A
Project
Demonstrating
Excellence:

THE BIOSPHERIC HUMANITARIAN: AN EMERGENT GROUP

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Abstract

The Biospheric Humanitarian: An Emergent Group

The Project Demonstrating Excellence is an inquiry into the lives of eight women and men who practice as biospheric humanitarians. A biospheric humanitarian possesses the consciousness, awareness plus committed action, of an inextricable relationship between humans and their environment. The biospheric humanitarian acts to bring both remediation and amelioration to a fragmented, misunderstood or severed relationship between humans and their natural environment.

This study explores, through the means of qualitative interviews, the experience of becoming and living as a biospheric humanitarian. While the subjects do not call themselves 'biospheric humanitarians' each of the subjects must possess the characteristics of a biospheric humanitarian provided in the interview outline. These characteristics follow. Each makes a conscious deliberate choice to act on behalf of the environment, while also acting on behalf of humans. Each has an awakened and developed sense of the interrelationship that exists between humans and the earth. Each sustains her/himself and her/his faith in committed action, through the course of encountering obstacles and difficulties. Each recognizes the importance of localized action (act locally), as it contributes to the betterment of the whole (sees and thinks globally).

The research found that the interviewees acted consistently in relating their actions for their respective communities to global environmental awareness. They recognize as well that amelioration of living conditions within their communities necessitated acting in a focused manner on behalf of the localized environment. The subjects were able, in each case, to extend their awareness and concern about amelioration to the global level. The research revealed the empowering relationship that exists between the respondents' disposition toward, understanding of and practice of non-violent methodologies and the accomplishment of their social and environmental activist goals and projects. Non-violent philosophy constitutes an organizing principle for their commitment and their actions. This research contributes to the identification of an emerging group of globally aware, non-violent practitioners of social and environmental justice. The research also contributes to the literature that identifies practitioners, methodologies and practices that successfully serve social and environmental justice.

Chapter 1 Introduction

> *Under the ordinary surface of the life of lies there slumbers the hidden sphere of life in its real aims, of its hidden openness to truth. The singular, explosive, incalculable political power of living within the truth resides in the fact that living openly with the truth has an ally, invisible to be sure, but omnipresent: this hidden sphere*
>
> *Vaclav Havel, Living in Truth.*

The purpose and goal of this research project is to discover factors that will assist in drawing ordinary people into biospheric humanitarian service. The use of the term 'ordinary' as a descriptor for the subjects of this study has two connotations. Firstly, ordinary means that these subjects go about their work without calling attention to themselves. Secondly, it means that these subjects do not have privileged backgrounds or upbringing that would have made necessary their calling. They have chosen their vocation of their own volition.

What is a biospheric humanitarian? The larger answer to that question fills the pages that await the reader. A shorter answer is that a biospheric humanitarian is a thinker and an actor in the joint arena of environmental justice and social justice. In addition, this actor in her/his community carries a cognizance of the relationship between her/his actions and the effect of these actions on global environmental and social justice issues. 'Justice' as used throughout this study carries the connotation of equity and respect. Environmental justice demands that the Earth be treated with equity and respect. Social justice means that humans, others as well as oneself, be treated with equity and respect. The biospheric humanitarian makes the connection between the equity and respect owed to the Earth and the equity and respect that is owed to humans (and other species).

The assumption underlying this study holds that we cannot truly respect one without the conscious intent of respecting the other. Justice for the Earth and justice for humans are inextricably and incontrovertibly linked. It is precisely the conscious awareness of and commitment to this link between justice for the Earth and justice for humans (and other species) that distinguishes the subjects of this present study. The biospheric humanitarian possesses a capacity to see the effect and relationship of localized or particular events on the whole. The 'whole' that the biospheric humanitarian concerns her or him self with is the Earth and her dependent species, the whole biospheric system. The concern is global.

I give the title The Biospheric Humanitarian: An Emergent Group to my study. My reason for this naming is to witness to a phenomenon that is directly and immediately associated with a growing body of environmental and eco-systemic literature. This literature is treated at length in the Literature Review, the chapter immediately following this Introduction. The literature catalogs a

developing awareness in many sectors concerning the harm that humans are collectively doing to the Earth and Earth systems and how action has been, is, and can be taken to restore balance.

Indeed, sensitivity about this harm has been transformed into a quasi-industry. This evidence has been accumulating in the Western world since the publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring in 1962. The evidence presented by many authors, think tanks, non-governmental organizations and various departments of governmental bodies, worldwide, has moved from a poetic and anecdotal commentary to evidence collected and presented through rigorous scientific investigation. This does not ignore the fact that Carson was a rigorous scientific thinker in addition to being a lover of nature and the natural environment.

The discovery of the evidence firstly through anecdotal reporting followed by scientific validation of the notions of the environmentally sensitive was the first stage of a developmental process within the consciousness of the human species. In this first stage awareness is heightened. Concern grows. Trends are noticed. Facts enter into the mythologies that underpin the organization and movement of societies. Deeper concerns are expressed. These concerns mount. Exasperation and perplexity are shown. Tension builds.

In the 'objective' external, environmental realms the floods become more devastating. Hurricanes become more frequent and violent. Typhoons rage. Earthquakes occur with greater rapidity (Brown; Renner). Sandstorms send thousands to hospitals. Water shock wipes out entire villages. Water shock is a term developed by Lester Brown to describe the loss of all ground water and well sources of water that reach of a given village or other locale (2001). Rising temperatures melt ice plates releasing intense doses of stored methane gases further intensifying global warming. Infectious diseases spread precipitously.

Tension builds. Concern mounts. Deeper concerns are expressed. Exasperation and perplexity intensify. The tightening gaps between occurrences in trends are noticed and noted. Warnings are published.

Into this gap, this dirth of effective action to remedy, steps the biospheric humanitarian. They are women and men of action. The singularly most significant condition associated with the emergent group of biospheric humanitarians beyond the recognition that the leaders have been mainly women is the fact that the movement, if it can yet be called that, is a grass roots phenomenon. This amounts to ordinary people taking action. Without mandates, often without recompense, frequently by putting themselves in harm's way, these leaders are stepping into the action gap. It is these women and men who are the subjects of my research.

What this study purports to accomplish:

My purpose has been to learn about the inner workings of the thought and decision processes of the group of women and men I have interviewed who represent this emergent group. I am interested in the internalized relationship these individuals have with the environment and with other humans that allow or compel them to take action to bring relief and remedy and to work toward achieving justice. My interest extends to an effort to understand the factors in their backgrounds and influences upon them that have supported their decisions to take the actions they have taken and to sustain them in their chosen endeavors.

In identifying this emergent group of biospheric humanitarians I have found evidence of a phenomenon that indicates that the warnings in the literature are being addressed in a significant though incipient way. I am interested in knowing the subjective factors in these individuals that compel them to take action. What is it about these individuals that sets them apart? What characterizes their subjective consciousness that allows them to heed the warnings and to act in such a way as to bring remedy? What is it that they know that others do not know or want to know?

The research interview and research questions have been designed to take particular note of the quality and character of each interviewee's consciousness, their subjective, internal awareness. In each interviewee's instance there is a unique story. Within the story and the circumstances lie the wakefulness and the awareness that typify that particular person's consciousness that notices the interconnectivity and interdependencies between humans, the biosphere, as well as other aspects of the biosphere.

To summarize this section: I am tracking and reflecting about the relationships that exist among each of the biospheric humanitarians in this study, their own internal consciousness and the rest of the biosphere. I observe the manner in which they notice the interdependencies of individual phenomena and are able to relate seemingly separate objects, events and persons as belonging to an interconnected web. It is the capacity to see these interrelationships coupled with the action taken as a consequence of this internal knowing that distinguishes the biospheric humanitarian.

Significance of this research on the biospheric humanitarian:

The signifier, biospheric humanitarian, I was not able to locate in my various searches of literature concerning environmentalism, eco-feminist expression, environmental activism, or in environmental and social justice writings. There does exist at the present time an incipient literature within the peace activist circles as well as the environmentalist circles that recognizes that a mutually stabilizing and mutually pollinating *engagement* of these two enterprises, peace/justice and environmentalism, is now required. In seeing a

need for a much greater effort in combining social and environmental justice activism Lester Brown states: “We are winning battles and we are losing the war.” (Brown 2002, 17).

This is to say that there is now a rising tide of recognition that a much greater focus of awareness and blending of resources needs to be brought to bear in remediation efforts. This awareness translated into effective action must simultaneously address and remediate the degradation of the Earth systems, despoliation and destruction of plant and animal species, and the violation of the economically, socially and educationally marginalized and disadvantaged peoples of the Earth. It is the biospheric humanitarian who is knowingly taking action, persistent and protracted action, to remedy these issues.

From my perspective on the body of literature that catalogs and speaks to these aforementioned issues I have discovered no literature that identifies, upholds and applauds a specific group of individuals, functioning at the grass roots level of societies, who have taken the future of the Earth and the human, and other, species into their own hands. The purpose of this study is to fill this gap in the relevant literature.

At the same time, accounts in Common Fire (Parks Daloz, Keen, Keen, Daloz Parks), Spiritual Genius: The Mastery of Life’s Meaning (Gallagher), and Ella Baker (Sullivan, L.Y.), for example, carefully recognize, uphold and detail lives of committed social justice service and activism. Such accounts share concerns and a focus that are parallel to the focus of the present study. This study of biospheric humanitarians does not make the unique claim of identifying a group of committed activists. The focus and significance of this study is in uniquely identifying the global reach of the concern exerted by the research population of this study as well as their binary focus on the Earth and Earth species simultaneously. Again, this study’s purpose is to identify elements in current biospheric humanitarians that might drawing other ordinary humans into similar activity. To this end, this present study examines the relationship between the global awareness of the research population and their social and environmental justice activism. A principle value of this study is to give a name, and the recognition that proceeds from naming, to an emergent group that is already in existence. This is one factor that would support a wider embrace in activism of the biospheric humanitarianism.

Scholarly relevance:

From a scholarly perspective in relation to the relevant literature I have as my purpose to make a seminal/ovular contribution; that is, my contribution is to identify and recognize a heretofore unidentified emergent group. I see this contribution to be cross-disciplinary and twofold. The disciplines affected include, most conspicuously, environmental studies, environmental activism, eco-

feminism, environmental justice, eco-economics, social justice, peace studies, nuclear disarmament and demilitarization policy studies.

It is possible to make one level of contribution through the fact of identifying this group of biospheric humanitarians. By making this identification it is possible to create a focus, a syntax or a category that can then allow researchers and others to be able to 'see' a group, an identified group, that is effectively engaged in remediation and restoration of balance of the whole, complex biosphere. The second level of contribution involves creating profiles of biospheric humanitarians that demonstrate their effectiveness and offer compelling models whom others can recognize, appreciate and possibly imitate.

Social relevance:

The research subjects are emulated and respected as pioneers who have identified significant needs and have pressed themselves into service to provide relief and seek solutions.

Relevance for the Earth:

As the study documents, the subjects of this research are raising awareness among marginalized people about their own distress as well as their ability to alter their distressed situation.

What is singular about the subjects of my research is not the particular issue or issues they engage. Not significant either is the particular success they experience in their engagement with problems and situations. The singular element that binds them together as a group is their consciousness, their capacity to see the Earth together with her dependent species as one, living organism. Biospheric humanitarians are able to make powerful contributions to others through seeing these interdependencies and interrelationships. This knowledge they have acquired comes to them as a consequence of their activism. They are empowered by their active conviction.

In each case the choice to serve within the framework of recognizing the necessary interdependencies and interrelationships is a conscious one. The manner in which each research subject has come into this awareness varies, sometimes quite dramatically.

Content and Structure of Study:

This study focuses on eight subjects selected within the greater Puget Sound Area.

In addition to this Introduction and the following chapter, the Literature Review, there follows a chapter on Research Design. Next follow eight

successive chapters, each one of which tells the story of one of the research subjects. Each of these eight chapters is organized according to four considerations: What are the influences that have brought you to be a biospheric humanitarian? How has your work changed you? What sustains you? What does your future hold for you?

The twelfth chapter offers an analysis of the eight subjects' interviews plus findings based on the analysis. This analysis utilizes the same four components used in each of the eight chapters recounting the story of a particular research subject There is a final brief chapter that addresses the conclusions concerning the research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

> *Awareness of an all-pervading mysterious energy articulated in the infinite variety of natural phenomena seems to be the primordial experience of human consciousness, awakening to an awesome universe filled with mysterious power.*
>
> *Thomas Berry*
> *Dream of the Earth, 24*

There is now a proliferation of articles written on an annual basis that address the environmental and social justice issues under discussion in this study. In order to shape and develop a focus for this literature review that accords with the purpose of this study it is important to reiterate the purpose of the study. It is to identify factors in the research population that will help to draw ordinary people to become biospheric humanitarians. I review the most recent thinking relating to environmental justice and social justice concern and activism. This brings the freshest sets of insights to the discussion at hand. I review the literature for indications of activism and perspective as well as for conviction concerning hope.

This literature review includes current thinking in environmental justice studies; and then proceeds to a review of the literature concerning social and environmental justice activists. Then follows eco-feminist studies. This section on eco-feminist thought includes a feminist critique from the perspective of women's history and environmental history. There then follows a discussion of literature concerning social and environmental justice activists. This section includes a discussion of two psychological concepts that are useful in understanding the activists of the present study. Next this study proceeds to a discussion of Social Movement Theory. This is followed by a section on sustaining commitment, burnout, and collective versus individual action. Important to this study is the relationship between the local or place-based activism and the global. The literature review sets the global situation and global concern about environmental and social justice issues as the context in which place-based local activism occurs.

Environmental Justice Studies from an Economic Perspective:

No conversation about the environment can move very far forward before economics enter center stage. "Most of the world's economy and the behavior of the world's governments are under the control of corporations. Corporations are striving to increase their control; at the same time, the world is increasingly out of control. There is a direct connection." (Hawken, 2003, 51). Hawken is able to make a strong case for the fact that the present economic order mandated by multi-national corporations to serve their own stakeholders is

at cross purposes with the environment, a great majority of humans and plant and animal species supported by the environment (Hawken, 2003).

The thinking about environmental issues now advanced by Hawken; Hawken, Lovins and Lovins; Korten; Henderson, and Shiva, for example, place emphasis on the detrimental politics of multi-national corporations and the governments that support and sustain them (1993; 1999; 1998; 1996; 1993). The global environment has been colonized by the globalized economy (Brown 2001). It is a shared understanding of these writers that the predatory practices of multinational corporations are two pronged. There is a first level exploitation in extraction of natural resources, worldwide, for use as raw materials for industrial production and manufacture. This predation occurs in the capitalization and commercialization of the lives of people who are formerly outside market economies. The second prong occurs when these productized goods and services are then marketed to the very peoples marginalized by the extraction (Shiva, 1993, 1988, 2000, 2002, 2003; Henderson, 1996, 1988, 1978; Hawken, 1993, 1883, 2003; Hawken, Lovins and Lovins, 1999; Korten, 1990, 1998, 1995; Cleveland, Henderson, Kaul, 1995).

As examples of the exploitation processes inherent to capitalist predation Shiva documents the patenting of hybridized seeds, the privatization of water, waterways, sowing processes as well as the human genome (Shiva, 1993, 2000, 2002). This convergence of ideological, political, and technological forces is leading to an ever-greater concentration of economic and political power in a handful of corporations and financial institutions. It has the effect of separating their interests from the human interest. In the unfolding of this process the market system is blind to all but its own short-term financial gains. What results are the devastating human and environmental consequences of the successful efforts of corporations to reconstruct values and institutions everywhere to serve their narrow financial ends (Hawken 2003, 1993).

A specific example is in order. In a chronicling of a post-Iraq War business contract for post-war re-construction, Shiva follows the award of a $680-million contract to the Bechtel Corporation for restoring water and sewage facilities in Baghdad. Based on the outcomes of a similar water restoration project by Bechtel in Cochabamba, Bolivia in 1999, Shiva warns that Bechtel may well try to own the sources of water. “If the international community and the Iraqis are not vigilant, Bechtel could try to claim ownership of the Tigris and Euphrates, just as they tried to own the wells of Bolivia” (Shiva 2003 4). This particular example is useful in that it allows the disclosure of the direct and immediate relationship between wars of aggression and marketization of natural resources and life sustaining processes.

> About a quarter of the roughly 50 wars and armed conflicts active in 2001 have a strong resource dimension—in the sense that legal or illegal resource exploitation helped trigger or exacerbate violent conflict or financed its continuation. The human toll of these resource-related

> conflicts in simply horrendous. Rough estimates suggest that more than 5 million people were killed during the 1990's. Close to 6 million fled to neighboring countries, and anywhere from 11 to 15 million people were displaced inside the borders of their home countries. But some people—warlords, corrupt governments, and unscrupulous corporate leaders—benefited from the pillage, taking in billions of dollars. (Renner, 6).

A by-product of marketization is garbage, the refuse or remains of planned obsolescence. In the global market place garbage becomes another commercial product. Toxic waste is dumped into the developing countries along the North/South axis of global division. Indeed, this practice of dumping toxic waste in the developing countries of the South, the southern hemisphere, has spawned an internalized colonialism within the countries used as dumping sites (Stavenhagen; Uva and Bloom; Adeola, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000). The lands of the most marginalized peoples in the countries selected as dumping grounds, in exchange for 'foreign aid' from the development banks of the industrialized countries of the North, are selected as the actual dump sites for the imported toxic waste (Weir and Schapiro).

> Environmental inequity involves a skewed (or disproportionate) distribution of environmental risks by nationality, race, ethnicity, or class. These concepts are intertwined with the concept of environmental racism, which suggests a deliberate targeting of the communities of specific racial, ethnic, tribal, or cultural groups as depots for hazardous waste, environmentally and health-threatening products, and other forms of pollution. (Adeola 2000 687).

The forces of neo-colonialism under the guise of market globalization represent one set of forces at play globally. Another set of forces, a counter-force, mobilize grass roots activism by the means of education, consciousness raising and alternative media campaigns that circumvent the news black-out, especially within the United States. "Perhaps the most basic challenge humanity faces is to awaken our capacity for collective knowing and conscious action so that we can respond successfully to the immense social and environmental difficulties that now confront us" (Elgin, 2-3).

David Korten sees glimpses of how life can be when the environmental movement does become a 'collective knowing'. During his attendance at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1991 (Eco-Summit) he

> came to realize the extent to which we held a common vision of the world we hoped to create. It was the first visible manifestation of the emergence of a global civil society. (T)he experience suggested…the emergence of a planetary consciousness without precedent in the human experience. Eighteen thousand people from every part of the world had come together to share their dreams for the planetary future (1998 278).

Korten found evidence that an emergent planetary consciousness was being forged through the use of media and technological advances. Electronic

devices provide instant availability for contacts and information across cultures and across hemispheres. The seeds of this planetary consciousness are planted throughout the globe. All continents and all countries are home to inchoate movements embracing social and environment transformation. The secrecy, massive financing and central authority of government-backed globalizing corporations are unable to halt the advancing capacity of women and men who identify as world citizens to organize and communicate across national and international boundaries. The communications foundation for global exchange in the global marketplace is being co-opted by awakened world citizens who are committed to sustainable and responsible practices of preserving diversity and reversing environmental degradation (Korten 1998). This emerging global community lives with the vision of utilizing the Earth and her resources for the benefit of all.

Henderson and Shiva produce feminist perspectives for righting the aggrieved global imbalance currently favoring the forces of exploitation. Henderson proposes varieties of luxury taxes on fossil energy usage to then be used for the funding of the United Nations, which would serve as a global monitoring body (1996). Shiva proposes direct, participatory democracy as the mechanism to right the imbalances she observes from her perspective as a feminist, woman of color, developing nation citizen (India), and as one identified with externalized colonized, by global market forces, and internally colonized, by caste consciousness, peoples. The first and essential step in the movement toward participatory democracy is the right to the natural resources of the global commons (water, air, seeds, farming land). Next for her is the right to education with a focus on literacy programs for women and girls (1993, 2000).

Literature concerning social and environmental justice activists

The purpose of this section of the literature review is to bring the global concerns and global perspective of problems and their solutions to the level of the local activist. First is a discussion of other activists in scholarly research. This portion of the review highlights more traditional humanitarians as well as more contemporary activists. The review then moves its focus onto the inner-city problems that these activists tackle. As an example, the discussion of garbage as a global economic and political issue is now brought to the local level. The extended discussion concerning the economics and politics of garbage and waste is pertinent on two counts. This discussion provides insight into the various ways and levels of toxification of the urban environments of the poor and peoples of color. In addition, two of the subjects of the present study were personally involved in training and supporting youth who participated in shutting down a toxic incinerator in Seattle's Central District. This kind of activity typifies the work of the biospheric humanitarian who works in urban settings.

Common Fire (Parks-Daloz, Keen, Keen, Parks-Daloz) is a detailed report of an investigation concerning one hundred social justice activists and advocates.

This study is an in-depth study concerning the motivations and sustaining factors of a population, each of whom has at least twenty years experience as committed activists. This study identified themes of connection with others (213). More generally, Common Fire observes the inescapable fact of our discovery through self-reflection and cumulative awareness of a "new commons". This new commons is synonymous with globalized awareness (1-19).

A second text that identifies certain themes in this study relating to commited action is Spiritual Genius (Gallagher). Gallagher set out to engage and profile women and men who were not spiritual seekers, but rather who had found their spiritual fulfillment through self-realization on behalf of others. Gallagher offers eleven profiles of committed social justice advocates and activists whose motivation and inspiration are guided by their spiritual beliefs and practices. The profiles range from pastors in urban ghettoes of large American cities to missionaries native to England serving in remote villages in India. A common theme is the rigor with which each profile presents evidence that the spiritually realized do not shrink from facing highly difficult and trying life circumstances in order to alter entrenched patterns of social degradation on behalf of those whom they have chosen to serve.

Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time (Loeb) explores this study's focus on what the ordinary person can accomplish in the arena of social justice. Loeb explores what it is that leads some people to get involved in larger community issues while others feel overwhelmed and uncertain. He investigates what it takes to maintain commitment for the long haul. He also looks at the benefits of activism for the practitioner; community involvement and citizen activism can give back a sense of connection and purpose rare in a life focused on the purely personal. He demonstrates through telling stories of ordinary citizens who were motivated, always for some deeply personal reason, to become activists that one's efforts can do more--for ourselves and for the world--than we may ever imagine. He makes clear that change happens little by little, step by step. We can savor the journey of engagement, even though our ultimate destination is unclear. The impact of our efforts will often ripple outward in ways we can't predict. He also tackles the difficult issues, those ordinarily unspoken, concerning the dangers and costs of activism. Dropping out, burn out, despair, crisis mentality and emotional exhaustion all receive careful consideration in his discussion.

The profile Ella Baker (Sullivan), in a similar vein, tells of the obscure organizer of youth, women and poor people in Harlem, New York, who paved the way for the organizational successes of the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the South of the United States. Baker relied on the "principles of grassroots democracy and decentralized leadership" as she went about building her youth organizations in Harlem and then nationally (Sullivan 57). Baker as understood and interpreted by Sullivan is another person whose life and work exemplifies the

themes explored in this research. Her teachership of youth, for example, emerged as a strong theme, as did her ability as an organizer and networker.

James Farmer, founder of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), in 1942, is another forebear of contemporary social justice activists. Farmer was an empowered organizer with strategic instincts for anticipating new thresholds of intervention on behalf of black minorities in northern cities as well as in the South. Like Ella Baker, his work in organizing pinpointed burning social issues and rallied entire communities to take stands against social injustices. His gifts at organizing, great as they were, were outstripped by his capacity to train and form young leaders in black communities along the eastern seaboard of the United States. His great legacy is his work of preparing the way for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as leader of the boycotts and sit-ins in Atlanta and Birmingham (Rosen).

We turn now to contemporary young activists. Recently a group of reporters have identified and characterized certain youth because of their unusual and noteworthy strategies (Passy 2000; Capek 2000). These young activists who see themselves as anarchists have gained prominence in the forefront of the social justice and environmental justice movements. They are highly principled practitioners of non-violence. They live practical democracy, refuse to act for political expediency, make decisions by consensus and are deeply committed to their goals and purposes. They live with the conviction that their lives and decisions matter and are competent at taking strategic and carefully planned risks in fulfillment of their goals. They do not associate with mainstream agendas and are said for this to have a more distinctive understanding of the deeper and underlying issues about which they speak and act. They have taken leadership in the anti-globalization movement and organize their lives around meeting the objectives of channeling the forces of globalization into more humane purposes than the sheer motivation for profit (Shank, Smith, Mooney).

We turn now to urban environmental justice activity. “(M)inority activists are appropriating mainstream environmental discourses and applying them to social justice issues to construct a new social movement, known as environmental justice.” (Checker 95). “Significant scholarship has emerged that probes urban ecologies, assesses the interplay between gender and space, and examines geography, race, and social justice. The provocative insights of cultural studies have also impelled historians to track the representation of the natural in culture.” (Miller, C. 1123). In other words “including the environment on their agendas for social change enabled minority activists to develop and sustain new strategies and alliances that strengthened their struggles.” (Checker 94).

Poor communities within major American cities are continuously confronted with environmental threats to the their health and well-being. These threats come to them in the form of toxic land fills, garbage dumps, highway right

of ways, petrochemical plants, paint factories, lead smelters, incinerators, prisons and jails, for example. The toxification of the environment functions on several levels simultaneously. When the voiceless poor accept these conditions in silence this silence is taken to be acquiescence and this acquiescence is rewarded by further toxification (Bullard). Glenn and Bullard each tell stories of how the organization of communities under the banner of environmental justice activism paved the way for government litigation against the perpetrators of policies of toxifying poor neighborhoods in New Orleans and in Chicago (Glenn; Bullard). In Houston an environmental discrimination suit closed a poisonous plant (Bullard). In Chicago an incinerator producing 400 tons of ash per day laced with lead, cadium and other toxins was found to be in violation of US Environmental Protection Agency standards. The plant was also closed (Glenn, Pellow 2002).

Shutting down the incinerator in Chicago proved to be a bittersweet victory. The community won the battle and lost the war. The community had won an important victory because it had found its voice. What we evidence here however is how one solved problem can lead to a larger problem. Upon the plant closure the City of Chicago instituted a 'Blue Bag' program. One blue bag per household was provided by the city in which all recyclables were thrown together. This new program has done a poor job of managing the city's waste. Worse, however, is that fact that in order to sort the recycled materials hundreds of low-paying jobs, dangerous and hazardous, have been created. This in itself is another environmental injustice (Glenn, Pellow 2002, 2003). Here is a moment where the macro-systemic (global) and the micro-systemic (local) intersect. Hawken's earlier observation about the corporate control of government aptly describes this situation in Chicago where an industrial baron, Wayne Huisinga of Waste Management, has taken a community service—waste management—into the private sector. How the service is conducted serves his corporate agenda primarily (2003).

The corporate designers of the waste recycling program did not take into account the cost to the human beings who sort through infectious medical waste and household hazardous waste. That this task is de-humanizing was also overlooked by the corporate engineers. Some of the problem is laid at the feet of the community's naiveté. The community organizers did not look beyond solving their immediate problem—the plant closure. They had no strategic plan in place for their vision of delivering their community of a noxious plant. They had imagined that the City of Chicago would remain much more involved, more 'hands-on', in retooling the incinerator plant. This would have meant better jobs with higher salaries. Waste Management instead configured the plant's retooling to suit its own bottom line considerations (Glenn, Pellow 2002) --

In Glenn's view it becomes the task of scholars to examine the character and quality of jobs in this increasingly privatized waste removal industry. There is evidence, for example, that the health situation and working conditions inside

waste treatment plants are far worse than the deleterious effects that the same waste treatment plants have upon their surrounding environments. Scholars must take into account the harm anticipated to come to workers in this industry via direct exposure to toxins. This scholarly task must be exercised with foresight and imagination rather than be romanticized, as has been the approach heretofore by some scholars toward environmental justice projects, for example, Bullard. Realistic assessment of racial politics and racial injustice are important aspects of a more adequate scholarly approach. In addition to the racial issues there are also class issues and political hierarchies that need to be taken into account. For example, in Robbins, a poor, African- American suburb of Chicago, an incinerator was constructed in 1997 to generate desperately needed revenue and jobs. The town's predicament is certainly related to unjust racial structures. Yet there is a fierce battle being played out that is not along racial lines. Both protagonists in this battle are African-American. The divide is along classist lines with internal colonization also playing its role. Such issues require a much more nuanced thinking than is available through mere racial understanding (Pellow, 2002; Glenn).

The first widely organized effort to name these themes occurred several years earlier at a conference. The first National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was convened in Washington, DC, in 1991. Their agenda included bringing attention to pollution problems facing low-income communities and minority communities. They met to protest the fact that affluent and middle class communities receive greater environmental protections than do the poor and working class communities. The achievement of this leadership summit was that it greatly broadened what 'the environment' means. The environment has now come to include where people live, work, play, worship and attend school. It has expanded beyond the physical and natural environment. It is in this way that the environmental justice movement has become aligned with the social justice movement. It has changed the way that environmental justice activism is practiced throughout the United States. Other groups throughout the world who take cues from Americans have followed suit. The underlying understanding is that all communities, affluent and poor, deserve to be protected from the consequences of pollution and toxification (Bullard).

We now turn to issues concerning motivation of the activist in the literature. Shepherd discusses the conviction and commitment lived and expressed by her research group, an environmentalist group in Brisbane, in terms of asceticism as understood by Max Weber in his study of the sociology of religion. These subjects regard themselves as anarchists, though not in the traditional sense. She found that "working on personal feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, called 'self-work', was central to the strategy for social change employed by this group" (Shepherd 135). Her research added the dimension of ascetic fervor or zeal and ascetic practice. Shepherd came to a clear theoretical and practical understanding of how her research subjects maintained commitment through their ascetic practices.

Contemporary non-violent anarchists bring a deeply moral perspective coupled with a rigorous egalitarianism as well as an avowed anti-authoritarianism, to their practice of social and environmental justice (Shepherd, Epstein 2001, Harpham). That is, they tend to live separated from the mainstream. They display a highly integrated and revolutionary, though non-violent, desire to transform the world. The anarchist faction of anti-globalization is decidedly mobilized against corporate hegemony and a doctrinaire control of the global commons, that in many cases extends to ownership. Their attitude is to act with such highly integrated sense of purpose that the adversary is impelled to learn and to eventually desist in its most egregious violations (Epstein 2000; 2001; Harpham; Gandhi).

The activists explored in these studies have high expectations of themselves. They engage in methodical procedures and rigorous moral, physical and dietary practices as they work on themselves. These moral and dialectical procedures take the form of journaling, open challenges in conversational circles, deliberative processes to determine rigorous egalitarian cooperation among themselves (Epstein 2001). Shepherd uses the frame of Max Weber's sociology of religion to characterize and understand precedents of ascetic practices, both moral and intellectual, in world cultures. This use of the moral and ascetically prepared self to gain leverage in advocacy for social change is, according to Weber, a carefully documented historical phenomenon (Weber, Shepherd, Harpham). The particular group of ascetics explored by Weber and used for comparison by Shepherd is Weber's group of rationally active ascetics (Weber 166-184). This is a significant point since religion and religious fervor are not driving forces in the activity and motivation of the contemporary ascetic activists in Shepherd's group. Their motivation is political transformation. They do not appear to have a focus or intention beyond the environment itself. Their principal tool is the ascetically prepared and honed self. This self is in relationship to the environment. The asceticism strengthens the will and physical presence of the activist with the intention of having non-violence permeate to the very core of one's relational being-in-the-world (Gandhi, Epstein 2001).

Shepherd makes a assertion in stating that in postmodern society what it means to be a person is no longer a given. For some, this is not a haphazard affair, this decision as to how and what kind of person to be. Personhood has to be carved out of distinctive possibility born of association with like-minded and similarly motivated persons. It is fair to observe that the anarchists described by Shepherd and Epstein find ground for their beingness, even if they do this unwittingly, in the eco-feminist discourse concerning marginalized voices (Shiva 1988, 2000; Warren 2000). In the instance of the anarchists, their marginalization is voluntary. They take refuge in communes and seek with purpose to develop alternative lifestyles that allow them to remain in touch with ecological concern. They eschew reflexive modernization in their deliberate lifestyle choices. Reflexive modernization is blind consumerist and materialist in

its approach to life. Moral purity is sustained by living outside the market economy (Epstein 2000, 2001; Shepherd).

Self-discipline, self-observation and self-criticism combine to constitute a political ascetic in service to living a green ideology in every aspect of their daily life. When the activist in living this lifestyle makes progress s/he is said to be consistent. In thusly living one's life one's activism becomes a vocation and expresses a sacred value, which in the case at hand is nature. This lifestyle requires withdrawal from the world constructed around the market economy. The green ascetic then interacts with the market-dominated world through non-violent civil disobedience coupled with other non-institutionalized forms of political activity, including street theater. Perhaps a most important outcome of the pursuit of an ascetic lifestyle is how it serves as an antidote to despair (Shepherd). This discovery has reinforcing implications for the present study.

Eco-feminist Studies Including A Feminist Critique From The Perspective Of Women's History And Environmental History:

Eco-feminist studies relate directly to the research subjects because the eco-feminists are the ones who have discovered how to articulate oppression issues and environmental concerns that have remained below the threshold of awareness and articulation. Before a problem or issue can be addressed and resolved, it must first be identified. This identification includes naming as a first step. It is to the credit of the eco-feminists that they have named the various issues that the research subjects of this study have tackled as challenges for their resolution. Eco-feminists such as Warren, Shiva, Henderson and Spretnak have initiated this process of naming problems and issues that have been obscured by the worldview of the hierarchy of dominance (1987, 2000; 1993, 1998; 1996; 1991, 1997). In addition to contributing the function of naming, eco-feminism has also contributed the attitude of cooperation (cf: Hernderson 1996). The subjects of the present study live and act within a cultural awareness that has been created and fostered by eco-feminist discourse.

A second contribution that has come forth from eco-feminist discourse is the discussion of the relational self (Naess). The relational self is a construction and an understanding that follows from the basic interdependent premise of eco-feminism. Humans are not dominators of the biosphere; humans are interdependent with it. In addition, the human is an interdependent species, within itself. This premise contributes to the understanding of the motivations, the sustained action, and source of renewal of the subjects of this study.

One of the leading eco-feminist authors, Karen Warren, studies environmental and social justice issues from the perspective of the origins of the problems (1987, 2000). She proposes to analyze and resolve a series of environmental issues through understanding the plight, status and conditions of voices at the margin. These marginalized include women, people of color and

children. Mainstream environmental practices have the effect of subverting, devaluing and in other ways rendering impotent women, the poor, underclasses, and children. In these transactions the humanity of these groups is denied. It follows that the contributions of these groups; their insights, their work; their inspiration and care, are equally devalued and subverted (Warren 2000; Capek; Cleveland, Henderson and Kaul; Hallen, Mies and Shiva).

Warren calls for a 'transformative feminism' that would provide a philosophical and cultural re-orientation that would address the direct link between oppression of women, children and minorities, and the environment. She provides six points upon which to build this transformative feminism:

- make explicit the interconnections between all forms of oppression
- provide a theoretical space for the diversity of women's experience
- reject the logic of domination of the patriarchal conceptual framework
- rethink what it means to be human
- recast traditional ethical concerns to make a central place for value
- challenge patriarchal bias in technology research to favor appropriate technologies that preserve rather than destroy the Earth. (Warren 1987).

It is important to note that Warren in her effort to construct a transformative feminism sees herself as speaking to an audience of concern that extends beyond feminist and eco-feminist circles. Transformative feminism is directed at broad social change in addition to being transformative of feminism itself (Glazebrook). This point is an important one since it allows Warren's understanding about root causes of environmental and social injustice to have their *locus* in what Riane Eisler has called "domination hierarchies", that is, patriarchy. (The Chalice and the Blade 106). From a Marxist perspective, all the various forms of domination may be historically and empirically contingent or dependent. This means that the various problems, historical and empirical, generated by the patriarchal constructs of domination will not be solved in isolation. They are intertwined and related to each other. Warren makes a distinctive contribution both constructive and practical in positing the necessary link between feminism and environmentalism (Glazebrook). This link between feminism and environmental issues foreshadows the link between social justice and environmental justice that is a basis for the research in this present study. Warren has built a case for this link in her own feminist research.

To transcend the forms of oppression that derive from domination hierarchies, one cannot act in isolation or even think in isolation. How one understands 'self' becomes an important philosophical issue. It is in this regard that the critical contribution of eco-feminist thought to see the self as relational is so important. "Since the self is already relational, self-realization is not about losing oneself in a collective but about finding oneself and others through positive forms of relation" (Diehm 31). This finding oneself in relationality becomes "a widening and deepening of the self" that occurs through "a widening and

deepening of the web of relational entities" (Naess 273). In this strand of feminist thought then a self that is constituted in and through its relationship to others can only flourish insofar as there is no radical isolation between this self and other (Diehm).

Interrelatedness is at the core of this understanding. The capacity to identify with other is completely bound up with the realization of one's own potential. One's own potential is relational, by definition. In this way the realization of the potential of the self is bound to promoting the realization and fulfillment of others. Likewise, to promote the realization of the other is to promote one's own realization. Implicit in this understanding is the recognition that one's motives for seeking self-realization are necessarily mixed. This is not a comment on the egotism underlying the motivation to work for the benefit of others. "It stands as an attempt to recognize the reality that interests intermingle, a reality which stems from the gestalt ontological principle of essential relationality." (Diehm 31).

This model provides a way to think about how environmental and social justice activists allow themselves to become so deeply and inextricably intertwined in the work that they do and in the lives of those whose causes they uphold. An 'atomistic' or highly individuated, non-*inter*dependent self-identity cannot conceive of either the benefit or the actual reality of an identity that is interdependent and thereby subject to the same vicissitudes and vagaries of fate to which others, for example, the marginalized, are subject. In other words one has to move away from the domination hierarchy's notion of self-realization as autonomous and *independent*. In an independent depiction of self, "self-realization is the term most often used for the competitive development of a person's talents and the pursuit of an individual's specific interests...." (Naess, 31).

The dominance hierarchy's principle strategy is agency, which means that one acts on behalf of oneself in contradistinction to what others may want or need (Wilber 2000 441-443, 684; 1997 187, 196-198; 2001 167). Relational selves see themselves as separate neither from others in the respective communities nor from their physical environment. This is what Wilber calls "agency-in-communion" (Wilber 2000 560-561). The relational self enters into activity as a form of service or caring about the well being of self and other. Val Plumwood says of the relational self that it "assumes the overarching interest of the other's general well-being and reacts to that as bound up with its own". (1999, 209).

Relational selves see themselves as not separate from others in their respective communities. This is what Wilber calls agency-in-communion (Wilber 2000 560-561). They see themselves as not separate from their environment, as well; again what Wilber calls agency-in-communion. Lest they fall prey to the same kind of violence perpetrated by those ensconced within dominance

hierarchies, by forcing subjugation through seeing the needs of 'other' as identical to one's own, activists must not rely exclusively on identification as driver of their activism. At the same time, the idea of essential relationality of the self that includes a physical and evolutionary heritage renders non-sensical any discontinuity and radical separation from others. This non-separation extends to the non-human as well as to the human.

Relationality does not rest upon the premise of identification alone. Relationships can flourish only within the context of recognition that others are relatively distinct beings with potentially dissimilar interests. It is in the absence of this recognition that others are lost or annihilated. It is in this way that the idea of identification falters. As a consequence of this recognition we must then pose the question about something else that must be at work in the relationship between self and other. This something initiates the search for community as it also recognizes that community is also always tenuous. Community is subject to revision. It is perpetually incomplete. In this sense identification cannot possibly constitute the last word (Diehm).

The task is to probe further into differentness (otherness). The differentness of the other addresses us and calls upon us. This differentness asks us questions and requires of us that we respond in certain ways (Naess). In encountering others we are required to go more deeply into our self. This encounter evokes the self just as certainly as it requires sensitivity to difference. Indeed the sensitivity to the differentness of the other springs from one's capacity to evoke one's self in ever deepening ways (Diehm; Naess; Warren, 1987, 2000).

In terms of the relational self identification comes to be a response to the differentness of other. It is only one mode in a dialogue that engages us in the effort to articulate ourselves properly to others. It becomes a way of recognizing and assuming responsibility as well as a way of being responsive. As we come to view differences in this manner we come to understand that differentness itself has the capacity to question our very capacity and adequacy of our responses. The effect is that we are called to the open stance of being able to re-position ourselves in relationships. This re-positioning manifests in relationship in how we respond as well as in how we listen. This listening and responding become then the deepest expressions of who we are (Diehm, Warren 2000).

Self-realization in this frame means making the self real as a relational being. It comes about as a function and a consequence of one's dialogue with the differences of the world (Diehm). Self-realization is an ever-renewing process. It is open-ended. It consists in an on-going series of identifications and their revisions. The movement is in the direction of self to other made possible as responses to the movements of other to self (Naess).

Some of my own interest involves the discovery of a sound philosophical basis for comprehending the inexorable commitment made by the biospheric

humanitarians who are the research population for this study. This search has led me to eco-feminist philosophy and feminist political theory. I am here engaged "in an effort to describe how eco-feminism will actually function as radical democratic politics." (Clark 212). There is a relationship between the commitment of the biospheric humanitarian to achieve equity and justice and direct, participatory democracy, sometimes called 'radical democracy' or 'deep democracy'; "philosophy's ideal goal—helping to liberate human persons and to create conditions for their mutual flourishing—is understood to require deepening democracy". (Green 218).

Eco-feminism empowers the voiceless, the silent and the silenced to take voice, to co-articulate (Clark). The path to achieving radical democracy for eco-feminism requires of it that it make explicit the partial and uncertain construction of women and nature. Beyond that eco-feminism has to make an overt commitment to ambiguity and perpetual openness in the political conversation (Clark, Capek). This feminine ethic replaces a masculine one made destructive in its individualism, manipulation, remoteness and hierarchy (Scharff).

An Understanding from Social Movement Theory:

Another area investigated in helping to gain insight about the research group of biospheric humanitarians is research in Social Movement Theory. Social Movement Theory studies aggregates of people who gather with a specified activist focus. Social movements are described in these pages relative to their focus on social change. Social movements are collectives of people whose efforts are focused on trying to create or resist social change. In this research our focus is on those movement organizations that foster social change and not those who resist change. Social movement organizations are called SMOs in this newly developing field of Social Movement Theory. Some of these organizations are ad hoc organizations that come together for a specific event or time-framed purpose. Other social movement organizations become institutionalized once they have engaged in an event. Whether the group disbands or becomes institutionalized is a function of the leadership of the original organization in question. In any event the activities of these groups, of whatever temporal duration, is the subject matter of Social Movement Theory. There are many different types of social movements and social movement organizations. Taken together they employ numerous social movement strategies. What they all share in common is the fact that their success depends on their ability in attracting membership and in finding support among other groups and individuals who mobilize to align with them (Tindall; McCarthy and Zald).

One way Social Movement Theory understands sustained engagement is through the adoption of activism as a life-style. The degree of activism turns on the phrase "embedded" (Tindall 423). The greater the embeddedness as measured in terms of network ties within and surrounding the organization the

greater the identification with the organization, the movement and the cause upon which the movement is focused. Embeddedness comes to be a measure of network centrality. Embeddedness occurs through a variety of mutually reinforcing processes. These processes can range from friendship to philosophical and moral appeal. Another is socialization function by which the organization gains adherent(s) through education and training (Passy).

Individuals are predisposed to join a movement or a social change process based on the fact that they share pro-movement values, ideals and attitudes. That is only a first step. These individuals join the movement's network activity. One aspect of the network activity is the work that is done by members of the collective with those whose identity by attitude brings them into familiarity and interaction with the collective. The identity with the collective or movement is coalesced through a series of interactions between those predisposed and the active, engaged membership (McAdam and Paulsen).

Communication influences activism in both direct and indirect ways. It is information and knowledge that are partly responsible for the positive relationship between frequency of communication and the level of activism. The more frequently one discusses movement events, issues and group processes and issues with others the more informed and knowledgeable one becomes about these matters. This knowledge and information become drivers of activity in support of the movement's goals and focus. Yet there is another important aspect of frequent conversation among members of the same social milieu. These frequent conversations serve as interaction rituals that serve to reinforce and help shape cultural identities. Frequently the same or similar conversations are repeated, sometimes in a ritualized form. This serves to *build espirit de corps* (Tindall). Network embeddedness and network-based interaction with other movement members sustain information transmission. By extension, socialization and social comparison processes are augmented via these same transactions (Tindall; McAdam and Paulsen; Passy).

Movement identification serves as a basis for collective action. This cultural identification is in this sense an important barometer of one's own identity as an activist. Of benefit to the activist then is her/his capacity to extend one's social network. The larger the engaged social network in and around the social movement the greater or stronger is the activist's own identification as a committed worker. With a larger social network the opportunity for communication grows. Information increases and the associated rituals of exchange are reinforced. Frequency of communication as well as level of integration, based on extension of network, determine how highly one identifies as a cultural member. This identification serves as a basis for collective action. Action is necessary to reinforce and sustain one's identity. Action is a test of authenticity (McAdam and Paulsen).

Sustaining commitment; burnout; collective versus individual action

The purpose of this section is to provide a review of the literature that addresses the psychological and emotional issues that concern themselves with activism and the individual activist. Burnout is the nemesis of the committed activist. The conditions for sustained activism are important to know and recognize. Even more important is the willingness to enact the conditions that allow for sustained activism in one's own life. Failure to do so will most likely result in burnout. Freudenberger, who developed the understanding of burnout, suggests that it is a fatigue or frustration that comes about when one devotes oneself to a cause, a way of life or a relationship. When the expected reward does not ensue, burnout occurs. There is a paradox involved in the occurrence of burnout because it results from the expression of good intentions. Again, the paradox of burnout occurs when one's energy is depleted. One loses touch with oneself, with others and with reality as a consequence (1981, 1982, 1977).

> Expectations that are too high for oneself open the door for burnout. If we don't acknowledge our doubts about particular approaches or causes, the gap between our internal psychological state and our outward allegiances will eventually erode our will to act. When movements do not allow hesitation, uncertainty, ambivalence, they make it impossible for many of their most dedicated participants to continue (Loeb 260).

Isolation; too much intensity; unwillingness or inability to say 'no'; over nurturing; lack of pacing; extensive worry and anxiety; loss of sense of humor; and denial are the practices engaged by activists that result in burnout (Loeb; Freudenberger 1981, 1982, 1977; Sapienza and Bugental; Chuang). "If we work only in crisis mode sooner or later we will burn out" (Loeb 264). Betrayal by the movement that one joins is another quick road to burnout (Loeb). When burnout does occur, complete withdrawal from activism and activist commitment is likely to occur. The withdrawal if fostered by "memories of doing too much and feeling isolated, unappreciated, and let down by people we counted on" (Loeb 274).

Burnout can be reversed; this is a process that requires self-reflection. The self-reflection begins with an effort to trace back to the time or period when one was no longer able to relax and began feeling overly tired. An examination of the pressures to succeed brings insight and awareness. An understanding of why one certain area of one's life became overly important and when that happened is a next step. Loss of sense of humor and isolation from friends are important matters to recognize; their time of occurrence is also important. A too complete identification with a given project coupled with the drive to succeed and the concern about failure are other ingredients that are useful to note on the way back from burnout (Freudenberger 1981, 1982; Chuang; Loeb; Sapienza and Bugental). Beyond this range of questions lie the practices of self-care that now need to be engaged. Since burnout is loss of energy as well as loss of balance, both energy and balance have to be restored. This restoration involves body, mind, emotional life and spirit. Proper diet and a regular exercise program put

the activist back on track. As far as the mental, emotional and spiritual domains are concerned grieving is a beneficial means to begin the restorative process. The constant and continual repression of despair takes a toll on activists' energies that leave them especially vulnerable to bitterness and exhaustion. The conditions for which one must grieve vary from person to person and depend on the activist endeavor. The importance of knowing how to grieve applies to all activists (Freudenberger 1981; Loeb)

The self-reflection process must continue through the return from burnout and beyond. One must establish short and long term goals that are realistic. Time for relaxation and renewal are important. This relaxation and renewal time may take the form of walks in nature; visits with family and friends; meditation and contemplation; journaling; and time in inquiry with other activists. The creation of firm boundaries and the ability to say 'no' are fundamental to recovery. An examination of one's values and the ability to laugh at oneself bring benefit and release from the burdens of the past. A caring community is a *sine qua non* for any activist that expects to endure over the long term (Freudenberger 1981, 1982; Loeb; Sapienza and Bugental).

The two concepts of hardiness and resilience are meaningful in this discussion since they cast a positive light on personality characteristics that build endurance. Hardiness is based in existential personality theory. It is defined as "a constellation of personality characteristics that function as a resistance resource in the encounter with stressful life events" (Kobasa, Maddi and Khan 1982 169). Commitment, control and challenge are the three elements that comprise hardiness. Such hardy persons commit readily to what they are doing in their lives. They also believe that they have some control over the causes and solutions of life problems and dilemmas. They view changes in life and the need to adapt as challenges and opportunities for growth. Adaptation does not threaten the hardy personality type (Kobasa, Maddington and Courington; Kobasa, Maddi, Puccetti; Kobasa, Maddi, Zola; Florian, Mikulincer and Taubman).

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress. There are seven aspects or qualities comprising resilience: insight: asking tough questions; independence: emotional and physical distancing from the sources of trouble in one's life; initiative: taking charge of problems; relationships: making fulfilling connections to others; creativity: using the imagination; humor: finding the comic in the tragic; morality: acting on the basis of an informed conscience. The concept of resilience is also paradoxical. The concept of resilience as paradox encompasses the psychological damage and the enduring strength that can result from struggling with hardship (Wolin and Wolin 1993). Resilience involves maintaining flexibility and balance in your life as you deal with stressful circumstances and traumatic events. This happens in several ways. Letting oneself experience strong emotions, and also realizing when you may need to

avoid experiencing them at times in order to continue functioning promotes resilience. Resilience is knowing when to step forward and take action to deal with your problems and meet the demands of daily living; it is also knowing when to stepp back to rest and reenergize yourself. Resilience is nurtured by spending time with loved ones to gain support and encouragement. It is also sustained by nurturing oneself. Finally, resilience is supported by relying on others, and also relying on oneself (Wolin and Wolin 1993, 1996; Wolin, Muller, Taylor and Wolin 1999).

Summary:

The literature review begins with an investigation of the central issues associated with social justice and environmental justices issues. Environmental justice studies are explored as they affect the entire global situation facing those concerned about and committed to remediation of the imbalances brought about by globalization of markets and market forces. The effort in this portion of the review was to make known the severity or serious nature of the problem upon which the research population of this study focuses.

The next section of the literature review focuses on the literature describing particular activists, aggregates of activists and contexts into which an understanding of the work of activists can be placed. Profiles of activists with tangential or parallel concerns and activities assist in understanding both the motivations and the sustaining factors associated with social justice and environmental justice activism. In addition to the literature profiling activists, a second aspect of this section concerned itself with understanding the motivations as well as the activities of activists.

The following section explored philosophical, sociological and historical understandings that underpin both the issues and the approaches to remedy. This section relies heavily on feminist studies. These are the studies that are responsible for bringing fresh insights and a fundamental rigor and willingness to face and name the underlying conceptual constructions that have brought forward the ecological and social justice dilemmas that the activists of this present study face. Within the broad construct of feminism and the feminist discourse, this review made an effort to disclose the fact that many feminist voices exist within this discourse. It is the feminist discourse with its disparate voices and perspectives that contributes immensely to the present study as a background for understanding. In particular, the work of Warren I have found most useful and precise in naming the issues associated with environmental and social injustices I undertake to address in this study and their potential resolutions. I especially respect and admire Warren's deep thoughtfulness and what I want to call a visceral compassion. She is a rigorous and careful thinker and she does not step back from issues.

The fourth section of this literature review concerns itself with an examination of New Social Movement Theory. Cognizance of this theory supports a clearer understanding of the present study in that I see the biospheric humanitarian as an emergent group. The New Social Movement Theory allows productive insight into how and why social movements come together. The inner dynamics of newly forming groups are also explored and named within traditional and inchoate sociological theories. Important to understanding how activists sustain themselves in committed action is insight into the dynamics of social movements

The section concerning the issues of burnout and committed action discussed the signs of burnout, its reversal and the importance of community. To work for social justice in solitude is a contradiction in terms. This section focused on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of commitment to action.

This literature review has allowed me to identify many of the threads and themes that I explore in this study. The gap that the present study fills is that of identifying a group at the grass roots that has brought together social and environmental justice concerns and who act locally with the knowledge that their actions affect the whole.

Chapter 3 Research Design

Introduction

The purpose in this chapter is to discuss the subject matter and the design of the research. I regard the present study as exploratory, one that will lead to further research projects.

Chapter Overview

Within the context of the literature review provided in the preceding chapter, I proceed with a definition and description of the term 'biospheric humanitarian', which is the subject of my case-study type research. In this same section, the case study discussion, I discuss the goals of my interviews. A discussion of the significance and relevance of my research immediately follows the section devoted to case study and interview goals. This section is followed by a discussion that concerns the selection criteria for the interviewees.

The next section of this chapter offers details and information about the research population that I have chosen for interviews. There are two sets of criteria I have developed for the research population and each interviewee. These will be discussed using both sets of criteria. In the following section of this chapter I offer an interview outline. That is, I offer an outline of the themes and questions that inform or evoke the interview narrative.

Definition, Description and Discussion of Term 'Biospheric Humanitarian'

A biospheric humanitarian is an activist or advocate who acts in fulfillment of three central values. These values are *sustainability, peace and justice*. Critical for the enactment of these values is the theory and practice of non-violence. (Fischer; Easwaran 147-174; Schell 101-233). A core understanding of non-violence is presented in the words of Mohandas K. Ghandi.

> Whenever you are in doubt…Recall the face of the poorest and the most helpless man whom you have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he be able to gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to…self-rule for the hungry and also spiritually starved? (Easwaran 148).

"He did not want India to have an army…A constabulary to deal gently with bandits and professional hooligans was the maximum violence he might countenance." (Fischer 351)).

A 'biospheric humanitarian' is a person who is actively engaged as a full-time participant in the work of remediation and amelioration that relates simultaneously to the environment and to humans. A biospheric humanitarian possesses the consciousness (awareness+committed action) that there is an inextricable relationship between humans and their natural environment. The

proper subject of my research is this biospheric humanitarian whose consciousness drives her or his commitment. The formulation of the definition is mine.

The biospheric humanitarian worker is concerned with these three issues of *sustainability, peace and justice* in their interrelationships and interdependence. *Sustainability* connotes the interaction with and use of the Earth and natural resources by present generations in such a way as to make available these resources for future generations (Capra and Spretnak; Lazslo; Hallen, Mies, and Shiva). Through sustainable practices the natural resources are preserved rather than depleted and destroyed. The Earth is protected for future generations. This protection takes place through employing the practices of sustainability as well as through modeling for and teaching the succeeding generations.

Peace is a "state of mutual harmony between people or groups; a state of tranquility or serenity". *Justice* means "to appreciate properly; equitableness" (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 1989 Edition). As understood by the biospheric humanitarian, and other seekers after social justice and peace, there is a significant interrelationship between peace and justice as here defined. In other words the state of harmony between peoples or groups can only come when the conditions of respect, appreciation, fairness and equity have been properly served and fulfilled. The biospheric humanitarian understands that this peace wrought through justice is rooted in place.

There are four main qualities that define the biospheric humanitarian. These include: 1) a conscious and deliberate choice to act on behalf of the environment, while also acting on behalf of humans; 2) an awakened and developed sense of the interrelationship that exists between humans and the Earth; 3) the ability to sustain one's self and one's faith in committed action, through the course of encountering obstacles and difficulties; 4) the recognition of the importance of localized action, as it contributes to the betterment of the whole. The formulation is mine.

The connotation of justice as proper appreciation and equity is the linchpin for the biospheric humanitarian both in theoretical understanding and in practice. This proper appreciation extends to the Earth and to peoples and other species. In this manner then is justice the fulcrum of an axis for action by the biospheric humanitarian in relationship to the Earth and to humans, as well as other species. The biospheric humanitarian is a seeker after justice. This commitment to justice is rendered on behalf of the Earth and likewise on behalf of the peoples of the Earth. This is a 'both/and' recognition that replaces an 'either/or' attitude that has contributed substantially to the current malaise of social and environmental injustice.

Because my focus is on the consciousness of the biospheric humanitarian I am interested primarily in how the practitioner thinks about and sees her or him self as an engaged and committed activist. I am only secondarily interested in the particular practice of each of the persons whom I am interviewing. In my view it is the inner attitude of concern that justice be done for the Earth and her peoples that is the most significant factor that drives the particular action or series of actions of each of my subjects. It is this attitude of concern that provides the link among the subjects of this study, as well. This sense of justice needing to be done is sufficiently compelling to create in the biospheric humanitarian a need to take action. The particular action varies from practitioner to practitioner. The actions differ and the inner consciousness is a shared phenomenon among the practitioners as a group.

The biospheric humanitarian sees justice then as the pathway to creating right relationship between the Earth or environment and the peoples of the Earth. Without justice there can be no peace. In the biospheric humanitarian's commitment to justice and the understanding of proper appreciation and equity that this commitment entails, the means for seeking justice become extremely important. Justice is sought through non-violent means. Only in this manner can proper appreciation of all parties to the interactions on behalf of remedy and amelioration take place. Non-violence constitutes the foundation for action, the means of taking action and the expression of action. Non-violence is a value, an attitude, and a means as well as an expression.

What this means effectively for the biospheric humanitarian is that s/he is versed in the understanding of the tremendous power that accrues to one who seeks justice through non-violent means. Here again this reality is known through the process of self-reflection or self-awareness, and ultimately, in committed action. In the community of non-violent practitioners the casting off of violent means is a significant commitment that can be fulfilled through practices of self-awareness as well as the practice of self-restraint. (Fischer 312). When non-violent means is the tool of choice for effective social and political action, one does not have an immediately apparent advantage that accrues to one who uses violence. Violence begets immediate and effective response. One can witness the direct and immediate results of one's violent act. This is not so with non-violent action. In the short term violence can readily win out over non-violence. Yet non-violent action does not have a downside. It does not create the repercussion of furthering the cycle of violence, at least from within the practitioner of non-violence. Any furthering of violence is at the hands of those who employ violent means for solving perceived problems.

The practice of non-violence in the pursuit of justice regularly has the effect of strengthening the will and the resolve of the practitioner. Since there is not guilt or remorse associated with non-violent practice, repeated acts of non-violence serve to clarify and purify one's intentions and one's strategies. In addition, non-violent practice assists in gaining positive attention for one's social

cause or purpose. The practice of non-violence curries scrutiny for one's cause. Non-violent means of raising consciousness about injustices attract interest over time based on the sincerity and resolve of the practitioner.

Interview subjects:

I have interviewed eight subjects. Each of these subjects has either identified her or him self or has been identified by others as a biospheric humanitarian. My intention has been to seek known biospheric humanitarians, albeit known by other names, for interview. I have known such biospheric humanitarians already exist. In my search for subjects for interview I have followed a procedure of explaining my research to certain environmentalists, teachers, authors, editors and networkers. I have then asked each of these persons to assist my research by providing names of potential research subjects.

Since I have been careful and precise in explaining my research I have accepted and respected the discovery process of locating potential research subjects by following through in interviewing each of the eight potential subjects who was brought to my attention. This has provided a very heterogeneous group of interview subjects. All of them meet the requirements for being a biospheric humanitarian.

In each of the interviews I have taped the interview and have taken some notes in addition. Often the taking of notes at the time of the interview proved to be a diversion and a distraction. In one case it proved to be an interference. I provided a time of reflection for myself at the close of each interview. This took the form of my sitting in a quiet place to review or 'play back' the whole of the interview. I made notes about items that occurred to me as important while I engaged this process.

I then transcribed the taped interview. The data is included in the chapters that follow. I have made each of the separate chapters a focus of one of the eight interviews. In other words one chapter is devoted to each interview with a subject. As a separate chapter following these eight chapters I provide an analysis and discussion of the similarities and differences that I have discovered among my research subjects. This data in the chapter that provides analysis and discussion, as well as findings, I analyze and discuss using the four components of my original definition for biospheric humanitarian. Again, the four components of the definition are:

1) a conscious and deliberate choice to act on behalf of the environment, while also acting on behalf of humans;
2) an awakened and developed sense of the interrelationship that exists between humans and the Earth;
3) the ability to sustain one's self and one's faith in committed action, through the course of encountering obstacles and difficulties;

4) the recognition of the importance of localized action, as it contributes to the betterment of the whole.

I present the data in the next eight chapters in this fashion because it provids a coherent method of organizing each chapter. It also links my analysis and findings directly with the definition and with my purpose for conducting the research. It serves to provide continuity from chapter to chapter in the discussion of my research subjects. It provides an orderly frame of reference in which I could focus on similar issues in my discussion of very different individuals from quite dissimilar backgrounds doing varied tasks and projects while expressing biospheric humanitarian concern. Lastly this structure for analysis in each of the chapters that discuss an individual research subject provides a coherent method for discussing the similarities and differences of my subjects as a group in the chapter provided for analysis and discussion. I have used the same analytical structure throughout my presentation of data and my analysis and discussion of the data.

Case Study Research Method/Goals of Interview

"Case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin 1989 13). "A case study need not reflect a complete or accurate rendition of actual events; rather, its purpose is to establish a framework for discussion" (Yin 1989 14). Rather than to have a 'complete or accurate rendition of actual events', my intention, in using a case study format with my subjects, is to be able to enter as fully as possible into their own interpretations of their own inner experiences, as they have constructed them. "The idea of acquiring an 'inside' understanding—the actors' definitions of the situation—is a powerful central concept for understanding the purpose of qualitative inquiry" (Schwandt 2000 102).

It is through the use of case study that I have been able to perform the inductive analysis of each individual subject's interview, that will then lead to my deductions concerning the issue of generalizability (Patton 55-60; Marshall and Rossman 114-117, 152-156; Yin 44-45). My use of case study allows me to explore, through interviews, questions, which can be expected to yield to appropriate content analysis (Marshall and Rossman 99).

My decision to develop this research project as an exploratory project allows me the opportunity to refine and develop this case study approach, in order to undertake further research, provided my exploration proves useful and I am able to demonstrate the element of generalizability to a much larger population.

There are three sets of goals for this study. Each set has two aspects. The first set of goals relates to the biospheric humanitarian. To discover and

understand the experience of becoming a biospheric humanitarian. How to persevere and experience the rewards of being a biospheric humanitarian. The second set of goals relates to how the biospheric humanitarian influences his/her environment. To explore the ways that interviewees are acting on behalf of the common good. To shed light on the process of social change at the grass roots. The third set of goals relates to ways in which the biospheric humanitarian influences others. To display these persons to the larger world as possible models for emulation. To discover factors that will assist in drawing ordinary people into biospheric humanitarian service.

Research Significance and Relevance

A primary purpose of my research as noted in the foregoing is to understand as thoroughly as possible the lived experience of the subjects of my study. This purpose of understanding my subjects' experience then constitutes one of my primary research goals. A closely related purpose for my research is to hold up the biospheric humanitarian to the world as a possible subject for emulation.

My research also has implications and relevance within the academic community. The subjects of my research express a leadership in their respective communities. Their leadership is validated by the way in which these biospheric humanitarians live and breathe their values. They are known for their concern for the Earth and for the members of the communities in which they live and serve. In the research concerning intellectual and moral development in which I have engaged in my new learning modules a central issue for discussion concerns the actual living of one's values. This is to say that there is considerable value in my studying the subjects and in learning about their actual lived experience and choices because this will have a potential relevance in understanding how chosen values are enacted, integrated and lived by particular individuals.

Another research benefit that is likely to accrue from my study of the subjects' inner experiences of being biospheric humanitarians is that light could be shed on the process of social change at the grass roots. The two elements of commitment and risk are important ingredients of the social change process. Insight could be gained as to how these particular biospheric humanitarians relate to risk issues and how they go about making and sustaining their commitments associated with being biospheric humanitarians.

Selection Criteria

As for sample size, Patton says: "There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry" (244). "The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size" (Patton 245).

I have chosen the path of 'purposeful sampling' discussed by Patton, with "maximum variation sampling—purposefully picking a wide range of cases to get variation on dimensions of interest" (Patton 243). In addition, following Marshall and Rossman, "a sample with the widest possible range of variation in the phenomenon, settings, or people under study" is the most useful research posture to take (55). What this means for me is that I have selected interview subjects with attention to variation along gender, age, class, culture and ethnicity. I decided on eight subjects because this will allow me a sufficient range or cross section of biospheric humanitarians given the range of variables.

I have chosen to identify potential interviewees for my eight case studies by reading local activist newsletters and magazines, Colors, for example, by contacting newspaper editors, by contacting teachers and university professors and by contacting likely community leaders, in whose networks potential interviewees might exist.

I am using two distinct sets of criteria for my subject selection. The first set of criteria addresses the question, What is a biospheric humanitarian?

While it is not required that the subjects of my inquiry call themselves 'biospheric humanitarians', each of the subjects must possess the characteristics of a 'biospheric humanitarian'. These are: 1) a conscious and deliberate choice to act on behalf of the environment, while also acting on behalf of humans; 2) an awakened and developed sense of the interrelationship that exists between humans and the Earth; 3) the ability to sustain one's self and one's faith in committed action, through the course of encountering obstacles and difficulties; 4) the recognition of the importance of localized action, as it contributes to the betterment of the whole.

The second set of criteria for subject selection relate to diversity. I have monitored my selection of biospheric humanitarians to reflect diversity in age, gender, ethnic identity and class status.

Research Population

My research population consists of eight interview subjects. Four are females and four are males. Their ages range from twenty-six years of age to fifty-six years of age. In terms of ethnic and cultural identity, two interview subjects are Caucasian, one Filipino, one Native American, two African American, one Chinese, one Pakistani/Banglasdeshi. In terms of race, two are Caucasian, two are African American, one is Native American, one is Chinese, one is Filipino or Eurasian, one Bangladeshi or East Asian. In terms of class, one is upper class, one is from the diplomatic class or upper middle, six are, by birth, from the lower classes economically. Presently, three of these six remain

in the lower economic strata and three, through educational advancement, have risen to middle class economic status.

The eight interview subjects with whom I have arranged interviews meet my research criteria as per explanation that follows. I am listing the subjects in the order in which I have contacted each and arranged for and conducted the interview. The names I have chosen to represent each interviewee is a fictitious name. The name does coincide with the actual gender of each interview subject.

Nell, a 31 year-old Caucasian female identifies herself as having an upper class background and upbringing. She is an American and a United States citizen. She first became interested in humanitarian work at twelve years of age when she spent her summer working in an orphanage in Nicaragua. She has spent a total of seven years in Central America working with two indigenous tribes in the Basawas Reserve on the border of Nicaragua and Honduras to have land titles granted them. Today she is working with indigenous Hawaiian farmers to secure agreements with United States Fish and Wildlife to allow the farmers to continue with taro farming (an indigenous, protein-rich crop used as a dietary staple along with fish for native Hawaiian peoples).

Paurice, is a fifty-one year old Caucasian male, formerly homeless, who now sees himself as a 'sacred gardener'. He is American by birth and a United States citizen. He advocates through classes and hands-on teaching sessions a return to right relationship with the Earth. His advocacy extends to urban organic farming, worm farming, creation of organic labyrinths, organic lifestyle elder care, walking in nature. He has a highly evolved sense of human dependence on the Earth and the debt of justice and integrity humans have to care properly for the Earth.

Monica is a fifty-six year old Native American female. She is a member of the Makah Tribe, a Northwest Coastal tribe. She is a retired schoolteacher in colonial (American) schools. She is a tribal elder who has led various expeditions of the concerned to care for winged and sea species that have been harmed by oil spills. She has instituted youth programs in her tribe to re-awaken Native language and cultural skills. She has taken leadership in the restoration of inter-tribal canoeing and canoe visitation. Tribes now conduct inter-tribal visitation along the Western Coast of the United States, Canada and Alaska (from Santa Barbara, California, to Alaska).

Byron is a fifty-three year old African American male who has dedicated his life to being a Peace Pilgrim. He is a United States citizen. He walks an average of twenty miles a day and has walked on four continents and seven Caribbean islands. He undertook, in the company of twenty other pilgrims, to deconstruct or reverse the damages done in the slave trade by visitation of slavery-related sites to conduct healing rituals. He conducts workshops on the human right relationship to the Earth and to each other. He has taken vows to

practice non-violence toward self, others and the Earth. He is a compendium of knowledge about the harm industrialized products cause to the Earth and to the health of organisms dependent on the Earth for survival.

Rory is a twenty-six year old native Filipino male who has spent much of his life in the Northwest of the United States. He is a committed spiritual practitioner and a community organizer. He is a spoken word performer (with focus on cultural identity and liberation). He works in the Seattle inner city with youth offenders, using graffiti art and mural art to help these youth connect with their own inner struggles. He is a passionate spokesperson for justice to the environment and to peoples of diverse cultures. He is a strict advocate of grass roots organizing, meaning that he has a unique gift of hearing others' stories and then assisting them with living their stories into liberation. He is a committed communitarian, a believer in community and community-based action.

Jamshid is a fifty-one year old Pakastani/Bangladeshi male, who is a fourth generation practitioner of Sufism. He is a community builder with a focus on deep and knowledgeable appreciation of the religious heritage of others. He leads a coalition in the State of Washington that concerns itself with the issues of hunger and homelessness. His ties to environmental practices are strong since his family has farmed for generations. He finds in his faith and his spiritual practices the respect for the Earth he teaches others. He has studied the Sufi mystic, Rumi, since his adolescence and quotes liberally from Rumi to persuade others of the sacredness of the Earth and the properly humble attitude we humans are to have relative to the Earth.

Yetta is a thirty-nine year old African American female who founded and directs a not-for-profit organization in the Central District of Seattle. The foundation is a leading agency in Seattle in matters concerning environmental justice. Yetta moved with her family from Texas when she was under five. She was reared in Seattle's Central District and made the commitment to environmental and social justice during her teens as she contemplated the stories she heard about seemingly endless injustices done to the poor and otherwise disadvantaged. Yetta is a community organizer with a fine reputation for her activism and advocacy. She is currently organizing a six-state agency collective with the purpose of gaining much greater bargaining power with governmental and funding agencies.

Serena is a forty-nine year old female who directs one of Seattle's largest foundations. She is an ethnic Chinese who is now a United States citizen. Her concerns range from environmental justice to homelessness to adequate housing to care for the Earth. She is a busy executive with a very large staff and several offices within Seattle. Her influence extends far beyond Seattle since she sits on several boards and committees in her fields of expertise and concern at the regional and national levels. She speaks several languages and is a deeply compassionate humanitarian as well.

Interviews Themes and Questions

The interviews are exploratory in nature. The purpose in the interviews is to explore the inner experience of each of my interviewees. The exploration's purpose is for me to understand the lived experience of each interviewee as a biospheric humanitarian. Because my purpose is exploratory I use a thematic interview approach rather than an interview with a set series of questions. The thematic approach involves the use of general topics that would bring significant experiences to light during the course of a particular interview.

One of the things a thematic approach accomplishes is that the subject has more openness to explore her or his own personal experience. The thematic approach creates the widest possible area for comment and reflection by the interview subject. At the same time the thematic approach is able to bring the subject back on track should the interview become sidetracked.

Two general themes inform my interviews. They take the form of two general questions. Who are you? How did you become the person you are? (How did you become what you are?)

As regards the first general question such themes as follow assist the subject in providing details of his or her lived experiences and choices.

- What person(s) influenced you early-on to take the direction you have taken?
- What events in your early life raised your awareness about the issues you now address?
- What event(s) occurred in your life to lead you to decide to become a biospheric humanitarian?
- What factors in your life inhibited you from taking the decision to fully committed service?
- What personal qualities contribute to your work as a biospheric humanitarian?

The second question (How did you become what you are?) is developed through exploring the following themes.

- How old were you when you entered fully committed service?
- What steps did you have to accomplish to enter your current role?
- What kinds of experiences get you to refine and expand your reach and effectiveness?
- How do you avoid burnout?
- What sustains you?
- What personal practices do you engage with the purpose of sustaining you in your work?
- Are you as influential as you would like to be?
- Do you expect to expand your horizon of influence?
- If 'yes', how will you do that?
- How does your work affect your personal life?

- Your loved ones?
- Why do you keep going?

Content Analysis

I have conducted a cross-analysis involving all eight interview subjects that uses the four components of the above definition as the analytical framework for the analysis. Themes or motifs are derived from this analysis that support the findings. The findings then disclose in what ways the research supports the purpose of the study; namely, to shed light on the work of active biospheric humanitarians so that other ordinary people may enter into similar work in the world through a process of emulation.

Presentation of Research Information:

I have created a profile for each of my eight subjects. This profile has been taken from the transcription of the interview conducted with each of the subjects. Each subject's interview appears as a separate chapter. I have organized each subject's chapter according to early influences on decision; how the experience has changed each subject; factors sustaining committed action; vision or plans for future. My purpose in organizing the report of each interview by using the same categories (considerations) as I have used for the cross-analysis of all eight subjects supports coherence in the development of themes.

Chapter 4 An Environmental Anthropologist

Nell is a thirty-one year old Caucasian female. At the present time she is completing a doctoral degree in environmental anthropology. She currently lives in Hawaii where she is conducting research with taro farmers who are descendants of Polynesians and native Hawaiians. She has a background of privilege in the sense that her father has been a highly successful and wealthy merchant banker. Both her parents have been active in the humanitarian and not-for-profit community.

"I remember being taken around by either my parents or my friends' parents to various places like soup kitchens." Nell was twelve years old when these visitations to soup kitchens began. These visitations were to continue through her sixteenth year. Nell discovered that she was deeply affected by the poverty and hardship she witnessed during these excursions. In her reflections she is able to connect her empathy for the poor with experiences she had in the lower grades. Nell was identified as having dyslexia and Learning Process Syndrome. These learning disorders required of Nell that she sit at the "stupid table". She was looked down upon and seen as being slow because of her difficulty with processing the lessons in the classroom. The net effect of this castigation by her peers in the primary grades is her development of empathy and an ability to identify with the other.

It may be that the learning disabilities were fortuitous because her parents were intent upon offering their only child the widest possible exposure to others' hardships. "When I was about sixteen my parents took me to Honduras and Mexico. And it seemed to me that those communities were so much more in need." There she encountered levels of poverty and hardship that were far worse than what she had seen in Seattle and its neighboring communities. She thinks about what she encountered in Honduras and Mexico as stemming from "structural problems" that cause a "culture of poverty". Nell "felt on the fringes and felt guilty for the bad things that I had seen". One of the advantages that accrued to her in her role of being on the periphery is that she "developed the behavior of observing things". It might even be said that Nell's ability to observe has set the course for her life as a biospheric humanitarian. The contributions she makes at the present time and the contributions she will make in the future stem from her developed capacity as an observer.

Upon completing high school Nell had developed the intention to study law. In the summer of her graduation from high school she spent the months working at an orphanage in Mexico. She was fascinated with Latino culture and she enjoyed her work in the orphanage. On a visit to a sister orphanage in Haiti, Father Wasson, founder of the orphanage system, took Nell to visit Cite Soliel. There she encountered men, women and children so stricken with poverty and its devastation that they wore no clothes. Their destitution caused her to weep uncontrollably.

When she entered the university after returning from her travels she set aside her plans to study law and delved into the study of Spanish and sociology. She found both her parents very supportive of this initiative. She explains that in long letters and conversations over meals she discussed her thoughts and feelings, her motivations and intentions. She had become involved in her own right. She no longer needed the support and direction of her parents; she experienced her own felt need for involvement in some form of helping others.

Her parents had already been traveling for several years to monitor their family foundation's contributions to the orphanage project in Mexico and other Central American countries. They also contributed to efforts to spread the micro-lending system in Central American countries. Micro-lending is a loan granting process of very small sums of money to mainly women of the lowest economic strata of society. Because the system is thoughtfully and carefully structured it has enjoyed successes in providing these women an opportunity to move away from deeply entrenched poverty. In addition to her parents' verbal and emotional support, they offered modeling of social awareness. Not only did Nell travel throughout Central America visiting sites where their family foundation was making contributions, she traveled with her parents to Russia. Their purpose in their several visits to Russia was also to seek opportunities to assist with social transformation. These experiences across many cultures provided Nell the opportunity to sharpen her observations. The continued conversations and interactions with her parents helped her in developing a critical view of how societies and cultures are organized. This social organization of society became the subject matter for her second undergraduate degree. Nell equipped herself to serve with the study of Spanish. Spanish "taught me an incredible love for that culture, but also an incredible amount of knowledge about what language brings to understanding other people". Her degree in sociology offered her a point of view about how cultures are organized. She took her ability to empathize and her experience of being on the fringe into her learning situations at the university. She departed the university ready to make a contribution. She next took an active role in the direction of her family foundation.

Through the course of her many experiences visiting situations of poverty, need and destitution, Nell had accumulated a solid base of eyewitness knowledge. Nell had won her father's confidence in her sound judgment. On the occasions when he had asked for her input for decisions he had to make in funding projects, she had offered thoughtful counsel. He also witnessed her dedication to the plight of others less fortunate. Her ability to identify with the other had come to the fore as a significant factor in the decisions she made in her new role as field director of her family foundation. Nell did not accept the conventional wisdom of learned circles in the developed world regarding the causes of poverty. She did not accept that the poor are somehow 'less than' others who have greater advantage. Nell spent a great deal of time in her role as field director of her family foundation traveling between Seattle and Nicaragua.

Something did not sit well with her about the fact that all the decision making occurred in Seattle while all the field experience occurred in Nicaragua. She lobbied successfully with her father to set up a foundation office in Nicaragua.

She recognized that "I have no understanding of other places' history; no understanding of other places' politics". She had observed many failed efforts by humanitarian organizations that superimposed their imported solutions onto superficially observed situations. These interventions inevitably failed. She came to the conclusion that the poor with whom she empathized and identified had knowledge about their situations that was not being called forth. They are thought to be poor "primarily because they do not know how to figure it out". Nell made two interventions into this misunderstanding once the offices for the foundation were re-located to Nicaragua. In the first place a director from Nicaragua was hired to head the operation. Once the headquarters were established, others were hired for the purpose of engaging the poor in information sessions. The understanding and experience of the poor were incorporated into the planning and strategies for alleviating their distress. Nell's second contribution was to bring community development, based in a sustainable model, into the programming of the foundation. Nell herself did the research associated with the selection of the community development program and its several components. The model she chose accentuated reliance upon the recipients of the program's offerings, rather than upon those administering the program. When the recipients were treated as trusted allies the program became, by that fact, a sustainable one.

She had come to the conclusion that sustainable community development was the strategic intervention of choice in the lives of those she had set about to assist. In addition to her own field research and her university education in Seattle, a Honduran named Elias Sanchez was a significant influence in moving Nell in the direction of choosing sustainable development as the means of choice to address issues of endemic poverty. Sanchez, now deceased, was a native Honduran who introduced both organic and terraced farming among very poor farmers in Honduras and elsewhere throughout Central America. His training was in organic farming. When he shared his knowledge of organic farming with the poorest farmers this knowledge produced no benefit. The poorest farmers worked steep hillsides; the run off of irrigation and rainwater continued even with the best farming methods. He then researched terraced farming and applied it to that locale. The run off problem was eliminated.

Sanchez knew how to involve those he wanted to help in finding a solution. Nell came to know Sanchez personally. He made his contribution to her by reinforcing what she had already observed. She had participated in the orphanage programs that offer assistance without ever addressing root causes. Sanchez was a local person who also addressed structural change. Both these qualities drew Nell to Sanchez. As a consequence of Nell's commitment to structural change she involved her family foundation in securing land title for the

indigenous peoples of the Bosawas Reserve that is located on the border of Honduras and Nicaragua. “My primary focus is that people are based in land; they are place centered. How people in those locales look at themselves and their land and their future is something that I am strongly focused on.”

She had been invited to visit the Bosawas Reserve by an anthropologist who was working there with the indigenous leaders. En route to a meeting with these indigenous leaders the two drove by miles after miles of land that had been stripped bare of pristine rain forest. Nell was informed that the European Economic Community had provided sums of money, grants-in-aid, to projects that would use the rain forest area productively. Experts arrived on site to determine, through feasibility studies, that farming was the most productive use of the land. And cattle farming was the most strategic farming in terms of return on investment. The land was stripped of all trees through a slash and burn process. Within two years this new farmland had been abandoned. The indigenous peoples who had lived for hundreds of years on that land were more than annoyed. The anthropologist was taking Nell to meet with indigenous chiefs.

Nell and her companion arrived at the meeting. She describes her encounter. “It was a meeting of all the chiefs of all the territories in the whole entire reserve. They had AK-47s that they were trying to deal with. There were about thirty of them that were fully armed, with the criss-cross of bandoleras.” They were at the meeting to learn how to protect their boundaries from these incursions by farmers. “They were trying to protect their place from all this crazy development that was going on from the influence of outsiders. Every new face that was coming into that community was threatening.”

At that meeting was yet another anthropologist who was making an effort to work with these chiefs on land tenure issues. The very idea of ownership of land made no sense to the rain forest chiefs. The chiefs present spoke many different languages. In no one of the languages was there a word for ‘ownership’. The concept was an unknown. Into this situation Nell was introduced as having knowledge of community development; her companion told the chiefs that she wanted to help them. “Well, I am here to learn about the Bosawas and the communities in the Bosawas. I am not here to tell you what needs to happen.” Her message drew “blank stares”. They could no better understand an outside expert who wanted to listen and learn than they could comprehend the ownership of land. “I don’t know what has to happen for things to be better for you. You guys are the ones that know that stuff. I’m here to learn from you and walk along side you and try to help you achieve those things that you are interested in.”

One of the outcomes of this meeting was Nell’s decision to invest her family foundation’s money in the work of securing land tenure for these indigenous peoples. The program has been so successful that Nell’s family

foundation has been selected in Nicaragua to lead another community development program that teaches mothers of neonatal infants how to care for these infants in terms of breast feeding, touch, and the introduction of proper nutrition. This new program extends throughout the entire country of Nicaragua. Nell's vision of community development now encompasses an entire nation in Central America.

The connection of people to their land is the organizing principle in Nell's biospheric humanitarian vision. She has come to this understanding through a series of experiences that inevitably take her back to recognizing that people know what is best for them. Even very poor people know what is useful and beneficial. Assistance in Nell's view takes the form that she learned from Elias Sanchez. Assistance means that one has the willingness to enter into the lived experience of the one who is being offered the assistance. Sanchez rigorously adhered to the rule of looking people in the eye. Without that essential human contact nothing good can come from the offer of assistance, in his estimation. Other kinds of assistance were merely hidden forms of domination. Nell is firm in her conviction that Sanchez understood an essential characteristic of good community development. She is also aware that her involvement means that she grows and develops and learns from those to whom she offers assistance. Nell uses her extensive travels and field research from Central America, Russia, and the Northwest of the United States and Hawaii to offer comparative studies as proposals for community development projects in Nicaragua. She has found that her field experiences from different places often reinforce the place-based knowledge of people who have never moved from their original home sites.

"I focus on communities that have lived in a place for a long period of time, and have many generations that they can trace back to that place. My philosophy is more based on how place is critical to survival. What people know about their environment is critical to how they are able to live off their environment." This includes doing what she and others to whom she consults can do to assure that people have the rights to utilize their environment. "Sustainability of a place is important." The sustainability allows for a second kind of sustainability, sustainability of family, community, culture group, extended to include an entire bio-region. It is this interrelationship of people with their land that defines Nell's contribution to biospheric humanitarianism. In her focus on understanding, supporting, recognizing and acting on behalf of the relationship of people to their land Nell brings together the issues of social justice and environmental justice that are central to biospheric humanitarian concern. The element of economics also is an important piece of this puzzle of opening the way for people to have rights to their land. "Ownership in a place is important." Economic viability is the mediating factor between people and land. Without the economic means, those who are most at the whim of advancing marketization, the very poor, will simply be driven off their land in the wake of advancing industrialized farming, for example.

In 1997, Nell departed Central America as her base of operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. She had been doing field research among very poor villagers concerning the economic reasons that they harvest resources. When do they decide to harvest natural resources and what is the timing involved? Nell found that the timing of her research among these people was adding insult to the injury they had sustained in the wake of the hurricane. She took a respite from her research to meet her parents in Hawaii. While on the Island of Kauai she happened across sign posted at an overlook of Mount Hanalei. The sign told the story of how the taro farmers, descendants of native Hawaiian and Polynesian peoples, provide critical habitat for many species of endangered water birds. "Aside from all the experiences that I have had in Latin America, that is really fascinating that humans, through an economic activity, are providing habitat for birds that are endangered. Species that are endangered." She found it strange that she had happened upon an instance in which economic activity by humans helped preserve the natural environment. She found the success of the endeavor amazing and decided to study the phenomenon as environmental anthropological research.

The conventional wisdom, even in her research in graduate school, had held that there is an inverse relationship between economic activity and environmental degradation. The more successful the economic activity the more damage that is done to the environment. Economic activity was seen as not beneficial for the environment. What especially appealed to her was the fact that the economic outcome of the taro farming produced good profits. The taro root, as a staple (with fish) in the diet of indigenous Hawaiians and Polynesians minimizes the risk to heart disease, diabetes and hypertension that result from diets high in fat, sugar, salt and processed foods. In addition to these benefits, the taro farmers acted as environmental managers at the same time.

The taro root is farmed in water ponds called loiis. This root was introduced into Hawaii by the Polynesians. It was unknown to native Hawaiians. To produce the wetlands conducive to taro root the Polynesians destroyed the dry forests. This caused the extinction of the birds of the dry forest. The development of the loiis for growing taro resulted in an explosion of the populations of water birds that are now threatened with extinction. When a great number of loiis were developed by the Polynesians the water birds that had previously migrated began to establish permanent colonies on Kauai. They built nests on the banks of the loiis. What the Polynesians came to discover is that the loiis are ecological units: they are self-contained ecological areas that contain reserves of fish, crustaceans, snails, bugs, worms and other plants.

These loiis provide habitat for a wide array of species. At harvest time, churning is the method for harvesting the taro root. The bugs, worms and snails are churned up. These are food for the endangered water birds, the coots, galonyuls, stilts and ducks. In addition to food these ecological systems of loiis provide nesting grounds for the water birds and also provide cover from

predators. The taro plant provides material that many of the birds use in building their nests. The bird guano that is dropped into the loiis serves to fix nitrogen in the soil, thereby enriching the soil. There is also direct interaction between the native Hawaiian and Polynesian farmers and the birds. The farmers and the birds have befriended each other and look out for each other. At times, Nell has observed farmers replacing chicks in nests when they have fallen into the water. This is an example of co-evolution, in Nell's terminology. The birds, the habitat and the farmers, are all co-evolving together. The farmers help the birds and the birds provide benefit to the farmers, as well.

The native Hawaiian farmers and the Polynesian farmers exchange knowledge among themselves, as well. Nell observes that ethnicity is not a key to knowledge exchange, at least in this situation. The farmers have accepted her and respect the contributions she makes to their knowledge. This contribution comes mainly in the form of the many questions and hypothetical situations she proposes for them as a function of the research that she is doing with them concerning their farming practices and the sustainable economic and ecological benefits that are derived from the expertise they contribute. She also contributes through connections she makes for them with the world beyond their loiis. As place-based peoples they remain close to their land and their ponds.

Nell is far along in the process of carving out a particular niche of expertise for herself. There are three components to her field of expertise. "Demonstrating how much people know to other people that don't think that they know very much." This demonstrates that these place-based people are authoritative and "they are the ones that should be in control of a lot of decisions". This is a very decentralized focus that supports "the self determination by locals of how their future should be spent". The foundation for the three aspects of this understanding is that people have a right to their land and the right to use the land for their benefit and the benefit of their families. Nell intends to take this knowledge that she has acquired and accumulated into the university at the completion of her doctoral studies. She sees herself as a mentor to young people in bringing them "to respect what's going on outside academia". She also see herself making contributions to foundations that are engaged in the work of implementing social justice and environmental justice through the means of sustainable community development. In her research with the taro farmers she has gained first-hand knowledge of an economic model that works for the farmers and works, as well, for the environment. These particular farmers offer additional lessons in co-evolution with other species. In her present and future work she exemplifies the biospheric humanitarian endeavor.

Chapter 5 A Sacred Gardener

Paurice is a fifty-one year old Caucasian male who is a former drug addict and homeless person. I interviewed him in Gresham, Oregon, on the site of his organic garden and garden labyrinth on April 9, 2003. He is an inspired story teller and one who is dramatically immersed in the greening of the Earth, that is, the return to right relationship with Nature.

Today Paurice calls himself a sacred gardener. He is an organic gardener but the term 'sacred gardener' connotes more than organic gardener. Paurice works directly with the nature spirits as he tills the rows, plants, weeds, waters and cultivates the gardens in his care. The nature spirits are plant *devas* and *elementals* that are the unseen energy components of all living as well as all inanimate things. These beings are directly associated with the plants, trees, vegetables, berries and fruits that grow under Paurice's watchful eye. In his view, sacred gardening is his calling. To know the spiritual source of the fruits and vegetables is to enter into a reality that is not accessible otherwise. This reality he describes as Eden. His goal and mission is to return the planet to being the Garden of Eden.

Life has not always been sacred for Paurice. In his teens and early twenties he was a drug addict. He did not think of himself as a drug addict. It was simply a lifestyle he lived that provided some meaning and a modicum of contentment. Paurice, along with his other siblings, had suffered physical and emotional abuse at the hands of an alcoholic father. Substance abuse was a normal part of his home life. The abuse that was meted out to him by his father was the context in which Paurice placed his own substance abuse practice. While he knew it was not the best thing, he had no good reason to question his lifestyle and life choices, until one day while he was water skiing on the Columbia River near Portland. It was a fine summer day with temperatures at 105 degrees. Paurice had been drinking "a little bit". "We were out water skiing and I fell and landed and just about broke my neck." Even with the self-prescribed anesthesia in his system, Paurice was hurt. "My whole right side of my body went numb." The injury did not respond to his own efforts at self healing. He continued in pain, a pain so severe that it forced him to seek the assistance of a chiropractor. The chiropractor took x-rays and diagnosed the injury. He recommended that Paurice first receive massage treatments before he could help with the injury.

Paurice arrived for his first massage treatment. The masseuse "ended up being this beautiful woman that was from Hawaii". She helped him with the healing of his back. She also became his first mentor in a life transition that he made at that time. The masseuse, whose name was Heather, suggested to Paurice that he begin eating organic food. The very concept of organic food was foreign to him. In order to demonstrate to him the value of eating pesticide-free food, Heather took Paurice to visit an eighty-two year old woman. Heather had

become a live-in attendant for this woman. Heather had come to consider the older woman her grandmother. The grandmother told her story to Paurice. "She had been told that she was going to die in bed, because she couldn't get up or anything." Heather had moved in with this woman and had begun massaging her and preparing macrobiotic meals for her. She also gave her time and attention. Heather "got her out of bed in six months". "It amazed me, really. The lady was basically telling me herself. So I knew it was true, because that is what she believed. And that's basically what got me going down the road, was when I saw that."

Paurice began using organic foods after his visit with Heather's adopted grandmother. What was the key to what Heather had provided to him? "There was so much respect between the two. Heather really saw this woman as her grandma." Once Paurice began to eat organic fruits and vegetables he began to pay a different kind of attention to his drug use. He was making an effort to become conscious about his diet and, at the same time, he continued with his use of cocaine. "But it was more of a side thing. Then one day a light bulb went on because I just threw it (the cocaine) out the window. And that was the end of it." Heather did not come to play the role of companion for Paurice that he had desired. She left the Portland area and traveled to Greece about the time he relinquished his need for cocaine. Some months later she returned with a gift for him. The gift was a book entitled, The Nature of Personal Realities. "It was a book about you create your own reality through your perceptions and your choices." It was this book, rather than Heather, that now became a companion for Paurice. This book had a marked influence on Paurice's thinking; it maintained that each person creates her/his own reality. "It's your choice what channel you are on. You know what channel you are going to watch? How are you participating in this? It isn't just you are watching something. It is actually what you are and this is it." The fact that one is so influenced and shaped by what one chooses to think, feel and do came as a shock and a surprise to Paurice. He used this shock to good effect in that he began to incorporate the lessons of this book into his everyday awareness. He began to recognize that the element that was missing from his life, a deep trust and respect that he sought from others and wanted to offer others, was missing as a consequence of his focus. He was focusing on mistrust and suspicion and this very focus revealed cause for suspicion and mistrust to arise in his dealings and associations with others.

Paurice met and married a woman named Joanne. The next step in Paurice's healing came when Joanne, his wife, became pregnant. The book from Heather had so influenced Paurice that he wanted to incorporate the best possible conditions for the developing fetus. He encouraged Joanne to join in the dietary changes, with mixed results. The couple, in preparation for the birth of their child, found a house to rent that had a space in the yard that could become a garden. When the couple moved into the house two women who also embraced an organic lifestyle joined them. The two women assisted Paurice

with the organic gardening while his wife worked as a technical support person with computers. The time now approached for their child to be born. Paurice was present at the birth of his child. In the months leading to this moment of birth, one of Paurice's friends had told him that at the moment of birth a message comes as well. He was counseled to attend to hearing or receiving this message. Paurice remembered to ask for the message as the moment of birth drew near.

Paurice described the intense moments immediately prior to the birth. Because it was a home birth he was very involved. The midwife in the minutes immediately prior to the birth had Joanne move from the bed to a squatting position on the floor. In order to offer support, Paurice was positioned directly behind her and held her. Joanne seized Paurice's head and held it so intensely that he could barely function. "Then they got her back on the bed and all of a sudden Patrick was in my hands. It was real pure energy that I felt with him." He also received the message that he had been alerted to seek. "The love that you will have for this child, to share that same love with every person you come into contact with." He thought to himself at the time: "Geez, that seems a little expanded to even think of it. That's why I knew it was a message because it was a very expanded thought of loving this person." He wondered if he could come to love everyone as much as he was going to love this person since "I already knew that I was going to love this person a lot".

This message has become Paurice's *monitum*, an instruction by which he guides his life. "Never had a clue how much that meant by trying to love everyone else the same way. It took me many years to get there." Through these many years of trying and failing to love others the way that he loves his son Paurice came to discover that "the biggest challenge was me, loving myself as much as that person". The benefit of dwelling at some length on the birth of Paurice's son is that this birth event was the moment that Paurice's life came together in a new way. He took the message to heart that had come to him at the moment his son was born. In addition to the message he heard he also began to realize and trust in this innate capacity to hear such messages. This time then was the time that Paurice began to focus on and develop his intuition.

He tells the story about an interaction he had with his new baby. Joanne and Paurice had decided that Paurice would remain at home to be the principle caretaker for their infant son. Joanne was a technical resource person who was better equipped to provide financially for her family. Paurice was more inclined to be the emotional support person and caretaker for their son. Paurice learned his new role by trial and error. "The first week actually went pretty good." Then he hit a snag. On about the tenth day of his newly adopted role, Paurice had done all the right things by his son. He had fed him, bathed him and put him down for a nap. Paurice was preocccupied with the household chores of washing dishes and doing laundry. His infant son began to cry uncontrollably. The crying turned to wailing. Nothing that Paurice could do or think to do abated the crying of his

son. He did not know what to do. "You cannot talk to a little baby that's six months old and have him answer what's wrong."

"So I'm sitting there, just asking him what's going on? I don't get it. Could you just give me a clue?" At the moment of his asking he got a strong feeling to stop what he had been doing and simply sit down and hold his child. "Just sit down and hold me is what he was saying." Paurice made the decision to stop doing the chores and to sit to give his undivided attention to his son. He was even willing to sit with Patrick for as long as it took to comfort him. The infant immediately fell asleep. "It was almost like my feminine intuition was opened up right then." He believes that the purpose and underlying reason for his role as the primary caregiver of his son was to support the opening of his intuition. (This does not discount the authentic relationship he created and still maintains with his son who is now a young adult.) The opening of his intuition is important for his role as a sacred gardener. In this role he works directly with the nature spirits. In addition he is charged with the challenge of teaching other humans the ways of relating to these unseen beings.

The most immediate way in which his opened intuition served him is that he had now become attuned to inner guidance. This inner guidance came to Paurice in the form of hearing. He could hear messages be spoken to him within himself. The nature spirits and elementals were offering him an on-going set of instructions related to organic gardening. He was advised, for example, that it is not beneficial to grow organic crops in the vicinity of crops that are being sprayed with pesticides and herbicides. He was given repeated messages about growing crops about which he knew nothing. Along with that message came the assurance that he would be offered the assistance and instruction from the unseen realms. Some of the instruction began to make sense because it related to the information he used in prior times when he was cultivating marijuana. The use of bone meal and the use of worm castings were applied to the growing of organic vegetables, berries and fruits with results that Paurice found staggering. In a ten-foot square plot he was able to grow enough vegetables in a single season to provide food for several families. He had now become an organic gardener.

At this point a new teacher entered his life. His name was Bob Buss and he was a professional worm farmer. Paurice had been content with purchasing worm castings in the past. Bob Buss had a theory. "Befriend the worms. Make them your friends and feed them really well and then they will take care of you." Buss taught Paurice how to better fix nitrogen in the soil by developing one's own worm castings. By feeding the worms well Buss meant to provide food for the worms that they can digest. Worms cannot eat anything whole. Worms are very much like an intestine; food has to be given to them in a form that allows them to digest it. An example that Paurice used was the 500 bales of hay that a neighbor farmer had offered gratis on the condition that he would haul it away from the man's farm. The hay had gotten moisture and had begun to rot. The hay had

taken a semi-liquid form as it rotted. This was a perfect condition for the worms. Paurice spread the hay over a large area. Within twelve months the worms had transformed the rotting hay into a rich topsoil. Paurice had found a way to provide healthy food for his new family. This discovery had taken him back into a connected relationship with the earth.

Once Paurice's son Patrick grew old enough to walk, he son began to spend time with Paurice in the garden. This fact of his son's presence began to transform again the way that Paurice thought about gardening. Paurice turned gardening into play in order to accommodate his son's presence. He had been working on raised beds in the garden. These raised beds now took the form of letters. He spelled the word L-O-V-E in raised beds and grew vegetables and legumes in that shape. Later he added YOURSELF to the garden in raised beds. Paurice's reputation as a gardener grew when he reported at a church meeting that he had designed a garden of raised beds in the form of Love Yourself. The senior pastor at the church visited the garden and told others of her visit. After about two years of growing the garden in that configuration he heard a voice tell him that he could again change the configuration. Initially he reacted to the message as if it were an imperative. He resisted the communication and struggled within himself about not wanting to do it. He had to do something because the weeds had taken over the garden, since he had gone back to work as a rock mason. Eventually he relented and changed the shape of the raised beds into a four-directional configuration. Coincidental with his decision was his receiving a contract for a job that allowed trucks of stone to be brought to the garden site. He now had the means to construct the four-directional garden with the stones placed as walls for the raised beds.

Paurice's brother brought a visitor to this garden. The visitor happened to have been a CEO in a large construction company. The visitor was someone who commanded respect from Paurice for his prior accomplishments in the world. This man had left his job and was now hitch hiking around the country. The man had come to see the garden. When the two arrived Paurice was eating a Walla Walla onion right from the garden. The visitor had to try an onion for himself. The sweetness and the taste of the onion dazzled him. The man became a convert. He stayed to assist in the construction of the garden. He eventually learned all that Paurice had to teach him about organics, worm farming and fixing nitrogen in the soil, as examples. He purchased his own organic farm. Paurice was able to learn in this exchange that a man with impressive credentials in the world was eager to learn from the knowledge that Paurice had acquired. This interaction became an important builder of self-confidence for Paurice. He had now become a teacher.

Paurice's newly discovered self-confidence propelled him to take his next steps as a gardener. He began to cultivate medicinal herbs and to harvest seeds, as well. His own growing edge involved learning about infinity gardening. Infinity gardening means that seeds are harvested and stored in safe, dry places.

These seeds are the bounty that provides the next spring's garden. Infinity gardening attends to the most significant variables of gardening such as building and replenishing the soils through composting. Crops are grown that work well in each other's vicinity. Worm farming occupies a portion of the time and strategy in infinity gardening. Another important aspect of infinity gardening is to hold in mind the purpose of the gardening. In one sense this purpose is to produce crops for human consumption; to feed the bodies of humans and other species. Infinity gardening takes note of the transactions that occur in the process that begins with the planting of the seed. The seed is planted in rich soil and watered sufficiently. The energy and heat of the sun transform the seed into a plant. The plant grows, matures and is harvested. The plant is then consumed by a human. The infinity attends to the transaction associated with the sunlight.

The sunlight enters the seed. It energizes the seed. Next, in the process of photosynthesis, the sunlight is transformed into plant material. Once the plant is harvested and consumed by a human the sunlight enters the physical body of that person and gives the energy for sustenance. It is the energy of the sun transformed into a digestible form that the human consumes. With this type of awareness being brought to Paurice's gardening he was becoming, by steps, the sacred gardener. The steps continue. "That's when all this stuff started happening with the plants, where they started talking to me." He began to experience the plant *devas* as little blue lights. They spoke with him, offering him messages about more abundant ways to garden. He also learned to enter into rapport with a certain tree on the property where he lived and gardened. What was required of Paurice is that he clear his mind of the incessant chatter that usually occupied him. "The tree was telling me 'we don't try to be different than what we are. That's why, when you come to sit with us, you get to know who you are better. We support you to be'." Paurice related a tender story about how a tiny blue light had asked him to approach him and pick him up. Paurice was frightened initially. The blue light persisted. Paurice asked that the light identify itself. "I'm a *deva* (a plant spirit)." Eventually Paurice extended his hand. The plant spirit stood on his hand. A conversation ensued; when the conversation ended the *deva* disappeared.

It helped Paurice to accept that what had happened with the little plant spirit was real that he was reading the Perelandra Gardening Workbook around the time that this event occurred. The book confirmed his experience in that it described a scene similar to what he had experienced. The book held out the view and the expectation that such events could become commonplace in the life of one who is open to such close association with the nature spirits. The book served to reinforce Paurice's experience and also brought relief. Now that his experience had been validated for him, he accepted that it had actually occurred. About the experience with the *deva* he exclaimed: "It was like I was being myself more than I had ever been, just for that twenty minutes".

His work with the *devas* progressed from that time forward. It came to pass that he found himself no longer dialoguing with the *devas.* What had happened is that he had come to the place with them that dialogue was no longer necessary. They now worked together in cocert. He was aware of their presence and their assistance. Another similar experience with the tree *devas* occurred when Paurice was walking in an orchard. He could hear a thunderous applause and could see no people. Because he could see no people he dismissed the applause as being a product of his imagination. The morning following this experience, his telephone rang. A psychic woman friend told him she had a message for him. The message he heard on the telephone was "the clapping and the cheering you heard was real". The tree spirit was speaking to Paurice through the psychic. The *deva* explained the reason for their cheering and applause. Paurice had performed a series of loving acts that had brought some discord to an end. The *devas* were acknowledging him as a way of supporting him and recognizing his good works. That *deva* further explained to Paurice that he would be teaching others to take the kind of action he had taken in bringing the discord to an end. Paurice was shown how to take experiences such as hatred and discord and transform them into loving experiences. He recognized that his primary way of creating loving experiences was through his gardening. The gardening allows him to enter altered states of consciousness, what he identifies as the "fourth dimension".

What happens for Paurice that he references as the fourth dimension is that after some time in nature, working in the garden, eating only food from the garden "all of a sudden, all the flowers g(e)t real bright. And all the birds and everything start landing all around us." These experiences describe how he has opened himself into a deep intimacy with nature, plants, animals and the spirits of nature. He hastens to add that this comes to him in a natural way and yet it is a discipline at the same time. Whenever he comes to this state of union with nature he somehow gets tempted to accept a job that pays money. As soon as he does this his heightened experience evaporates. He leaves the state of heightened awareness in exchange for something easier.

The best way he has found to extend these heightened experiences for himself is to share them with others. He does this by teaching. As an example, Paurice accepted a position in an elder care facility in Portland. Soon enough he was getting the bedridden residents out for walks and wheel chair strolls around the garden he was planting. He invited the residents fit for such activity to join him in working and weeding the garden. Next he introduced the produce from the garden into their diets. He then added movement classes to the offerings at the facility. He found himself soon engaged in chores and tasks of one sort or another that accumulated into a rather intense work schedule. He was able to do this, he explains, because he was only doing the things that he loved. He was not asking others to do anything that he did not want to do himself. He had set out to actually live his life with these residents. The way that he accomplished his objective was to get the residents involved in a much more active lifestyle.

He had learned this practice from Heather and the eighty-two year old woman that Heather had adopted as her grandmother.

More gardening is on the horizon for Paurice. He is working on a project called Eduen. It means getting 'you' back into the Garden of Eden. He has learned his lessons from the nature spirits. He is now expanding his role as teacher. The Garden of Eden Project is the work of many hands. Recently, Paurice has made contact with a group of young, ethnically diverse men and women who consider themselves a tribe. They live in south central Oregon and number about 250 members. They are loosely knit organizationally and reach consensus around the issues of living an Earth-friendly existence. They are known as Indigos, a designation that describes an etheric energy that they are each said to possess. They are drawn to Paurice because of the clarity of his understanding about how to relate to the Earth. Several of the leaders of this group have begun to plan with Paurice how they will be integrated into the Garden of Eden Project. Music is a passion of theirs. Gardening organically and learning to work directly with the nature spirits is something they have already begun to learn from Paurice.

Paurice is the head gardener on a thirty-two acre Gresham, Oregon organic farm. One of the features of that farm is a labyrinth that is designed for meditative walks. The rows between the walking paths are all planted with a variety of vegetables, herbs, medicinal plants, and spice bearing bushes. Paurice encourages those who come to the farm to walk the labyrinth to pick leaves from the various plants while winding their way in and out of the labyrinth. Eating while walking is one of the ways to expand the spiritual benefits one receives from walking the labyrinth according to Paurice.

On the day before my interview with Paurice at the farm, the farm's owner had received a license from the City of Gresham that would allow him to expand the operations at the farm. The City of Gresham also offered grants-in-aid and loan backing so that the expanded organic farm could be realized. The officials at the city emphasized that they understand the benefits of having green industry within their city limits. As these plans unfold it is likely that Paurice will become better known in the mainstream. He has operated at the periphery of society nearly his entire life. Through the years in which he has evolved from an outlaw to a sacred gardener he has grown in compassion and understanding about some of the reasons others make the choices they make relative to eating harmful foods and drinking harmful drink. Paurice has found his way into the practices of gentleness and compassion. When he is working in his garden others sense and see a radiance and a blissful presence. It is this gift that he has become willing to share with an ever growing circle of visitors who come to learn from him.

He always emphasizes that he is merely an instrument. He proclaims that it is the worms and the nature spirits who do all the work. He is just there to help.

Chapter 6 A Tribal Elder

Monica is a fifty-six year old Native American woman. She is a member of the Makah tribe and an elder in her tribal council. She retired recently from public school teaching after twenty-nine years in the classroom. She has two offspring. Her thirty-one year old daughter has two children of her own. The daughter lives near Monica, in a neighboring village. Monica's son is twenty-one years old and is currently attending a Native University in Polson, Montana. I interviewed Monica at Neah Bay, Washington. Neah Bay is the village that serves as the seat or center of the tribal affairs for the Makah Nation. Neah Bay is the northernmost tip of the continental United States. The site lies at the point where Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean meet. The interview took place on April 12, 2003.

When I arrived at Neah Bay for the interview with Monica, I found my way to the market where I was to telephone her at her home. I made the call and Monica arrived a few minutes later to greet me and welcome me to Neah Bay. We sat at a table in the deli of the market while Monica said a few words of welcome to me. She is a reserved person and very soft spoken. She was taking this time so that I would feel welcomed into her people's land. She explained that her people, the Makah, have been known for centuries as diplomats. Cordiality is an important value to her people. When Monica completed this ritual of welcome, she agreed that it would be good for us to conduct the interview in her home. While this arrangement of meeting place had been made at the time that I arranged the interview some weeks before, Monica brought the matter up for discussion again. A mutual friend, a prominent local environmentalist, had arranged for me to meet Monica. It helped that I had brought along with me a scrapbook of his depicting several scenes in which Monica had led youth in clean-up programs of oil spills along the coast. Tankers apparently frequently spill vast amounts of crude on the sea. The spills are anathema to the sea creatures and the birds. Monica regularly leads work parties that rescue as many creatures as possible, as time is a critical factor.

Once Monica felt comfortable in having me into her home, we departed the market. As we stepped outside into the parking lot an eagle appeared overhead. The eagle was so close that it appeared rather imposing to me. Monica began to speak in her own tongue to the eagle. It was clear to me that the two, Monica and the eagle, were in conversation with each other. As far as I was able to discern, they clearly understood each other. The interaction between the two was brief and yet it apparently had a purpose. Once we had arrived at her home and I began to make preparation for the interview, Monica informed me that the eagle's presence at the precise moment that it had appeared was a positive sign to her that the interview was a beneficial thing for her to do. Monica had also observed while we were still in the market that I had been noticed and observed by clerks, employees and others, from the time that I had entered the village, since I was an outsider. The tone of the information she gave me in

these brief interactions was that I was being carefully scrutinized and that a decision had been made that I was a safe person.

The cultural divide that had to be straddled for this interview became apparent in Monica's reply to my first question. I asked: "Who are you to you?" Monica replied: "I just turned fifty-six, which begins to tell you something right away". I was an outsider to what that remark intimated. As I was able to discern in the moments that passed, Monica was telling me that she was now a tribal elder. Whether fifty-six is a decisive watershed point she did not make clear. It was clear that she had willingly become a guiding presence for her people. She confirmed for me that tribal eldership does not necessarily come with age. One has to come to a certain chronological age to become an elder. The age, by itself, guarantees nothing. She did not speak directly to me about the trust and confidence that had been placed in her by her community. This self-effacing quality permeated the entire interview. Monica consistently understated her importance. She is a tribal person; she takes her identity as a Makah very seriously. She is proud to be a Makah and upholds the values of her people. She does not place importance on her individual identity. There was an agreeable and compelling quality associated with Monica's self-effacing characteristics. In addition, these same qualities presented a challenge in conducting the interview, at least at the beginning. Monica naturally found her place within the whole; her attitude and composure in this regard were refreshing qualities.

Monica asserted that she was influenced by the sixties' efforts at raising awareness about many things: Vietnam, the environment, consciousness raising about social justice issues. It is her community that ultimately influenced her to become the person that she has become. "I think that my community and the members of my community did much more to help me become all the kinds of person that I am today. The influence of the elders, the influence of my aunts and uncles, because uncles and aunts played a huge role in our lives when we were young." In stating that she had become 'all the kinds of person that I am today', Monica distinguishes herself as a multi-faceted person. During our initial telephone conversation Monica had identified herself to me as a 'bread maker'. She also remarked that she is a 'berry picker'; when others need berries she is called upon. These are service roles in which a tribal member who has the ability or the inclination gives her/him self role in service to others. This is not done on the basis of monetary exchange. One gives one self in service; the reward is in the act of giving.

When I suggested to her that our mutual contact had identified her to me as a biospheric humanitarian she remembered the incidents where she has led work parties to clean birds and other creatures of the oil from the tanker spills. In other words, biospheric humanitarian meant a specific function that she is called to play even though she had not heard the term. As the interview unfolded it became clear that there are numerous ways in which she qualifies as a

biospheric humanitarian. Love and respect for the Earth and all species is her religion. She is also a member of a Presbyterian Church and views her participation in church much more as a garment she wears, whereas her essence is her religion associated with her responsibility to protect and steward the environment. Her participation in life is very Earth-based. She has a university education and has been a public school teacher, yet these are roles like other roles. The signficance they have for her is peripheral to her main identity and concerns. As a high school teacher she had the opportunity, overt and conscious, to use appropriate occasions to begin the process of restoring native teachings about respect for the environment. She is a traditionalist in the sense that she grieves the loss of her native culture. She laments the fact that she does not speak Makah as a first language. She has only learned her native tongue over the years of her adolescent and adult life. She is also a traditionalist in the sense that she is aware that the loss caused great harm to the Earth. Thusly is she involved in the movement for a complete restoration of her native Makah culture. Language is a critical element in this restoration. In her native language is embedded the respect and direct relationship with the environment. Both her son and daughter speak Makah. Both are involved in native cultural endeavors.

Monica has used her education in the superimposed European cultural system as a vehicle to spread her awareness about environmental calamity. She seizes every opportunity to teach others about how the environment suffers. As a tribal member she chafes under the legacy of oppression that has come to her people through this imposition of European culture. Her strong refuge has been her community. “The community being the Neah Bay community, for starters. And I would have to say other Indian communities as well. Because I would go and stay with my Aunt Laverne, down in Lower Elwah, at times, for Christmas or spring breaks.” It was the traditional activities that captured her imagination. “When you watch people go out in their canoes, without a gas-powered engine, and you watch them come back in, and you watch them clean their fish, and you watch them take the guts that they aren’t using, have no use for, and you feed them to the birds, that’s such a wonderfully example, right off the bat, from the very use of taking care of your environment and yourself.” After the fish are cleaned they are then dried. The catch is then disbursed throughout the community. It is this “wealth” that is spread “to other people in the community”. “All of us are like that. If anyone has a fish, they share it. We used to see a lot of the old people, when they would finish whatever they were eating, they would throw it out to the animals. So this did a couple of things. Number one, it fed the animals. And number two, it did not leave any garbage. So I still try to practice that as much as I can.”

The principle involved is that the fish belongs not to oneself. It belongs to the community. “It’s like I told you earlier, somebody got all the halibut, and now it’s my brother’s job to filet it out and bring it to the seniors. And in my own freezer I have all kinds of fish, but myself, I am a berry picker.” Monica extended

her explanation of the principle involving the fish that belongs to the entire community to include the entire life of the community. "And it's not only a culture of sharing, but its making sure that your environment is taken care of as well. It's an exchanging of energy." Monica emphasized that this understanding of how her culture of sharing works is not specific to her. "That's just the way it is here."

Her focus on the environment permeated the entire portion of the conversation. "You're not abusing your environment. There's a mutuality that's going on, and that's going on between you and the animal lives in just about all things. Like my brothers: they filet out a lot of fish. And they smoke a lot of fish. Any scraps that they have they feed to the crows. A crow could not go out and get a halibut because the halibut would be too large." The human does have the ability to fish for halibut. When the human shares with the crow the crow is sustained. In this way the environment is sustained because the environment receives from the human in a manner that supports the environment. It is in this way that the energy exchange takes place. Clam digging served as another example. Monica referred to her brother, Hotshot. Before he sets out to dig clams he knows what kind of clam he wants and digs only for that clam. He leaves other types of clams for those who come after him. Hotshot also spends time gathering seafood for the elders in the community. Monica has used her brothers as examples in her work with high school students. Both her brothers are known in the Neah Bay community and both serve as examples of ones living the traditional ways. Monica has encouraged her students to follow in the footsteps of her siblings in their concern for and care for the elderly of the community. She further encourages her students to eat in the traditional ways so as to avoid the diseases associated with processed foods.

In describing the traditional ways that her brothers follow, Monica contrasted these traditional ways to what she called "parasitic" ways. "I think this country in many, many ways has been parasitic. You can see it being parasitic when it takes and uses." At this point Monica discussed an issue that is the source of a deep grief for her. In the first place the Europeans came and drove the indigenous peoples from the land. There was an ostensible effort to eliminate all these peoples through practices of genocide. When this failed, the Indians were relegated to reservations. At the time of this enforced containment it was not recognized, nor could it have been known, that these reservation lands contained valuable resources. Now that these resources have been identified they are again being taken. "You go to any reservation you are aware of it, because of the resources any reservation has." This becomes most obvious "if you go to where the strip mining is going on". The farmland is being changed through use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. "It's going to take a long time" to restore balance to the land. The problems do not end there. "And probably dearest to my heart is the nuclear waste that they have stockpiled underneath the land. That, to me, is one of the greater things that we do. We've taken and used that nuclear power for what we've wanted. That's certainly the parasitic side of it." No care has been exercised relative to "what is going to

happen to the land as a result, even way past my grandchildren. We should be concerned about that."

Monica has her own understanding as to how and why this parasitic attitude occurs in the first place and how it thrives. "Number one, there is nothing in their world that is an indicator to them of the magnificence of nature. If they go to Central Park, that might be some clue. Might be a small clue as to what is possible. But constantly keeping your mind busy, keeping your body busy and overloading your senses is not the natural way that a person should be, optimally." Her recommendations include spending some time alone, spending time with nature for rejuvenation. She regards this as necessary. "How can you connect with God? You just cannot connect with God. You can't hear his whispers." Monica advocated for bringing New Yorkers, Chicagoans and Seattlites into the natural pristine areas. She is certain that an experience of God and reverence for nature could occur by the fact of spending time in nature. "The presence of God is everywhere here. There is no place that you can't look. Just look out here and see the trees. You see the berry bushes. You see the grasses. Here are all these things that God has created, not us. God." I persisted in my doubt that an awakening from such an entrenched attitude, a trance, could so readily occur. At the same time I was struck by Monica's conviction and by the sheer power of her reverence and respect for nature. As an example, readily at hand for me, I shared with her my own dismay at the number of logging trucks that I had encountered on the way to Neah Bay for the interview with her. She nodded and thought for a long moment. "You know what keeps coming up is loving yourself enough to change your thinking instead of going back to the parasitic kind of thinking." In these words she captured the essence of her own religion and the strength in which it is rooted in the natural. It was the strength of this conviction, as well, that allowed me to see why she had been identified to me as a biospheric humanitarian and why she had understood intuitively what that term meant.

Monica was able to place the authority for her conviction within the context of her tribal culture. "Indian people, for the most part, are not into greed and forms of greed, which is a part of the parasitic consciousness. That has not played a part in who we are. It's how you are whole as a human being. And how you can be a world server to your people, in whatever form it takes." She returned to her example of a New Yorker. "If that New York executive were to learn to be more whole, whole to himself, whole to his family, whole to his community, then there would be less of that greed going on. I believe that." This is the statement of a true believer and, in her own words, the proclamation of a world server. It is apparent that her belief in the transformative power of nature rests in some great part in her committed service. What was understood in her statement is that she would know how to do her part in introducing someone of parasitic consciousness to the beauty and wonder of the natural world. Again, it is her own conviction and commitment to service, rather than the mere fact of her birth into a certain tribal culture, that constitute her biospheric humanitarianism.

She knows, for example, that the parasitic consciousness has infected some of her own people. This was the result of the systematic cultural cleansing that occurred for her people, as one example, through having their young placed in white schools. Their language and religious rituals were systematically stripped. The parasitic culture is what replaced what they had lost.

There was a bit more understanding to Monica's awareness about how a conversion from the parasitic to the non-parasitic could occur. She spoke about getting "rid of the negative energy". At this point we embarked upon a discussion of Monica's healing abilities. She has had aunts who have been Shakers. Shakers are native healers who practice rituals of restoring beneficial energies to people who have fallen ill or who have suffered loss or who have been shamed within their tribe, as examples. The Shakers travel to where they are called. In the rituals they work to release the negative energies that have attached themselves to the ill or despondent person. These negative energies are then directed back to the Earth. How does that not bring harm to the Earth? "There is gratitude and thankfulness given to the Earth before the load has been dropped." Monica made it clear that she was not a Shaker because she found "it too limiting". She does not want that others have expectations of her healing gifts. She leaves herself open to the right people, those who need what she offers, to find her. She has already traveled widely to offer her healing. Inner city youths have been the recipients. She has also done healing of environmental sites, in addition to the clean-ups of the coastal areas from the tanker spills.

Because her people are so connected with the water, she has been associated with several water healing projects and rituals. Monica's healing abilities emerged after she had a near death experience. She had checked in to a hospital at her father's suggestion and out of his concern and internal knowing. She thought she had an appendicitis attack. Once in the hospital the emergency room physician diagnosed the situation. Her appendix had ruptured. She had arrived in the state of toxemia. She nearly died. Through the course of that evening, post surgery, in the hospital she lay awake reciting Psalm 23: 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil'. She knew that she was leaving her body. After she had been moved from the intensive care unit to another wing in the hospital, she felt her self coming back into her body. She describes this as "getting firmly entrenched inside my body again". She was afraid to open her eyes "because I did not want to know that I was not here anymore. I said 'No, you gotta be brave and see where you are." It was at this point, she believes, that her healing power came to her. "Because, they say, a lot of times, an NDE (near death experience) is when your power comes to you." She describes the healing energy that she has as pulsing through her fingertips. How does the healing work? "All things are possible, as long as you believe it and know it's going to happen." There are two prior conditions. One has to know that this is what the person, the recipient, wants. One has to know that it is the correct thing to be doing. She moves negative energy out of people. She can actually visualize and see the *locus* of this negative energy; she can see

where it has attached itself to a body. She works by closing her eyes. "I'm moving that energy out of them. That's what I feel. It's gone. Poof, it's gone."

Monica is sustained in her various service and healing practices by the response and positive regard she receives from others in return for the gifts she offers. A friend who owns a bookstore in Tacoma, Washington, said to her on an occasion of her visit to that bookstore: "I'm always glad that you come here because you are here long after you are gone. It is so healing." Monica is also sustained by the new lessons that await her on her own healing path. A friend named Heidi teaches Monica about non-judgment. "Heidi, oh she is such an example. She practices non-judgment like you would not believe." Heidi has also taught her about the power of intention. "The intention to heal. The intention to have an illness. The intention to eliminate an illness." One eliminates an illness, according to Heidi, by not claiming it. "Now my intention—and this is a huge one—but why not?—is to eliminate those parasitic kinds of interactions on this planet." Monica's awareness about how vast she is as a spirit has been awakening in her, thanks to her friendship with Heidi. Monica has now come to hold the entire globe, the planet, in her healing embrace. "We do not know how vast we really are as a spirit. Let's go into the dark and help and intend to make that a more loving, peaceful, compassionate, environmentally sound place. It's our purpose in life."

The notion of genetic healing lineage is a significant one for Monica and her tribal people. She knows that the Shaker aunts that have gone before her were a part of this genetic healing lineage that has come down to her. What genetic healing lineage means is that healing lineages run in families. Sometimes these lineages are both matrilinear and patrilinear. They sometimes descend through both mother and father. This notion is one that sustains Monica because she holds the vision that both her own daughter and her son are also healers. Each has had an important dream that has been interpreted by the elders at Neah Bay as constituting a sign that each is a healer, a shaman(ess). Her daughter had two such dreams. One foretold how she would be one who assists with the return of the ancient ways. In the second dream the daughter transformed from a salmon into a young girl. The only medicine that is more powerful to the Makah Nation than the salmon medicine is the Thunderbird medicine. The Thunderbird never descends into form; never takes a body. Monica's son's dream foretold a future time when the longhouses had been restored. This signifies to Monica that her son will play a role in that restoration. In this fact that both her offspring have had healing dreams Monica is able to pass the healing lineage to the next generation. One of the measures of healing power is this ability to pass the healing to the next generation. It signifies the fact that the Creator has found that the healer, in this case, Monica, has properly served and responded to the needs of the people. In this fact Monica feels blessed.

Monica is also involved with tribal cultural restoration that goes beyond the boundaries of her own Makah Nation. Women friends of hers are learning about healing and medicinal herbs. The classes are being shared along the Pacific Coast Indians in an effort to restore their native healing practices. Native men and women are returning to building dugout canoes, called tamals. The tamals were used in times past for voyages along the Inland Passage to Alaska and also to the south as far as Baja Mexico. Canoeists today travel as far as Alaska to the north and to the coastal areas near Santa Barbara, California, to the south. Canoeists from different tribes are traveling to visit neighboring tribal areas. These practices are being restored far away from public attention and scrutiny. The old ways of diplomacy and of assisting neighboring tribes is returning. The greatest benefit that Monica sees in this restoration is that the environment is again reclaimed and the ancient respect is reawakening. As the canoeists build their boats they learn the language associated with the dugout and it uses. The European languages are not adequate and suited to describe and contextualize the sentiment and meaning that are contained within the native languages. The languages are place and sound based; they describe the experiences of being one with the ecology, with the waters and the waves and the salmon and the eagles.

Monica's Makah people have begun to trade with other coastal tribes in the old ways. There are rituals of greeting involved. And items that one tribe may lack are offered by another that has such an item. Monica gave an example of the dugout canoes that are being built. It was decided to build the canoes in the traditional ways. For this whale adzes were needed. The Makah peoples had the necessary whalebone from which are made the carving instruments called adzes. Canoeists from the Makah nation traveled the coastal waters to the area near Santa Barbara, California, to trade the whale bone. The Makah received sage in return. Money is not exchanged. The barter practices are strictly adhered to.

In order for this to work there were many intra-tribal meetings. There was a lot of talking that had to happen before the tribe consented to enter into the trade with the California Indians. Great care had to be taken to have the full consent of the tribe. Monica explained: "You just do not go out and do your own thing. It's like permission to do your own thing." Four rib bones from a large whale were given in exchange for sage. "The gift was equal, because the gift of sage and its healing abilities and their ceremonial was huge." Monica sees these steps taken as "the opening now of healing, of bringing back who we are as a country. We just have to work on a couple of other places and we'll be on the way."

Chapter 7 A Peace Pilgrim

Byron is a fifty year old African American male. He telephoned me after he had spoken with Ms. Sarah van Gelder, Executive Editor of *Yes! Magazine*; *Journal of Positive Futures*. He observed in this conversation that he fit the description I had given to Ms. van Gelder of a biospheric humanitarian. Sarah van Gelder is one of the individuals who had sent my description of my research and my request for interview subjects to potential subjects. I interviewed Byron at the site of a Buddhist Temple on Bainbridge Island, Washington, on Wednesday, April 13, 2003.

Byron proved to be as interesting and intriguing in person as he had sounded on the telephone. In his role as Peace Pilgrim he occupies a rare cultural niche. I was interested in discovering how this role of Peace Pilgrim could fall within the definition that I had set for candidates for research for this present study. It was sufficient that Ms. van Gelder had chosen to pass my research description along to Byron. When I met Byron at the Buddhist Temple, I found a quite imposing presence. Byron is a large man who wears a radiant smile. His deep baritone voice carried a resonance of conviction when he spoke. He was charming and engaging; thoughtful, pensive and captivating. Through the course of the interview I found that Byron had drawn me into his discourse in such a way that I had become included as aligned with him, as he used 'we' in speaking. When he spoke in the interview of his earlier life as a street performer I was able to see that he had become versed in the vocabulary of entrancing and engaging others. He was skillful, on the one hand, engaging and authentic, on the other. There is a depth of conviction and commitment that goes beyond his ability to engage and captivate.

Byron was not always a Peace Pilgrim. He came to his vocation through the school of hard knocks. He was reared in an abusive home. He describes his father's aspirations as being 'bourgeois'. What this meant to Byron is that his father, an African American working class man, tried to adapt himself and his ways to the prevailing expectations of the dominant culture. Byron could see how difficult this effort to adapt was for his father. He could also see that nothing his father would or could do was going to bring him the comfort he sought in these efforts. "I left at sixteen, because I could not take 'bourgeoise'. My father and I were not getting along. I took to the streets because I was rebellious and I had no direction for that rebelliousness. I had no mentor. My older brother was off in the Navy. That certainly was not a direction I wanted to go in."

His brother could not mentor him "because he was capitulating to the system. "Misguided as I was, my rebellion was justified." Byron is able to connect his rebellion of his youthful days to the rebellion he associates with being a Peace Pilgrim. "I am seeing that my rebellion today, as a Peace Pilgrim, is the same as that young boy that left his daddy's home at sixteen years old. I went into the streets to avoid Vietnam, and I lived the life of the streets for ten years."

His life in the streets extended from his fourteenth year to his twenty-fourth year. At first, during the first couple of years, he was in and out of his father's home. He would repair his relationship with his father and return home only to find himself in the same predicament that had caused him to take refuge in the streets. During these first years he was becoming acclimated to the street life of "selling drugs, selling women". He was a hustler "pretty much in the angles (non-notorious, low profile criminal behavior)". He learned how to be a con-man and how to pickpocket. "I chose non-violent crimes. Now non-violent being the lesser of the evil." When he left his father's home for the last time at sixteen he moved to Amherst, Massachusetts. He originally went to Amherst to steal a large stash of marijuana. He went back to Amherst to rob liquor stores. Eventually he was able to survive in Amherst as a thief. That was not the only attraction for him in Amherst. "The consciousness in the area was stimulating to me, and I began to read books." He never forgot the draw that Amherst had for him. He came and went from Amherst, much as he had come and gone from his father's home. Eventually, "it became my base". "So, criminally, scholastically and spiritually, that has been my base since 1976."

He described his years as a street criminal and survivalist with some satisfaction. "Oh, I was very talented. I was very very talented. The money I made would not support all my needs but that is because I didn't have the knowledge." He made the claim that had he been given the proper training he would have been a very good con man. "I had the IQ to be a very good con man, world class con man." His street game was con. Robbery, for instance, involved the potential for violence. "It meant carrying a gun or a weapon." The focus of his con was the white citizenry. "I didn't try to steal from anybody but white people. But stealing always carried the danger of violence." He limited his activities to pickpocketing, conning the creep thieving. "I was a con even in that (creep theiving) because I would go into the store and get the store clerk's attention while my partner, who was the creep thief, could go in the back and steal the money." Byron also used and sold drugs. "But I wasn't an addict." He did not wake up in the morning needing a fix. He counts himself as not a good business man in the drug area because he gave a lot of drugs away. "Even legitimately, I am not a good capitalist."

Byron did know others who would rob and beat people for money; they would bludgeon people to death or cut off a hand or a finger to get others to tell them where the money was hidden. He did espouse that kind of violence. "I had instilled in me, through my grandmother and my father, some values about respect for life. I wanted your money but I did not want to see blood to get your money." He refers to pickpocketing, conning and creep thieving as finess crimes. "I wanted to separate you from your money." He sees what he calls a line of evolution connecting his attitude toward committing non-violent crimes and seeing "all life as sacred". These first, early steps in his evolution had the effect of getting him to tire of the streets. "Because I was always a spiritual person."

He read Muslim literature, “Messianic stuff”, the Bible. He engaged “other intelligent people” from the street in conversation. Some of these people were from Vietnam. Others with whom he spoke were “people who were down with the Mau Maus or the Black Panthers or the Black Muslims.” He was hungry for intelligent conversation and remarks that many street people only know the streets. They do not have any other interest beyond survival. “And they don’t know anything, have any book learning.”

He got tired of his life on the streets and began to recognize that it was not conducive to a healthy lifestyle. For one thing, there was no loyalty. In addition it was destructive to the body and to general health. He happened upon Dick Gregory’s Cookin’ with Mother Nature. That was the book that turned his head around. Gregory directly influenced his personal life practices. “So I’m sitting in my apartment and I’m doing meditations and eating steamed vegetables and doing yoga meditations. There are knocks at my door from people who want to buy heroin from me. So I was growing, I was outgrowing.” He got to the place within himself where “the peace of mind is more important than the money, the jive”. Eventually he discovered enough peace of mind and was so intent on self-knowledge and seeking his inner self that the knocks on the door became intolerable. “I don’t want to answer that. I don’t want to sell.” At this juncture in his life, in his mid-twenties, he began to take classes at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst campus. It was at the University of Massachusetts that Byron was exposed to critical thinking of the intellectual variety. The works of Franz Fanon influenced him as did “W.D. DuBois and quite a few of the great African American thinkers, Native American thinkers, and different European thinkers of today that reject colonialism.” He graduated from that university with a degree in African American history and performance.

Byron’s education in African American history assisted somewhat in tempering his anger and rebellion. Although he was growing intellectually he had neither the opportunity nor the skills to make political use of his developing awareness. Yet the healing of his own consciousness and the early steps that would set his foot on the path of being a Peace Pilgrim were an outgrowth of his studies at the University of Massachusetts. This education assisted with his understanding of apathy among African Americans. He was also able to understand the self-hatred that had been instilled by the colonial system and that had been passed through the generations. This understanding brought healing. It also helped him to understand his parents. His father’s capitulation to the system took on a different meaning than the one he had earlier ascribed to it. Even the beatings he had received with ironing cords and the whipping with his father’s belt he was now able to link to the floggings of the slaves. The American African community had internalized the colonial oppression. From this new understanding forgiveness of the apathy and the internalized oppression ensued. Not only did he understand the consequences of colonial oppression on the offspring of the slaves, he also began to place the rage and anger that had driven his own life of crime into a context that began to make sense. This was not an

effort on his part to justify his crime; it merely helped him to make sense of what he was working out in his own consciousness given the fact that he had not had better political tools and skills to take some other form of action. Once he began to access healing for his mind and for his intergenerational predicament with his father, he turned to the healing of his emotions.

He has honed his performance abilities at the university. He had become an actor, a writer, storyteller, singer and dancer. This burgeoning career brought him much happiness and delight. Even though he was trained he also recognized that he had the natural inclination and desire to perform. It was his personality that delighted audiences. He even thinks of his performance as a calling, a vocation. It was not his full-fledged vocation. His full vocation began to unfold as he began to walk. "I began walking because I had so much rage in me through just living as a black man in America. It was ignited by majoring in African American history and seeing how this has been going on for five or six hundred years." The walking had to be quite extensive since Byron needed to come to a balance within himself. He recognized that he was very much out of balance. Walking served to temper the rage. Even though he discovered the benefits of walking by himself, he sought walking as a means to control his weight. As a dancer he needed to maintain a fit physique. From his multiple readings of Dick Gregory's book he was aware of the benefits to digestion and the digestive system of walking. Walking oxygenated the body, firmed the muscles and brought psychological benefits.

> So, anyway, I got out and walked a bike trail in Amherst, Massachusetts. I walked this bike trail, and I just couldn't stop. I just kept going to the end of the bike trail. Then I walked back home, which totaled out to be 19 miles. As I sat in a tub of water, soaking my body, *I felt a peace that I had never known*. *I felt a resolve that I had never known*. So I knew that walking was a way to come by peace within myself. I played basketball with the brothers down at the courts, and we cursed and fussed, and all of us had rage. My mind would really think of some of the awful things to say and do to people if they attacked me or if they harmed my body. My mind can think of some of the most violent things to do to them. And I was aware that my mind was thinking these things. But walking tempered all of that. And when I went to play basketball then (after his 19 mile walk) I had a personality, I had a sunshine about me. And I didn't feel that rage toward my brothers that I was playing basketball with. *So I discovered walking as a way of peace*. *It was a dawning of a new consciousness for me.*

It was only after he had done that long walk and experienced the peace that ensued that he came to the realization that walking was a form of prayer. He came to this notion because of the changes that began to take place inside of him. Some of these changes included an awakening of his environmental consciousness. Somewhere in the eighties he wrote a play the title of which borrowed on Dick Gregory's Cookin' with the Mother theme. Byron titled his play Chattin' with the Mother. The central character of the play is a Juba man. "Juba

is a person who gives praise. Juba, it comes from a Yoruba word, *mojuba*, which is to give praise and thanks. And so I named this character out of my alter ego which was Juba." The juba man is the thank you man. He gives praise all day long, everyday, day in and day out. He gives praise for all that occurs, without making any discrimination about whether something is good or bad. Byron began to practice giving thanks throughout the day, day after day, without question as to whether the thanks was merited by the event. "Just say thank you repetitively. And I did that and I think therein lies my transformation."

The story line in Byron's play involves the Juba man and an African shaman woman based in New York City. Her offices are in the New York Public Library, main branch. The shaman woman sent Juba to Africa to find the answers to two questions. Firstly, why is the human family so dysfunctional? Secondly, Why is the environment acting out with such hostility toward humanity? Juba's task was to return to Africa to unearth the birth records of humanity to see what had gone wrong. He is transported from Harlem in New York City to the base of Mount Kilamanjaro in Africa. Juba finds that he can speak to all creatures. They understand each other. Indeed, the other creatures attack Juba until, at last, Mother Earth intervenes on his behalf: "Put that child down." Juba descovers the birth records. Humanity is now to be put to trial for its misdeeds. The High Court of the Ecosystem is summoned. There are three judges: Mother Earth, Mother Wind, Mother Ocean. Other plant and animal species are witnesses. The testimony goes back through human history. Humans are discovered to not be at the center of the environment as humans have thought of themselves as being.

This play that Byron wrote in the nineteen eighties displays his biospheric humanitarian consciousness. From that time forward Byron has deepened within himself this consciousness. Humans have to return to a sense of right relationship with the Earth and other species for the peace that he has experienced to come more generally for humanity. Byron has prepared himself for his next steps to becoming a Peace Pilgrim. While in Amherst, Massachusetts, he read in a newspaper the details of a Juneteenth celebration. Juneteenth celebrates the anniversary of the day that the slaves in Texas discovered the Emancipation Proclamation. The date of discovery was two years after the actual event of the Proclamation. Juneteenth marks that day of discovery. The newspaper told of a forthcoming peace pilgrimage in Amherst to mark the anniversary.

The Buddhist Order sponsoring the peace walk was called the Nyhonyohoji Buddhist Religious Order. Nichidatsu Fuji founded the Order. He in turn had been inspired by the Buddhist saint, Nichirin. These people walk as their form of prayer. Their walking is a meditation practice. "I was glad to know that there were people who walked as a form of prayer for peace." Byron has not joined the Order yet he has made many walking pilgrimages with them beginning with the celebration "So I walked with them over the last ten years. I've been on

upwards to 19 different pilgrimages with them. And I've been all over the world with them." When he is not on pilgrimage Amherst is his base. Of particular interest among the peace walks of this period is one involving the Nipponsan Nyhonyohoji Buddhist Religious Order. It was called "the Interfaith Pilgrimage of the Inner Passage". "Sister Claire, a Buddhist nun, inspired this Interfaith Pilgrimage. (She) is one of my teachers in the ways of peace." This Interfaith Pilgrimage was committed to "reversing the steps of slavery all the way back to Africa. The Pilgrimage proved so important to Byron that "it began to be clear to me what I was born to do. I understood clearly my lifeline, everything, everything leading up to that moment was preparing me to do that pilgrimage. I did that pilgrimage very successfully. I was one of the few successful people."

Clarity as to what success meant he stated as follows: "What it means to me is that, number one, I was a presence. I was a black presence on that walk, all throughout the entire thirteen months. That was my vow, to walk every step of the way for my ancestors, number one. Number two, I didn't want to take a plane back to Africa. I was one of two people. There was another young woman out of New York, Regina Woods. Her and I were the only two of that pilgrimage that went back to Africa the way our ancestors came over." He was one of five people to complete the entire walk from beginning to the final disbursement in South Africa, thirteen months into the walk. He was the only African American who did the walk through the entire portion done in the United States. The group was not allowed to walk in some countries in Africa; while other countries greeted the pilgrims and welcomed them. Important to the pilgrims was to visit sites of historical significance. "It went to fifteen countries, and we touched down on four continents. During those thirteen months we walked through the United States, visiting all of the sites of significance to African history, pertaining to the slave trade. We went to ports of entry; we went to African museums; we went to lynching trees; we went to auction blocks; we went to those posts (stocks) where they had the displays."

It was through the time of his journey that he began to shift within himself to feel himself becoming a Peace Pilgrim. He could not pinpoint exactly what caused the shift. Perhaps it was the prayer circles that the pilgrims conducted at each site they visited. Perhaps it was the fact that "black people, white people, red people, yellow people all got together on this pilgrimage"; he began to notice that the human race includes all peoples. Perhaps it was the fact that nearly eighty people had participated in some portion of the thirteen month pilgrimage that helped in his making this shift to peace pilgrim. For certain his reflections that took the form of an essay titled 'The Interfaith Pilgrimage of the Middle Passage Written in the Stars' helped him to see the steps he was taking to make this transition.

After the pilgrimage had traveled through the slave trade sites in the United States, "we caught a boat and went to Cuba, did the same thing, then we went to Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean." At this point the group

split because some pilgrims left the group and others continued but with time as a consideration. “And so a majority of the pilgrims flew” to Africa. “Myself and three other people would not take a plane back to Africa. We wanted to go back to Africa because we were reversing the steps to slavery. Our walking and our chanting and our praying and going to all these sites were supposed to be psychically reversing, rolling back the carpet of racism. And so it was very important to the psyche, to the human psyche, to dismantle colonialism, racism, and the other -isms and schisms by painstakingly going back to Africa on the boat.”

This insistence that they find a boat to take them to Africa became an adventure in its own right. They took a plane from the Caribbean to Caracas, Venezuela. From Caracas they traveled by bus to the border of Brazil. They continued by bus to the Amazon River where they then caught boats that took them to the Brazilian state of Bahia, the center of receiving African slaves for Brazil. They did not find a ready way to travel by boat to Africa. Hitchhiking cargo ships had now become impossible because of trade in illegal aliens and drugs. American policing agencies had completely taken over in Bahia. “Finally, a boat came along being sailed by a black captain, adventure sailor and storyteller and lecturer named Captain Bill Pickney. And he was riding a small 74-foot yacht. He was sailing this boat called THE SORTILEGE “

The contact with Pickney was no coincidence, in Byron’s eyes. Pickney was also on a journey that he named the ‘The Middle Passage.’ “We were not working alone. We knew, when that boat came, we knew that we were not working alone. All of our efforts to get to Brazil, going to all the sacred sites in Brazil, honoring the ancestors in Brazil, doing the same work we did everywhere else, continuing to keep the prayer unbroken, brought a boat that said, ‘The Middle Passage.’” Perhaps it was this encounter with Pickney that brought forth in Byron the realization that he was now a Peace Pilgrim. “We know that there are no accidents. The captain knew that there were no accidents. He knew that he was supposed to take us. It was just clear to him that things like this don’t just happen. You got Middle Passage Pilgrimage, pilgrim people going all around the world for that, and he’s doing the same thing. He’s on a Middle Passage Pilgrimage himself. He knew that it was written in the stars for him to take us. And he took us. He just said pay for your own food, which will be about $100 apiece.”

They arrived in Tumu, Ghana, after a thirty-five day crossing of the Southern Atlantic. They caught up with the other pilgrimages in Benine. In the countries where they were not allowed to walk, they hired cars that took them from border to border. All the while, Byron carried the Pan-American flag that had been designed by Marcus Mosiah Garvey. The flag is constructed in three colors, red, black and green. The green represents the land; the black represents the people; the red represents the spilled blood. He carried the flag to the completion of the pilgrimage in Capetown, South Africa.

Now it was time for Byron's own healing. "After all I had seen, after all I had experienced with the internal processes of the group, I was traumatized for a year. For a year, I sat and did nothing. I sat and did nothing but just processed all of the things I saw and the things I experienced. And I didn't know what to do. I had no desire to perform." He could only sit and in sitting absorb the experience. After about a year, the writing began to flow. "My writing about the relationship that African-Americans had, that black people had with white people. That was the bond and chain. We went back to Africa with black rage and white guilt constantly clashing and dueling." Even though all of them could feel this tension not all of them knew what to do about it. "Some of us were trying to seek a balance and say, 'Let's raise up above our past history and look at this as you have white people, black people, red people and brown people walking together for the ancestors and doing prayer circles.' If we're not sincere in our prayers; if we're not sincere in being what we seem to be to all these communities that are so inspired by this human race walking together it's a sham, it's a farce."

"And we were not what we seemed." This then is what occupied him in his writing. He probed within himself as to how to go about re-establishing human relationships based on one people, one earth. History would have to be transcended; much forgiveness would have to come into play. He decided that this letting go of history and enacting the forgiveness would be the bases for establishing new human community. "Emotionally, there's a lot of things you have to let go of. (You have to) have compassion for the ignorance that took place before and then try to move on from there." After a year of pondering and writing he joined in other peace walks. These included walks for disarmament, nuclear disarmament walks, prison walks. Along these walks he continued to notice and confront the various –isms: sexism, racism, speciesism, ageism.

On one particular prison walk in California, Byron accompanied a green engineer who had authored a work on alternative forms and uses of electricity. Byron read the book and in this reading came to the realization that all humans are suffering from some form of slavery. "I knew that humanity was in slavery as a whole. But I didn't know how much. I didn't know that we were being held hostage to fossil fuel when there were natural energies that we could use. "There's an infinite amount of energy in the ether and in the ocean. It just does not run out." Those who understand this and try to change the dependency system are either killed or otherwise dissuaded. "So I began to look at global corporate gangsterism a little closer. (I began to) understand it in terms of government gangsterism, corporate gangsterism." He began to see how the microcosm reflects the macrocosm. In this understanding he came to a much deeper compassion for himself and his actions of his earlier years. He began to see the survival of the fittest as another ideology used for enslavement. Through this entire elongated process Byron's dream for his next mission (work) came to him. The dream is encapsulated in the phrase 'One People, One World'.

"So 9-11 occurred. But before that, a few weeks before that, I'm sitting and I'm thinking about doing a One People, One Earth 'war'. People going all over the planet, walking all over the planet. Communing with communities of people who believe that all life is sacred. Going to sacred sites and holding interfaith prayers, as a beginning of taking our planet back. As an affirmation, I would say, of moving Earth into higher consciousness. Affirmation of moving humanity's consciousness higher, into higher evolutions. Certainly to raise the consciousness of humanity that all life is sacred and we are multi-dimensional creatures and we are solar." We are all of us, solar creatures. What this means is that we each have what a star has. Our cellular and physical make-up is the same as constitutes the sun. This understanding is being suppressed in the same way that information about solar energy is being suppressed. Information about renewable energy is also being suppressed. "Who we truly are, as celestial creatures (are ones) who have everything that we need. We have everything that we need to survive. So I don't need to come and take anything from you. I don't need anything from you. I can honor your divinity. I can honor you for who you are. One People, One Earth is to move through the planet and propagate its information."

"It goes back to ancient thinking. It goes back to humanity's first spiritual mind, before organized religion. It's that all life is sacred. We have the potential to help other species develop and evolve. From that spiritual base I am seeing that in a Christian vernacular or lexicon of words that it is possible to have heaven right here on earth. The same spirit, the same intelligence that animates you and I animates all life. It definitely begins with the thought that everything is interdependent. All life is sacred and we're all connected. One People, One Earth." Byron's journey has brought him to this meeting with himself as a being of light. In seeing himself as such a being he also see others in that same light. One People, One Earth encapsulates the vision of what a biopsheric humanitarian hopes to see and desires to create.

Chapter 8 A Community Youth Organizer

Rory is a twenty-six year old ethnic Filipino male. He is twenty-six years of age. He is the youngest member of this research group. I met Rory at the 2nd Annual Community Based Solutions for Environmental Health and Justice Conference, Saturday, April 19, 2003. This Conference was convened at the Seattle University, School of Law, in Seattle, Washington. A local community activist had brought this conference to my attention. I attended this conference for the purpose of networking and meeting prospective research subjects.

During one of the plenary sessions, Rory had performed a spoken-word piece. Rory's performance showed him to be a marvelous communicator as well as being deeply thoughtful, passionate and committed to social action. He performed an original piece that consisted in a call to non-violent resistance against 'colonialism'. Rory was exactly the kind of person that fit my profile for research subjects. It became a question then of his willingness and availability for an interview.

He. readily consented to an interview. When I mentioned that the interview would run to 1.5 hours he winced. He was noticeably uncomfortable. He was quite willing to be interviewed, yet he did not know how to sustain a conversation for that length of time. He was concerned about having himself be the focus of the conversation. I assured him that I would help him by asking questions and by guiding the interview to keep us on track. With that assurance he relinquished his hesitation and consented to be interviewed. I traveled to the Central District (home of many peoples of color, many immigrants) for the interview. We conducted the interview in the offices of a community youth organization.

Rory had already demonstrated that he is a bright and studious person in his performance at the Community Justice Conference. Throughout the interview his thoughtfulness was apparent. He holds fast to his identity as a Filipino youth and embraces this identity as the key to his solidarity with other, non-Filipino, youth. He is steeped in the writings of anti-colonialism and consciousness raising for the purpose of social action. As a matter of identity and solidarity, he is extremely cautious about having any labels be placed on him or his actions. He regards himself as the final arbiter of what names ought to be given to him and the work that he does. In this regard, he raised an immediate objection to the fact that I had placed him in the category of 'biospheric humanitarian'. Just as irrelevant was the fact that I regarded this term and his inclusion as laudatory of him. He is practiced in not allowing himself to be labeled and this is a more important procedural or operating principle than is accepting compliments from someone he can easily identify as being a potential oppressor. He regards labeling as profiling and profiling is the *bete noire* of the anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist organizers and thinkers. Profiling is a theme around which an important piece of this interview is organized.

In respect to his personal conduct of himself with me and throughout the interview, Rory was gracious and forthcoming in his responses to the questions I posed. It may have been, as a matter of conjecture, that Rory could not quite fathom that fact that I was presenting myself as a learner and a seeker of his knowledge and wisdom. Under these circumstances, Rory held fast to his clarity around accepting no incursions on his self-defined identity. I marvel at Rory's sensitivity and survival skills and acumen.

Rory came to the United States from the Philippines in 1978, as a child of three years. His father worked for the United States Navy as a chef aboard an aircraft carrier. His father came from a village called Cavite. His mother is from a neighboring village in the Philippines called Pandakan. His mother is an educated woman who had been a school teacher in the Philippines. Once she arrived in the United States, she could no longer teach school. An income from her was required to maintain the family household. This meant that his mother had to work at the Naval Base in Bremerton, Washington. Rory has spent most of his life in Bremerton, Washington, the home base for the various naval vessels to which his father was assigned. Rory is the oldest of three, with a younger sister and a brother. His sister is a school teacher who studied drama. Rory knows that his brother is studying something and was not certain what that is. "And I was the visual artist of the family. I was involved for a while, just in high school, it was drawing and painting and stuff. And then I slowly got into more -- I studied graphic design at Cornish (a college for the arts located in Seattle)."

Rory learned commercial applications of art at Cornish School for the Arts. He has learned graphic design for advertising. While in high school he had designed tee-shirts and posters, such that graphic design was something that came naturally to him. The graphic design he did while in high school had a social or political purpose. The tee-shirts and posters he designed were expressions of his cultural identity. "*I'm very into maintaining a cultural identity*. Early on, it was like just hanging out with Filipinos and talking about like what it means, and stuff like that. So in high school, we were part of like -- just that was our crew. That was how we kind of retained what we knew of it (cultural identity). And then changed it."

Bremerton, Washington has a large population of Filipinos, most of whom work with the United States Navy, in the civilian service sector. Because there are three large neighborhoods of ethnic Filipinos, Rory found no problem in finding others who would support him in maintaining his cultural identity. As a way of sustaining and learning more about his cultural roots he joined a group called "Ismangmahal". "It's a collective, which is predominantly a spoken word arts group. Isangmahal means 'one love'." Ismangmahal has about thirty-five ethnic Filipino youth in its membership. The group was established in 1966. The reason that it was founded is that the young Filipinos could not find any stages on which to perform their spoken word pieces, including their poetry. At times

they were not allowed to speak at open mikes where members with other cultural identities were allowed to perform. In other situations the ethnic Filipinos were not comfortable performing in the presence of others. They felt that their poetry was not good enough. This was a self-esteem issue. Two young Filipino artists started this performance group in an effort to address all these above issues. The group started meeting in the living rooms of the families of group members. They began to read poetry to each other. Then they began conversations about issues associated with identity and with interfacing with the larger culture.

It is within Ismangmahal that Rory gathers the strength and the intellectual resources to face the many facets of identity issues. The thirty active members of the group engage in conversation around the notions of dominance and internalized colonialism. They notice even among themselves the penchant of some to control others. Their group is dedicated to the principle of a realized participatory democracy. An organizing principle of this group is the recognition that such a democracy allows each person her/his dignity; each person has a recognized place and a non-arbitrary dignified role within the community; each community member is a community leader by the fact of membership. In pursuit of sustaining cultural identity, the youth see themselves as catalysts for social awakening in the larger Filipino community. Ismangmahal, in offering public readings and other performances to the larger Filipino community, has a mission: "To cultivate the mind's eye of society." What the members of Ismangmahal mean by cultivating the mind's eye of society is to encourage other Filipinos to be wakeful about the benefit associated with maintaining the cultural heritage that has been scattered from its place of origin. In other words, Ismangmahal has as its objective to support themselves and other Filipinos in not forgetting who they are.

Rory disclosed the great lengths to which Ismangmahal goes to properly understand itself as an organization. Are they a collective? "Somewhat. And the hard part about it is that in the last six years we've tried to establish what we are as a collective. It's totally what we're trying to go for in terms of like how do we make decisions around things. So the structure that we lack, we make up in a collective type form. But structure is slowly being implemented, but not to be like emulating like white organizational structure."It's slowly becoming (a) nonprofit structure, with a Board of Directors, Executive Director, and different things like that. Where people are kind of members, people are kind of floating." Overriding concern is given, always, to not replicating structures of dominance. Rory finds the process very time consuming and emotionally exhausting at times. He recognizes that any premature effort to organize the group along certain lines (whatever line) will necessarily delimit or rule out kinds of self-expression that would then be lost or not even known. These are the very expressions that might be contain insight for which the group, as the mind's eye of society, searches. There is a wisdom in not prematurely precluding self and group expression. This wisdom has its costs in the social and political organization spheres. The benefit to Rory and the others in Ismangmahal who actively engage themselves in these

formative issues is that they have created for themselves a laboratory in which they can internalize a viable operational structure of participatory democracy.

Does Ismangmahal see itself as the mind's eye of Filipino society or of society in general? "You know they (the group's founders) were never really clear about that. That mission statement was written six years ago. There (are) a lot of big words that I wasn't really familiar with when I first joined. And I joined at nineteen years old. I was recruited and mentored into learning about social causes and stuff like that. Social causes within the Philippines and within what's happening as a Filipino-American. Identity politics. And also just regular day-to-day frustrations with yourself. Like a lot of it is based on self-revolution. (Self-revolution) is to change your internal mechanics. And seeing what makes (one) tick." One can deduce that if Ismangmahal does see itself as a mind's eye to the larger society beyond the confines of the Filipino community, that goal lies in a future time when the group has matured. That would be a time when the nature of the reflections have turned outward with the purpose of engaging the larger society in conversation about its own capacity for participatory democracy.

Rory gains from the study of such writers as bell hooks, Thich Nhat Hahn (the Vietnamese Zen Buddhist Master and peace activist) and Paulo Freire. Because he is such an active part of the inner workings of Ismangmahal he sees as his responsibility to bring fresh insights from other sources and other activists into the internal formative discussions of the group. His love for reading was awakened by a high school English teacher. The teacher engaged Rory and some of his other Filipino classmates when Rory was a sophomore. In response to the oppressive colonialist learning environment of the Bremerton based high school, Rory and his classmates had taken on a rather antagonist, anti-authoritarian, anti-intellectual attitude. These youth associated learning and intellectual achievement with capitulation to the oppressive colonial masters. Into this mix came the English teacher who sought a means to reach these youth. "The teacher actually would help us, or cater to our needs to learn about ourselves. (He brought in these books called -- from Carlos Bullison -- America Is in the Heart. And we just ate it up. That was the first time in high school that I felt more a sense of who I was."

Rory explained that his English teacher was not especially focused on Filipino culture. His effort was "to get us interested. He invested time to ask what would help us. (He searched for) what would make us want to learn. And it was us wanting to learn about ourselves, and then him getting the books. You know, getting it paid for by the school and getting us all reading, at least." America Is in the Heart is a story about a Filipino man that recounts the difficulties he faced in arriving from the Philippines, going through the immigration process, finding his way to Alaska, facing the hardships there of cultural and environmental shock. It was Rory's contact with the English teacher and his reading of Bullison's book that opened his eyes about the self-learning that could occur through reading. At about the same time that Rory was reading Bullison he had an experience that

politicized him. He was working with a number of other Filipino youths in the summer, during the Kitsap County Fair. He was fifteen at the time and under the legal working age. They were hired to work in the concession and game booths. “But the people that were running it were always accusing, mostly all the folk (all the Filipino youth) of stealing money from them. And me particularly. I was just like pinpointed as if I’m pocketing a lot of money, or something like that.”

His initial reaction to these accusations was disbelief and shock, even though it was not his first experience of having been profiled. Then when he heard that others were also being profiled he took action. “A lot of people working there would all confide. ‘Hey, did this happen to you?’ And I’d get all the information. And then I pretty much understood that everybody was being mistreated by the management. So I was trying to organize, almost like a sit-in.” He did not know to call it a sit-in at the time. The point was that they had all agreed to a work stoppage. The youths meant to “tell them that we’re your work force and we all have this agreement about how you’re treating everyone. The management soon learned about the plan to stop doing stuff at -- I think we were supposed to stop doing the work like at 1:30, after lunch. So then the games would stop.” The flow of cash to the management would also stop. The management discovered the plan for the work stoppage and intervened by offering bonuses for the youth who stayed at work through the entire week. More importantly, the accusations and harassment came to a halt. “But at the same time, it was like them kind of undermining that plan, to silence (us).”

He felt good that they had gotten what they wanted, which was to not be mistreated, or talked down to. He felt badly about the lack of admission on the part of the management. The management had preempted the planned intervention and had been able to save face at the same time. With that one caveat in place he regarded the experience as a positive one. “It is my understanding that when people do come together that there is more of a powerful voice. In solidarity something can get done. But if people are just complaining then it doesn’t make sense to just hold it all in. It was a childhood experience that was powerful.” This understanding of the importance to him and his associates of solidarity brought him to reflect about culture and politics. “I don't know if it’s Filipino culture. But it’s definitely because we would come together family-style. (We are) family-oriented people.” He sees his people as always acting together. “It was through friendships. There was a bond formed that if you were Filipino, you were one of us. Then you’re always reflected in how other people are going to see you anyway. So you might as well stick together, type thing. I don't know if that’s so much the cultural or if it’s the political tensions.”

From a cultural perspective, it is being family oriented that holds the community together. From a political perspective it is being subjected to the negative connotations of being a person of color that provides motive for political organization. “I think all people of color have that same innate drive to be

stronger within a group. I think when we came together it was, at first, because of our bloodlines. But there's also a lot of extra drive to know who you are when no one else is telling you who that is, or what that is, what that looks like." A decision is made, base on essential dignity, to create one's own standards for valid identity when the standards that are available impinge on one's dignity. "A victim mode is almost always helplessness. When I was growing up it was never us wanting to give our power away to people." Some of Rory's internal resistance to his relinquishing his power came from observing his parents. "My parents wouid assimilate and at the same time resist. They were conforming to certain ideals and practices but at the same time maintaining and retaining cultural identity." His father was a member of a military culture, as a chef on American aircraft carriers. This required rigorous conformity. In the Filipino culture the mother is naturally the true decision maker, especially in matters concerning home and family. His father brought the military culture into his home. "It put a strain and it turned our family culture into something different. A lot of other families that had fathers in the military were just starting to realize just what were the impacts on the children. In his conformity we also knew that there was a give and take of what culturally was not there." This militaristic attitude also contaminated Rory's relationship with his father. "He was very militaristic to me."

Rory's father tried to instill in him military discipline in the name of his becoming a man. Rory rebelled. "It was an internal resistance that I did not understand at first. But it was definitely what shaped a lot of why I want to be more analytical and just gain an understanding of why things happen. It pushed me to become more introverted. I closed up in myself so much in childhood that I didn't find a voice again until maybe the beginning of high school." The benefit to Rory of his being so introverted, "being so inside my head" is that this caused him "to think more about things". It also helped him to become more spiritual. "Working in the work we do with anti-racist work there's a lot of hope that can be lost. Working with youth there's a level of hopelessness that is just so prominent in youth culture. (It is) not being able to have power over yourself."

He shares with other youth his spirituality in the form of art. "Spiritually I have always known that my art has never been just art for the sake of art. It's always on the basis of there's healing involved. There's talking about things explicitly and in depth so that there's understanding and healing. The spiritual side of things is moving beyond a point of hating yourself and hating your situation or your people and becoming what your highest potential can be." In this healing the psychological and the spiritual merge. "A lot of it's spiritual. A lot of it is self-esteem. A lot of it could be (caused by the) lack of nurturance, the lack of love in everyday life."

Rory first began working with youth in 1998. His work begins with exploring problems that the youth identify themselves as having. To discover these issues he uses "journaling, free writing and poetry". He finds that the

youths' problems are similar to the ones he had growing up. Sometimes he finds that he continues to have problems that are brought forward by the youths he mentors. "I think working with young people inspired me to continue working on myself." He has worked with a not-for-profit organization called Artworks. The first steps are talking about problems. "There's talking about things explicitly and in depth so that there's understanding and healing. The spiritual side of things is moving beyond a point of hating yourself and hating your situation or your people and becoming what your highest potential can be." This organization also inspires families to work with youth on probation. In his solidarity with the youth and his advocacy that the youth on probation be paid for their artwork, Rory ran afoul of the board of directors of the not-for-profit. His position was terminated.

He has now launched Vision in Artwork. This is an arts program for inner city minority youth. He uses what he has learned in the Filipino youth collective, Ismangmahal, to build self-esteem and community with other minority youth. He uses Harold and the Magic Crayon as a model for this program. Harold has a magic crayon that allows him to create the world as he imagines it. "Art, organized word projects, community work, stuff like that" are used to motivate the youth to express themselves. Rory does not want Vision in Artwork to be "in its own little niche somewhere". It is not to be secluded from everything else. "It's part of a bigger whole."

He has taken a leadership role in Ismangmahal at this time. He advocates for a rotating leadership in order that authority be shared and distributed among the participants. Not everyone in Ismangmahal wants to be so involved in the political process. Yet the ones who do not want immersion in the political process do want to create. Rory adds outdoor mural projects to the list of spoken work activities that are already established fare in the inner workings of Ismangmahal. Art helps people in the collective to relate to each other, especially those who do not have the demonstrated interest in self-understanding and self-analysis that Rory exhibits. Through art Rory is able "to get or gain understanding for people with the same bloodline who do not necessarily have the same analysis".

The youth work and anti-racist work are both uphill struggles. His participation in Ismangmahal is a source of renewal for him. The murals he creates within the inner city inspire others, He basks in the appreciation for his work and for the upliftment it brings others. He works on himself to gain strength. He reads spiritual works, returning often, for example, to the Tao of Pooh. Taking the time to contemplate the balance between internal and external and making the effort to bring forth within himself that balance is his central spiritual practice. He definitely sees "the symbiotic nature" of how these internal and external forces interact and play off each other. "While you are dealing with it internally you have to almost reach out and extend beyond who you are." Rory sees himself as always "doing community-based art stuff". It must "not just (be) beautifying structures or something. It's more expanding on a dialogue, and

creating a dialogue, if need be. To continue that voice, the voice of resistance, the voice to explore." He struggles with the apathy he finds. "The challenge for me is to stay grounded in what's happening in the movement, what's happening with myself, what's happening with my family. All those things shape what I want to do with myself." He sees that he will always be a poet. He will always be a muralist. His parting words, that took him back to the lesson he learned at the Kitsap in his first effort to organize, were: "It takes one voice to be heard, but a thousand voices to make a point".

Chapter 9 An Enviromental Justice Activist

Yetta is a thirty-nine year old African American. She is the Executive Director of the major coalition for environmental justice for peoples of color in the Seattle area. I met Yetta at the 2nd Annual Community Based Solutions for Environmental Health and Justice Conference, Saturday, April 19, 2003. This Conference was convened at the Seattle University, School of Law, in Seattle, Washington. Yetta had been responsible for convening the conference. I attended this conference for the purpose of networking and meeting prospective research subjects. More specifically however I had attended this conference with the intention of meeting Yetta..

Jonathan Betz-Zall, the environmental activist who had suggested that I attend the conference, gave me a personal introduction at the conference to Yetta. Yetta was preoccupied with conference logistics at the time of our introduction and asked that I contact her by telephone. I did speak with her by telephone to set a time for our interview. I interviewed her in her offices at the community coalition suite in Seattle's Central District. This interview took place on April 30, 2003.

As was the case with other peoples of color that I have interviewed I encountered a certain reserve bordering on suspicion when I arrived at Yetta's offices. She cast a wary eye on me relative to her concerns relating to my appearance and the color of my skin. The ball was clearly in my court to break the ice. Yetta did quite a bit of testing before she would allow the interview to commence. Once the interview got under way Yetta was engaging and forthcoming.

Yetta is the daughter of Texas sharecroppers. Her family has a history of being close to the land and of caring for the land. "My concern for environment in general has been since I was a child. I don't know how old maybe twelve or thirteen." Her grandparents maintained a small piece of land in the Skagit Valley, which lies north of Seattle, Washington. They did not live on this piece of land although they frequently visited it on the week-ends. Yetta's grandfather is the one who directly taught Yetta how to care for the land. He farmed the small piece of property, growing strawberries, tomatoes and other vegetables. Although her grandparents lived in Ranier Valley within Seattle during Yetta's entire life, she thinks of them as being farmers. Her grandfather had to live in the city in order to provide financially for his family. Her grandparents followed Yetta's father north, where he came in search of work. The farm he worked in Texas had become a burden and he could no longer support his family. He tried working on farms for others and that also proved insufficient as a means for providing for his family. In Texas he had been a cotton farmer, as had his own father and his grandfather before him. "I just understand that my family, like a lot of African Americans, has very historic ties to land."

Fishing was also an important to this family and provided a source of protein. In Yetta's family the girls were not allowed to fish. The men would take the women and children on the fishing expeditions to Moses Lake, near Seattle. Fish frys were one of the ways that their family celebrated. Yetta was allowed to dig clams at the family clam digging expeditions. She took great delight in the clam digs, found it exciting and could not wait for her uncles and aunts to come get her and her siblings for the clam digs. Later, after her grandfather died, she continued to travel to Skagit Valley to the property now own solely by her grandmother. The time spent on the property stopped being fun for Yetta because the area around the property had all become developed. Now there were a lot of people crowding the property. She lost interest and quit going to the property. She did retain her appreciation for nature. This appreciation translated in a concern which expressed itself in taking staff positions with not-for-profits in the environmental field.

"My first job in the environmental field was with the Wilderness Society. I was the sole program coordinator. More like an administrative person." She performed office tasks while also being a keen student of the inner workings of the organization. Because of her interest she was mentored by a woman named Jean During, who had run a large not-for-profit organization in New York City. From Jean she learned the basics of fund-raising and public relations. Yetta appreciated learning about the fundamentals of the inner workings of the organization, although these tasks were not directly related to her interests. What drew her attention and passion was work she did on the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. She soon learned that any work she would be able to do on the Endangered Species Act had to be funded work. The lessons she learned from Jean During about the nuts and bolts of a not-for-profit operation, including fund-raising and administration, are the lessons that sustain the capacities of her present organization to do the service work in its constituent community. She now excels at "both sides" of the not-for-profit organization. She also excels at a third dimension, that of bringing diversity into not-for-profit organizations. Even in the recent past, many environmental not-for-profits have not been adequately diverse.

What Yetta discovered is that peoples of color were less than enthusiastic about environmental issues. She set about to understand why peoples of color were not interested. Her discovery, the answer to that question, took her in another direction, to the next step in her career as a biospheric humanitarian. She came to discover that peoples of color were indeed interested in environment; they were suffering tremendous health problems as a consequence of the environment. This was not the same focus on the environment as represented by the Wilderness Society. It was the environment, nevertheless. What Yetta learned is something about herself and something about the peoples of color that she had been trying to recruit. About herself she learned that she had been participating in the mainstream mindset. The environment meant the vast, if also endangered, wilderness areas and the plight of the various species

that inhabit those same areas. For peoples of color the environment that appeared on their radar of interest and concern was the environment that surrounds them in the inner city and their own dwelling places. Yetta began to learn much more about the relationship between environmental diseases and the health issues affecting the poor and peoples of color who live in highly industrialized areas of Seattle and South Seattle.

In order to get up to speed about these relationships between urban environment and health issues affecting the poor, Yetta turned to the written works of Bob Bullard. He "is considered one of the scholars of the movement. He's written the most books on the issue. He's an African American attorney and now professor at Clark Atlanta University." Dumping in Dixie and Unequal Protection are two works that helped to open Yetta's eyes. They discuss matters such as disparate impact and community mobilization. The first of these issues exposes the racial and economic bias of placement of industrial zones near neighborhoods. The second issue relates to how remediation takes place. These are the ideas that fascinated Yetta and drew her into action in the inner-city community. What Bullard represented to her is the fact that poor people could advocate for environmental justice and be successful at it. They could win in court; with institutions and corporations. They could win in the eyes of the public, as well.

It was through Yetta's contact with the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCJ) that she began to understand that she needed to change her own focus. She began to shift her focus from the concerns represented by the Wilderness Society to paying attention to what was happening in her own neighborhood. She left her position at the Wilderness Society and enrolled at Seattle University to work on her undergraduate degree in political science.

She noticed that a lot of children in her area had asthma. Then she began to spot incidences of cancer. She asked herself: "Is there a connection here?" This convinced her to do more formalized research. As a volunteer for the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, Yetta began teaching families in the Central District of Seattle about household chemicals. Next she did research on chemicals that are environmentally airborne in the same neighborhoods. At the completion of these two research projects, she had addressed what families could do to have safer home environments and safer neighborhood environments. She had canvassed three neighborhoods in Seattle's Central District. The project was a huge plus for the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice. It was a success for Yetta, as well. The CCJ asked Yetta to join their staff. Yetta now moved from being a volunteer in environmental justice concerns to a full-time staff member of the CCJ. Between the time that Yetta started as a volunteer at CCJ and the time she joined them as a full-time staff person, in 1996, she had completed her degree in political science at

Seattle University and had also completed a masters degree in non-profit management, at the same university.

In the conduct of the community-based research concerning household chemicals the CCJ worked in cooperation with the American Lung Association. The Lung Association provided an office in downtown Seattle for Yetta as a base of operations for her research. In addition, staff there helped her to develop questionnaires to be left at the homes of prospective respondents. For those respondents who decided to participate in the survey for the research the Lung Association also provided a green cleaning kit of environmentally friendly household cleaning products. In addition, a mattress cover and a non-allergenic pillow was provided to each participating household. It was Yetta who went door to door in the designated neighborhoods to personally conduct the interviews. Confidentiality was assured to each participating household. The sole purpose of the interview was to take the information gathered to ascertain about how poor families are impacted by household chemicals.

Yetta visited each of the fifty-four families who participated in the study two times over a nine month period. On the first visit she conducted the interview. On the second visit she checked to see if families of asthmatic children were using the green household cleaning products; removing their shoes upon entering the household; using the mattress cover and pillow she had furnished; and following the other suggestions she had given each family.

In her study she discovered how difficult it is to manage asthma. She was helping to reduce the triggers for asthma in each household. But that was only a beginning of her findings. She discovered how a single parent household is held captive by the presence of an asthmatic child. Because the condition is life threatening a parent or responsible adult has to be nearby the child at all times in the event that an asthmatic attack occurs. The kinds of jobs single mothers in the Central District typically hold do not have emergency leave taking built into their format. What this means is that many mothers she had interviewed stayed home full-time because of the distress associated with not being able to leave work when the child with asthma needed assistance during an asthmatic attack.

This link between environmental triggers for asthma and economic repercussions for poor people became solidified for Yetta. She began to see a downward spiraling relationship between environmental triggers for asthma and economic impact on single parent households. Yet that was not the whole picture. Yetta also uncovered case after case of broken windows, broken locks on doors, broken pipes, mold, roach problems, and other housing code violations. “I ended up getting Scott Miller from King 5 News to follow me around for a day. He actually followed me to two home visits and taped some of what I saw. There were a lot of substandard conditions.”

As a consequence of her determined work on this project, a board member of CCJ came forth to mentor Yetta. This was a reward for the leadership Yetta had demonstrated. "She took me under her wings to teach me what I needed to know to keep this organization going: about the funding, watching the budget, accountability; working in the community. (She) showed me a lot of things. And I sought out training in other places, like I'd go to Western State Center." Western State Center is a training facility in Oregon. "I was selected to be part of what they called, at that time, the Advanced Leadership and Mentorship Project, ALAMP. You fill out this lengthy application, and they pick a certain number of people to go through three, three-day trainings a year that are really intense. All day, three-day trainings where you learn a lot of stuff."

At the time of this training at Western State Center, Yetta became the Executive Director of CCJ. "The first thing I did was look at where do I need to strengthen my skills so that I can be successful."(I was) very new. I didn't know a thing about what this was all about. I was still learning about the issues. And I've just now become a master of the game. It took me this long to really get to where I feel like I've got it figured out. It takes awhile to learn. And we also had another staff person who was part time who did administrative work. And my job was to advance the mission." One of Yetta's many strengths as an executive director is to encourage a very active board. Some of the board members are from the community and others are concerned people who have expertise to contribute or who want to support the growth of CCJ.

CCJ is successful in Yetta's view because the organization always seeks counsel from community members before it undertakes a project. At the completion of one project, a community survey is conducted in order to ascertain the felt needs of the community. These needs are then prioritized according to incidence of community member response. This practice is critical for Yetta because it then allows her to solicit active participation from the community. After the indoor air project that Yetta conducted, CCJ, for example, wrote a proposal to the Seattle Health Department. The Department commissioned a Environmental Health Survey for South Park, another neighborhood in Seattle's Central District. Two hundred eighty families participated in this survey. She had resistance initially from officials at the health department and from members of the community. Both groups told her that "poor people are busy being poor and are not interested in environmental issues."

The results of the survey showed a concern about air pollution. Many of the respondents reported smelling chemical odors. They thought that the odors might be making them sick. The results of the survey showed that the respondents who were most concerned about odors and fumes lived in close proximity to the Long Paint Company. This company paints onsite and is involved in the painting of buses, trucks and parts of buildings that are hauled to the company site. This site was in South Park, the neighborhood that was surveyed in the Environmental Health Survey. Yetta began to organize the

community. A law student from the University of Washington did research within the Seattle Health Department to track that various reported violations of the health code committed by Long Paint. Other points of pressure were created. For example, a committee from the community was organized to begin a long series of meetings with officials from Long Paint.

In the beginning, there was scant acknowledgment that a problem even existed. Then Long Paint agreed to curtail its hours of on-site painting. Next injunctions were brought against the company's practice of storing toxic products in residential homes that the company owned in the vicinity of the site. Newspapers began to report concerning the violations, unpaid fines, toxic practices and protracted obstruction of environmental justice by Long Paint. Then came a breakthrough. "Because of the organizing that we've done with the community; because of the pressure and all the regulatory agency attention, they (Long Painting) actually moved to Kent."

One of the ways that success was achieved in this case related to Yetta's willingness to get deeply involved in the finest details of the situation. She learned about EPA regulations, about chemicals and their composition, about zoning laws, about reporting standards, about regulatory enforcement, about inter-agency cooperation in enforcement. This is a cumulative knowledge base that allows her to detect openings for the refinement of environmental justice tactics on behalf of the poor and peoples of color. With the successful removal of Long Paint Company to an industrial park in Kent, Washington, the CCJ under Yetta's leadership turned to other environmental justice issues. CCJ is now supporting the community in conversations about what they would like to do with the land on which Long Painting once located. Some residents wish to extend Duwamish Park now across the street from the site to include the site. Other residents discuss having a community garden on the site. Still others want to build low income residential units on the site. Under any circumstances the 'South Seattle Toxins Project' has been a huge success on behalf of the community that was once subjected to the toxic fumes and overspray.

In addition to the South Park Toxics Project CCJ sponsors three other projects. One of these is called the Northwest Environmental Justice Alliance (NEJA). Yetta started this project in March of 2000. "I saw a real need for collaboration between Northwest environmental justice groups. The Funding Exchange has mentioned in their guidelines that the Northwest is one of the most under-funded regions in the area of environmental justice. What that means is that when we don't have strong organizations it's really hard for us to advance on these issues. When we don't have this infrastructure: a copier, computers that work, phones--you need that. And it costs money. We pay rent here. So we found most groups don't have (rent money). They have a one-person operation operating out of their home. They're working with all volunteers. And they're doing really good work but you burn out a lot easier when you've got to make a living and do this."

One of the purposes of the NEJA is to get the other groups who participate in the alliance funded. "If we can do this as a living we can really be effective. It works for other groups. Audubon, Sierra Club have got chapters everywhere. In her graduate work and the mentoring she received, along with the training at Western State, Yetta has learned to model not-profits on a business model. "We're non-profit in that we are not making a profit like selling products. We get donations in order to do good things for the community. But it is like running a small business. You have to have that mindset." A third project is the Environmental Justice Youth Advocates. "There is a high school student out of Franklin who runs that, and it's a group of sixteen youths that are Franklin High School Students, who meet every Thursday and learn about environmental justice. After they attend five months of training, where we have speakers come in, teach them about issues, they're supposed to help us recruit new members and educate the community by doing presentations and projects." This youth group had recently completed three presentations to the community. There was an average of forty people in attendance at the sessions conducted by the youth. They also attended the conference that CCJ sponsored at Seattle University School of Law and offered a presentation at the conference. "And so this is a way where we want to build leadership among youth so we have future folks working on environmental justice." A fourth project is in a holding pattern awaiting the hiring of a staff person to undertake it. It is called PEEP (Poverty Education Empowerment); it relates environment to teaching the poor how to become grass roots organizers.

"The goal (is) to share with the broader community what we've been doing. We (desire to) be accountable to a larger segment of folks. NEJA is an organization that will strengthen the existing organizations as well as help identify future organizations that have to be built. "We've got a whole plan together. The one thing we're working on now is, where is our common ground? How can we work together? And what kind of issues can we support each other on? So that's what we're doing together right now."

NEJA brings together indigenous peoples and peoples of color who already are working on environmental justice and environmental racism. These organizations are drawn from Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Oregon and British Columbia. The purpose is to deal with these issues on a bio-regional basis. "We're trying to deal with our own region, people in our own area, and learn what the issues are because we are all part of the same Northwest environment. Hanford (a nuclear power plant in Eastern Washington) impacts not only Washington but Oregon and Idaho (as well. The goal of NEJA is to strengthen grassroots environmental justice groups in the Northwest. Period. Through training, through dialogue, and through joint campaigns. At some point we're going to take on an issue together and work together on achieving a goal."

The leadership of this group has been meeting since March 2000. "We've been coming together since March (of 2000) and we've organized four gatherings a year. We have a monthly conference call with the leadership committee. At the present time the leadership committee is the board of NEJA. They have created the bylaws, decision-making process, conflict resolution process, and a strategic plan. This provides a collective idea and a shared understanding of where they see themselves headed as an organization. They already know that this new organization will be a "centerpiece for all the organizations in the Northwest to get what they need. It will serve us. We will go to them and say, 'You know, my board needs training, can you send me a resource list of consultants?' And they shoot it out to you. We'll have a regional newsletter that will go out. We'll have a place where if we have an action we send it to NEJA, and they mobilize all the members."

Some of the groups that are part of it are the Environmental Justice Action Group Of Portland, Willamette Valley Forest Workers, United Farm Workers Union, some members of the Spokane Tribe, the CCJ and others. It is clear from the way that Yetta discusses this alliance that she sees herself and her future as a director of the organization. This is Yetta, the master of her game, at her most inspired place. What drives her to take on ever growing levels of responsibility?

"The constant suffering my people experience in the community, and that I see other people experiencing, the illness rates, the injustice that I see when poor people stand up and say, 'We have to do something'. It takes longer to win. The fact that if you have the money, you can hire lawyers to fight for you and you can win. When you're poor, you don't have that." She is motivated by the very fact that the problem exists. Does she suffer in what she sees and faces? "Oh, I don't feel despair. I feel empowered. I think that people are inspired by the fact that CCJ has had success in eliminating pollution through organizing. And I think that's the hope, that even though there is a lot of stuff wrong, that we can win if we understand how the system works and we utilize it. A lot of people are really inspired by looking, seeing other people win. Not only CCJ, but I see other organizations that are successful, too. So that's inspiring to me."

Yetta epitomizes the ordinary person who has taken upon herself to become a biospheric humanitarian. She willingly and knowingly encourages, trains, inspires and cajoles others to join the struggle. She makes her success sound very simple. "We really emphasize that it's critical that you know who the decision makers are so that you know who you need to pressure. If you don't know who your representatives are in your district, who the mayor is it's really hard to make change."

Chapter 10 A Sufi Master and Diplomat

Jamshid came recommended to me through a group of women spiritual practitioners. Upon hearing the description of my purpose in locating and interviewing eight participants for a study concerning biospheric humanitarians, three of the six women present recommended Jamshid. I interviewed Jamshid on May 3, 2003, at the Interfaith Community Church, which he founded and where he is senior pastor.

Jamshid was born in 1950 in Eastern Pakistan, which country became Bangladesh, in 1971. At that time Jamshid became a Bangladeshi by citizenship. His parents were senior ranking diplomats in Pakistan's and then Bangladesh's Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Because of his father's prestige within the Bangladeshi Ministry of Foreign Affairs he had the privilege of choosing the seat of his own Ambassadorship. When Jamshid was in his early teens, his father chose Canada and became the Bangladeshi Ambassador to Canada. Jamshid traveled with his parents to Canada and later remained there to become a citizen of Canada. At the present time Jamshid is seeking to become a citizen of the United States. This interest in American citizenship involves security reasons.

These facts of nationality and citizenship are a means by which Jamshid discusses his fervent passion for being a global citizen. At fifty-three years of age Jamshid regards himself as now being ripe for an expanded role in politics, governance and diplomacy. As a Sufi Master his proper field of expertise is religion. Sufism is the mystical strain of Islam. It is Jamshid's involvement in Sufism that makes of him a practicing mystic. Sufism never contents itself in abiding separately from the cares and concerns of the world. Thusly is Jamshid actively engaged in ecumenical dialogue as well as concerns about environment and social issues like poverty, homelessness and hunger.

Just as his parents trained him in the mysteries of Sufism so did his father train him in the fine points of diplomacy. His father presented to Jamshid and to the world a seamless garment of diplomacy informed by spirituality. It has been Jamshid's destiny to follow in his father's footsteps. Jamshid, then, is both a Sufi Master and a diplomat. One of the challenges presented to me in this interview with Jamshid concerns a taboo that he observed throughout the interview. The taboo does not allow a devout Muslim to speak directly about him or her self. One can speak quite liberally about one's parents, grandparents and ancestors. One can openly espouse his or her devotion to Islam, to Allah and to the Prophet Mohammed. One dare not speak directly about one's own accomplishments and victories. I had to make inference through my conversation with Jamshid about his involvement in the community as well as about his commitment and passion as a biospheric humanitarian. The women who recommended him had already portrayed some of his involvement in community affairs to me. In addition, in

times past, I had had occasion to attend worship services at the church he founded.

Even in his indirect manner of speaking about himself, Jamshid provided rich detail about the inner workings of his life; about how he makes decisions; about how he has come to his present point of view concerning his mission and purpose; about how he had prepared himself for the contribution he will now make as a biospheric humanitarian. Jamshid provided splendid detail about his parents' and grandparents' lives and work. By inference he was providing evidence about his own commitments and work. In Jamshid's culture one honors one's forebears by taking and using wisely what one has been given by them. In his case, as what follows will make amply evident, Jamshid was trained deliberately over the course of many years to be a diplomat and a Sufi mystic. These gifts and abilities he uses to great effect in the local community.

Jamshid is a highly regarded member of an ecumenical community of Seattle, sponsored by the Interfaith Church, and has a particular focus on pastoral concern for the socially disadvantaged. He is a leader in a significant ecumenical dialogue that concerns itself with root structures within religious dogma that cause oppression, contempt and are the source of violence against the 'other'. This I know not especially because of our discussion during the interview rather because of his reputation with colleagues also known by me. He spoke often of his 'good luck' by way of allowing for certain roles and positions of prominence he has attained. When he speaks of his 'good luck' he is recognizing the ascendancy of Allah in all matters great and small. Jamshid finds his way into the arena of social and environmental justice concerns not through a political consciousness, rather through a spiritual consciousness. While others among the subjects are prompted to action by social justice concerns Jamshid is prompted by his spiritual understanding and his compassion. His religion is not based in nature, as was the case with Monica, the Makah tribal leader. Monica comes directly in her religion to see nature as sacred. Creator is known through nature for her. For Jamshid mystical awareness of the Beloved, the Divine Creator, Allah, is first cultivated and then one comes to see the sacredness of the natural order through knowledge of God's goodness. By extension, nature is known to be sacred and good because only good can come from Allah, the Beloved.

When Jamshid discussed the origins of his care and concern for others, he was drawn back to the upheaval his people experienced even before he was born. In 1947 Pakistan became an independent state when it separated from India. The separation occurred along religious lines, since Pakistan was mainly Muslim and India was predominantly Hindu. Because of this separation from India along religious lines there were two Pakistans separated by more than a thousand miles of India. East and West Pakistan shared Islam as the main religion and yet they had many things that they did not share. This caused further disruption in the lives of ordinary people. In 1971, when Jamshid was 21

years of age, East Pakistan became Bangladesh. “Because of economic disparities, and the location of political power, what they thought was economic justice and political justice, that was too much. That actually overwhelmed what they had in common: religion. And the insight is that religion is powerful, but really economic and political considerations can override that.”

While Jamshid is keenly aware of the religious rivalry and the economic disparity that caused further discord among the people, much of it did not affect him personally. “My parents were diplomats. So we traveled all over the world. So I cannot say I have lived too long in my part of the world. He was a very senior diplomat in that part of the world. My father became a Middle Eastern expert. So (we spent time) in many countries in the Middle East, like Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Egypt and also Iran (and) Turkey. We lived in India. We lived in Germany. We lived in Canada. I’m missing a few. (We moved) every two years, year-and-a-half.” Jamshid regards this opportunity to travel his good fortune. “Because, really, nothing breaks down prejudices more than the actual practice of traveling and actually participating in the life of the community.”

“So I really, sincerely believe that traveling, participating in the community, and, as you were saying, truly participating in the community, on various levels, over a period of some time, is the best way to overcome prejudices, and, I might say, to increase one’s awareness. If I feel that my prejudice level is not low, but lower than some.” He attributes this fact to his travels. In discussing travel he does not speak of tourism. To break down prejudice requires “participating, engaging oneself.” Jamshid’s exposure to poverty has been indirect. “I cannot say I have experienced poverty. My parents, I have to say, were if not well off, quite comfortable. If you become ambassador, you are well taken care of.” He has had plenty of exposure to poverty based on his willingness to participate. “I’ve seen it. I’ve been in it. I have not suffered it. But I have witnessed poverty, injustice. I witnessed a fact.” He also knows about racism. “We talk about racism; we talk about the separate discrimination. But I’ve noticed that when there is a certain economic wealth a lot of that falls away. At least in theory.” Jamshid discusses racism in a way that places him in a direct alignment with three other subjects of this study; Yetta, Serena and Rory. In his discussion of racism he brings economic factors to bear. At the root of his understanding of racism is the notion that it is driven by the mentality of scarcity. “It’s not an accident that much of racism or discrimination is with people who have lower economic status.”

How did Jamshid become sensitized to the environment and to other peoples in the way that he has? What he describes in what follows is an intricate and meticulous process. The process involves the whole of oneself. It requires that every thing be set aside so that one can pursue self-knowledge. When one then attains a certain satisfactory degree of self-knowledge one is competent to understand properly others. “I do come from a Sufi lineage. Sufism is just the mystical side of Islam. I find it very precious. Absolutely. And in the Sufi

lineage, as also in the Islamic education, it is the duty of parents to educate the children." In all the travels of his family, his parents were his main teachers of the tenets and basic values of Islam. "And then of course as I grew older my parents dedicated even more time to sharing and spending a lot of their active mind and heart time in truly educating me and my brother and my sister." Since this religious training is regarded as taking in account the whole of one's life he was educated by his parents in certain psychological, economical, emotional and spiritual practices of the Islamic faith. Beyond the training that his parents personally provided to him they also sent Jamshid to teachers in Europe and the Middle East. "Then after I finished my Masters in Berkeley, California -- I was in the Ph.D. program in Berkeley-- I had a choice of either doing my Ph.D. or studying with my parents. And the choice was given, and I chose to study with my parents." This particular portion of his training required his full-time involvement through the next seven years. He once regarded this work as "very inconvenient" and has come to regard it as "very productive, very rewarding". "The main task was to examine, to explore, and to establish a relationship with myself."

In Sufism there is no fixed curriculum. The teaching flows from the understanding that each student has a particular need at a particular time. "For me, apparently the need was to look at my ego. It is with everybody, but for me in some special ways. The study became at a more advanced stage to focus on some verses of the Koran, but particularly verses of Rumi. (I had) to meditate on and connect that to some psychological exercises in integrating my ego. Meaning becoming very aware of who I really am." This protracted work on the ego lays the foundation for going beyond the ego. "We all want to go beyond the ego but in Islam that's surrender. And the question becomes, what are you surrendering? So it's easy for me to say, 'Oh, Allah, I surrender to you.' But then the question, the prime question is, 'Jamshid, what are you surrendering?' Well, you're surrendering the fragments of your ego, which you can surrender only when, as Rumi says, for example, you have gathered these scattered fragments of your ego and put them together. Put them together."

"The work of shining the light of awareness on oneself, in Sufi Islam, is the main work. It is meant to occupy the very central focus of our lives. Most importantly, one undertakes this primary work with gentleness and compassion." Jamshid went on to explain that this merciful attitude toward oneself is not an escape. It is merely the wisest strategy by which to engage the rigorous self-scrutiny that is required. A similar path of self-scrutiny is inherent in every major religion. In Taoism, for example it is written: "If you want to shrink something; if you want to diminish something, first allow it to expand.'" Jamshid's central point was that it is the light of awareness that is expanded.

This was Jamshid's practice for seven years, to expand the light of awareness on the conditioned aspects of himself. He explained that once one gains an awareness of these conditioned aspects of one's ego, one is then ready

for the next step, called in Sufism “the Divine Exchange”. His example of what he meant by the Divine Exchange came from a 13th century Sufi mystic and poet, Jelalludin Rumi, Jamshid. Rumi says: “Oh, heart, where can you find a customer more beautiful than God? He pays in gold; buys your shabby goods, your dirty bag of goods; accepts your counterfeit coins; and gives you a spiritual spring so delicious that even sugar is jealous of its sweetness.”

Jamshid explains that the practice goal is to continue the self-exploration in such a way that verses like the one quoted in the foregoing spontaneously begin “to splash in your chest”. Jamshid tells of his struggle with his own ego. It is the ego, he says, that would interfere with his doing the real work he had come to do. Jamshid states on many occasions through the course of the interview that his own study had specifically to do with breaking the grasp of the ego so that he could engage in his life’s work. To make his point about the ego, he again referred to Rumi. The ego is likened by Rumi to a candle that one uses to find one’s way in the dark. Once one arrives in the land of the radiant sun the candle becomes subsumed by the light of the radiant sun. It is only when one’s ego is subsumed by the sun that one knows oneself. . One now becomes a safe person to work in the world. Indeed in Sufism one is compelled to enter the world and to live and work in the world.

“The Koran says, not literally, but it suggests the truly spiritual person is one who participates in the bazaar of life, buying, selling, marrying, having children. Two cars in the garage. With all these difficult problems, this and that, mortgage problems. And yet never for a moment forgets God. And acts as if and speaks as if, one is continuously seeing God.” Jamshid’s father’s life provided a warning about humanitarian service. A tragedy that befell Jamshid’s father, the distinguished diplomat, became an important object lesson for him about the affairs of the world. At a point when he was very far advanced in an illustrious diplomatic career his father ran afoul of the military dictator of Bangladesh. Jamshid’s father spoke against the harshness of the regime. Word of these statements eventually were carried to the dictator. He recalled Jamshid’s father from his posting in Canada. He was placed under house arrest. Only when the dictator was killed in a coup six years later did this situation resolve itself. Jamshid’s father struggled mightily in Bangladesh to save himself from going to prison. This he was able to do. His diplomatic career, however, was cut short on a very sour note. Because of Jamshid’s close relationship with his father and due to the fact that his father was training him to be a the father’s tragic end to a noble diplomatic career proved to be a cautionary lesson for Jamshid.

The practical effect of his father’s fate on Jamshid’s life in the present is that he is carefully making application for United States’ citizenship. As a Muslim cleric functioning in a suspect environment, he has to choose carefully his path of action. His concern for his well-being is warranted; he proceeds carefully.

The tragic aspect of his father's demise was the sincerity for which his father was rightly known. This is the aspect with which Jamshid has struggled the most. Jamshid himself had a political career when he was younger so he has had a taste of the forces with which his father had had to confront. Jamshid in his younger days was not yet ready to follow in his father's footsteps. "I believed in the issues, but did I really understand the issues on a true, sincere, heartfelt level? I feel only now, and I'm fifty-three, have I reached that point where I can really, sincerely say I feel that issue as much as I think that issue. So only now I feel I can go back to my twenties and become more political, more active, in the sense of taking action because I really, sincerely, fully, on a heart level -- not only believe in it. I participate in it. So for me, this is a new chapter of my life starting." Jamshid knows that his father paid for his principles with his life. Is that the price that Jamshid will have to pay? This is a riddle that he knows he cannot resolve for himself save by following in his father's footsteps. What this means to him is that he has to live to the same standards that his father followed. The purpose is exalted and yet it is also not wholly comforting to him. Jamshid is a full-fledged diplomat with excellent credentials and training under the watch of a distinguished diplomat, his father.

Jamshid is aware of the expectations that have been placed upon him relative to this diplomatic training and his many opportunities for travel. In addition, he has his Sufi training to support him in the work that lies ahead for him. Because he is in a genetic lineage, he has the guidance that his deceased grandfather holds out for him. His grandfather was a prominent Muslim cleric, trained in Sufism, who lived and taught in northern Bengal, before India was divided according to religion. Although his grandfather was well educated he never sought anything for himself except the simple life in remote villages. "He believed so staunchly that Islam is about equality of gender. So the greatest priority was to educate the women. In his lifetime he established a lot of schools and a lot of colleges in that area."

His grandfather maintained large mango groves. The proceeds from the sales of the mangoes provided the revenue needed for the schools. One of the colleges that his grandfather founded was situated in the village where he lived. This college was only for women. To this day Jamshid and members of the Interfaith Community Church, which he founded in Seattle, sustain the operations of that college through a yearly funding drive, as well as other contributions. This allows Jamshid to have a direct contact in his work and service to the legacy bequeathed him by his grandfather. A second legacy he has from his grandfather is the concept of spaciousness. "Islam—any way of life is about cultivating spaciousness within oneself, spaciousness of the mind, spaciousness of the heart. My favorite word is the need to create spaciousness in our hearts and minds. That is what life is about." His grandfather was also a healer and a rainmaker. "He was well known for creating the rains to fall." Although his grandfather employed elaborate techniques including hand movements and citations from the Koran, when he was pressed for his secret of making the rains

to fall he offered an explanation that in no way depended on his gestures or his scriptural citations. He explained that prior to going to a site of a drought to pray for rain he would spend two to three weeks alone in a mosque praying and fasting.

The whole point and purpose of his prayer and fasting were to assist him to "get in touch with an anguished cry from within, a real heartfelt anguish cry. In Islam this is called increased necessity." The idea is to have increased necessity from the very depths of one's being. This increased necessity has to proceed from the soul and not from the personality. It was the fact that his grandfather could actually access this increased necessity within himself that allowed him to create the rains to fall. Jamshid seemed to be practicing his own version of increased necessity as he works to convey what his grandfather was capable of accomplishing, by this practice. Jamshid states, "It's not just a theoretical idea. It's not just a nice idea. 'I beg you, from the depths, from the core, from the infinite depths of my soul, may rain fall, from my anguished cry.'" He explains that it is the capacity to get in touch with that deep vibration of longing, the energy of an anguished, soulful cry that is in itself the capacity to open the floodgates of heaven and make the rain happen. Such a capacity is constructed of sincerity, compassion and powerful intention. There has to be some action in the external domain, as well. It is important that sincerity underpin the action; it cannot come from one's ego. According to Jamshid, "That's why Confucius said 'Sincerity has the power to shift heaven and earth'."

At this time, says Jamshid, "I'm ready for doing some outer work. Oh, I aspire to have it that way, to have the quality of increased necessity. I pray I have the depth of that increased necessity, of that anguished cry from within, sincerely, for justice, for peace, for equity, for goodness around me. So I pray that I'll be a vessel for that, but I pray that I continuously develop the depths for that. Allah be praised." In some ways, his work has already begun. Jamshid works in the Seattle Interfaith Community Church. He attends to the exigencies associated with the lives of the less fortunate as a founding member of the Multi-Faith Coalition for Social Justice. This latter group tackles the issues of poverty, homelessness and hunger in the Washington area.

Jamshid is the teacher of doing lifetime work on oneself in preparation for service and as a way of being in service. He leads his interfaith community in the inner work as well as the outward expression. "Many members are encouraged to do volunteer work in social organizations. Since we believe that we have done some inner work—a lifetime process—we feel ready to engage ourselves actively in social and justice issues. Consequently a large number of members are involved in political, environmental and social justice projects. Some are entering leadership positions in those organizations. Another aspect of the work is to relate to and work with people and groups we disagree with. Consequently we have recently begun dialogue and collaborative projects with fundamentalist Jewish and Christian groups." He is actively seeking more extensive

involvement for himself in “economic, political and social issues”. He also wants more collaboration with other groups. He knows that by the nature of his background and training his work is quite political. He wisely awaits his full United States citizenship before becoming involved again in politics. He is sustained in his work by his faith, his community and by friendship. His parents and grandparents, who have gone before him, also oversee his work. Most significantly, perhaps, his work is heart centered. “I work with some Sufi techniques in nourishing the heart. Also I seek help from That Absolute Mystery, God. I have great faith in the invisible world.”

Chapter 11 A Survivor and Scientist

Yetta, the Executive Director of the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, suggested that I arrange an interview with Serena. Serena is also an executive director of a social justice agency in the Central District of Seattle. Apart from their respective directorships of agencies, Yetta and Serena work together on coalitions of social and environmental justice agencies and hold seats on two foundation boards together. The interview with Serana took place on May 19, 2003, at her office in the Central District of Seattle.

Serana is a forty-eight year old ethnic Chinese who is an American citizen. She was born in the Borough of Queens, New York City, in Flushing. Her parents were expatriate mainland Chinese. They took the infant Serena to Thailand where she spent her first years while her father, an ordained Baptist preacher, headed the American Bible Society there. While it will become abundantly clear in the story. that she is a biospheric humanitarian, I have also cast her as a survivor and a scientist. My purpose is to honor her for her courage and her dedication to life.

When Yetta had given me Serana's name she had briefed me about why Serena would be a good interview subject. Serena is a very serious and intense person as the following pages will make clear. She spoke to me in direct, terse statements, without elaboration. I had the uncanny experience with her that she had known beforehand all the questions I would ask. I found her forthcoming and cooperative especially after the environment between us became friendly and congenial or "safe" for her to use her term.

Serena's parents came from Shanghai to Flushing, New York. Once she was born, her family moved to Thailand for the next four years. They returned from Thailand in 1959. She explains, "The reason (that) we moved to Thailand is (that) my father worked for the American Bible Society." Her father was the American Bible Society's representative for the Southeast Asia region; he was an ordained Baptist minister. Her father left the ministry in the late sixties. "He had a nervous breakdown. He had a mental illness episode during his time with the American Baptist Society. Once he became mentally ill, the family's fortunes plummeted Serena properly regards the mental illness that both her parents suffered as a negative influence on her. Teachers, however, have been a positive influence on her, primarily two high school teachers. Serena's parents emphasized to her the importance of education. She regards this emphasis, more generally, as an aspect of Chinese culture. Serena noticed in the lower grades that her performance in school was directly related to how her parents acted toward her. When she did not excel in school, for example, she was forced to live on the streets. She first slept on the street at seven years of age.

The teachers in high school were good role models for her. In addition, they helped her through some of her difficult times with her parents. Serena

achieved so well in the lower grades that she was able to win a place for herself at the Bronx High School of Science. Her teachers were getting advanced degrees themselves such that Serena and her classmates were exposed to the most recent developments in science at a very early age.

While Serena was busy excelling in her school work she was also suffering different kinds of abuse. Her parents, as a consequence of their mental illness, abused her. Physical beatings, verbal abuse and threats usually preceded their forcing her to leave her home. In the streets Serena encountered more abuse. She was a girl and then a young woman so sexual assault, attempted sexual assault and threats of sexual assault were the norm for her in her street life. She was hassled with racial invective as well.

The racial torment began in Queens when she was in the lower grades. Irish American boys chased her after school and beat her. Her struggles have led her to become very philosophical and reflective. "Safety is a primary need for every living thing. (In) my experience, what I think really drove my actions and my need for planning and decision-making, all that really was around safety. Stay away from the cops who were beating me up. Climb a tree. Stay away from gangs of other kids that were beating me up. Hide in bushes. But then there's nutritional safety. I knew I'd be hungry, so I'd dig a hole and bury a cache of candy bars and stuff like that, so I had something to eat when I was a kid, when my parents threw me out of the house. So I wouldn't be hungry." Candy bars? "I know. I was a kid. And candy bars kept."

Serena slept in city parks. "Where else do you sleep when you are out in the street? It (had) the safest places to sleep. (I could) find a bunch of bushes (to) hide underneath them where nobody else would bug you. Or climbing trees. I climbed trees and slept in the tops of trees, because nobody ever looks up." Her principal project was to protect herself form abuse. "I'm sure you knew at that time the police department in New York was extremely corrupt. They used to pick on me and harass me and beat me. I had to stay away from the police as well as staying away from other trouble. So I used to climb trees or hide under bushes. Cops never looked up. I heard a lot of interesting things (while I was) hiding in those trees." Her friends became the Jewish kids in the neighborhood. They took her into their families. She began to spend more time in synagogue than she was spending in the Baptist Church attended by her parents. She believes that the Jewish kids were so helpful to her because "they have such an incredible history of oppression that they incorporate into their heritage, in their culture, to make sure that they understand the oppression of others."

Serena finally left home when she was sixteen and a half. Her decision was based on her estimation that she could lead a more stable life outside her parents' home. She rented a room in a large home that was occupied by college students. Her life stabilized around school and school attendance, beginning with junior high school. Serena does credit the Thai members of the large Bible

house where she lived with her parents during her first four years with providing nurturance to her. "There were a lot of servants and a lot of workers at the Bible House that I interacted with. I remember very well and I think that that's where I got a lot of my positive stuff. (My) kindness and the caring and the confidence probably came from those people." As far as survival skills are concerned, she learned to survive by making decisions. An inner toughness or resilience developed for her. She was "able to realize that I wasn't going to get anywhere by running out and crying all the time." She learned to think ahead and to strategize. "I learned how to play chess; I was very good at chess…That kind of strategy has been a major part of the way that I conduct my life."

At the Bronx High School of Science, "biology was where I had the most interest and where I really excelled. And I remember having these incredible biology teachers even in the early classes, before we got into the specialized classes. (There was) the openness of this one teacher, his interest in broadening us to not only understand what was in the textbooks, but looking at naturalists' activities, and going beyond." She began to learn about evolution and botany. "I was learning gel-electrophoresis in 1972 when it was new in research. We were getting it at the high school level." One of her classmates at the Bronx High School for Science had a father who was a "hotshot birdwatcher". "You know, the ones that are on the top of the list of expert birders. They get called whenever a rare bird comes into the city. He taught me how to birdwatch." Her birdwatching took her away on weekends; it also took her into nature. She traveled to upstate New York, to Jamaica Bay, the Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania, to Long Island and Montauk. Serena enjoyed the habitats and the natural beauty as much as she enjoyed the bird watching. After graduating from Bronx High School, Serena took her excellent survivalist skills and her stellar education to the State University of New York at Stony Brook. There she "got involved in ecology and evolution and majored in behavioral ecology, which is the study of animal behavior and how different behaviors are adaptations to environmental needs. (I) studied animal behavior for three years. (I) did quite a bit of research on redwing blackbirds."

It was at Stonybrook that she continued activist interest that had begun in high school. She involved herself in protests against the Vietnam War and was also involved in activism on behalf of the war veterans from Vietnam. She joined cooperatives at the university that focused on larger socio-political issues and way-of-life issues, as well. "I belonged to the only food cooperative at the University. It was kind of a weird thing. The University had a big ruling that said that you had to be part of a meal plan. The way that we got out of that meal plan was we formed a vegetarian co-op. But, of course, the vegetarian co-op brought a lot of political stuff with it as well. We got involved in more of the social justice issues of the region and labor issues. (I) got away from corporate foods." She remained at Stony Brook for five years. She did not finish her undergraduate degree at that time, although she published research papers.

Her parents continued to be a negative influence on her. "I was finding (that) biology and research continued to be my haven from my personal issues with my parents."

She then moved to Seattle and "got a job here doing behavioral teratology research as a research technologist at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences" at the University of Washington. Teratology is the "study of animal behavior and how it's changed by exposure of the mother to toxic environments." She did research with rats that had been exposed to low iron. When Ronald Reagan took office their project was defunded. She moved to the Department of Pathology to study blood vessel biology and remained in that position for eleven years.

Through these years as a researcher, from 1978 through 1993, Serena did volunteer work. She worked extensively with Seattle Rape Relief; taught English as a second language; worked in the deaf-blind program at Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind; and worked at the Northwest AIDS Foundation. In 1993, "I left the country and did a volunteer job in Kenya with the Minnesota International Health Volunteers. And I did community development work in a peri-urban slum in Nairobi. It was a health project, community based health project, and a clinic. I learned a tremendous amount. At the same time I did volunteer with the Kenya Red Cross AIDS Counseling Center." I playfully suggested to her that she was being a volunteer to the power of two. She was already a volunteer with a full time commitment. She volunteered in her spare time as well. "Yeah! Well, you know, it's like my job. Even though I was a volunteer, (I) was with the health project, and then also volunteered with the Kenya AIDS NGO's consortium, which was just starting up at that time. I was one of the beginning members of the consortium, representing Minnesota International Health Volunteers. I also represented Kenya AIDS Red Cross. I was on the Counseling Center advisory committee." She returned to Seattle from Kenya in 1996 after three years' service. She toyed with the idea of returning to the scientific research but decided against it. "Then I got accepted to a fellowship at MIT. They have a program called Community Fellows Program in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. I wrote a proposal, submitted it to the Director of the program. (I) met with him. He gave me the challenge that if I raised a certain amount of money towards developing the ideas that I had set up in my proposal that he would take me as a fellow. I did so. (I) had one of the most life-changing experiences at that program."

A Boston-based political person named Mel King was the director of the program at MIT in which Serena enrolled. "He is an incredible leader, an incredible person. You can just feel his presence. He's the kind of leader that when there's a really heavy conversation going on, with a lot of very strong personalities, as soon as Mel says, 'Well…' everybody shuts up." Serena was captivated with King's charm and charisma and drew extensively on his experience. King challenged Serena and was able to draw her best effort from

her. In the 1980s, King had been a state legislator in Massachusetts. He ran for mayor in Boston in an effort to break the hold that the Democratic machine held on Boston. In that mayoral race, he took a position for the poor and people of color. Serena had found in King the advocate she had not had in her younger years as a street kid in New York. While a Fellow at the Community Fellows Program at MIT, Serena did research on a Youth Environmental Justice Program, which she then implemented in the agency she now directs, once she returned to Seattle. She launched the program in 1997. The program is called "WILD". It is Wilderness Inner City Leadership Development. In the first year of this program, Serena's agency worked very closely with Yetta's agency, CCJ, to close a medical waste incinerator at the Seattle VA Hospital. Serena guided the youth in developing the initial brochure. The youth went door-to-door on Beacon Hill, site of the hospital, to alert residents about the toxic effects of the incineration and the danger to them. The youth were all high school kids. Serena was the Youth Program Director. At the completion of this project, she became Executive Director of her agency, her current position. Today she oversees the work of fourteen people and directs operations in the main office and two satellite offices.

She is known among her colleagues and peers for her prodigious work efforts. She is tireless in her efforts on behalf of the poor and people of color. One element that sustains her is her relationship with her husband whom she describes as a "very special individual". Another sustaining element is her very passion for social justice. When she developed the WILD Program she had the intention of exposing inner city youth to the same wonders of nature to which she was exposed in her bird watching expeditions while she was in high school "so that they have the opportunities for renewal that I had." For her own renewal she spends time in nature. "I do a lot of backpacking (and) have done a lot of mountain climbing. Through those experiences there's a lot of stuff you deal with in terms of your survival, which link you to urban survival skills. There's a lot of thinking that you have to do, decision making. Is this an avalanche-prone slope that I'm going to cross? And how do I make that assessment, and how am I prepared for it?" One of her gifts from her time in nature is the perspective she gains about the place of humans in the larger scheme of things. "There's also the real renewal piece of realizing the bigger picture, realizing what our place is, what our role is, in the larger scheme of things. People think that they are all so important, and that they're also great, because we think that we can manipulate our environment. But the environments will manipulate us in the end. In a good or a bad way. If we want to continue to pollute our environment, they will in turn wreak havoc on us personally."

As a summary of what sustains Serena in her work as a biospheric humanitarian she made a statement that brought the whole of her life into perspective. This passing observation of hers provides a window into her soul and into her passion for the integration she has made that is such an essential component of her capacity to assist and inspire others. "Whatever you have a

passion for, it's because you've got these things in your past that are not settled, that you're still working out. And all of my work on social justice, I think, stems from my experience, whether it be in dealing with my parents' mental illness, or dealing with the racism that I encountered, or dealing with police brutality, or dealing with some of the hardships of poverty." An important ingredient in her perspective is her willingness to allow what has been to influence her in constructive ways. "When you leave home at sixteen and you try to make it on your own, you don't have a whole lot of money, and you're not going to get a job that pays very much, no matter what. So there are a lot of different things that I've had to deal with, and then dealing with the immigrant experience and the injustices of that. And dealing with living in New York. When I was a kid I used to volunteer in school to assist the disabled classes in my elementary school. I learned a lot there that I still think back to a lot. There are just a ton of things that I'm still working out, that this society is still working out."

As a corollary she added the following remark. "If you let them get the best of you then you're down. If you want to survive you have to find a way that they (victimizers) work for you. You shouldn't stop going. You shouldn't stop fighting for what is right. Just because a tax reduction bill passed that cut assistance, doesn't mean that I should stop fighting for Affirmative Action. Just because George Bush is going to do all these awful things to our environment, open up the Alaska Wildwife Refuge and stuff like that, doesn't mean that I should stop the activism." Because we had our interview in the wake of the most recent war on Iraq, this issue was fresh on Serena's mind. "I had several of my friends that, just during these anti-war protests that were before the day that we ended up invading and actually starting the bombing in Iraq, (who) were all gung-ho and going out to the protests. And as soon as we started bombing, they got so depressed and a feeling of, 'Well, what good is it now?' that they stopped participating." She became quite vocal with her friends in her critique oftheir having desisted in their demonstrating, in raising their voices. "That frustrated me, because to me it's exactly at that point that you need to be the loudest, so that the world doesn't know that you're just going to roll over and let it be okay for the United States to be doing that stuff. I guess that perspective that I have is totally different than some of these friends of mine. Maybe the difference is because where I'm coming from."

Serena also derives sustenance from a spirituality that might be described as a form of nature mysticism. She summarized this spirituality that serves as a source of renewal for her. "I believe in the connectedness of everything, not just people, but all living things and all inanimate things, as well. I think that there's a larger balance that I'm always trying to understand." Her focus in her effort to understand does not rest on products of human invention. "There's isn't necessarily a meaning in a coffee cup, because a coffee cup is something that we as humans have formed for its utilitarian purpose. But the meaningfulness in a rock that has formed over millennia, or the meaningfulness in the way that water droplets reflect light and produce a rainbow, or the meaningfulness in the

wind and how it forms scientifically. Then what that effect is overall. That kind of connectedness and meaningfulness is where I focus my spirituality."

Serena's deep involvement in and with nature has created the urge for her to simplify her life in terms of material possessions. Her experience in Africa also helped her to find a way of identifying those elements and qualities in her own life that she regarded as essential. "When I came back from Kenya, I wanted to change the way that I lived my life day to day, so that what I was doing on a day-to-day basis would be, if I got hit by a bus tomorrow, I would have absolutely no regrets." There is also the issue of her being more vocal about how much she cares about her loved ones and her friends. "(This involves) letting people who I care about know, and making sure that they know how I feel about them. But also what I do day to day. Usually as you get older your ideals and your principles compromise. And in some ways mine have. In some ways they've gotten stronger, because the experience I had in Kenya was really teaching me that I had to make sure that I wasn't going to have regrets of yesterday today." Her standards for herself are quite rigorous; she struggles with her own humanity and her frailty. As to living up to her standards she observes: "I'm not always able to achieve that, certainly. This job is pretty stressful. Sometimes I act (in) certain ways and do certain things that I don't really mean to (do) because I'm stressed out. And that's when I step back and I think about, 'What do I need to sustain myself?'"

She then spoke to the issue of her external expression, to how and where she does her work in the world. As for her present role as executive director of a social justice organization: "I expect to be here until I see a place that I can just as strongly live by my principles. As an executive director I have a lot of autonomy. As an executive director of a social service agency that focuses on populations that are the most disenfranchised, that gives me exactly what my passions require. I've been offered jobs from other places that would pay me far more than what I get paid here." She has already had a successful career as a research scientist and has carefully weighed the pros and cons of re-entering that career. Because she is such an effective administrator who exercises scrupulous budgetary oversight, she is frequently recruited to take executive positions in the private sector and in industry. "(Such jobs) are a lot less work and stress, but they are also places where I'm not so sure I would agree with all of their politics or the way that they, in my mind, sell out for the larger economic good of the organization. Or that I would be tied into a position where I wouldn't be able to do as much broadness in activities. I do a lot of advocacy and I do a lot of program work. I do a lot of nitty-gritty stuff. Most jobs don't allow you that."

Still others see her as a political force and encourage her to move in the direction of electoral politics. Much of this encouragement comes to her from the poor and people of color who comprise her constituency. "I do not want politics. Politics involves which way the political tide is running. That in this county is fueled by money and not necessarily by principle." It seemed to me that she was

involved in a kind of non-electoral politics. She hastened to agree. “Well I’m on the doorstep of the city council and mayor’s office quite often trying to influence policy. I’m advocating for communities of color down in Olympia (Capital of the State of Washington). In that way I’m in politics.”

She has a sense of the reach of her political influence even at the present stage of her political development. “In the broader sense I serve the whole community. If you want to, you can say that I serve (all King County) communities of color as the president of the Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King County. But then (based on) the stuff that I do, I’m serving the whole community, because even if I’m advocating for people of color, that benefits white people in the end. The education that I give -- well, yeah, maybe I’m doing it because of this person of color over here. But that’s definitely a benefit to the mayor to know that stuff.”

Serena closed the interview with this comment. “I have gotten a tremendous amount from other people.”

Chapter 12 Analysis and Findings

> *Objectivity is an artificial mental construct that attempts to create an authentic, believable 'reality'; however, it fails to do so because the entire, seemingly logical construction is built entirely on subjectivity and belief. There is no inherent authority of 'truth' to any concept except for the subjective value ascribed to it. Credibility is a subjective decision and purely experiential and indefinable. What is convincing to one person may be dismissed as nonsense by another.*
>
> *David R. Hawkins*
> *I: Subjectivity and Reality 324*

Chapter Overview

The first task in this chapter is to present the analytical framework that I have used for discovering themes and counter themes, points of similarity and difference among the eight subjects of this study. Since a purpose of this entire research project is to discover factors that will assist in drawing ordinary people into biospheric humanitarian service, it is this purpose that will elucidate and assist with determining the themes and motifs for discussion and comparison of the subjects' experiences and self-perceptions. The framework for analysis, in addition to the above-mentioned purpose, provides the necessary means to reveal the themes and motifs.

Once the themes have been identified, a comparison of the similarities and differences, motivations and sustaining factors of each of the eight subjects are discussed through the use of direct references from each of the eight subjects' interview manuscripts. This three-step process sets the stage for a discussion of the findings of this research project. Discussion of and reflection about the findings relate the findings back to the original definition of the biospheric humanitarian as well as to the purpose of the research project. A commentary concerning recommendations for next steps based on the findings and potential uses of this research data and the extracted motifs then follows.

Analytical Framework

The organizing principle for the analytical framework is a central purpose and goal of this research project. This purpose is to discover factors that might draw ordinary people into biospheric humanitarian service. In service to this purpose the research project focused on and selected ordinary people who are engaged activists. The framework selected assists in identifying two sets of factors. The first set relates to how the already engaged activists, subjects of this research project, were drawn into their work. Or alternatively, how these engaged activists found their way into the work. What are the constitutional or personality components of these men and women that were responsible for

delivering them into dedicated service? The second focus of the framework addresses the elements that sustain these activists in service.

This analytical framework has four components. What are the factors that led to the decision to become a biospheric humanitarian? How has being a biospheric humanitarian changed the subject(s)? What are the factors that have, or have not, sustained the subject in committed action? What does this subject hold as a future for her/his life as a committed biospheric humanitarian?

These four components were the bases for the original questions to the research subjects during the course of the taped interviews. The components themselves were not the questions. The questions asked of the interviewees were meant to derive information about how each interviewee understood her/him self in reference to each of these four themes or components. The underlying issue, relating to the purpose of learning how to draw ordinary people into humanitarian service, was to seek elucidation about what kinds of people would be likely to take up such service. And once one selects him/her self, what does it take to stay the course?

By separating the subject matter of each interview into these four components, themes or motifs begin to emerge. To identify these themes I used the process of sorting and coding. A further elucidation takes place by comparing the subjects' varying responses to the questions for discussion. Two distinct categories of similarities and differences across subjects begin to emerge relative to the themes that have revealed themselves. I have identified nine themes. They are:

- Degree of commitment
- Source of influence
- Role of education
- Maturity and persistence
- Belief in self
- Sustenance and inspiration
- Mentoring of others
- Principles and practice of non-violence
- Looking toward the future

The next step in the analysis is to utilize each of the nine themes as a means to discuss two sets of variables. The first set relates to how each of the eight subjects relates to the particular theme that is being discussed. The second variable involves a comparison of the significance of the theme among the eight respondents. A short summary statement then follows at the close of the discussion of each of the nine separate themes, as listed in the foregoing.

1. Degree of Commitment:

One of the determinants for degree of commitment relates to how early in the life of the interview subject s/he began to express interest in activism and service. Nell tells us: “I remember (between 12 and 16 years old) being overwhelmed by how my situation was very different (than the situation of those in the soup kitchens). And that caused me to feel that I had a responsibility to those people.” Serena made an early investment of herself and her energies as well.

> At my high school and through college the extracurricular activities were focused around protesting against the Vietnam War and a lot of activism for Vietnam War veterans as well. And then I joined cooperatives, student cooperatives, at the University that opened me to larger political issues, but also way-of-life issues.

Yetta, daughter of sharecroppers, made an early investment of herself in environmental concerns. “My concern for environment in general has been since I was a child. I don't know how old, maybe twelve or eleven. *My family legacy is farmers.* I just understand that my family, like a lot of African-Americans, has very historic ties to land.”

Rory was recruited in activism at the age of 19. He had been strongly influenced in that direction while yet in high school because he was aware of his status as a minority person. His passion to keep his cultural identity (Filipino) paved the way for his recruitment. His early personal experience of racism was the trigger for him to not abdicate his self, as his father had done before him.

It can be said of Monica that she too was born into concern for the environment. Her legacy is similar to that of other Native American tribes. “Most Indian tribes will look at things and think about seven generations in front of them and what’s the impact on that.” Her elders had foreseen their treatment of the environment many generations before she was born. It has been expected of her that she think along the same lines. Jamshid’s heritage, Sufism, teaches that one cannot contribute properly to social and environmental issues until one comes to know oneself. This challenge of knowing oneself requires that one go apart from the world, in Jamshid’s tradition. For Jamshid this period commenced once he had completed his master’s degree from the University of California at Berkeley. “This work of seven years of studying with my parents and then them sending me to other teachers was very, very productive, very rewarding. But, shall I say, very inconvenient work. At least in my case the main task was to examine, to explore, and to establish a relationship with myself.”

Paurice began his awakening in his mid-twenties. He had an accident while water skiing that began a chain of serendipitous events that created the occasion for him to awaken to the need to become more conscious and respectful of his environment, including his own body. Prior to the skiing accident, he had been living a rather non-committal, dissipated life. There were many self-destructive patterns to heal and to reverse for Paurice. His commitment has been gradual and incremental. Byron was leading a rather non-

self-reflective lifestyle earlier in his life, as well. A breakthrough came for him at the age of twenty-six, when he experienced a profound peace as a consequence of a long (19 mile) walk. He sought other occasions to have the same experience which lead to his discovering his vocation as a Peace Pilgrim. “It began to be clear to me what I was born to do. I understood clearly my lifeline.”

Another measure of degree of commitment is longevity of engaged practice as a biospheric humanitarian. Rory has been engaged from the time he was nineteen until his present age of twenty-six. Nell has been engaged in her humanitarian work since she was a teen-ager. She has also been a full-time student much of the time between her first full-time field experience at eighteen until her present age of thirty-one. Her university and graduate education have served to reinforce her commitment to service. Monica recently retired after twenty-nine years of public school teaching (on the Makah reservation). Through her membership in the Thunderbird Lodge (a woman’s secret tribal organization) she was brought into a life of service. The Thunderbird member commits to the restoration of the ancient or traditional ways (Native ways of relating to the Earth). She entered the Lodge shortly after her entrée into puberty. At fifty-six, she has been engaged in various ways since she was fourteen.

Serena became an activist in high school. She has engaged a life of activism as a secondary vocation (volunteer) until 1993, when she left her life as a research scientist to accept a full-time volunteer activist position in Kenya. From that time forward she has been an activist full-time. She is now forty-nine years old. Paurice has been activist as an organic gardner since age twenty-six. He has never owned his own land and therefore has been in teaching and sharecropping relationships to land owners. He has extended his organic gardening practice to twenty-seven years, through which time he has become a sacred gardener (works directly with the plant *devas* and nature *elementals*). Byron grew gradually away from his inner city lifestyle to his present role as Peace Pilgrim. This took a number of years. He has now been engaged in his mission for a little over ten years. He is now fifty-six years old.

Jamshid is now fifty-two years old. His approach to activism has taken a far different track than any of the others interviewed for this study. As a Sufi mystic and cleric, the spiritual realms are the mediators of his constructs for being in the world. One develops oneself carefully and gradually over time. Only when one is ripe for service (when one knows one’s self) does one engage in service to the world. Otherwise one can never be certain that one is actually serving for amelioration, rather than simply making more problems in the world. While Jamshid has been teaching and serving in various ways over the period of his adult life, he believes that he is only now ready for a fully engaged service. Nell has been moving in and out of phases of activism over the time since she finished high school, at eighteen. She too is gradually maturing and growing in her competence as an activist. She is intensely intellectual as well as heartfelt in her desire to serve. At thirty-one she is now completing a doctoral degree while

also doing field research among the taro farmers of Hawaii. Her activism is basically part-time at this juncture.

Yetta has been involved with service organizations through her life as an adult. She has taken leaves of absence to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees in areas that support and further her contributions in the inner city communities of Seattle that she serves. She is now thirty-nine years old. Save for Monica, Yetta has the longest standing career of activism among the members of this research group.

There are other ways, as well, of measuring degree of commitment. Monica, for example, has committed to tackle an issue affecting the entire Earth. "And probably dearest to my heart is the nuclear waste that they have stockpiled underneath the land. That, to me, is one of the greater things that we do. We've taken and used that nuclear power for what we wanted, and that's certainly the parasitic side of it (parasitic: taking without respect; without giving back)." This could be called an externalized commitment; a seeing the consequence of human behavior in the waste and devastation created. Rory addresses this same issue of human consciousness from an internal perspective. "For me, it's always been trying to be mindful. (It is) trying to really step back and gain a perspective that I don't have or that I'm not seeing at the moment. But it's always being mindful of the present and how it's affecting the group or other people. The internal conflicts still have to be worked on. They have to be worked on at the same time with the external, the obstacles that will present themselves. Because I think they go hand in hand in how you work on yourself."

Serena presents yet another dimension of degree of commitment. Her specific example comes from her personal friends' response to the invasion of Iraq by the armed forces of the United States (in 2003). She quotes her friends: 'Well, what good is it now?' They stopped participating. And that frustrated me, because to me it's exactly at that point that you need to be the loudest, so that the world doesn't know that you're just going to roll over and let it be okay for the United States to be doing that stuff." Paurice sees degree of commitment as relating directly to personal realization. "I had given to myself and realized that that's where the power has been for me. In being more myself, is by being and doing exactly what I love to do."

Commitment arises in conjunction with varying human emotions. For Nell guilt and feeling troubled and obligated paved the way for her commitment. For Byron a sense of boredom and ennui brought forth a search for more meaning. Serena refuses to accept defeat or submission in herself. Yetta is motivated by the suffering of others. Paurice turned attraction to a member of the opposite sex into a motivation to change destructive patterns in his own life. He then moved to sharing and teaching what he had learned with others. Pride in cultural identity opened the way for Rory to become a committed activist; Monica learned respect

and obligation of being a caretaker of the Earth as her birthright. Jamshid moves from a deep inner spiritual awareness in his exercise of responsibility.

To summarize the discussion concerning the first theme: Commitment can be seen and measured in a number of ways. Longevity of service provides a marker that determines commitment without measuring the content or depth of commitment. Degree of difficulty of the problems tackled by the biospheric humanitarian is yet another measure. The issues surrounding the toxification of the Earth and her species from the burial of nuclear waste; issues associated with contending with entrenched power structures affecting inner-urban areas are similar in degree of difficulty as they are also similar in being symptoms of hierarchies of dominance (Eisler 1987). The concept of self-work (Shepherd) employed by Rory and the knowing of oneself as espoused by Jamshid are both tools of commitment for preparing the self to engage the external problems encountered in the world. Commitment is multi-faceted. It is the foundation for any further discussion as it is the foundation for the activists' engagement with the self and the world.

2. Source of Influence

Serena observed: "There are positive influences and there are negative influences. Some of the positive influences have been teachers that I've had in my life. Primarily two teachers in high school. They helped me through some extremely difficult times." Her relationship with nature was enhanced by a high school friend. "Another positive influence was that a (high school) friend of mine, his father was one of the hotshot birdwatchers in New York. You know, the ones that are on the top of the list of expert birders." As she undertook to enter full-time in the administration of joint environmental and social justice programs, she encountered another important mentor. "His name is Mel King. He is an incredible leader, an incredible person." King was the Director of the Community Fellows Program in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. King granted a fellowship in that program to Serena.

Byron reports that the "consciousness in the area (Amherst, Massachusetts) was stimulating to me, and I began to read books. I began to write. I never forgot the place. I left and I came back; I left and I came back. It became my base. So criminally, scholastically, spiritually, that has been my base since 1976." He was influenced as well by reading "Dick Gregory's book, Cookin' With Mother Nature. And that kind of opened up all of this, kind of opened my mind up." In his earlier life "I had instilled in me, through my grandmother and my father, some values about respect for life." As he progressed on his spiritual path another important influence emerged; "Sister Claire, a Buddhist nun. (She) is one of my teachers in the ways of peace."

For Rory "there was only one English teacher that actually would help us, or cater to our needs to learn about ourselves. I first met that teacher when I was

fifteen. And then I took a class from him every year. That teacher made a difference to me." After high school Rory "was recruited and mentored into learning about social causes and stuff like that. Social causes within the Philippines and within what's happening as a Filipino-American. Identity politics. Isangmahal ('One Love': a consciousness raising collective of Filipino youth)"

In Monica's eyes the influence came with being born into her Native American (Makah) tribe. "I think that my community and the members of my community did much more to help me become all the kinds of person that I am today. The influence of the elders, the influence of my aunts and uncles, because aunts and uncles played a huge role in our lives when we were young." In addition, throughout her life new teachers have arrived for her when it was time to take the next step in her evolution. ""I've had some outstanding people in my life. One of those outstanding people-—when you said 'river' it just connected for me. His name was Tom Heidelbaugh." He taught her how to heal large bodies of water that have become polluted from human misuse.

Much like Monica, Yetta was influenced from early in her youth. "When I was younger my grandfather and grandmother used to have property in the Skagit Valley (north of Seattle). My grandfather grew strawberries at the time (and) tomatoes. Grandpa would kind of tell me things about which plants were good to plant together. He always knew what to put together. (He knew) what complemented what. He seemed to always know things to do. He grew the most beautiful vegetables." As Yetta began growing into her professional identity as a not-for-profit administrator and executive an important mentor came into her life. She was "a woman named Jean During (who) was director at that time. She had run a large agency in New York. And I learned a lot from her about the other side (fund raising and public relations)."

Nell when yet in her early teens remember(s) being taken around by either her parents or her friends' parents to various places like soup kitchens. Her education grew more intense, however. Father Wasson, founder of orphanages in Central America to which her family foundation donated large sums of money set about to recruit Nell to become a nun. He took her to visit an orphanage in Haitii. While in Haitii they visited City Soleil where she saw people so destitute that they did not have any clothes. These homeless and utterly bereft people could not create for themselves the conditions that would allow them to be clothed. None of these people wore clothes; she was most distressed by seeing the naked children.

Jamshid's influence is in sharp contrast to Paurice's. Jamshid explains, "In the Sufi lineage, as also in the Islamic education, it is the duty of parents to educate the children. No matter where we were, which county, it was my parents who taught us the tenets and basic values of Islam. And then of course as I grew older my parents dedicated even more time to sharing and spending a lot of their active mind and heart time in truly educating me and my brother and my sister."

Paurice was drawn into a state of wakefulness and healing when he "met a woman named Heather who had healed an 82 year-old woman through a macrobiotic diet, massage and attention. That's probably what really me got me out of everything (his addictions to drugs), there was so much respect between the two."

Parents, grandparents, elders and early adolescent teachers present a common theme with the majority (six) of the research group. Byron and Paurice, who had come from homes where the male parental figure was abusive, did not find their calling into humanitarian service at such an early age as did the others. They each left home early and took to the streets, from which experiences they only began to recover when they were in their mid-twenties.

Even though both of Serena's parents were abusive to her she suspects that she was nurtured while very young when her family lived in Thailand during the first four years of her life. They lived in a large common house belonging to the Bible Society. She was in the care of native Thai women during much of this time.

3. Role of Education

Byron's street life came to bore him. He lacked intellectual stimulation and sought intellectual conversation. This took him to the university. He began to take classes at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst Campus, in the African-American Studies Department. Here Byron was exposed to critical thinking of the intellectual variety. Franz Fanon influenced him as did "W.D. DuBois and quite a few of the great African-American thinkers, Native American thinkers, and different European thinkers of today that reject colonialism. I got my Bachelor's Degree in African-American history and performance."

For Serena education was a value passed to her by her parents. They 'enforced' education for her in some rather cruel ways. Nevertheless

> school was a really important thing for me and doing well academically was important. I got an excellent education. It was Bronx High School of Science. Biology was where I had the most interest and where I really excelled. And I remember having these incredible biology teachers even in their early classes.

Her successes in high school won her a scholarship to State University of New York at Stonybrook. There she "got involved in ecology and evolution and majored in behavioral ecology, which is the study of animal behavior and how different behaviors are adaptations to environmental needs. I studied animal behavior for three years. I did quite a bit of research on redwing blackbirds." When she later in her life returned from three years of humanitarian volunteering in Kenya she won fellowship at MIT. "They have a program called Community Fellows Program in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning." This

prepared her for her present position as executive of a large inner-city not-for-profit.

Monica is a university-educated and trained high school teacher who has retired after twenty-nine years of teaching. Her idea of education had very little to do with the ideas valued by the transplanted Europeans. She sees education in relationship to how the environment is treated. "When you watch people go out in their canoes, without a gas-powered engine, and you watch them come back in, and you watch them clean their fish, and you watch them take the guts that they aren't using, have no use for, and you feed them to the birds, that's such a wonderful example, right off the bat, from the very use of taking care of your environment and yourself."

Paurice, a member of the dominant culture shares a kinship with Monica in terms of how he values education. He has been more influenced by individual teachers who offer teaching in areas of healing and organic gardening. Heather, the woman who brought him out of his skiiing trauma with healing massage also introduced him to organic gardening. Later a man named Bob Buss taught Paurice about worm farming, organic composting, marcobiotics and working with nature and plant spirits.

Education assisted Yetta with questioning the values of the dominant culture she had accepted unquestioningly. She had been working for not-for-profits in the arena of health (lung disease). "CCJ (Coalition for Community Justice) was having meetings about how the environment and health were connected and how poverty and race were connected to that." Through this introduction she discovered that there was "a whole environmental movement among people of color going on that I didn't know about and that I was disconnected from. I wanted to be a part of it, so I kept going to meetings. I kept learning about issues. I read Bob Bullard's books (Dumping in Dixie; Unequal Protection). Bob Bullard is considered one of the scholars of the movement." Yetta was now focused and had discovered a purpose. She sought more education. "I went to Seattle University and got a BA in political science. I have a Master's from there too in non-profit management leadership." Her leadership skills won her recognition while on her present job. Coalition for Community Justice has sent her to Western State Center in Oregon. "Western State Center is a training facility in Oregon. I was selected to be part of what they called, at that time, the Advanced Leadership and Mentorship Project, ALAMP."

Rory first learned about education from an English teacher in high school. There "was this English teacher that brought in these books called -- from Carlos Bullison -- America Is in the Heart. And we just ate it up. That was the first time in high school that I felt more a sense of who I was." Because art and the spoken word are the vehicles through which he expresses his activism he attended a local college for the arts. "I studied graphic design at Cornish. So

that's where I learned the trade of kind of the advertising type of commercial art stuff.

Nell refers to her educational opportunity as "my own grandiose opportunities". These opportunities began while she was yet a teen-ager. "From 16 to early 20s I spent a lot of time in other cultures, in foreign cultures in Latin America and Russia." Her father encouraged her to "take things you are fascinated with. I took more Spanish classes and took more sociology classes. Two undergraduate degrees. Spanish (because) a lot of things are language specific, combined with sociology and how societies work." Today this education continues. Nell is completing field research in environmental anthropology.

Jamshid's education has covered "some psychological, economical, emotional and spiritual practices of the Islamic faith". Beyond this his parents committed to

> sending me to some people in the Middle East and also in Europe who were my teachers. I had a basic grounding with my parents in Islam. Then after I finished my Masters in Berkeley, California -- I was in the Ph.D. program in Berkeley-- I had a choice of either doing my Ph.D. or studying with my parents. And the choice was given, and I chose to study with my parents.

Education has meaning for each of these research subjects, albeit in varying degrees and in dissimilar ways. Education is held to be of value insofar as it results in effective action. Six of the subjects have undergraduate degrees; four have master's degrees; one will soon complete her doctoral degree. Each of the subjects is well-educated in the domain in which s/he expresses her/his activism.

4. Maturation and Persistence

Maturation and persistence can be described as a function of self-reflection, on the one hand, or as an advancing commitment to activism, on the other. Yetta provides an example for us of the latter. "We're forming a new organization that will be the centerpiece for all the organizations in the Northwest to get what they need. It will serve us. We will go to them and say, 'You know, my board needs training, can you send me a resource list of consultants?' And they shoot it out to you. We'll have a regional newsletter that will go out. We'll have a place where if we have an action we send it to NEJA (Northwest Environmental Justice Association), and they mobilize all the members."

Nell provides an example of knowing when not to persist (self-reflection). She had been doing field research in Honduras related to her doctoral studies in environmental anthropology. The research concerned the economic stability of marginally marketized villagers in outlying areas. Her research population were the peoples who were most devastated by Hurricane Mitch. Nell became discouraged at her own interference in the lives of these villagers who were

suffering in the wake of the storm. She desisted in her research because of her strong humanitarian sensitivity toward these people. Given the situation (post-hurricane) her questions proved troubling and embarrassing to the respondents. There were "tough living conditions and it was difficult to structure the research". Nell abandoned her research project among the indigenous peoples of Honduras. She moved the *locus* of her research to Hawaii, where she is now engaged in research with native Hawaiian and Polynesian taro farmers.

Jamshid notes persistence and maturation of self through a comparison of his earlier activism and his present state of self-development. He was "very political in those days (undergraduate student), against the Vietnam War, and against this and against that. I used to lead demonstrations. Then when I studied Sufism, I realized this is very important. But I haven't done the real work (inner work; work on the self)." That real work took him many more years than he had imagined it would. "I feel only now, and I'm fifty-three, have I reached that point where I can really, sincerely say I feel that issue as much as I think that issue**."**

Rory, the youngest of the interviewees at age twenty-six, has relied partially on sources outside himself for direction in the maturation process. From books he has learned how to go about placing oneself on a trajectory of self-development and maturation. "Like a lot of it is based on self-revolution. (Self-revolution) is to change your internal mechanics. And seeing what makes you tick."

Serena takes this same kind of insight about how self-development takes place and applies it to the work of the activist. "Whatever you have a passion for, it's because you've got these things in your past that are not settled, that you're still working out. And all of my work on social justice, I think, stems from my experience, whether it be in dealing with my parents' mental illness, or dealing with the racism that I encountered, or dealing with police brutality, or dealing with some of the hardships of poverty."

Paurice reflects about the birth of his son as a watershed moment that brought him into a more wholemaking interface with himself and others. He describes how, as the moment of the birth of his son approached, he had an unmistakable inner experience of hearing "the love that you'll have for this child, (you are) to share that same love with every person you come in contact with." Monica, who shares many of the same values of love for self with Paurice says, "What keeps coming up is the idea of loving yourself enough to change your thinking instead of going back to the parasitic kind of thinking". Parasitic thinking: taking from the Earth without gratitude and awareness.

Byron, the Peace Pilgrim, frames his connection to persistence and maturation of the self in terms of his walking. First he discusses his connection

with the Japanese Buddhist Nyhonyohoji Religious Order. The central spiritual practice of this Order is to walk on behalf of peace.

> I didn't join the Order, but I walked with them. I have an affinity with this Order, because walking is a form of prayer, and chanting and beating the drum is all very African, which is something else. I have an affinity for my ancient roots. And so these things I had a relationship with: the drum and walking.

Once he became tangentially associated with this Buddhist Order, Sister Clare, a member of the Order, brought forth the idea of a pilgrimage to reverse the ancient wounds of the slave trade, as it affected those enslaved and the American culture more generally. The idea of this pilgrimage touched Byron, an African American, very deeply. He made a vow as a first step upon deciding to undertake the pilgrimage. "That was my vow, to walk every step of the way for my ancestors." He explains his reasoning: "So it was very important to the psyche, to the human psyche, to dismantle colonialism, racism, and the other -isms and schisms by painstakingly going back to Africa on the boat. So I would not give up on that."

Maturation and persistence are inherent components of this kind of life-style commitment to action. Other alternatives to continued and enduring service nowhere were discussed within the research population for this study. It is the work itself that demands as well as begets maturation.

5. Belief in Self

The not ordinarily self-reflective Yetta spoke directly of her belief in herself when she stated that she had "become a master of the game". Rory joins Yetta in a direct affirmation of his belief in himself. "I'm very into maintaining a cultural identity; I'm now involved with a group called 'Isangmahal' It's a (Filipino American youth) collective, which is predominantly a spoken word arts group. Isangmahal means 'One Love'." As to the origins of this belief in self he says, "I think that's due to self-actualization, really. A victim mode is always almost helplessness. And (one) can be helpless individually. When I was growing up it was never us wanting to give our power away to people."

The other research subjects were more indirect. Some spoke in externalized ways that exhibit self-confidence and belief in self by implication and association. Nell ponders "how to help out various institutions in society to rebuild themselves so that they could be healthy again". Serena reveals her belief in herself via a comparison with others who have not chosen the road less traveled that she has taken. She reflects about the research scientist career she traded for her present not-for-profit administrative position. She comments, as well, about the offers she regularly receives to assume an executive role in the private (corporate) sector.

> They are also places where I'm not so sure I would agree with all of their politics or the way that they, in my mind, sell out for the larger economic

> good of the organization. Or that I would be tied into a position where I wouldn't be able to do as much broadness in activities. I do a lot of advocacy and I do a lot of program work. I do a lot of nitty-gritty stuff. Most jobs don't allow you that.

Paurice frames his understanding in terms of love of self. "I finally figured out it wasn't about loving everyone else that much -- it was that, too, but it was -- the biggest challenge was me, loving myself as much as that (other) person. It took many years to get there." Jamshid has come to a strong belief in himself as a consequence of his years of inner work that he has done within the frame of his Sufi heritage. He is now ready to take this confirmed self into the world to "become more political, more active, in the sense of taking action because I really, sincerely, fully, on a heart level -- not only believe in it. *I participate in it*. So for me, this is a new chapter of my life starting".

Monica and Byron take a distinctly spiritual tack in assessing their respective beliefs in self. They commit the self to the transformation they see needs to occur. Monica ponders that "we don't know how vast we really are as a spirit. Let's go into the dark and help and intend to make that a more loving, peaceful, compassionate, environmentally sound place. It's our purpose in life." Byron also takes his confirmed self into the world by "going to sacred sites and holding interfaith prayers, as a beginning of taking our planet back. As an affirmation, I would say, of moving earth into higher consciousness. Affirmation of moving humanity's consciousness higher, into higher evolutions." He then clearly states his purpose for the consciousness raising. "Certainly to raise the consciousness of humanity that all life is sacred and we are multi-dimensional creatures and we are solar. Each and every one of us are solar creatures." He describes this metaphysical construct.

> To be a solar creature means that you have everything that a star has. Your whole cellular -- your whole makeup, everything, is that of the sun. So we have thermal heating. We have everything right there in our own bodies. Who we truly are, as celestial creatures who have everything that we need. We really don't need anything.

While belief in self is a critical ingredient for enduring service, the concept does not stay in the forefront of the minds of these research subjects. They act from their respective senses of self; it is the action rather than the contemplation of self that is paramount to them. The belief in self does not necessarily have immediate and practical implications as far as immediate results are concerned. It does have consequences for logistical and strategic planning. The greater the belief in self, the more adept become the logistical and strategic interventions. Traces of the belief in self bleed through into the interviews while other, more transparent considerations are being discussed.

6. Sustenance and Inspiration

Nell shares how her work affects her and encourages her to sustain her action. She enjoys "demonstrating how much people know who don't think that they know very much. They are authoritative and should be in control of a lot of the decisions." She is an advocate of "self determination by locals." Another source of inspiration comes to her as a consequence of her research in the field. She is struck by the "co-evolution taking place in taro loiis in Hawaii; farmers with birds".

> What engages Yetta is
> the constant suffering my people experience in the community, and that I see other people experiencing. The illness rates, the injustice that I see. When poor people stand up and say, 'We're not going to do something', it takes longer to win. The fact that if you have the money, you can hire lawyers to fight for you and you can win. When you're poor, you don't have that. So I'm motivated by the fact that the problem exists, if that makes sense. Oh, I don't feel it's despair. I feel empowered. I think that people are inspired by the fact that CCJ (Coalition for Community Justice) has had success in eliminating pollution through organizing.

Serena recognizes that sustenance has been required at various times in her life to get her through the difficult and trying episodes. "In Thailand (from her first to her fourth year of life) we were part of the big Bible House. There were a lot of servants and a lot of workers at the Bible House that I interacted with. I remember very well and I think that that's where I got a lot of my positive stuff." Later in elementary school in Queens, New York, she says, "Jewish kids in the neighborhood were my friends. They have such an incredible history of oppression that they incorporate into their heritage, in their culture, to make sure that they understand the oppression of others." As she has grown older she has internalized her capacity for self-care and self-sustenance. "I do a lot of backpacking (and) have done a lot of mountain climbing." This is not merely exercise for her but includes spiritual experiences. "I believe in the connectedness of everything, not just people, but all living things and all inanimate things, as well. I think that there's a larger balance that I'm always trying to understand."

Paurice has similar experiences of inspiration and sustenance in his work in the garden. "I realized what I had been doing for myself with the garden was therapy. And the therapy was, when I got in the garden and ate the natural foods, I naturally became myself easier." He provided a vivid description of what it means to him to become himself. "You brought your physical body into a fourth dimensional experience (a more exalted state of consciousness)." Monica, too, is similarly sustained and inspired. "Well, the presence of God is everywhere here. There is no place that you can't look—just look out here and you see the trees. You see the berry bushes. You see the grasses. That here are all these things that God has created, not us. God."

Byron recognizes that "I was always a spiritual person. I was always keeping up with Muslim literature and Messianic stuff, reading the Bible, and talking with other intelligent people who were out in the street, people who were politically inclined." There is a more direct way that he has been able to sustain himself. It occurred for him the day he walked 19 miles.

> As I sat in a tub of water, soaking my body, *I felt a peace that I had never known*. *I felt a resolve that I had never known*. So I knew that walking was a way to come by peace within myself. *So I discovered walking as a way of peace. It was a dawning of a new consciousness for me.*

Sustenance and inspiration have come to Rory and Jamshid through literature. Rory has been inspired "by books by bell hooks and Thich Nhat Hahn. And Paulo Friere was in there. And that was just really nurturing of the spiritual side of what was happening with our community." This literature has supported his focus on his own spirituality.

> I think I am very spiritual. Spiritually I have always known that my art has never been just art for the sake of art. It's always on the basis of there's healing involved. There's talking about things explicitly and in depth so that there's understanding and healing. The spiritual side of things is moving beyond a point of hating yourself and hating your situation or your people and becoming what your highest potential can be. A lot of it's spiritual. A lot of it is self-esteem.

In terms of literature, Jamshid has devoted years of intensive study to the 13th century Sufi Master, Jeladduin Rumi's poetry and his philosophical writings. In addition to this source of inspiration he had a living source.

> I had parents who were so spiritual. Also they were true Muslims, true Sufis. Why do I say that? Because the Koran says, 'The true Muslim and the true Sufi is one who is able to encompass with the heart and mind heaven and earth and do it beautifully and do it completely.'

Beyond these two sources Jamshid reports his deceased grandfather, a prominent Sufi cleric in Northern India, accompanies him in his work. "I feel my grandfather all the time."

Sustenance and inspiration are issues that directly concern each of the subjects in conscious ways. The work itself makes large demands on the energy and the psyches of each of the participants. Sustenance and inspiration are sources of balance and renewal.

7. Mentoring

Jamshid is a prominent teacher in the Seattle community. He is founder of the Seattle Interfaith Community and more recently he launched the Multi-Faith Coalition for Social Justice. Of his Interfaith Community Church members he reports:

> Many members are encouraged to do volunteer work in social organizations. Since we believe that we have done some inner work—a

> lifetime process—we feel ready to engage ourselves actively in social and justice issues. Consequently a large number of members are involved in political, environmental and social justice projects. Some are entering leadership positions in those organizations.

Byron has chosen the role of a playwright to express his mentorship. “My whole ecological consciousness took place in the eighties. I wrote a play called, ‘Chattin’ With the Mother,’ which is an ecological piece.” The central character in this play is “the Juba man. He’s a thank-you man. He gives praise all day long, day in and day out.”

As a community youth organizer Rory is a mentor by definition.

> I started working with youth in ’98. Before that, I was only doing graphic design stuff, art stuff, and then (seeking) a role or my role in creating a youth culture. I started working with youth and exploring the problems that they had (that) were similar to the ones I still have or had. Or (similar to ones I) experienced when I was growing up. I think working with young people inspired me to continue working on myself.

He describes the challenges that youth face and how art allows these youths to address these challenges.

> They need to create the world that they see. Through whatever means. Art, organized spoken word projects, community work, stuff like that. All of those things are incorporated. Like my Vision in Artwork is sort of doing. It’s just something that’s not just in it’s own little niche somewhere, secluded from everything. It’s a part of a bigger whole.

The bigger whole, he says, is “to cultivate the mind’s eye of society.” The mind’s eye of society is cultivated “by giving voice to one’s inner world. It is my understanding that when people do come together that there is a more powerful voice.”

Monica has mentored students through the course of her adult life in her role as high school teacher. Now that she is a retired teacher she has set a new goal for herself. This involves teaching about the difference for humans between being parasites and non-parasites on the Earth.

> We have all that capability within us (to be one or the other). I would love to take most New Yorkers, most Chicagoans, and a lot of Seattleites, even, and bring them to places like this, have them have an awareness of places like this, so that they can return to the land and be respectful of the land.

Paurice broke through into mentoring when an ex-CEO of a large construction firm was brought to visit the organic farm he was managing. “Bob S.: He ended up staying there with me, helping me build the next garden, which (had) this four-directional centerpiece. Anyway, he used that as therapy for himself.” At the present time a band of gifted young people known to themselves and others as Indigos have sought out Paurice as their mentor. This group which numbers about 250 individuals, live in south central Oregon. Leaders of this

group have begun regular visits to the organic farm in Gresham, Oregon, where Paurice practices his gardening arts. Paurice remarks that the Indigos are attracted by his lifestyle, his simplicity and his familiarity with nature and the nature spirits.

Serena's mentorship is more formal and institutionalized than is Paurice's. "We've had a Youth Environment Justice Program since '97. When I came back from the program (at MIT), I implemented the research I had done, and started up a program called, 'WILD.' It's Wilderness Inner City Leadership Development." This program is similar to Outward Bound in that it takes youth into the wilderness. It is more directly related to life in the inner city in that lessons learned in the wilderness are applied to tasks and challenges in the inner city. Beyond her involvement in the education of youth, Serena is a mentor to the Seattle community at large as president of the Minority Executive Directors Coalition of King County. "The education that I give -- well, yeah, maybe I'm doing it because of this person of color over here. But that's definitely a benefit to the mayor to know that stuff."

Yetta is also a member of the same Minority Executive Directors' Coalition of King County. In addition she established within the Coalition for Community Justice a youth group called Environmental Justice Youth Advocates. She states,

> And there is a high school student out of Franklin who runs that. It's a group of sixteen youths that are Franklin High School Students, who meet every Thursday and learn about environmental justice. After they attend five months of training, where we have speakers come in, teach them about issues, then they're supposed to help us recruit new members and educate the community by doing presentations and projects.

These youth are trained to do presentations in venues within the inner city of Seattle. Yetta explains the purpose, "And so this is a way where we want to build leadership among youth so we have future folks working on environmental justice."

Alone among the research population without any significant mentoring experience is Nell. She looks forward to a teaching role once she has finished her doctoral degree. Her work to date has been as a consultant and an observer.

Mentoring is a outgrowth of dedicated service. Seven of the eight subjects engage in mentoring. Five of the subjects mentor youth; six of them mentor adults. The mentoring takes place in formally structured programs associated with agencies and institutions for four of the seven mentors. Three subjects mentor in informal or *ad hoc* situations. The lone subject who does not now mentor is in the process of preparing herself for a mentoring role.

8. Non-violent principles and practice

Non-violence is expressed as an attitude and a way of thinking about problems and their resolution. Yetta explicates this attitude. "And I think that's the hope (equity), that even though there is a lot of stuff wrong, that we can win if we understand how the system works and we utilize it. A lot of people are really inspired by looking, seeing other people win." She makes a quite practical application of this sentiment. "We really emphasize that it's critical that you know who the decision makers are so that you know who you need to pressure. If you don't know who your representatives are in your district, who the mayor is, it's really hard to make change."

Nell expresses a similar concern for those with whom she works. Her focus is on the systemic or institutionalized violence that occurs when people, who have lived for centuries on land, have that land taken from them.

> My concern about people that don't have the opportunities that lots of other people have; people are based in land, they're place centered. How place is critical to survival. What people know about their environment is critical to their survival. If people have rights to utilize their environment they have more ability to survive successfully.

For Serena non-violence is an overt strategy associated with not being weak or vulnerable. Serena acknowledges that the non-violent protest tactics require persistence and courage in order to be successful. "If you let them get the best of you then you're down. If you want to survive you have to find a way that they (victimizers) work for you. You shouldn't stop going. You shouldn't stop fighting for what is right." Monica's non-violence shows itself indirectly in quoting her aunt's position concerning the Makah tribal fishermen's controversial resurrection of a traditional whale killing expedition: "Auntie, she has always been an environmentalist, always. And she was very much so against the killing of that whale. Very much so. And you name the environmentalist, they are her friend now."

Rory describes in rich detail a non-violent response he organized at the age of fifteen to a work-related issue.

> Everybody (himself and Filipino youth peers working at a county fair) was being mistreated by the management. So I was trying to organize, almost like a sit-in. I didn't call it a sit-in at that time. It was like we were all just going to stop working and sit down. (We wanted to) tell them that we're your work force and we all have this agreement about how you're treating everyone. The management soon learned about the plan to stop doing stuff at -- I think we were supposed to stop doing the work like at 1:30, after lunch. So then the games would stop. No one would play the games, and they'd stop making money.

Jamshid translates non-violence into terms familiar to his Sufi mystical roots. Sufism does not speak directly about non-violence. The notion of sincerity, of not having any hidden agenda is the path of avoiding violence. Increased necessity is an intensely powerful inner longing. When sincerity is funded or bolstered by increased necessity the result is non-violence toward

others. “And it can be increased necessity if there is authentic non-egoistic, unalloyed sincerity. So the power of sincerity is very beautiful. Very powerful. That’s why Confucius said that, ‘Sincerity has the power to shift heaven and earth.’”

Paurice recalls that an entire group of tree spirits actually cheered for him while he was walking in a forest after he had performed an act of kindness and hospitality on behalf of others. The morning following this incident he received a telephone call from a woman psychic whom he knew. She had a message for him. The message came from Koala, a certain tree spirit. Koala informed Paurice that the applause was real. The trees applauded him for the acts of compassion and kindness. “What you wanted was your ex-wife and everybody to love each other.”

Byron’s understanding of non-violence was a bit unusual. He spoke of his life as a criminal, a street thief. “I chose non-violent crimes. Now, non-violent being the lesser of the evil. But I had an aversion to robbery because it meant carrying a gun or a weapon. That always led to the potential of violence. The non-violent crimes were the ones I had a high IQ for, particularly con.” This beginning understanding of non-violence later flowered into dialogue circles along the way of the various peace pilgrimages he has undertaken. During breaks from walking and in the evenings the peace pilgrims sit in a dialogue circle to discuss the constructs of inner violence that continue to plague them. The procedure is that each person owns her/his own violent ideation, proclivities and constructs. The non-violent confrontation is with the self. “Those issues are very real and very sore for us. I found that healing circles work.”

All eight of the subjects have an active awareness of the effects of systemic violence; violence that is organized and propagated by institutions on the disempowered and marginalized. Four of the subjects employ political means to raise the consciousness of their respective constituencies. In each instance, the strategies they employ are non-violent. Four of the subjects approach this issue of systemic violence from a spiritually integrated perspective. Again, in each case the means for remediation and alleviation of problems is through cooperation and non-violent resolution.

9. Looking toward the Future

Byron’s Peace Pilgrim activity has most recently taken the form of an organization called One People, One Earth.

> I’ve always wanted to work on the higher vibrations, on the psychic level of this planet. And I’m much more comfortable at going into those zones, into the unknown, like that. So I am asking those of like mind and like heart to come out and walk the Earth with me on these earth energy grids

Paurice has an intention that is very similar to Byron’s though Paurice is working on a slightly different aspect of the issue of raising the vibration of the

planet. He was told by his inner guidance: “It’s actually one of the things you’ll be taking out and presenting to people, helping them to understand what (capacity) you have is that you can actually take hate from somebody, or jealousy, or anger, and turn it into love. (You do this) through doing (allowing yourself to have) loving experiences.” This is his idea of “bringing the Garden of Eden back as a physical thing on this planet.”

Monica has discovered the healing power of touch that will take her into her next vocation or mission in this life. This discovery, coupled with her expanded sense of spirit and her power to assert intention for the restoration of balance on the Earth propel her into the future.

> I am just beginning to understand the complete power that is there (coming through her—at her fingertips). That your word has a great deal of power. And each person, however they use their word, has a great deal of power. And just simply by the power of my word, and the power of my intention, the things that are occurring in New York through time could change.

The other respondents took a more practical approach to thinking about the future. Nell will be “teaching and disseminating the things I have learned”, as well as “working with probably NGOs (non governmental organizations)”. Serena

> expect(s) to be here (her present executive directorship of a community-based not-for-profit) until I see a place that I can just as strongly live by my principles. As an executive director I have a lot of autonomy. As an executive director of a social service agency that focuses on populations that are the most disenfranchised, that gives me exactly what my passions require.”

As to her thoughts about taking a political position, Serena stated: “Well I’m on the doorstep of the city council and mayor’s office quite often trying to influence policy. I’m advocating for communities of color down in Olympia (Capital of the State of Washington). In that way I’m in politics.”

Yetta definitely has her plans for the future.

> It’s called Poverty Education Empowerment, because we want to move into being more multi-issued, always working on environmental justice, but also looking at poverty. Because it’s so linked, and we can’t talk about one without the other. Because all the people we work with are poor, at least as far as environmental justice in South Seattle. So in Poverty Education Empowerment, called PEEP, our goal is to build a base.

A ‘base’ in Yetta’s action lexicon is the group of local residents who call forth assistance for a concern or problem that needs to be addressed “If you don’t have that, you’re not grass roots.”

She wishes to address other underlying systemic issues as well. She wants to hire an organizer to build a base around looking at root causes of poverty and looking at environmental injustice as another burden on the poor

community. Like tying in the lower your income the more likely you are to live near industry. Her vision does not end there. She is launching a region-wide environmental justice coalition that will serve the needs of various groupings of peoples of color. "The Northwest Environmental Justice Alliance (consists) of indigenous people and people of color who are working on environmental justice and environmental racism in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska and Northern Canada. Capacity-wise that is all we can deal with."

Rory assesses that he has built for himself a solid base in what he calls "self-revolution". He expects to continue into the future along the same lines.

> I'll always being doing community-based art stuff. (Art that is) not just beautifying structures or something. It's more expanding on a dialogue, and creating a dialogue, if need be. (The purpose is) to continue that voice, the voice of resistance, the voice to explore. In the future I would always want to be a muralist. I would always want to be a poet, and I would always want to be an organizer."

At fifty-three Jamshid has arrived on the threshold of being able to make his mature, considered contribution to his community. He has laid the groundwork through his years of inner work. He is now prepared to be "getting involved in economic, political, and social issues."

All subjects of this study are either in early career (Nell and Rory) or in a phase of mid-career service. No one of them thinks about passing the torch of leadership and responsibility. Each is thoughtful about continuing and/or expanding her/his area of responsibility. Their present respective leadership roles offer ample opportunity for this expansion.

Findings

This research study has consisted of interviews of eight activists who have been selected for having the four characteristics of a biospheric humanitarian as per the definition given at the outset of this study. The four distinguishing characteristics of this definition are: Each makes a conscious and deliberate choice to act on behalf of the environment, while also acting on behalf of humans. Each has an awakened and developed sense of the interrelationship that exists between humans and the earth. Each sustains her/him self and her/his faith in committed action, through the course of encountering obstacles and difficulties. Each recognizes the importance of localized action (act locally), as it contributes to the betterment of the whole (see and think globally).

A goal of this study is to learn about factors that will help in drawing ordinary people into biospheric humanitarian service. In this regard it is important to note that the subjects of this research project are regarded as, and regard themselves as, ordinary people. The study has been conducted to learn critical influences that have drawn these eight individuals into biospheric humanitarian service and that sustain them in that service.

In the foregoing analysis of the interviews, the eight subjects' comments as regards their self-understanding concerning motives, commitments and purpose have been examined through the lenses of nine motifs or themes. These themes are: degree of commitment; source of influence; role of education; maturation and persistence; belief in self; sustenance and inspiration; mentoring of others; non-violent practice and principles; looking toward the future. In what follows, themes drawn from the responses of the interview subjects will be discussed according to the similarities and differences in self-reflection, self-awareness and experience. The nine categories are the means employed to draw conclusions about what kind of individual commits to this type of humanitarian service, on the one hand, and what factors sustain such an individual, on the other. In this regard, similarities and differences in self-understanding within each category take on an added significance. That is, conclusions drawn as to future use of the data gathered in this study depend on the significance attributed to the themes individually as well as collectively. Similarities within a theme augur for one kind of importance. Differences within a theme, especially marked variation within the research population, augur for less importance for that theme, as regards the intended use of the research data.

The nine categories themselves can be divided into groups. The one theme in the first group that relates to drawing a person into this type of humanitarian service is sources of influence. The second group relates to sustaining factors, once the service has been chosen. The themes in this group are six in number. These are: degree of commitment; maturation and persistence; belief in self; sustenance and inspiration; mentoring of others; looking toward the future. A third group, that draw in and sustain in service, is comprised of two categories; namely, the role of education and non-violent practices and principles. The preponderance of the categories concern themes associated with continuance of engaged service. This points to the demands of the service and to the dedication of the individuals who take this service upon themselves.

The nine themes elucidate how the subjects meet the criteria, the four components of the definition of biospheric humanitarian. In addition, the criteria isolate factors that can assist in drawing other ordinary into the work of the biospheric humanitarian. The themes that support and sustain the activists in their commitment are greater in number than the themes associated with drawing persons into service. The themes themselves shed light on the qualities of the culture of the biospheric humanitarian.

Cross Subject Analysis

1. Degree of Commitment

Apart from motivation, early exposure to economic, environmental and social hardships are determinants for degree of commitment for four of the subjects. Each of these four made decisions while a teen to notice social disparity and economic injustice. One measure of degree of commitment is the time of onset of the decision to notice disparity and injustice. Each of these four made a commitment to engage her/him self in the redress of these various disparities while yet a teen-ager. In addition, each began to take some form of action to redress these disparities while yet a teen-ager.

Two others demonstrate strong post-adolescent commitment to their respective activism. The commitment has had to grow and mature over time. While the commitment may not be less at this time in terms of intensity, it is different in terms of having occurred while they were in the mid-twenties. Another measure of the degree of commitment relates to the quality or purpose of the commitment. With five subjects, this commitment draws upon the sense of self as the relational self (Naess 1999). That is, the self is known and constructed as being in relation to others, including one's ecological context.

In terms of degree of commitment, it is not possible for an isolated, non-integrated self to make the same kind and degree of commitment that a relational self is capable of making. In other words, it is a conscious self that makes the commitment. The kind and degree of commitment that one can make depends on the kind of self one is, or one conceives oneself to be. The relational self is constructed in such a way as to be predisposed or certainly more likely to be predisposed to concern about the other than could a self constructed as isolated be or possibly be so disposed. Alternatively, two subjects have shifted from seeing themselves as isolated selves to seeing themselves as relational selves. This has come for them as a consequence of their enduring commitment to biospheric humanitarian service. Their depth of commitment has deepened through the experience of service relative to the length of time they have remained in service. Depth of commitment occurs then as a concomitant with dedication to service. This is the case for those who entered into service as relational selves as it is the case for those who awakened from being an isolated self and then gradually moved into progressively more dedicated levels of service as the sense of self shifted from isolated (autonomous; independent) to relational.

To summarize this section, the relational self stands at the center of an activism committed to raising up and supporting the marginalized and the voiceless. The lived activism as exhibited by the research subjects provides occasion for the deepening of commitment. When the activism is embraced as a lifestyle the commitment deepens and grows. While there are various roads into the activism, to sustain the activism associated with addressing issues of marginalized and voiceless is nurtured by a relational self to sustain and deepen commitment.

2. Source of Influence

This theme stands alone among the nine themes as being the factor associated with drawing the research subjects into biospheric humanitarian service. In other words, in each instance, the research subjects were influenced by others in the direction of making a choice for this service. Some research subjects claimed the influence of their parents and grandparents as important.

Each of the research subjects was able to identify one or more positive influences that were directly responsible for communicating a message about self-worth and respect for life. The very fact that each respondent had such an experience bolsters the case for the importance to this study of the concept of the relational self. Yet it is not sufficient that the self be a mere relational self. The ancillary concept of self-worth is significant. The various parents, grandparents, family friends, teachers and one healer who noticed and evoked a particular subject did so through honoring and respecting that subject for her/him self. In other words, before one can become a relational self one has to be noticed, respected and loved for one's self. It is in this sense that self-worth is a foundation for a viable relational self. For the relational self to sustain in active service a reserve of good feelings, positive regard and constructive self-assessment have to be in place. Without these factors, there is little chance of sustaining oneself through the challenges and hardships that accrue for the biospheric humanitarian.

3. Role of Education

Education plays a vital role in the development and formation of the biospheric humanitarian subjects of this research. This is noted both by the presence of education and by its absence in certain cases. It is noted too by the choice of degree specialization. The subjects who have advanced degrees have chosen fields of specialization that enhance on-the-job performance.

It is not educational level that determines effectiveness as a biospheric humanitarian in the present research group. At the same time, there is a correlation between educational level and the breadth or scope of service when that service involves the management of agencies and personnel.

Education plays a significant role in the development of intellectual and social tools used by this group of biospheric humanitarians. Graduate education in traditional university settings allows some among these leaders to enter more directly into mainstream activity associated with organizations. The two active executives in this group of research subjects made strategic decisions to return to graduate school at a time when that education would advance their capacity to serve, manage and lead. They distinguish between advancing their careers and advancing their capacity to be more effective in their service. Others who have chosen roles more at the periphery of the culture pursue their vocations and

mission with less formal means of education. In one instance this means a hands-on orientation requiring the learning of techniques. In every instance education advances the cause or purpose of the biospheric humanitarian.

4. Maturation and Persistence

For this group of biospheric humanitarians maturation is a notion that is associated with the internalization of personal responsibility. The rigors and challenges of the work of activism require that the activist grow in self-knowledge and self-awareness. This particular growth path has the outcome of maturation. If progress is going to be made, it is going to happen through concerted, sustained action by the activist. The work of the activist is such that s/he can rarely see immediate benefit and results from committed action and sustained effort. On the other hand, the activist who does not stay engaged, who does not hold the necessary tension of sustained action, also knows that nothing will happen. Even though one cannot see immediate results one still knows that continued action is the order of the day.

Engagement in protracted activism serves to bring forth maturity, although not necessarily or automatically. The activist must be sincere, that is, not have hidden agendas, in her/his motives. Maturity comes in part as a consequence of self-reflection. The value of this approach to the process of maturation is that it is gentle and persuasive. In loving oneself greater strides are made toward maturity than in being harshly critical, for example. Persistence, too, is more persuasively produced through an attitude of kindness, appreciation and respect for oneself than through obdurate criticism or castigation. It can even be said that maturity involves this capacity to be gentle with oneself, with others one is attempting to influence and with one's assessment and analysis of that which has to be changed in order for strides in social and environmental justice to be made.

There is a relationship between wisdom and progress in maturity and persistence. Persistence is not useful if it only means making the same flawed analysis or the same ineffective intervention repeatedly. Persistence in its positive connotation involves having the capacity to stay the course; to complete tasks and projects that one has set to accomplish without capitulating to obstacles and roadblocks. This positive persistence is fostered by maturity and emboldened by the wisdom that derives from thoughtful action.

5. Belief in Self

No one of the research subjects escaped his or her childhood without being marked as 'other' in some fashion. For those six respondents who are people of color in a culture that values whiteness and characteristics that affirm outward signs of direct participation in the hierarchy of dominance, the culture itself identified each of these subjects as the other. Each of the two Caucasians

was singled out , as well, for differentness, for being the other, even given the visible whiteness.

To what extent does this experience of oneself as other beget a motivation to perform humanitarian service? What might the links be that allow this group of biospheric humanitarians to choose service; to experience fulfillment in this service; and to sustain themselves in the service? There are three concepts in the relevant literature that provide some useful clues for an understanding of these questions. The three concepts are the 'relational self' (Naess 1999); hardiness: "a constellation of personality characteristics that function as a resistance resource in the encounter with stressful life events" (Kobasa S. C., Maddi S. R., Kahn S 1982 169) and resilience: "the process of persisting in the face of adversity"; "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress" (Wolin and Wolin 1993 9-11).

It is the relational self, the self that is constructed in connection with others and in respect to interactivity, interrelatedness and interdependence that is able to recognize; to behold; and to embrace the cause of the other. Only a self that is interrelational can perceive and construct a frame of reference wherein s/he acts on behalf of the other. The voiceless, the marginalized that is the other cannot be seen and known in its otherness save by one who has constructed a self that has the capacity to see, know and reach out to this other. This is the inherent power of the self that is relational.

The concepts of hardiness and resilience, as defined in the foregoing, are useful concepts in this discussion because they allow us to understand how the relational self is able to carry forward strategic steps of acting on behalf of the other. For the biospheric humanitarian of this research population, it is not sufficient that the plight of the other, whether that other be the marginalized poor (social justice) or the marginalized environment (environmental justice) be seen and recognized. One must take action. Again it is not any action that will suffice. Only the action that is eventually successful in alleviating the conditions of oppression of the other, with whom the biospheric humanitarian has identified, is a sufficient action. It is hardiness and resilience in the constitution of the self of the biospheric humanitarian that account for the capacity to endure against seemingly impossible odds. Thusly, the hope, the optimism and the passionate engagement of the biospheric humanitarian are founded in personal experiences.

It is in this vein, then, that the literature that discusses hardiness and resilience provides some useful clues as to how this research population has developed a strong sense of self.

> This (hardy) personality variable is composed of three basic, interrelated hypothetical elements: commitment, control, and challenge. Hardy persons are easily committed to what they are doing in their lives, believe they have some control over the causes and solutions of life problems, and view changes in life and adaptive demands as challenges

and opportunities for growth rather than as threats. (Florian, Mikulincer, Taubman 1995 687).

Resilience is divided into seven separate aspects that shed light on this present discussion:

- Insight – willingness to ask hard questions and to give honest answers.
- Independence – ability to take emotional distance from source of trouble in one's life
- Relationships – ability to make fulfilling connections with others
- Initiative – capacity to take charge of problems
- Creativity – use of imagination both in art forms and in problem resolution
- Humor – ability to place the drama of the moment in perspective
- Morality – capacity to act with an informed and engaged conscience (Wolin and Wolin 1993)

An important aspect of the above characterization of resilience is the recognition by the authors that the foundations for resilience are constructed sometimes beginning in childhood and most definitely in adolescence. Once the resilient or hardy characteristics are formed, these characteristics carry over into adulthood. As far as the belief in self is concerned, then, there is evidence both in the research literature and in the stories told by the subjects of the present study that the self is a carefully constructed phenomenon. The relational, resilient, hardy self is the self of the biospheric humanitarian of this study. There are degrees and gradations of resilience and hardiness within the group of research subjects. There are also degrees of relationality, of the relational self, in comparing the subjects among themselves. This same notion of degrees applies to resilience and hardiness with the different subjects.

Belief in self is a core component for understanding the biospheric humanitarians of this study. Without the self, the central organizing dynamic, around which is constructed a life of meaning and choices, there can be no meaning nor any choices. Resilience and hardiness, when seen as characteristics of the self that is expressed in committed humanitarian service, offer clues as to how to go about engaging other ordinary humans to do the work of the biospheric humanitarian. To the degree that one expresses oneself as inherently relational, as opposed to being autonomous and independent, one is predisposed to humanitarian service. When the characteristics of hardiness and resilience are known to constitute the defining nature of this relational self, the necessary ingredients for successful, sustained biospheric humanitarian service are in place. The population of youth and young adults as well as older men and women that possess these three characteristics of the relational self, resilience and hardiness is the population upon which recruiting efforts might focus. Based on the relevant research literature and the findings of this present study, it could be anticipated that these characteristics positively predispose candidates for biospheric humanitarian service to be strong and committed servants.

Hardiness and resilience support the inherently relational self. When the dilemmas, setbacks, obstacles and other impediments in normative biospheric humanitarian service are encountered, internal disposition as well as the decision making capacities are in place to then afford fulfilling and rewarding experiences for the practitioner as well as remedy and redress of social and environmental injustices.

6. Sustenance and Inspiration

Not every one of the subjects of this research are overtly spiritual, yet each one has awareness about the necessity for self-renewal and her/his inherent ability to find and utilize means to accomplish this self-renewal. Biospheric humanitarian service involves an expenditure of energy. The challenges involve a vast expenditure of time, effort, focus, planning, cooperation, leadership and other kinds of acumen. One has to develop the skills and the willingness to elicit sources of energy external to the self in order to accomplish sustained action.

Beyond this rational exposition, there is something inherent in the very nature of committed action that is sustaining. This is a nonlinear, non-rational quality of life lived for high purpose. This notion is not ascetic or religious. It better relates to a life chosen to be exercised for a common good or a collective purpose. Certainly the relational self bolstered by hardiness and resilience contribute to this fulfillment. Beyond this, however, is the sense that one is acting to resolve problems and issues that would otherwise be left undone and perhaps even unrecognized. There is a participation in a transcendent purpose; a purpose that cannot be fully expressed in rational terms as it cannot be exhaustively expressed in words. It is similar in nature to vocation and mission. It has a note of the sacred about it even as it is lived out in the most ordinary circumstances. This service is its own reward. One constructs one's life around the unfolding of this purpose. Therein lies the meaning and the reward.

7. Mentoring

For each of the research subjects who is engaged in full-time service, mentoring is one of the necessary roles that s/he plays. Mentoring is the context in which the specialized knowledge and the accumulated wisdom of the activist is passed on to those who will step into the positions of leadership and authority. Three of the subjects of this research have created venues for themselves in which they mentor others.

Mentoring is an integral part of biospheric humanitarian service. Each of the subjects who were interviewed for this research have achieved a leadership role in her or his respective communities. Each has accumulated a wealth of knowledge and has developed successful strategies for intervention. Whether

the audiences are youths or adults, teaching and more direct mentoring are important aspects of the roles played by these humanitarians.

Some of the subjects of this research take up positions on the periphery of normative culture. Their purpose is to reach those who are more disaffected from the mainstream culture. Each of the subjects addresses some aspect of a system of thinking and acting that is at odds with the environment in general and with many humans. In this larger sense the very job definition of a biospheric humanitarian can be said to be a mentoring role.

8. Non-Violent Principles and Practice

> Non-violence to be effective requires constructive effort in every sphere of life, individual, social, economic and political. These spheres have to be organized and refashioned in such a way that the people will have learnt to be non-violent in their daily lives, manage their affairs on a cooperative and non-violent basis, and thus have acquired sufficient strength and resourcefulness to be able to offer non-violent resistance against organized violence." (Gandhi 1951 v).

The principles and practices of non-violence permeate the life of the activist; they are not separate and do not stand apart from development, planning and execution of activities, projects and community mobilizations for changing the social order. Non-violent principles are effective in self-work; they are not merely tools to be utilized at the moment of taking action. At that moment it is too late to hope for beneficial effect from non-violent practice. The practice is always with the self.

The culture of non-violence can be said to be the organizing principle that unites this otherwise disparate group of biospheric humanitarians. The sources of the non-violence come from different places: Paulo Friere, Martin Luther King, eco-feminist writings, other environmental and social justice advocates. This culture of non-violence has permeated the thought processes and the strategizing and organizing abilities of the individuals of this group. For those who seek peace, love and tranquillity, violence has no place. For those who have suffered personal violence, they have repudiated violence as an instrument of their action in the world. For those who contend with institutionalized violence on a daily basis, they know first-hand the futility of violence. They are determined and ambitious and yet they do not allow themselves to sink to violence as a tool in their work.

9. Looking toward the Future

To summarize, this group aspires to further committed action. Each has learned valuable lessons on the road thus far traveled. Most accurately, each has become the road that has been traveled. There is no turning back; no

stepping off the path. Each has an engaged heart and a clear mind to offer direction. Each is skillful. Some are improbably gifted and astute.

Unexpected findings

My research, evaluation and data analysis reaped a rich cache of unexpected findings. The organizing power of non-violence is the first of these unexpected findings. Secondly, I discovered that the interviewees were dedicated to building alternative ways of being in the world rather than being in resistance to the *status quo.* This can also be perceived as a focus on internal versus external barriers. These first two unexpected findings are interrelated. Thirdly, the psychological developmental phase model proved inadequate to explain my findings. Fourthly, the subjects of this study each emerged from a community and each relies strongly on community for support and nurturance, as well as for cues about issues and direction. Fifthly, how the interviewees sustain themselves in committed action came as an unexpected finding. What follows is a brief commentary on each of these points.

The organizing power and the deep-seated involvement with the practice of non-violence was the singular most unexpected finding in this research. It was not the practice of non-violence, *per se,* that was unexpected. It is the sheer power and authority that this practice engenders in those who commit to it. The efficacy of this practice of non-violence certainly demands patience and detachment from immediate outcome. Many practitioners of non-violence, including Yetta, Serena, Monica, Byron and Rory, among the subjects of this present study, are pushed to their limits of tolerance. It is, perhaps, in this instance that non-violence pays its greatest dividends. This moment of crisis can be very beneficial if non-violent practices are pursued, even beyond one's imagined limits of tolerance.

Much of my prior awareness concerns the use of non-violence for resistance against the structures of power. The present subjects appear, to this researcher, to be embedded in a culture of non-violence. They live within an inherited wisdom of the power of non-violence, seen as a viable force against colonialism. They exhibit a missionary zeal about their work and commitments. They organize their lives around this work to which they are committed. They make on-going commitments of their vital energies to engage in internal processes of self-disclosure and self-purification. In their work they are not engaged in resistance; rather, they have transcended the motive and action of resistance to begin the building of alternative cultural expressions that support their respective constituencies.

The literature concerning the relational self, hardiness and resilience assisted in shedding some light on this matter of non-violence as the powerful organizing principle it is for these individuals. They have successfully delivered themselves of the harm that was done them, by engaging in a life of service.

While they are fastidious in their search for self-awareness they use this awareness process to become better practitioners. This has an external focus. They do not engage in acts of introspection. This practice greatly assists them in coming to terms with their backgrounds and in coming to terms with their own responsibility as humans. They do not take their hardiness and their resilience for granted. These choices afford them the opportunity for relevant and consistent non-violent practice.

The third unexpected finding relates to an initial understanding I had about how to go about framing the research I had decided to conduct. The received wisdom states that the traditional models of psychological developmental phases would allow me to understand the subjects of my research. Unexpectedly, the developmental phase model did not prove to be adequate in understanding the subjects of this study. As an example, Erik Erikson, in Identity and the Life Cycle, posits the notion of generativity. Generativity means the capacity to give back to society at large, that is, to something greater than one's own perceived needs, including the needs of one's dependents and loved ones. In his view, generativity can only develop at the onset of the fifth stage of human development, beginning with the age of forty-nine (Erikson). All eight subjects of this study had been engaged in productive, active commitment to larger societal issues, as activists, well before the age of forty-nine. Serena, Rory, Nell, Monica had begun this commitment to activism while they were teen-agers. The developmental phase conceptualization was not a relevant frame in understanding the subjects of this study. What did prove highly beneficial in my understanding the research subjects were insights gleaned from feminist and eco-feminist writers. The relational self is a core organizing concept for understanding the motives and practices of these subjects. The Marxist feminist concept of historically based analysis and critique also proved to be similarly useful. The concepts of resilence and hardiness also contributed important grounding in the research literature.

The subjects rely on community, they spring from community, they foster community, they build community and resort to community for self-understanding as well as for direction of their activism. Their immersion in and with community is so strong that concept of the relational self became a critical window into understanding both motivation and practice. Each subject fosters a community constructed around her/his particular offerings to the community. Closely associated with this unexpected finding is the fact these subjects are sustained in their activity by the life they live as activists. They are so fully immersed in their commitments that they do not see themselves separately from their commitments.

Implications for Further Research

Based on the insights I have gleaned from the research with this small sample of eight subjects, further research is warranted. It would be beneficial to expand the present sample to a much larger group. Other studies that have examined the lives and work of one hundred subjects serve as good models for such an expanded study. The further research could probe the line of questioning associated with identifying themes or variables that can assist in the recruitment process for other biospheric humanitarians. In this regard, attention might be focused on the factors of hardiness, resilience, non-violent practice and the relational self. Studies of how biospheric humanitarians experience themselves in action would be another rich avenue of research. An analysis of the journals and diaries of biospheric humanitarians would provide valuable insight into how these women and men go about making and keeping their commitments. Understanding would also be derived from introspective processes that could then be analyzed. Longitudinal studies of biospheric humanitarians who have years of service would begin to build valuable models for practice, for expectations and for outcomes. Carefully constructed participant observation of biospheric humanitarians would contribute to the research on this emergent group. Another beneficial research project would involve the reports of those related to and influenced by these biospheric humanitarians.

Further research is also warranted to assist in building curriculum for peace studies programs, for example, as well as for programs that train individuals in activism, diplomacy, policy studies, policy making. It appears to be an advantage to these and other endeavors to be able to identify the factors that make for successful biospheric humanitarian service. This study has made a beginning in this regard.

Chapter 13 Conclusion

> *The rise in terrorism, fundamentalism, and violence in the world today is simply part of the death throes of an old world order that continues to resist the principle of human oneness and the global institutions that are sure to blossom from its widespread acceptance.*
>
> *One Country (Bahai International, 2002)*

Elements for discussion:

My task in this final chapter is threefold. Firstly, I offer a brief review of each of the chapters with the intention in mind of making a connection between each of the chapters to the whole. My method for doing this will be to show how each succeeding chapter builds on what has been established in the immediate prior chapter. This will serve to strengthen the study as a unit and will allow my reader to see the internal coherence of the process I involved in building my case.

My second task is to discuss where this study fits into scholarly research within the very broad field of environmental justice and social justice discussion. I have drawn from many disparate and sometimes contending scholarly resources to find a *locus* for my case for the existence of an emergent group of biospheric humanitarians. When the dust has settled where can this emergent group find a home? In what scholarly specialty or theoretical field can I argue that this emergent group belongs?

My third task is to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this present study. What does this study offer? What are the contributions this study makes to the existent literature? What can be done in the immediate short term to add strength and viability to this study? What can be done in the longer term to legitimize the claim that I am making that there is indeed an emergent group of biospheric humanitarians?

Discussion:

In the introductory chapter I discuss the meaning of this study for scholarship, for activism, for the Earth, and for myself. My point of view in the study is that of an activist scholar. My purpose is driven by concern as an activist, on the one hand. It is also driven by my awareness that very strategic and thoughtful steps have to be taken at this time to produce hope and provide evidence in scholarship for the reversibility of the harm already done to the biosphere and dependent species and of the processes that continue to harm. The most poignant way that I could accomplish these two goals was to identify an unrecognized group that was already effectively acting so as to bring remedy to the harm being done.

In order to accomplish the above purpose I not only had to identify an unrecognized group, but had to place this group in a scholarly context. A proper scholarly context provides one of the two kinds of visibility that I regard as crucial. The second kind of visibility involves recognition within society of the value, purpose and accomplishments of the biospheric humanitarian endeavor. Such a widespread recognition would compel others to take action. I return to this theme while discussing what can be done to develop further what I have set in motion in this study. The scholarship in which I have engaged relative to the present study is three tiered. The first tier of scholarship has been my reading and study that lead me to take the action of entering doctoral studies. I undertook doctoral studies with the intention of sharpening and refining my own focus and my ability to contribute toward the building of a world that works for all participants in the biosphere, including the very biospheric matrix herself, the Earth.

The second tier of scholarship for this study took me through the phase of the execution, completion and enactment of my Learning Agreement. Through this phase of scholarship I met at every turn the harbingers of doom, those who sound the call for remedial and transformative action; this group sees no action save for further deterioration of biospheric systems consequent upon human actions. Because of my own activist roots I have first-hand knowledge that some people do notice and do take action to remedy damage and harm being done. And they do make a difference. I have known personally and have studied the lives and effective actions of many such courageous persons who have taken as their mandate to change for the better the course of harmful action.

The third tier of scholarship appears as the Literature Review in this present study. The Literature Review has a focus and purpose. It places in scholarly context the emergent group I have identified. As I became more engrossed in the study and understanding of my research participants, I was driven to further my scholarly understanding about how these participants sustained and even deepened their commitment to their work and activist lives. I found their commitment compelling and admirable. I also found it challenging to grasp in my understanding. It was this dilemma that drove me further into more purely scholarly research.

I quickly came to find both complimentary and contending understandings among the various relevant research disciplines. I needed to grasp why my real-life subjects endured. What kept them so involved? Readings in eco-feminist tracts elucidated the plausibility of the commitment I encountered. Women's history research strongly critiqued the ahistorical and antihistorical bias in the eco-feminist writings. This critique brought into my conscious awareness a puzzling disquietude I had as I read certain eco-feminists, for example, Warren and Spretnak. Some of their philosophy is not suffiiciently grounded in historical perspective. Environmentalist evaluations of continuing degradations proved to be of little value in this search because they lacked a discussion of remedy and

those remedying. Social Movement Theory began to provide some empowering clues, yet its focus on resource mobilization, a strictly material focus, did not get to the core of understanding the motivation I was seeking to comprehend. New Social Movement Theory, a sub-category of Social Movement Theory, provided a more plausible context into which I could place the motivated activists I encountered in my own study.

It is this third tier of my background research that allowed me to gain credibility within my own eyes for my own study and to see the value it portends for further research. The most significant learning I have at the present is about how astute we have to be at this time as we focus our efforts on making a difference. Much effort, even though it is courageous and laudable, does not make any significant contribution. This is sobering and backed by strong empirical evidence. The instance cited by Pellow concerning the incineration of garbage in Chicago is one example. This third tier Literature Review also provides the scholarly context for my own research direction. Because I have identified an emergent group I have had to call upon various scholarly disciplines in order to glean insight and knowledge about matters of scholarly substance, including theoretical construction, identification and signification or meaning of claiming to 'see' an emergent group.

Based on my understanding developed in the Literature Review I have then presented eight consecutive chapters of detailed reports of my research findings. Each of the eight chapters is devoted to one of my research subjects. My effort was to engage subjects within a broad spectrum of research variables. I chose subjects with gender, ethnicity, age, class and type of activism as the variables. I wanted to demonstrate with even such a small sample of eight individuals that the expression of concern, that is, the type of activism notwithstanding, there is an underlying field of concern, within each subject's consciousness, that typifies the group as a whole. The biospheric humanitarian is motivated to take action based upon her or his worldcentric view of the world. This worldcentric worldview is a developmental phenomenon both ontological, that is personal, and phylogenetic, that is, the human race. Biospheric humanitarian activism is propelled by and grows from an awareness of the inextricable and incontrovertible evidence, perceived in one's own consciousness or field of awareness of the interdependence, interrelationship and interconnection of all objects or manifest expressions in the world. The eight subjects of this research are ordinary citizens who are a part of a much larger, global, awakening

In the preceding chapter, Analysis and Findings, I analyzed the data gleaned from my interviews with the eight research subjects. I analyzed the data, using nine themes, with an eye to discovering past influences, present learnings, sources of motivation to endure or continue, future vision and plans. Since much of my motivation in undertaking this study was to discover activists I could uphold for emulation by others, I analyzed the research data to disclose

evidence for emulation as well as material to support this emulation. I chose unknown or relatively unknown subjects in order to make a case for 'ordinariness', that is, to better make the case that other ordinary people can make similar commitments. The subjects reveal themselves as ordinary people who live believable lives. They are committed and sustain themselves in action. They are caring and deeply concerned. They have powerful capacities for empathy and find ways to get the point across to those they see as obstructing the causes they represent.

These subjects are also highly invested in acquiring knowledge that will allow them to become more effective. They make solid investment in self-knowledge and self-growth. As a group they are well aware that the self is the most useful tool they have at their disposal to accomplish their goals. This self-growth is an important reward of their activist endeavors. The entire enterprise of their separate and collective contribution is constructed on the foundation of non-violent practice. The commitment to non-violence requires a steady and consistent commitment to self-analysis and self-correction. One certain and clear outcome of this on-going practice is the advancement of personal moral development.

This study in relation to other scholarly research:

This study belongs in the category of New Social Movement Theory. The reason is because it explores a newly identified or emerging sociological phenomenon. By this fact that I am claiming the emergence of a group committed to sociological change, the study fits into New Social Movement Theory, a newer branch or subset of social more traditional Social Movement Theory, rather than Social Movement Theory. It does not fall into established social movement where the focus is on resource identification and allocation. New Social Movement Theory studies how activists organize in groups and how networks serve to sustain activist endeavor. Nor does the study fall into eco-feminist study for the reason that it contains an historical element. It addresses how the research subjects relate to their own lives and it projects how they will relate to an unknown future.

This study does not fall into critical theory because it does not yet constitute a case of "communicative action" that can be subjected to critical theory's "discourse analysis". (Capek 203). It would be of great future advantage, requiring a much more extensive development of a larger group of biospheric humanitarians including a more replete understanding of their motives and drives, their victories and influence, to subject this then-extended study to critical theory. Why embrace critical theory? Critical theory discloses "elements of hope for a working democracy; (it is) the self-reflexive capacity of a society to transform itself through the incorporation of knowledge about its own structures. (I)t provides a theory of democratic participation that can be applied to actual structures of social movement organizations" (Capek 202-203). The benefit to

society of an expanded understanding of biospheric humanitarians would come through analysis using critical theory. In the end, the objective would be that participatory democracy would embrace as its own the tenets that drive the committed activism of the emergent group of biospheric humanitarians. The central tenets relate the self to the environment and the local to the global.

> The problem is that in modem capitalistic societies such as the United States, important social knowledge--including knowledge about ecological consequences of our social actions--is continually lost due to a shrunken public sphere, ineffective democracy, and the reduction of citizens to individualistic consumers. Without democratic feedback that comes from the lifeworlds of ordinary citizens, the state cannot rationally evaluate, much less plan, a society with a viable relationship to the ecosystem (Capek 203).

Assessment of present study's strength and weakness:

It is a strength and a weakness of the present study that it is exploratory. As an exploration this study provides a research advantage in that it opens a possibility for further clarification and identification of an emergent group. It is a weakness in that the present study is merely an exploratory study involving qualitative research on a very small group of eight subjects. The study offers an opening. It makes a contribution to the literature of New Social Movement Theory. In order for the study to become significant it has to be extended further. In the final analysis, however, it is of benefit to have identified this emergent group of biospheric humanitarians.

There is certain current benefit for the literature in that the subjects are shown to be dedicated and committed individuals. In addition, each of the subjects has a history of making a difference in his or her area of activism. The difference is positive and benign in that social structures are impacted to better serve the respective constituencies of each biospheric humanitarian profiled in this exploratory study. In the process of serving the constituency the biosphere is also served through consciousness raising of the constituency, for example. This fact anticipates additional benefit coming forth from expanded studies. At the present the subjects can be seen to be worthy of emulation. They tackle problems that many others fail to identify or ignore once the identification has been made. By expanding the study further, other dedicated subjects would come to light. The extent of the new social movement could be better detected.

The initial intention I had for the study was to notice and explore the beginnings of a broad social change. I have come to see through the course of my work that this purpose is a tall order. Even though the study's subjects are worthy of emulation and when their case is more widely publicized they would receive warranted attention, by this fact broad social change cannot be predicted. It is in this fact that this study may serve its most important purpose. What I am saying is that at the completion of this present study I can see how much more

deeply I am called and compelled to become involved in the case for biospheric humanitarians that I have opened.

One of the recurring themes reported by the subjects of this exploratory study is that they do the work because they cannot imagine not being involved. I undertook this study to make a contribution to broad social change. I have merely scratched the surface. Yet my spirit and my commitment have been redoubled and renewed. I can see the next steps to take. Even more beneficial than my seeing the next steps is the fact that I am called and compelled by the work of activism and scholarship that lies before me. I am humbled by the lessons I have learned from the subjects of my interviews. I am further humbled by the forces against which one has to push in order to make even the most insignificant shift in consciousness or transformation in the social or ecological order.

My own spirit is one deeply committed to the transformation of social structures and human consciousness to the end that the mighty and the lowly of the Earth can all co-exist. I have come, through the means of this present study, to better grasp the immense commitment required of one who wishes to fulfill this purpose. Participatory democracy is the means by which this goal can be reached. At least participatory democracy is the best means now available to the species for attaining this purpose. I complete this study with a greatly deepened respect for those who devote themselves in service to an ever-fuller realization of participatory democracy, the means by which the biosphere will be liberated from the forces advancing to accomplish its demise.

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