Nature doesn’t grow on trees: an analysis of environmental discourse

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Nature doesn't grow on trees: an analysis of environmental discourse.

by

Belinda Mary Place.

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University of Technology.

March 31st 1996

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Abstract.

This thesis examines the issue of environmentalism through a study of the construction of the environment or the ‘natural world’ in contemporary society. It tackles the issue through a close analysis of a selection of material which engages with the environment in different ways. This material has been selected in order to identify methods of organisation and strategies of argument which are present across a range of texts and also to investigate the way in which environmentalism is entwined with other issues in society, such as science, feminism and consumerism. After exploring theories of discourse in the work of Raymond Williams, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes and Judith Williamson, a framework of analysis is worked out. This is then used and modified in an examination of how representations of the environment feature in advertisements, eco-feminist texts and popular scientific discourse, and the way in which they become the focus of various discursive practices and techniques.
Acknowledgements.
I would like to thank the following people who have helped in various ways in the writing of this thesis: my supervisor Jonathan Potter for his help and encouragement, members of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group [past and present], other post-graduates in the Department, the interviewees who gave their time so willingly and Peter Beaman who helped me with the computing.
PART 1: THE QUESTION OF APPROACH.

Preface. 1

Chapter 1. Introduction - Initial questions. 5

Chapter 2. Four key approaches to environmental discourse. 13

Chapter 3. Four theorists. 23

Chapter 4. Approaching environmentalism. 41

PART 2: READING ENVIRONMENTALIST DISCOURSE.

Chapter 5. Introduction. 54

Chapter 6. Green advertisements. 58

Chapter 7. Nature, Eco-feminism and environmentalism. 74

Chapter 8. Green Science. 90

Chapter 9. Modern arguments and reflexivity. 112
PART 3: CONCLUSIONS.

Chapter 10. How to find your way round this thesis and the way out. 124

Afterword. 133

Footnotes. 135

Bibliography. 140

Appendix.

Document no. 1.
‘Mumbo Jumbo’ The Listener 18-25 Jan 1990

Document no. 2.
Advertisement from Radio Times 31 Aug.-7 Sept. 1990

Document no. 3
Body Shop Pamphlet 1990

Document no. 4
‘The Hi-jack of Reason’ The Guardian 20 April 1990

Document no. 5
Transcript of group discussion Nov. 1990

Document no. 6
Body Shop Pamphlet 1991
PART 1. THE QUESTION OF APPROACH.

Preface.

Why have you decided to write some sections using dialogue rather than a more usual form?

I find it much easier to put down what I am thinking in the form of a conversation rather than a monologue, which is what I think of as a more usual form.

Why is that?

Well there seem to be different demands from the two forms. A monologue suggests a whole, smooth piece of discourse with no hesitations or contradictions. It seems to imply a finished product and this isn't a form that I find easy to produce.

Why not?

When I'm trying to find out about something, the process which I follow is much more like a conversation than a monologue; I don't have a particular starting place, I just jump in anywhere, whereas a monologic text always seems to justify its beginning as a logical place to start. Also, I am always stopping and thinking 'Yes, but what about this bit or that argument?' or 'God, I've forgotten that point'. In a monologue these sorts of problems are all smoothed over and integrated into the text.

Well what's wrong with that - doesn't it just mean that the writer has polished up a bit on her original ideas?
I suppose it could do, but it seems to put such a strain on the process of writing. It's as if you have to master the discourse, to whip any problems and difficulties into line behind your argument, whereas I never feel that much in control. Things are forever escaping from my arguments or refusing to fit in with them and dragging in reinforcements from other arguments to back them up.

*Doesn't this just mean that you're not very good at writing?*

Well it could do, but I think that I have got some interesting things to say, I just find it difficult to do it in the orthodox way. Or rather if I do it in the orthodox way I seem to miss a lot of the interesting things out.

*What sort of things?*

Well, like I said, it's the places where bits of the argument don't fit with other bits, I feel I have to conceal these or gloss over them or just ignore them and hope nobody notices. That's to do with the idea of academic writing as a finished product - it may be disrupting previously held theories or beliefs but in itself it has to be complete and internally consistent. It's very rare that you find writing in which the author says 'well this is a problem and I don't know the answer to it'.

*But isn't academic writing supposed to be different from 'ordinary talk'? Surely that's the reason it's given a higher status, because it's more organised, well thought out and consistent. This whole argument sounds to me like an excuse for not being able to, or being bothered to write in a more organised way.*

Well that might be true. But I still feel that there is a lot of value in writing like this even if it's not the final way my argument is presented. It seems much freer, in that I don't feel restricted by the need to be consistent - by having to decide at the beginning what my argument is and apply it mercilessly to the material from beginning to end. Thinking in the form of a dialogue makes it possible to voice criticism and alternative ideas without seeming to contradict myself. If you read a
monologue where the speaker contradicts herself you put it down as a fault in her argument, but nobody reads an interview written in dialogue and accuses the discourse of being contradictory because the interviewer disagrees with or criticises the interviewee - this is seen as a good and productive thing.

So how is it going to help your thesis?

By following more closely the way that I have tackled the subject and by allowing me to work out or talk out the problems I come across as I get to them rather than having to solve them before I begin writing. Up until now I have been thinking 'I must decide what my position is on environmentalism and discourse analysis before I begin writing' but when I try to decide on this it becomes impossible. I can make a few preliminary statements such as 'I definitely think that the environment should be looked after carefully,' or 'The Third world shouldn't have to pay for the overconsumption of the First world', or 'Discourse analysis seems likely to be a productive approach to understanding the organisation of environmental discourse'. But more than that I'm not really prepared to be definite about at this stage. In fact I even have some problems with these statements, for example, what do I mean by 'environmental discourse' and how would I know if the environment is being looked after carefully or not?

But surely you must have a strong theoretical position from which to analyse your material otherwise you end up being eclectic and having no overall argument.

This sounds so reasonable when you say it but in a way I think that this approach just gives strength at the expense of flexibility. In some ways what I am trying to say has been described by Billig [1989:95] when he talks about the distinction between rhetoric and logic given by Zeno of Citium. He compares logic to a closed fist and rhetoric to an open palm. Billig admits that it is possible to interpret this as a contrast between the rigorous thinking of logicians and the sloppiness of orators, but he argues that
'on the other hand, a rhetorician might dispute this interpretation and its implications: the looseness of rhetoric is not an indication of inferiority, nor does it need to be pulled taut by a logical wrench. For the rhetorician, the looseness is an essential part of rhetoric and a necessary aspect of argumentation'. [1989: 95]

I suppose then that I am saying that I want to take a rhetorical approach to the issues and look at them in terms of argumentation, although I hope to interest and convince the reader more by a sort of dogged worrying of the issues and my ideas about them and a spelling out of the problems as they occur, rather than by the grand and eloquent flourishes that are more usually associated with rhetoric.
Chapter 1.

Introduction: Initial Questions.

Some 'Green' quotes.

Who are the Greens and what are their objectives? A different answer would be forthcoming from virtually every country in which Greens are organised, and from many of the Green movement's own adherents." [Andrew McHallam 1991:7]

The dispassionate observer of the present ecology movement cannot help but be struck by the ironies and contradictions co-existing under one banner. Compassion and callousness, altruism and greed, world vision and nationalistic hubris, all join in what some presume to call the ultimate revolution [Neuhaus 1971:188]

Green political parties and movements around the world excite an interest and count on a breadth of support that has taken everyone - Greens included - by surprise. But as more and more individuals and organizations have climbed aboard the Green bandwagon, the central ideas of Green politics have become obscured.' [sleeve notes on Green Political Thought by Andrew Dobson 1990]

[T]he greatest weakness of environmentalism, [is] namely, its inherent ideological contradictions which are mirrored by ambivalent policy prescriptions ... [t]he fact that some of these contradictions are not even recognised, let alone understood and resolved, makes the issue all the more frustrating. [O' Riordan 1977:3]

These pieces of discourse, the dialogue and the Green epigrams, are intended to introduce and illustrate some of the preliminary issues and problems of this study. Both the piece of dialogue and the Green quotes suggest a state of
perplexity - the former in terms of the writing of the thesis and the latter in terms of the state of environmentalism. This perplexity can be formulated as centring around the issue of argument. The dialogic position suggests that discourse contains within it conflicting perspectives on the process of academic writing, and that discourse progresses through a continuing argument between these positions. The Green discourse has a similar formulation, with the environmental debate being represented as a melee of conflicting positions and values. However, the contribution of argument is here constructed as negative, as leading to a situation in which, for example, the 'central ideas of Green politics have become obscured'. The consensus in the views expressed in the quotes seems to be that until such internal arguments are recognised, understood and resolved, there will be little progress for the environmental movement.

A concern with the contradictory positions which co-exist within discursive environmentalism is central to the general approach which will be taken in the thesis. Many people have become aware of environmentalism as an issue and have begun to look more closely at its possibilities as a fresh way of grappling with the problems and concerns of everyday life. This interest has led to the posing of numerous questions on both a mundane level, such as 'should I buy Green washing up liquid?', 'shall I go to the bottle bank?', and 'are free range eggs healthier?'; and on a slightly more complex level such as 'is the alternative health movement Green?', 'if I want to be a feminist and Green do I have to be an earth mother?', and 'shouldn't people in the third world have a chance to make lots of money?'. These questions involve trying to decide not only how environmentalism would affect everyday lifestyle but also how it would fit in and interact with other issues.

The most obvious approach to these questions seemed to be the one suggested by the Green quotes above, to move from a superficial level of dabbling in Greenness to the expert level of sorting out the important issues in environmentalism, those which are often obscured by the ups and downs of the 'Green Bandwagon'. Even a brief glance at the literature, however, shows that
this is an approach which is already heavily subscribed. It would also entail ignoring or dismissing those very factors which attracted me to the research to the issue in the first place - the perception of the environment in everyday life, and the way that a Green awareness has been taken up and entwined with so many other facets of our existence. A method which entailed clarifying the issues would also involve smoothing out the untidiness and confusion which seems to be such a vital part of the environmental debate. I therefore decided to try and find a more holistic approach which could deal with the variations, contradictions and general messiness of the issues entangled in the debate, and in this chapter I hope to set out some of the problems and themes involved in trying to work out a method which will fit in with this approach.

My general mode of inquiry will be an examination of the social discourse of environmentalism, by this I mean a study of the construction or representation of the environment or the 'natural' world in contemporary society. In this instance the discourse will be in the form of language, although a study of other forms of discourse, such as visual images or artefacts, would be just as feasible [if more difficult]. I have decided to tackle the issue through a close analysis of a selection of texts which engage with the environment in very different ways. These include extracts from a group discussion, articles from newspapers and magazines, advertisements and academic texts. Two preliminary points can be made about this material: firstly, a diverse selection has been chosen in order to identify methods of organisation and strategies of argument which are present across a wide range of enviromental texts, and also to examine the differences and similarities between the texts which tackle the issues on a number of levels. Secondly, most of the texts used seem marginal rather than central to the environmental debate. This is in order to investigate the way in which environmentalism is entwined with other issues in society; in this discourse the topic of the environment is combined with other topics such as science, feminism, and consumerism.

The status of texts.
As has already been stated, the two preceding sets of accounts formulate parallel concerns. My own preface - the piece of dialogue, and the extracts from environmental discourse, focus on the same issue, the issue of inconsistency and variation within texts. This parallel concern brings up the question of the status of the texts which are involved in this study.

In most academic work the analytic text, that is the text of the author, is seen to be performing a different function from, and is privileged over, the texts or material which is being studied. The term 'analysis' is often used to describe the idea of reducing something to its component or elemental parts. This sort of assumption constructs the relationship between the 'data' or 'material' and the 'analysis' in terms of a superficial appearance and an underlying reality. The analyst can identify what is 'really' being said, why people 'really' behave as they do, as opposed to what 'appears' to be going on. So analysis and material are perceived as existing on different levels and are doing different jobs.

The two levels of material and analysis are also constructed as having a different relationship with the social world. The material is a slice taken out of the process of social life; an interview, a survey, a transcript, can all be seen as attempts to get hold of a 'representative' portion of the social process whilst preserving its 'social embeddedness'. The aim is to keep the effects of the 'slicing' process itself to a minimum as this is seen to contaminate the purity of the material.

Analysis, on the other hand, must try to keep its own purity. This involves detaching itself from the very social embeddedness which is valued in the material. The analyst must try to put aside her involvement in society in order to be able to see with clarity what is 'really' there. So the social element of discourse has opposing functions in social scientific research - it is perceived as ascribing value to the material but as obscuring clarity in the analysis.

This attempt to escape from the social in analysis is usually justified in terms of objectivity. A set of clearly defined methodological rules should be applied to the material under analysis; these rules govern matters such as the collection and analysis of data and as they are impersonal they will apply equally to all researchers. By following these rules it is assumed that any researcher who
approaches the same problem will arrive at the same answers, thus excluding individual bias from the research.

Social scientific analysis is thus seen, and sees itself, as being qualitatively distinct from the material it is examining; it is the result of the application of a set of methodological rules which act as a guarantee for its objectivity. Whilst not wishing to deny the value of research which has its foundations in this premise I would like to suggest that some useful insights into both analysis and material can be made if this distinction is first examined and then modified to some extent.

It is possible to question the assumption that a clear distinction can be made between the material and the analysis. There do not seem to be any special elements of the analytic text which are not present in other texts. Features used to validate and invalidate the analysis, such as the claim to objective truth, appeals to the values of established authorities, and the identification of an underlying reality which motivates or determines a superficial appearance, are all common features of a wide variety of texts from both academic and popular sources.

I will be arguing in this thesis that a great deal can be learned about an issue by focusing more on the construction of the text or discourse itself rather than by trying to focus on some external reality which we assume the discourse is describing or referring to. It is proposed, therefore, that features such as claims to objectivity and appeals to authority are looked at in both the analysis and in the examples of environmental discourse, such as the green adverts and newspaper articles, in terms of how they function rather than in terms of whether they are justifiable. This is not to argue that academic or analytic texts are of no value or that there is no possibility of assessing the value of one text over another, but rather to propose that analysis is not an inherently privileged form of discourse which can be set apart from other texts in some judgemental position. It has to struggle in the same arena as all other discourse.

Such an approach to the material thus tends to undermine the divide between the analysis and the subject matter. I do not see the analysis as an
objective account and assessment of the discourse. It is perhaps more clearly
organised and uses a wider range of references but it is no more 'true'. It exhibits
a quantitative rather than a qualitative difference, relying for its persuasive
powers upon its construction in the same way as the discourse under analysis. So
although the terms 'analysis' and 'material' will be used in the thesis, the aim is
not to remove the analysis from the arena of argument and present it as an
objective account which prevails over the material, but rather to subject it to the
same sort of scrutiny and criticism as the other texts which will be discussed and
to examine how it is interwoven with the material. In this way I hope to give the
thesis a reflexive quality in that it 'bends back' on itself to some extent. The best
way that I can think of to do this is not some radical reworking or overthrow of
the research process, but rather a continuing awareness that my own text exists
on the same level as the texts which I am discussing.

It has been claimed [Ashmore: DARG meeting 1992] that
this sort of argument is a rhetorical strategy which could be termed 'doing
modesty'. But in the same way that 'ideological' only seems to have power as a
criticism if it can be compared to some sort of 'non-ideological' state, the claim
that something is a rhetorical strategy only works as a criticism if it is possible to
bypass rhetoric in a way that sets some discourses apart as unarguably more
truthful, authentic or neutral than others. This issue will form one of the central
themes of the thesis and much of the study will be concerned with the attempts
which are made in the discourse to set some accounts apart from others by
locating them outside the arena of argument.

This thesis is a rhetorical piece of work. It is intended to persuade the
reader of certain things, for example that environmentalism is a complex and
interesting area to study, and that discourse analysis provides a useful and
worthwhile way of trying to understand it. That I am using many of the same
strategies and justifications which will be pointed out in the texts under
discussion is apparent, but this need not imply that I am undermining my own
argument, rather, this supports the proposition that these elements are present in
all discourse in our society, my own included.
There is a further question involved in the material/analysis distinction. This involves the explicit use of texts written by other people about the same topic; for example, other sociological studies of environmentalism. These could perform different functions in the thesis. When making some theoretical or methodological point they could be brought in as support or as a basis for the analysis. For example, I could say 'I am going to use Fox's categories of environmental grouping as a basis for my analysis'. In other instances they could be considered to be part of the material or evidence, for example 'Lamb's study shows that 60% of environmental activists come from social classes 1 & 2.' In many cases this distinction appears easy to make because the part of the study which counts as evidence will be different in form from the argument. Many studies are divided into data and analysis - with the data being presented in the form of tables and charts whereas the analysis is in the form of a discussion about the data. However when the material which is to be discussed is itself in the form of a discussion it is more evident that there is a problem.

Perhaps it would be useful to illustrate this problem using the 'Green' quotes above as examples. Are the quotes going to be taken as examples of environmental discourse or are they accounts about environmental discourse. On the one hand they can be seen as environmental accounts themselves - their focus is on the issue of environmentalism, but on the other hand they are making statements about other environmental accounts. Is there a difference between these texts and for example, the Green Party manifesto or a newspaper article advocating the recycling of bottles? Are they part of the material or part of the analysis? The view taken here is that they can function as both - there is nothing inherently analytic or substantive about them. They can be used both as support for analysis and as material to be analysed.

This coming together of analysis and material has perhaps been focused on in most detail by feminism. It has become apparent to feminists that gender cannot be treated as a topic which is detached from the methods being used to study it. Gender is not just another variable which must be taken account of in the study of social issues, it is involved in the perception and methods of studying these
issues in the first place. It thus becomes apparent that some sort of reflexive study of social science methods must be undertaken in order to understand the position of women in society. This brings up the question of whether the 'rigorous' research methods which supposedly ensure a 'value-free social science' are themselves value-free. If they are not, if they themselves are based on certain socially determined values, then they can no longer be seen as a neutral set of tools whose application will result in objective analysis. The rules themselves become the object of scrutiny and the previously clear distinction between the data, the methods and analysis begins to break down.

These arguments would seem, therefore, to go against the idea that social scientific analysis can be even partially removed from the social arena, and I hope to argue that perceiving analysis as a more complex reflexively social discourse rather than as a reflexively 'neutral' or 'objective' discourse can work in a positive and expansive way.

* * * * * * * * * * *

So how is this going to look in the thesis? Aren't you just going to get hopelessly muddled about what you are doing?

Well I think that depends on what I try to do. If my aim is to lay environmentalism out on the slab and dissect it neatly then I will probably get into a horrible mess and end up cutting off my own fingers, but if my aim is more to understand how environmental arguments are interwoven with other arguments including my own then hopefully it will prove to be a fruitful approach.

And what if you get half way through and find that things are not going too well?

Well I'll just have to try and work through the difficult bits - after all if I'm arguing that the conflicts and contradictions in a text are the interesting bits I can't really give up at the conflicts in my own work.
Chapter 2.

Four Key Approaches to Environmental Discourse.

Dealing with Discourse - The diversity of environmentalism.

As has been argued already, environmentalism is formed from a diverse number of strands and issues and these are often contradictory and inconsistent. In order to deal with the diversity of the discourse I will, then, have to work out some way of talking about its construction, the other discourses which it refers to and engages with, and the relationship between these elements. This search for a way of talking about discourse will form and be formed as a part of every chapter, rather than being defined before I begin. However, some preliminary formulations of discourse will now be suggested which bring out a number of significant features to be taken up in more detail later within the thesis.

a. Discourse is a totality of argumentative strands.

This is an analogy used in a number of studies of environmentalism [e.g. O'Riordan 1977, Pepper 1986] in which green discourse is examined in terms of a weave of ideas and positions which can be unravelled, identified and individually discussed. It is a useful assertion as it emphasises the constructed character of discourse. A piece of discourse can be perceived as being woven from pre-formed strands of ideas; different patterns and fabrics can be produced by weaving the same strands in a different order or combination.

b. Discourse is an active solution.

The relationship between discourse and its component parts can be formulated in terms of solution and sediment [Williams 1980]. The ideas and positions in the discourse are constructed as layers of sediment, which can be separated out and discussed as if they have an independent existence, [as in the 'strands' analogy above] but there will be an accompanying awareness that this is an analytic strategy, and that although these layers appear to underlie the discourse, like the sediment in a bottle of medicine which has been allowed to stand, social discourse never does remain static.
The sediment is always mixed and suspended in a constantly active and changing solution.

This activity is evident in the way that discourse can be constituted, not just as the end product of the act of speaking or writing, but as active in itself [Potter and Wetherell 1987]. This notion can be contrasted with the idea of discourse or language as a medium, a sort of sieve through which a previously existing reality must pass in order to be communicated to a receiver. Rather than the discourse being simply the means of representation of an objective reality, it can be argued that it has a power and vitality of its own. Although the notion of language as being an agent in itself is problematic, the struggle of Humpty Dumpty over who is to be the master, him or the words, gives a tangible example of the active character of language. The idea of a struggle taking place within language, rather than language merely describing struggles which take place elsewhere is an important theme within the thesis.

c. Discourse is constructed from resources.

In every society there is available a vast pool of already formed resources and representations, which can be used to discuss different topics [Moscovici 1984]. These resources are not confined to specific positions on a certain topic such as 'five different views of environmentalism'; they are much more wide ranging. For example, in the environmental discourse which will be examined, many issues and arguments which are not specifically concerned with the environment are made use of: philosophical arguments about free will and determinism, questions about the motivation of participants, assessments of issues such as advertising and social change, and analogous comparisons between environmentalism and other areas - is it like a political ideology? is it a scientific issue? does it come under religious or spiritual matters etc.? It could be argued that our understanding of the relationship between ourselves and the natural world is involved in numerous aspects of everyday life, and that there are few areas which could not function as resources for environmental discourse.

d. Discourse is an intertextual product.
A final way of formulating discourse is as an assembly of texts [Barthes 1975]. This emphasises some points which the above descriptions have missed. Firstly, it goes against the formulation of resources as free floating, abstract ideas; by calling them texts it is easier to picture these resources as bits of social practice which took place in some context. It also keeps the elements within the discourse on the same level; if the resources are considered to be social ideas then it is easy to construct the relationship between resource and discourse as one between abstract principle or philosophy and concrete manifestation of that philosophy. Although this hierarchical model has proved highly productive in some research it is not the one I wish to make use of here. If the resources and the discourse are all treated as texts, then the formulation of a hierarchical relationship between resource and discourse in which some aspects of a discourse are more crucial than others is dismantled. By comparing the discourse to a woven piece of cloth in which all strands play an equal part in the construction, rather than to a building in which the foundations are more fundamental than the superstructure, some interesting elements come to the fore.

These formulations of discourse will, then, be used to create a provisional frame for the analysis. In order to try out its potential, I would now like to examine a piece of environmental discourse. This particular article, 'Mumbo Jumbo', is one of a series in The Listener [1990] entitled 'Green Piece', and is written by freelance television producer Brian Leith [See Appendix Document no.1].

First of all the article will be summarised [by doing a summary I am aware that I will be creating another piece of discourse from the original article] and then examined in terms of the different approaches to discourse outlined above. The summary will, to some extent, employ the 'strands' approach, by drawing out what I consider to be the most important arguments and points in the discourse. This would seem to indicate that any attempt at analysis is going to involve not only a reading but also a rewriting of the material.

**Green Piece**

The discourse begins by commenting on the increase of articles and programmes in the media which deal with environmental issues. The author proposes that we have
suddenly entered a 'bright new age of ecology'. This has connected the most 'prosaic aspects of our daily lives with the rest of creation and the very future of the planet'. He then compares 'Green' with a new religion and warns of the dangers which can enter environmentalism through this comparison - 'Dangerous and powerful myths, fundamentalist myths which could undermine the rational foundations of environmental thinking'.

As an example of these irrational myths he focuses on Heathcote Williams poem 'Sacred Elephant' which, he argues, 'represents the militant wing of the new green theology'. Leith claims to have been moved by this poem and others by the same poet, but at the same time to be concerned about them: 'these poems show worrying signs of irrational fanaticism'. Although they are 'well-meaning' they 'perpetrate a deeply mistaken and romanticised view of nature and our place in the scheme of things'.

Leith then goes on to analyse the poem which he describes as a 'eulogy to animal strengths, animal virtues'. He argues that for Williams, animals are our superiors and that only humans are cruel and destructive. Leith denies this argument by claiming that 'a few nights spent in a South American rain forest or on the plains of Masai Mara should dispel any lingering notions that animals are nice to each other'. The difference is in humans having power and numbers, not by our being 'by nature any more destructive than the other animals'.

He then argues that the message in Williams' poems is clear: 'humanity is a lowly and contemptible beast altogether, unworthy of nature'. Other animals are more honourable and perfect than us and we should leave the world to them. Leith then identifies what he calls yet 'another myth' that 'only "noble savages" still possess knowledge of the Edenic world of harmonious nature, knowledge which we have long lost'. This 'myth' is dispelled, by citing what archaeologists 'now know' about the destruction of a diverse wildlife by the North American Indians and the Easter Islanders who 'deforested themselves out of existence' 500 years ago. Leith brings in evidence about aboriginal people today in Amazonia - which contact has 'revealed'. He argues that these people have an 'unsentimental and utilitarian - not to say short-sighted - approach to the forest'. They 'covet outboard motors and shotguns because these tools make their lives easier' Likewise the Masai of East Africa are 'busy fencing
off their lands and buying Toyota land cruisers' rather than deferring to the seniority of the elephant as Williams claims.

Leith continues his argument by making some comparisons between humans, animals and aboriginal tribes. He is not saying that animals are any nastier than humans or that aboriginal tribes are or were any less ecologically sound than we are, in fact he says there's not a lot to choose between us all. That, he argues, is why Williams' denigration of [western] humans is so unhelpful and mistaken. Leith argues that in order for 'lowly' humans to rise to the task of 'assuming responsible stewardship' of the planet, what we need is 'great self confidence and an intimate understanding of biology.' His statement of his own perception of 'our' role in the environment is quite complex.

We humans are on the threshold of becoming the first creatures to control our biological imperatives in a rational, constructive way. In biological terms we are immensely successful and yet we are about to become the first species in the earth's history to voluntarily limit our success in the name of harmony. OK so we may have left it pretty late, but at least we are beginning to act. I'd like to see a herd of elephants negotiate a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. [1990:7]

Leith's conclusion, then, is that up to a short time ago the environment needed all the media coverage it could get to build up 'awareness'. However, 'perhaps as a result we let our sense of discrimination atrophy'. This is something which often happens among 'zealots' especially if they are in a minority. But 'we've got to exercise those old muscles again if we are to keep the core of environmental thinking sound'. This must be done because 'green-bashing' is beginning to happen by those groups who will lose power and wealth if we have a more 'ecologically rational world ... what's the point in scoring own goals? Fundamentalists - whatever their faith are both dangerous and a laughing stock.'

How then can this text be examined or discussed in order to gain an understanding of environmental discourse? The formulations of discourse which were outlined above can be used as a preliminary way of engaging with the text.
a. Discourse is a totality of argumentative strands.

It is possible to understand this article as an argument between distinctive strands of environmentalism. These could be described as a technocentric position and an ecocentric position, two strands which have already been formulated by a number of environmental commentators [e.g. Pepper 1986 O'Riordan 1977]. The technocentric position is one which argues that the ecological problems of the world can be solved through more and better science; the relationship between people and the environment is an instrumental one. This does not preclude a desire to care for and preserve the environment for emotional or aesthetic reasons, but the path towards this preservation follows the route of scientific progress in which humans are in control.

The ecocentric perspective, on the other hand, denies this hierarchical relationship between people and nature. It positions humans within the arena of the natural world, not outside it, and argues that this world has an inherent value of its own which is not dependent on its instrumental value to humans. The environmental problems which we are now encountering are considered to be a result of the arrogant attitudes of technocentrism, which places people above the other occupants of the earth and encourages their exploitation for the gain of humanity.

In this article, Brian Leith could be understood as taking a technocentric position against the ecocentrism of Heathcote Williams. Leith is advocating rational control and biological knowledge as the solution to our problems. He criticises Williams' undermining of western people's superiority to the rest of creation; claiming that it is precisely this sense of superiority which is necessary to preserve the earth.

As a preliminary step, this way of understanding discourse seems to be a useful method of clarifying the argument and attaching it to a wider arena of green discourse.

b. Discourse is an active solution.

Although the construction of strands such as ecocentrism and technocentrism provides a way into the text, it tends to present the discourse as static. By formulating the account as a debate between two well established environmental positions the text can
easily become just another manifestation of an underlying set of philosophies, with attention being diverted from the specific construction of the discourse. This move could be considered as reductionist in that the underlying positions are privileged over the rest of the text, with any variations or inconsistencies from these positions being regarded as either mistakes or misunderstandings on the part of the author. This form of analysis on its own leads to the sort of comments quoted at the beginning of the chapter: 'the central ideas of Green politics have become obscured' or 'some of these contradictions are not even recognised, let alone understood and resolved'. However, it is around these contradictions that much of the constructive work in the discourse is going on.

The identification of already established environmental positions seems to ignore how these strands are 'dissolved' in the discourse as a whole. It misses out the indexicality of the constructions in this text [Garfinkel 1967, Weider 1974] that is 'their sense and reference are settled by looking at features of their context or occasions of use' [Potter and Wetherell 1987:23]. So in this context technocentrism is not just a static established position which underlies Leith's argument it is also a moving element which is being continually reconstructed and adjusted within the text to *create* the argument.

If the discourse is dissected in terms of consistent arguments or strands a number of contradictions have to be ignored. For example, there is a conflict between the earth being of value and not of value - the future of the planet and the environment is of paramount importance, but not so important that we get fanatical about it. Also, we must discriminate and judge in order to identify a core of sound environmental ideas, but we must not discriminate between humans, animals and aboriginal peoples [there's not a lot to choose between us] in order to place blame anywhere. Finally, our evolutionary development is both responsible for our being destructive [biological imperatives] and our stopping being destructive [having evolved to this threshold, unlike the elephants]. The conviction of the argument depends just as much on the deployment of these contradictions as on the technocentric position which Leith takes.

By constructing the discourse as an active solution, not only can the agency of these contradictions be considered but also the intertwining of environmentalism with other arenas of argument can be appreciated. This mixing up process adds to the
rhetorical force of the account. For example, when Leith warns of 'dangerous and powerful myths, fundamentalist myths which could undermine the rational foundations of environmental thinking' and argues that Williams 'represents the militant wing of the new green theology' his attack gains much of its vigour from a fusion with another set of strands - those concerning the debate about fundamentalist religion and its re-emergence as a political and possibly military force. This point is further discussed below.

c. Discourse is constructed from resources.
Leith's argument can be seen as being constructed from social resources. One set of these resources is the strands or positions which have been established in environmentalism, and which were discussed in section a. The resources which are drawn upon in this piece of discourse are however not confined to the topic of environmentalism. For example, resources which are explicitly made use of are issues of religion [Green has all the makings of a new religion] the media [the prolific amount of coverage of environmental issues in the press and on television] archaeology and anthropology [historical and cultural evidence about aboriginal people]. The article also makes use of theories of motivation [Amazonian Indians are utilitarian and their behaviour is motivated by the desire to make their lives easier; fundamentalists behave in an irrational way because of their religious zeal] and of evolution [in biological terms we are immensely successful]

So the resources drawn upon go far beyond the strands outlined in lists of environmental positions. Environmental discourse does not seem to be separable in any discrete way from other sorts of discourse. Although this article is clearly labelled as being environmental - it is in a series called Green Piece, subtitled 'Beware the environmentalists who glorify nature' etc. - the diversity of resources which it draws upon in its construction point again to the image of social discourse as being in solution; topics are not discussed in isolation from other social issues - the identification of a topic is an achievement of the text rather than an inherently exclusive concern of the text.

d. Discourse is an intertextual product.
The final approach to discourse which will be discussed is an intertextual one. As I argued above, by constructing the resources made use of in a piece of discourse as texts in themselves, the practical and social character of discourse is emphasised. The resources used are also texts which were constructed for some purpose and which used other resources or texts in their making. They do not exist somewhere in a pure form unaffected by the possible purposes to which they could be put. Any statement about technocentrism can be seen as another text which has been constructed for some purpose. It will always be active and in solution with other texts. This argument thus goes against the claim that strands or philosophies can be stated in an abstract and pure form. For example, although a seemingly objective statement of the technocentric position can be put forward [see my own brief description above] it will still have been constructed for some purpose [in this case to contrast with ecocentrism and to explain a point in my thesis] and so immediately loses its abstract status and becomes part of an intertextual solution.

Conclusion

By considering these approaches I hope to have convinced the reader that it is a worth-while pursuit to consider discourse in what could be described as 'holistic' terms. I am trying to construct a way of understanding discourse which, whilst acknowledging that this understanding may necessitate making all sorts of distinctions between different elements of the discourse and examining them in isolation, also proposes that it is worth making an effort to deal with it in its complexity.

It could perhaps be argued that it would now be a good idea to simplify these approaches to discourse into a single one - each category which has been used can be seen to conflict with another and although all these approaches are useful as a preliminary, maybe they could be combined into a unitary approach. Discourse as made up of strands, of resources and of texts could perhaps be refined into discourse as one single concept which selects elements from all three of these approaches but discards the inconsistent bits. However, I feel that by keeping the tension between the categories, a better sense of the complexity and uneven consistency of the discourse can be retained. Each approach seems valuable in itself and also in contrast to the
other approaches. For example, the construction of discourse as solution is a good way of dealing with the fluidity of texts, but part of its effectiveness is in the contrast between this and the discursive strands approach. In the same way looking at discourse as active and then as resource highlights the constructed nature of texts in which new meanings are made from an eccentric use of already existing meanings. If I try to weld all these approaches together into one single argument they take on a reified quality which I want to avoid. By analysing the discourse through approaches which exist in tension with each other I hope to maintain a flexibility which can deal with the diverse character of discourse.

Throughout the thesis these approaches will be tried out and adjusted and other dimensions will be added to my argument. I do not, however, intend to apply these ideas in a formulaic way by going through each approach with every piece of discourse. Rather, they will form a framework for my argument, some chapters concentrating more on one aspect than another.
Chapter 3
Four Theorists.

Preliminary note on postmodernism

The concerns which were identified in the introduction are often considered under the label of postmodernism. The term refers to a cluster of arguments and ideas which are active within a number of different arenas, including art, literature, philosophy and social theory, and which sets itself up in opposition to a modernist version of society. This modernist version has been formulated in various ways, but the project of modernity could be formulated as the belief that through the development of science and technology we can improve human life in general, and can set it on a more rational and satisfactory basis. The project rests on ideas of objectivism in which there is a conviction of 'some permanent, ahistorical matrix or framework to which we can ultimately appeal in determining the nature of rationality, knowledge, truth, reality, goodness or rightness.' [Bernstein 1984:4] Countering this, postmodernism emphasises pluralism and difference whilst criticising aspects of modernism such as the overarching or meta-theories of, for example, science, progress, Marxism and liberalism.

The issue of environmentalism could be seen to embody many of the features of a postmodern phenomena: a diversity of ideas, a cross-cutting of previously incompatible social movements, and some criticism of notions of science and progress. Postmodern ideas are also related to the writing of the thesis, with its concerns about intertextuality, the openness of argument and its reflexive awareness of the process of analysis as a construction which is imposed upon discourse; the diversity of environmentalism could thus be engaged with and explored as a positive aspect of the issue.

On one level, this thesis could be seen as a continuing argument between modernism and postmodernism, with the focus [as mentioned in the introduction] being upon the location of the boundaries of argument. In modernism, the idea of an ahistorical framework through which society can be perceived makes use of
concepts which attempt to place some social issues outside the arena of argument - progress, modernisation, civilisation etc., all present themselves as neutral standards by which things can be objectively measured. Likewise in social scientific writing, the idea of objective research methods attempts to exclude the methods themselves, and the material which is produced by them, from the arena of argument. The 'project of modernity' can also be identified within environmentalism itself, objectivist assumptions lie behind the epigrams in Chapter 1 which called for a cohesive and unified voice to speak for the environment, and a modernist stance is particularly associated with technocentrism, which, as has already been mentioned, promotes 'more and better science' as the answer to environmental problems.3

The modernist/postmodernist debate thus engages with this study on two levels:

a. On the level of the construction of the thesis - is the reflexive and tentative approach which I am taking going to prove as creative as the more compelling and absolute approach of objectivism?

b. On the level of the construction of environmentalism - is the diversity and variability of the discourse of environmentalism a source of strength or a source of irresolution?

Throughout the thesis I hope to work towards an answer to these questions. At this point I would tend towards a postmodernist position on both these issues, however, I am aware of a number of problems with this approach which exist on a theoretical level and I hope to be able to examine these on the more practical level of a detailed study of the discourse.

Four Key Thinkers.

In this chapter I will introduce the work of several writers who have influenced the theory, methods and analysis used in the thesis. These are Raymond Williams, Roland Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Judith Williamson. Although some of these writers will be discussed in later chapters, it seems important at this point to indicate their influence on the general approach which has been taken. This chapter will give a brief overview of the relevant aspects of
each writer's work, and in the next chapter these aspects will be drawn together
and discussed with reference to the argument put forward in Chapters 1 and 2.

1. Raymond Williams
The work of Raymond Williams has been influential in the thesis both through
his general theoretical approach to the study of the social through language, and
also in his more applied work on the issues surrounding the term 'nature'.
Williams is interested in the detailed examination of texts, not as an end in itself,
but as a way of understanding society and culture as a whole. He also takes a
reflexive position on analysis in which the methods and concepts which are used
in social analysis are subject to the same scrutiny as the material itself.

a. General approach.
Raymond Williams' work ranges over a huge field of intellectual enquiry,
including political intervention, cultural theory, the history of ideas, sociology,
literary criticism, the analysis of drama and semantics, as well as the composition
of novels, plays and documentary film scripts. Only a small area of his work will,
therefore, be discussed here. The most relevant of his concerns to this account
involves his writing on language and culture.

Williams' later work can be placed within the Marxist tradition [1977,
1980, 1983a, 1983b], in that it engages with the major definitions and problems
of historical materialism. One of the most interesting aspects of his thinking is
the way in which he reinterprets and reformulates many classical Marxist ideas in
his efforts to get to grips with contemporary culture. Much Marxist theory, he
claims, is more concerned with the 'large features of different epochs of society'
than with the 'different phases of bourgeois society, and different movements
within those phases' [1980:38]. This statement indicates the area of cultural
studies with which he is most occupied. The detailed inquiry into particular
forms of culture which he undertakes demands a precision and 'delicacy of
analysis', and it is this area - his attempt to find a method precise and delicate
enough to deal with complex cultural processes - which has proved most useful
to the present study. His criticism of Marxist analysis could be widened to encompass most macro-theories which deal with the structure of society, but his criticism cannot be seen simply as a plea for a micro approach. He never loses his concern with power or with the social and historical aspects of language and he tackles the issue in a thorough and reflexive way. 

As has already been mentioned, one of the arguments which recurs throughout Williams' writings concerns the inadequacy of many methods of social analysis as means of getting to grips with cultural activity. This inadequacy, he argues, stems from the way in which terms of analysis [the necessity of which Williams fully acknowledges] are treated as if they were concrete historical realities. He perceives society as being made up of constantly changing processes which must be described in action and not as fixed entities, and this sense of a changing reality cannot be accounted for if the 'solution' of social life is only ever described in terms of its 'precipitate' elements. Williams thus attempts to find an explanation for the construction of meaning in language which formulates society as a complex and active process rather than as a static entity.

He takes this approach in his book Keywords [1983a]. This book is, as Williams himself describes it,

'...the record of an enquiry into a vocabulary: a shared body of words and meanings in our most general discussions, in English, of the practices and institutions which we group as culture and society' [1983a:15].

He argues that the problem of understanding the meaning of words is not something which can be dealt with in isolation, because it is inextricably linked with the problems the words are being used to discuss. He considers this issue in two ways. Firstly, he examines:

the available and developing meanings of known words.... and the explicit but as often implicit connections which people were making, in.... particular formations of meaning - ways not only of discussing but at another level of seeing many of our central experiences. [1983a:15]
Williams argues against the notion of clear definitions of words in favour of what he calls a 'historical semantics' approach which goes beyond the limits of a 'proper' meaning. He claims that this opens up

a history and complexity of meanings .... which are masked by a nominal continuity so that words which seem to have been there for centuries, with continuous general meanings, have come in fact to express radically different or radically variable, yet sometimes hardly noticed, meanings and implications of meaning. [1983a:17]

So, in this area of his work he traces the historical development of a term through its usage within social discourse; what he calls the 'relational' level.

The second approach to the issue is termed the 'particular' level - this involves how a meaning is formed and constructed by the context in which it is used. He argues that one of the central aims of Keywords is to show how changes occur within language use and how much variation of meaning is 'determined, in practice, by contexts'. This can happen in a number of ways, for example, through the invention of new terms, or in the extension and transfer of already existing terms to describe and analyse new situations and issues. However, he argues that 'the problem of meaning can never be wholly dissolved into context' and that it is only by also considering the development of meaning, 'how networks of usage, reference and perspective are developed', that it is possible to understand 'the sense of an extended and intricate vocabulary, within which both the variable words and their varied and variable interrelations are in practice active' [1983a:23]

An important element of his work as far as this thesis is concerned is, therefore, his questioning of a 'proper' or authoritative definition of meaning. As will be illustrated, much dispute in green discourse centres on claims about what counts as 'real' environmentalism. Williams argues that

'variations and confusions of meaning are not just faults in a system, or errors of feedback, or deficiencies of education. They are in many cases .... historical and contemporary substance.'[1983a:24]

He thus justifies an interest in the variation of language and the possible fruitfulness of focusing on this variation rather than explaining it away.
A further aspect of Williams' work is his argument for connecting the study of language with the empowerment of ordinary people. With reference to *Keywords* he claims that it is not just a 'neutral review of meanings', but attempts to make the issue of a social and cultural language, which is subject to change as well as to continuity, into a conscious and critical issue. His aim is to communicate the active nature of language to the people who use it, so that it is seen,

not as a tradition to be learned, nor a consensus to be accepted, nor a set of meanings which, because it is 'our language', has a natural authority; but as a shaping and reshaping in real circumstances and from profoundly different and important points of view: a vocabulary to use, to find our own ways in, to change as we find it necessary to change it, as we go on making our own language and history.' [1983:25-26]

His analysis of language is thus formulated as a route towards political empowerment, in which a consciousness of the social construction of language will enable people to reformulate the world and their experience of it, if dominant constructions are inadequate.

Williams' overall approach is, then, that society is in a constant state of change, and methods of analysis must take this into account; consequently, his principle involves an awareness of the terms of analysis as part of this change. He examines terms such as 'class', 'culture', 'subjective' and 'empirical' not as concepts whose meaning can be defined once and for all but as inherent and changing parts of the issues they are used to discuss. Williams constructs language as an active and vital part of culture; as culture changes so does the language in which we account for it - as an integral part of it rather than as a reflection. He argues against the idea of a neutral, ahistorical form of analysis.

**b. Ideas about nature.**

The most relevant application of these ideas for the present study is in Williams' enquiry into the term 'nature', a discussion which is included in *Keywords*, and
expanded in the essay 'Ideas of Nature' [1980]. Williams begins by describing three distinguishable areas of meaning for the term 'nature':

i. The essential quality and character of something.

ii. The inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both.

iii. The material world itself, taken as including or not including human beings.

He then traces the historical development of the term and describes how these three meanings have changed and merged up until the present day. His account of this development illustrates how alterations in the usage of the term have been affected by wider changes within society. For example, he describes how the modifications in the relationship between nature and humans are apparent in the various uses of the term. Between the 17th and 19th century there was a shift from the medieval belief in the divine order of nature in which humans must find their own place [as in meaning ii.], to the idea of nature as an object or even a machine which was organised by constitutional rather than divine laws [meaning iii.]. This change ran parallel to the statutory changes from rule by an absolute monarch to rule through a constitution.

Such a change in perception allowed for the notion of intervention in the natural order by human beings, which indicated a new relationship between humans and nature - to speak of humans as intervening in natural processes presupposes humans are separate from nature. The conflict between these two versions of the human /nature link is not just a historical struggle but is still very evident in the contemporary green movement. Should we aspire to know the order of nature and to learn our place in it or should we try to intervene in this order and surpass it? This is a question which is entwined in many green arguments today [see for example the article 'Mumbo Jumbo' in Chapter 2].

Williams' account thus illustrates the social, historical and intertextual character of a term such as 'nature'; it does not have an existence or definition apart from or outside of culture but is entwined in its construction and change. The changing character of the term is linked with and formed from many other elements and issues which exist in the culture of the times and what seem to be opposed ideas about an issue can in fact be seen as part of a single social process.
2. Claude Lévi-Strauss

Lévi-Strauss is one of the leading social anthropologists of the twentieth century. His work on non-western cultures has affected the course of anthropological knowledge and he has been influential outside his discipline as a central exponent of the structuralist method. The relevance of his work to this thesis can be formulated in two ways: firstly, in a general way through his approach to the understanding of different cultures by examining their ways of organising the world in language, and secondly through his concept of 'bricolage' which is used to analyse a mode of thought prevalent in non-western cultures. Both these elements will be discussed and related to the present study.

a. General approach.

Lévi-Strauss grounds his work in the study of 'primitive' people; however from this study he draws conclusions not only about the societies under investigation but also about cultural systems in general. One of his fundamental questions is concerned with how it is that cultural systems are intelligible to those who use them, and he tries to identify an underlying and universal mode of thinking which can explain this comprehension.

His thinking has been influenced by the work of linguists Saussure [1974] and Jakobson [1966,1971a,1971b,1979,1981], and he utilises a number of their ideas in his attempts to identify a simple set of elementary relations behind the diversity of cultural rules and orderings. From structural linguistics he takes the distinction between 'langue' and 'parole' in which 'langue' is the basic system of a language which underlies 'parole' or speech. He uses this distinction to look beneath the surface of the cultural phenomena at what he terms their 'unconscious infrastructure'. His understanding of the value of the elements within this system is also from linguistics. This value is not determined by the individual elements but is dependent upon their relations with other elements in the system which combine with or oppose them. The elements in a system of meaning must, then, be looked at in terms of their position within the whole; for example, in his
analysis of myths he argues that the meaning of each myth resides in its relationship to other myths within the social system.

In *The Savage Mind* [1966] Lévi-Strauss applies these principles in an examination of the argument that abstract thought is the feature which differentiates 'primitive' from 'developed' ways of thinking [a distinction which is often discussed in terms of magic and science]. He disagrees with such a proposal on several grounds: firstly, he claims that the proliferation of abstract concepts [e.g. technical language] results from attention to the properties of the world and the differences between them, and that this form of thought, with its intellectual application and methods of observation is indeed present in the thinking of those people who are called 'primitive'. By the extensive use of examples he illustrates how many native languages do make use of abstract terms - some more so than western languages. His second line of argument is directed against the idea that 'primitive' people only categorise those elements of the world which they need on a utilitarian level. He argues that 'animals and plants are not known as a result of their usefulness; they are deemed to be useful or interesting because they are first of all known'[1966:9] All thought, he claims, is based on an ordering of the world, and it is through an understanding of this ordering that we can come to understand unfamiliar forms of thought.

This principle underlies his approach to magical ways of thinking. For example, he argues that a proposition such as prescribing the touch of a woodpeckers beak to cure toothache, should not be understood in practical terms [i.e. does this cure the toothache?] but in intellectual terms - from what point of view can these two things be seen as going together, and can some order be made of the world by using these groupings? Lévi-Strauss thus proposes that magical orderings of the world cannot be reduced to an early stage in scientific and technological development; they are complete in themselves, and rather than contrasting the two systems it is more useful to compare them as two valid ways of acquiring knowledge. Both are dependent on intellectual orderings of the world.
b. *Bricolage* and ideas of nature.

Lévi-Strauss uses the term 'bricolage' to describe the activity he calls 'prior' science which takes place in both 'primitive' and 'modern' societies. This concept is used to describe both technical and intellectual activities in which the same method is employed - that of making use of whatever is at hand. The *bricoleur* has a finite set of tools which have been collected piece by piece from other constructions and which are used to perform large numbers of diverse tasks. Some of these tools are fairly specialised, but not enough for them to have only one definite use 'each represents a set of actual and possible relations' [1966:18]

The materials of the *bricoleur* can be defined by two criteria; firstly, they have had a use and they can be used again either for the same purpose or for a different one, and secondly, they are not raw materials but wrought products - they are condensed expressions of necessary relations and this constrains their use, the transformations they undergo are not unlimited.

Lévi-Strauss sees these elements of *bricolage* as having parallels with the elements of myth [which he considers to be an intellectual *bricolage*] and also with Saussure's idea of signs. He makes a distinction between signs, which he attaches to *bricolage*, and concepts, which he attaches to a 'modern' scientific way of thinking. He argues that although both signs and concepts may be substituted for something else, concepts are unlimited in this respect whereas signs are not - 'the elements which the "bricoleur" collects and uses are "pre-constrained"' [1966:19]. Lévi-Strauss admits that the engineer or physicist is also under the constraint of a 'particular relationship between nature and culture definable in terms of his particular period and civilisation and the material means at his disposal' [1966:19], the difference being that the engineer tries to go beyond the constraints imposed by his culture whereas the *bricoleur* either by necessity or inclination always remains within them. The engineer works by means of concepts whereas the *bricoleur* works by means of signs.

Lévi-Strauss argues that the principles of *bricolage* are the same as those of western science - both are built around the differentiation of binary oppositions. But whereas concepts attempt to have a transparent relationship with reality,
signs see reality through culture. So, he claims, concepts open up what is being worked with whereas signs reorganise it - 'it is always earlier ends which are called upon to play the part of means: the signified changes into the significer and vice-versa' [1966:21]. *Bricolage* builds up structured sets from the 'remains and debris of events'. He argues that both approaches are equally valid - *bricolage* 'acts as a liberator by its protest against the idea that anything can be meaningless' [1966:22] and whereas the scientist changes the world (creates events) by means of structures, the *bricoleur* creates structures by means of events.

There are a number of ways in which these aspects of Lévi-Strauss' work can be seen as relevant to the study of environmentalism. Firstly, he tries to find out about a society by looking at the intellectual orderings which enable members of that society to understand the world. Secondly, he goes some way towards dealing with the notion of 'primitive' ways of life. This is an issue which is deeply involved in much environmental discourse and will be discussed at more length later on [See Chapter 6]. Thirdly, his distinction between *bricolage* and science is one which will be used in the thesis as a way of defining the level of discussion. In this study, environmentalism will be dealt with on the level of *bricolage* not on the level of science. Although there is a considerable amount of discussion of scientific writing and the importance of the idea of science in environmentalism, I will argue that within the discourse that I have used, science functions within a *bricolage* system, that is, it is understood through culture and within a cultural context. Whether or not there are other texts in which science manages to operate outside a cultural context and produce 'transparent knowledge' as Lévi-Strauss argues is not a question I will be examining. So although the idea of science is made use of in much of the following discourse I would argue that in each case it is being used as a tool of *bricolage*. It has been detached from a 'purely' scientific context [if such a thing exists] and has entered the realm of cultural understanding.
3. Roland Barthes

The work of Roland Barthes encompasses philology, semiotics, literary criticism and cultural criticism. The originality and diversity of his writing and his practice of periodically transcending his own position make it difficult to generalise about his approach to the study of language. However, there are a number of fairly constant aspects of his work which will prove helpful in the construction of the thesis. The relevance of Barthes' work to the present study cannot be separated out into a general approach and specific points which refer to nature, as was the case with Williams and Lévi-Strauss; ideas of 'the natural' are integrated into all the aspects of his work to be discussed here.

In his book Mythologies [1973] Barthes argues that,

[T]he starting point of these reflections was usually a feeling of impatience at the sight of the "naturalness" with which newspapers, art and common sense constantly dress up a reality which, even though it is the one we live in, is undoubtedly determined by history. In short, in the account given of our contemporary circumstances, I resented seeing Nature and History confused at every turn, and I wanted to track down, in the decorative display of what-goes-without-saying, the ideological abuse which, in my view, is hidden there.'[1973:11]

This concern with the 'natural' is relevant to the thesis, although Barthes uses it to discuss a much wider arena than the 'natural environment'. He sets it against the idea of the 'historical' or 'social' in which reality is something which has developed rather than something which is given and thus outside the realm of argument.

Barthes' position on the natural leads on to his position on reflexivity. He argues that the construction of work must be explained, otherwise it leads to 'mystification', in which writing is seen not as a socially determined construction, but as an unmediated representation of some external 'truth' or 'reality'. There is a need for the writer to declare her values or ideology in the writing, and this is particularly important when writing about science, which can give the illusion that it is not ideological because its values are portrayed as universal, rather than
class or history bound. He thus applies his concern with the natural or obvious to
the process of writing itself; the constructive and value-laden dimensions of
writing must be expounded to counteract any notion of writing as being simply a
reflective or descriptive medium.

This reflexive concern with the process of writing is expanded upon in
Barthes' distinction between two types of writer - the *écrivant* and the *écrivain*.
The former is a clerical type of writer who intends that her writing should only
carry the one meaning that she herself wants to transmit to her readers, whilst the
latter devotes herself more to the actual language than to the end product. The
*écrivain* does not work *from* already formed meanings as does the *écrivant* but
works *towards* them. Commenting on Barthes, Sturrock argues that this version
of the writing process is often difficult to grasp:

> [W]e assume the process of signification has travelled from signified to
> signifier: the writer knew what he wanted to say, then he decided how
> exactly he should say it. We are upset if we are asked to believe the
> opposite, that an author had first decided how to say and only then
discovered what 'it' was; this reversal of our habits seems degrading to
the whole notion of authorship [1979:67].

Barthes therefore formulates writing as an open and creative process. He reverses
the account of writing in which an already decided upon meaning is presented in
as objective a way as possible, claiming that this method leads to an ideological
mystification of the writing process. Instead, he formulates writing as a
constructive practice in itself in which the values of the writer are explicated and
the meaning is formed during the process of writing. This view of writing,
combined with his opposition to orthodox beliefs or the 'accepted wisdom of the
age' is, therefore, one of the few unifying strands in his work. Sturrock argues
that

> [h]e has seen his vocation, from the outset of his life as writer, as
being antithetical: his arch enemy is the 'doxa', the prevailing view of
things, which very often prevails to the extent that people are unaware
it is only one of several possible alternative views. [1979:54]
In the context of this thesis his work can, therefore, be used to provide a political angle of criticism. Although much of his work uses a Marxist perspective of ideology which will not be adopted here, his identification of 'naturalisation' as a strategy for preventing argument and closing off alternative prospects will be used in the following chapters in the investigation of ways in which political positions are justified within environmental discourse.

4. Judith Williamson

The area of Judith Williamson's work which I would like to consider is her critical analysis of the construction of meaning in advertisements; Decoding Advertisements [1978]. In this study several of the ideas already mentioned have been taken up and adapted to her analysis. She therefore serves as a useful focus for this chapter, particularly as she makes a close analysis of a variety of empirical material - an approach which will be followed in the thesis. Some of her ideas about the construction of meaning within advertisements can hopefully be used in an examination of the construction of meaning in environmentalism. Once again her work will be discussed in terms of both her general approach and her more specific ideas about nature.

a. General approach.

Williamson's account of the construction of meaning in advertisements begins by arguing that 'it is the first function of an advertisement to create a differentiation between one particular product and others in the same category.' [1978:24] As there is in fact very little difference between brands of a product it is necessary for the advertisement to construct a distinction by formulating an image for that particular brand. She therefore looks in great detail at the ways in which meaning is constructed and created from other meanings, proposing that the production of meaning is dependent upon pre-existent systems of knowledge which are referred to by the advertisement. The meaning which is constructed in the advertisement originates in these pre-existent bodies of knowledge which 'act as a guarantee ... for the "truth" in the ad itself'[1978:99].
Williamson's method of analysis relies heavily upon the structuralist theories of Saussure. She makes use of Saussure's work to move away from a traditional analysis of advertising in which an advertisement is formulated as a 'transparent vehicle for a message behind it'. In order to focus attention upon meaning as a construction rather than a 'package' contained within the advertisement she proposes to use Saussure's terms 'signifier' and 'signified' rather than the more usual 'form' and 'content'. As mentioned in the discussion of Lévi-Strauss, Saussure perceives a language to be composed of an underlying system which is shared by its speakers and of actual instances of speech. This formulation is evident throughout Williamson's work in which she analyses advertisements in terms of shared abstract systems of meaning upon which the advertisements rely for their significance. The second key idea is that the function of language is not to refer to concrete things in the world, Saussure does not see words as symbols which always correspond with fixed referents. Language acquires meaning as part of a system of relations, not as the result of a connection between words and things. Williamson [amongst others11] has broadened out the ideas of Saussure to include not only language but other sign systems which can be analysed in the same way [semiotics] - as an underlying structure or langue and specific instances of practice.

Williamson draws these ideas together into her theory of how advertisements create meaning. She argues that advertisements have two functions, firstly to sell commodities and secondly, to create structures of meanings. In order to sell a product, the advertisement must ensure that the properties of that product mean something to us. This involves a process in which statements from 'the world of things' [i.e. the product itself] are translated into a form that will mean something in terms of people, 'they are given a humanly symbolic "exchange value"' [1978:12]. In order to transfer significance from the world of human values onto the world of things or products, items with already known qualities can be used to convey these qualities onto the product. Such items are taken from systems of significance within which they have a relational meaning to other parts of the system. Because they have been removed from these systems they become empty
or 'hollowed out' and the product of the advertisement can be put into this space and made to draw its significance from a system of meaning to which it actually has no relation, 'there is a cognitive outline in which the product is inserted' [1978:100]

This idea of 'borrowing' or movement from already formed systems of meaning in order to create new meanings has an affinity to the formulations of discourse as both resources and as intertextual, which were discussed in Chapter 2. It can thus be seen as central to the following analysis of environmental discourse and will be taken up in the discussion below.

b. Ideas about nature.
The second area of interest in Williamson's work concerns her account of how nature is transformed into a symbolic or cultural order, how the idea of science works in this process and how these factors are involved in the construction of meaning in advertisements. Her account of the transformation of nature is described in terms of Lévi-Strauss' concept of 'cooking processes'. These are methods or organisational frameworks through which material is passed in order to make it meaningful in a particular culture.

Williamson examines one specific way in which nature is cooked - through science, and she specifies several points about the rhetorical use of science which are very pertinent to the study of environmentalism. She argues that although science may begin as an organising framework,

"Science", at once the most prestigious and ... the most transparent of society's "cooking" processes ..... can take on the nature of a referent system in itself - endowed with a mysticism which equals that of the "Romantic" vision of "Nature", and an authority which partakes of the inevitability of Nature'. [1978:110-111]

So, although Williamson does not argue with the possibility of 'real' scientific research, she distinguishes between science as a practice and the image of Science as an entity. The use of this distinction locates the popular view of science very much within the sphere of *bricolage* rather than 'real' science, in
Levi-Straussian terms. Williamson describes the popular representation of Science in our society as a kind of 'giant brain' -

it has a proper name, almost a character. It is spoken about as having achieved things and discovered things, as owning knowledge which ... no actual person is credited with knowing. [1978:111]

So although science is itself a 'cooking process' which transforms nature into a particular referent system Williamson argues that in the popular culture of our society it has taken on the qualities of a referent system itself,

by offering itself to us as something to be seen and understood rather than the means by which we see and understand, [science] is always something already there, like nature, something full of "facts" like nature, something Natural - replacing nature.[1978:117]

Williamson thus puts forward a version of science which, although connected to what she terms 'real science', functions independently of this, as an active entity rather than a methodological procedure.

Taking up a critical position on discourse

Adapting the methods of advertising analysis to the analysis of environmentalism will hopefully prove to be a fruitful move, however, there are some problematic aspects of such an adaptation which involve the question of taking a political or critical stance in the analysis of discourse. Williamson's analysis stresses the exploitative nature of advertisements and she justifies her attention to the minute details of cosmetics and washing powder by arguing that she is demystifying ideology. She thus presents her study as a critical analysis of advertising from a Marxist perspective. Whilst not denying the value of this position, I would like to set aside the ethical elements of advertising for the moment and compare the two issues in terms of their methods of constructing meaning, and the rhetorical strategies which they employ. By doing this I am not trying to avoid the issue of taking up a critical position on the discourse but I do not want to take up such a definite stance, as does Williamson, at this stage in the thesis. The question of how to take and justify a political position from a postmodern perspective, which
will not accept an over-arching theory of society, is a problem which will be returned to several times later on.

A second and connected problem involves the deliberation which goes into the construction of rhetoric in advertisements. It could be argued that although much green discourse is undoubtedly intended to persuade, it does not contain the cynically manipulative elements of advertising whose success is judged mainly in terms of economic profit. There are two points to be made about this, firstly, it could be proposed that the line between these two areas is not as clearly marked as it may appear - green discourse does in fact feature heavily in numerous advertisements and the adaptation of green discourse by the main political parties could easily be perceived as being used in a deliberate ploy to win adherents and votes. Secondly, it is not the intention of the thesis to consider the discourse in terms of the motives of the individuals who construct it. Williamson avoids this problem by taking up a Marxist position in which she posits the capitalist system as being the determining factor in the discourse. I would like to take the view that texts or discourse can be formulated as having a status independent of the individuals who produced them. Although it is often fruitful to look at discourse in terms of who produced it and why, much can also be learned about an issue by studying texts as coherent wholes in themselves rather than as expressions of individual personalities and motivations.
Chapter 4.

Approaching Environmentalism.

Introduction
I would now like to draw together the most relevant points from the writers discussed in the previous chapter and try to integrate them with the approach provisionally outlined in the introduction, firstly, by examining how cultural issues such as environmentalism can be approached through language, secondly, by considering the importance of applying this approach reflexively, thirdly, by discussing the ways in which these writers account for the construction of meaning in language, and fourthly by outlining the particular role of 'nature' in the formation of meaning.

1. Looking at social issues through language.
In this study I want to argue that our understanding of the world and the issues of our daily lives is produced through social discourse and that environmentalism can be explored effectively through an examination of this discourse. The ideas of the above writers are relevant for their insight into the social production of meaning within language.

Each of these writers sees language as a key to understanding society and has worked out ways of studying cultural forms through discourse. Raymond Williams engages with society as a complex process rather than as a static entity and his work focuses upon the changes which occur within language, how these are entwined with changes in wider society, and the ideas which are used to perceive these changes. Lévi-Strauss, Barthes and Williamson take a more structuralist approach in that they construct cultural phenomena in terms of language systems, although they all acknowledge the socio-historical character of these systems. They emphasise the way in which language takes its meaning from the relationship with other items in a language system rather than having a meaning which is fixed to some external referent.

This study will, therefore, approach environmentalism through an examination of the language in which the issue is represented. It can of course be
argued that 'real' environmentalism exists elsewhere - in the thoughts and actions of environmental activists, in the laboratories of environmental scientists, in the shopping baskets of green consumers, or in the laws passed in parliament to protect the environment. Following this line of argument, environmental discourse would simply be a descriptive medium which records things happening somewhere else. However, as was stated in the introduction, this is not the line I wish to take; the language or discourse will be perceived as playing a vital role in the construction of the environment and the issues which surround it.

Such an argument for the central importance of language in social affairs implicitly emphasises the active character of discourse, and locates it at the very heart of social action. Vico [as cited in Williams 1977] insists that we can understand society because we have made it, indeed that we can understand it not abstractly but in the very process of making it, and that the activity of language is central to this process.[1977:23]

I do not want to argue that there is nothing outside the text, or that language cannot be affected by material factors - both Barthes and Williams lay particular emphasis on the role which social and economic factors have on the construction of meaning - but I feel that a close study of environmental accounts reveals a great deal about how green issues are formulated and understood in our culture, and that these may be missed by other approaches.

2. The reflexive nature of analysis.
The issue of reflexivity was broached in the introduction, and one formulation of reflexivity\(^1\) is taken up and expanded upon by Barthes and Williams. Both demonstrate an awareness that the analysis of language and culture which they are undertaking can also be applied to sociological or cultural analysis itself. Williams emphasises this when he examines the historical progress and changes involved in many key concepts used in cultural and social studies\(^2\) He argues that it is a 'surpassing confidence' which enables the unproblematic usage of words and concepts with no questioning of their meaning, and gives the examples of

\begin{itemize}
  \item literature,
  \item aesthetic,
  \item representative,
  \item empirical,
  \item unconscious,
  \item liberal;
\end{itemize}
these and many other words which seem to me to raise problems will, in
the right circles, seem mere transparencies, their correct use a matter
only of education. [1983a:16]

Williams claims that many social and intellectual issues 'could not really be
thought through and some of them ... cannot even be focused unless we are
conscious of the words as elements of the problems.' [1983a:16] A reflexive
awareness of the instability of language is thus implicit in Williams' work and he
formulates language use as a problematic process rather than one which can be
clarified in advance by authoritative definitions of meaning.

Roland Barthes' reflexivity is evident in his emphasis on the process of
signification rather than the significance of the product of writing - as Sturrock
observes, 'Barthes would like us to understand how texts mean before we start
worrying about what they mean' [1979:58]. In his early work, Writing Degree
Zero [1953], Barthes pursues this notion in his attack on the value of la clarté or
lucidity in French writing. He argues that la clarté is not a universal quality of
'good' writing, as is widely believed, but is in fact a 'purely rhetorical attribute ....
the ideal appendix of a certain discourse which is subject to a permanent
intention of persuasion' [1953:43]. His concern with the process of signification
is also evident in the construction of his own work in forms which, he claims,
avoid the problems of domination and power identified in many other textual
forms.3

These ideas can be used, therefore, as possible angles on reflexivity.
Although I am convinced that being reflexive is a necessary and valuable
practice, I am unsure of how to accomplish it in a satisfactory way. Not all
instances of reflexivity are managed as skilfully as the examples above, and some
reflexive studies tend towards pretentiousness in their self-conscious style. The
incorporation of reflexivity into analysis is just as much a rhetorical
accomplishment as any other element of the text and needs considerable thought
if it is to function effectively.

The work of Williams and Barthes suggests two ways of engaging with
this problem. Firstly, by problematising the terms and concepts which are used in
the analysis. This is an effective way of drawing attention to the equivocal and contingent character of all language including that of the analysis. However, if handled clumsily it can also lead to an inability to say anything without lengthy explanations and a profusion of inverted commas. This seems to be one of the problems of taking an extreme postmodern position on writing - if all aspects of the text are unstable and open to question and the possibility of bestriding them with an overarching theoretical position is denied, it becomes very difficult to write anything at all. Williams goes some way towards dealing with this problem when he acknowledges that the employment of all language depends on a necessary confidence in the validity of our own usage of words, but he also warns that 'a necessary confidence and concern for clarity can quickly become brittle, if the questions involved [about meaning] are not faced' [1983a:16] This seems to suggest some sort of position of compromise in which language is used as if it were stable but is at the same time open to question.

A second method of engaging with the problem is identified by Barthes and involves an awareness of style as a rhetorical strategy. This may seem a platitude in, for example, literary studies, but it is rarely given much attention in the social sciences. Paul Atkinson argues, however, that sociologists surely should be concerned with how they construct and convey their arguments: not only in relation to historical and theoretical texts, but also in terms of how the "facts" and "findings" of sociological research are conveyed in monographs and research papers.

For these are not matters of neutral report: the conventions of text and rhetoric are among the ways in which reality is constructed. [1990:2]

This statement once again refers to the debate between language as a medium of description and reflection versus language as active and constructive. The predominant style of writing in the social sciences is, as has already been mentioned, an objectivist style. If the aim is to convince the reader of the objective status of the knowledge being produced, an appropriately 'factual' account must be given. So the relevant question again is whether this account simply reflects an objective reality which exists elsewhere or whether it actually...
constructs this 'objective reality' within the text by using particular strategies. Both of these points will be taken up in subsequent chapters.

3. The construction of meaning.

The construction and propagation of meaning within language is dealt with on several different levels by the above writers, and this is one of the most complex areas of concern. Williams identifies both a 'relational' and a 'particular' level on which meaning is produced; the 'relational' being one in which the historical development of language is traced through its social usage, and the 'particular' being the construction of meaning in a specific context. He argues that meaning is created through an interplay between these two levels, both of which are important.

Barthes' and Williamson's accounts use the notion of frameworks or systems of knowledge and they are more closely linked with Saussure's theory of langue and parole and the signifier and signified; Williamson appears to retain quite a clear structuralist stand whilst Barthes adjusts this to take up a more post-structuralist position. Williamson [1978] puts forward an account of stable meaning systems which are shared by members of a society and in which items draw their meaning from their relationship with other items in the system. In order to create new meanings in advertisements, parts of these systems are borrowed and inserted into the new context of the advert. They bring with them their meanings from the original systems and therefore endow products with this 'borrowed' significance. She thus uses the idea of langue and parole to explain the creation of 'ideology' in which individual ideological utterances [advertisements] are perceived as borrowing their significance from an underlying system of meaning.

Barthes' work, however, can be used to challenge Williamson's notion of stable systems of meanings which lie behind the construction of ideology. In S/Z [1970], he claims that any attempt to uncover the essential structure of a text will be in vain because each text possesses a 'difference' which is not a unique quality of that particular text, but is a result of the fact that every text refers back to other texts which have already been written. The major difference, then, between his
account of the production of meaning and that of Williamson lies in the status of
the notion of intertextuality. Williamson argues that the adverts 'clearly produce
knowledge ... but this knowledge is always produced from something already
known, that acts as its guarantee' [1978:101]. She thus implies that this method
of producing knowledge is in some way inferior to that involved in texts which
produce original knowledge of their own. This is one of her major criticisms of
adverts, that they borrow knowledge and validity from other sources and
insidiously attach it to their products.

Following Barthes' theory of 'intertextuality' however, all texts construct
their meaning from other texts and constantly refer to the 'already written', never
having an essential or fixed meaning of their own - so adverts are no different
from other texts. Neither can the referred-to texts be seen as any more stable or
fundamental than the current ones, being themselves constructed through the
same process of referral. This argument would seem to undermine the notion of
intertextuality as a criterion for distinguishing between ideological discourse and
non-ideological discourse [although this is not the only criteria used by
Williamson]. So although Williamson and Barthes both develop the ideas of
Saussure, they come up with conflicting versions of the relationship between the
text and its antecedents. Williamson sees this as being one in which the meaning
of the text [in her case the advertisement] is determined and fixed by the
underlying meaning systems to which it refers, whereas Barthes sees this
relationship as being one of flexibility and difference in which meaning is
constantly referred back to other texts, never being finally traced to its origins.

Lévi-Strauss uses a concept in his account of the construction of meaning,
which seems to bridge this divide between a fixed and a forever absent meaning,
by emphasising the material and social character of the referred-to texts or
systems. The concept he uses in his discussion of meaning in myths is bricolage;
this concept has already been briefly discussed [Chapter 3] and it seems to be
particularly appropriate for a discussion of environmentalism.

The most obvious convergence between the concept and the issue of
environmentalism occurs in the practical idea of recycling materials - one of the
most popular ideas which has emerged from the green movement. Bricolage
contains within it assumptions of limits to growth, working with a restricted set of materials, the re-use of already wrought materials and the adaptation to use of whatever is at hand - all admirable principles from a practical environmental point of view. However, as Lévi-Strauss illustrates, the analogy can also work on an intellectual level, and it is in the notion of a recycling of discourse that *bricolage* proves to be particularly appropriate.

It is being argued in the thesis that the elements which go to make up the discourse are not raw materials but have had a previous use and that this factor acts, to a certain degree, as a constraint on their use, in that they are already coated with cultural significance, or as Lévi-Strauss puts it 'they are condensed expressions of necessary relations' before being taken up by environmentalism. Barthes himself seems to be describing this notion when he elaborates on Saussure's simple account of the meaning of the sign by developing the idea of connotations, in which layers of meaning can be built up on top of each other with the signifier on one layer acting as the signified in the next [1973].

To some extent the concept of bricolage also incorporates Raymond Williams' idea of the particular and the relational properties of language, and both writers use a social account of language to bridge the gap between one meaning and any meaning. For example, it has been argued that Williams puts forward a socialised account of the construction of meaning in which 'words can and do change but that the possibilities of meaning are only theoretically and not practically unlimited by dint of their location in material history' [Crowley, 1989:25]

The idea of *bricolage* therefore helps to clarify one of the claims made about discourse in the thesis - that it is both constructed anew within environmentalism and constrained by its previous uses. It thus incorporates the ideas of action and intertextuality which were referred to in the introduction. It also allows for a number of seemingly different systems or strands which can be combined together within one piece of discourse.

4. Interchange of meaning between the human and natural world
The particular use of 'nature' itself in the formation of meaning will now be discussed in terms of the function it can have in a piece of discourse. The use of nature or a 'natural system' is involved in the work of several of the above writers. Williamson in particular looks at the issue in some detail; she examines how nature is transformed into a symbolic or cultural order - how it is organised so that it makes some sense to us and we can interact with it. As already mentioned, she follows Lévi-Strauss' notion of the transformation of nature as a 'cooking process', and she explains this transformation by arguing that,

Nature is the primary referent of a culture. It is the "raw material" of our environment, both the root of all technological development and its opposition; that which technology strives both to improve and to overcome. If a culture is to refer to itself, therefore, it can only do so by the representation of its transformation of nature - it has meaning in terms of what it has changed. [1978:103]

Williamson is thus defining nature in terms of its difference to culture and vice versa. This is a common definition although it will be seen that there are a number of variations within it. Her use of the concept of cooking means that just as food is 'cooked' in order that it can be physically assimilated by people, so nature is 'cooked' so that it can be intellectually assimilated. Williamson argues that images of nature are 'cooked' in culture so that they may be used as part of a symbolic system - nature is transformed into 'the Natural'.

She also argues that both sides of the cooking process can be presented simultaneously - this has the function of giving a cultural product a natural status and vice versa, as slippage occurs backwards and forwards between the two. It will be argued [in Chapter 6] that this movement has great significance in the way that environmentalism is constructed and in the justification of argumentative accounts.

Raymond Williams and Roland Barthes also make use of the idea of 'slippage' between culture and nature. Williams [1980] illustrates how the movement can work in a political sense in his examination of the relationship between nature and history. The most widely accepted modernist account of the 'history' of
nature is the Darwinian theory of Evolution, however, Williams' discussion is not in these terms - he argues that because we have 'mixed our labour with the earth' it has become very difficult to separate social from natural history. This is evident, he argues, in the way that it is now deemed 'unnatural' to cut down hedges although everyone knows that they were planted by people in the first place. He further claims that what we call 'natural landscape' is in fact the product of human design and labour and that to admire it as natural we must suppress the history of this human labour. He thus outlines the political implications of using the term 'natural' to describe a phenomenon in a way that denies that it has a social history.

Roland Barthes extends this argument about the political use of the natural. He emphasises the expediency of a movement between a 'natural' and a 'social' order in the maintenance of power. It can be argued that one of the most useful strategies through which a group can gain and maintain power is to convince people that its version of reality is not just a body of politically held opinions, but is the obviously correct and authentic view of that society; in other words it must manage to represent a historically contingent state of affairs, which could be different as being a 'natural' and consequently inevitable state of affairs. Such claims are thus positioned in a 'natural' rather than a social order. In a Marxist context Barthes states that 'bourgeois norms are experienced as the evident laws of a natural order - the further the bourgeois class propagates its representations the more naturalised they become [1973:154]. He uses the concept of 'myth' as the mode of communication which constructs and conveys our ideological understandings and which, he argues, 'is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things: in it things lose the memory that they once were made' [1973:155]

This movement backwards and forwards between the cultural and the natural order can thus function as a powerful strategy of explanation and justification in discourse. It is evident from Barthes' argument that this strategy is by no means confined to direct discussions of the natural world, however, as will be illustrated throughout the thesis, it is a prevalent form of argument within environmentalism. As Keith Thomas, for example, writes,
it is an enduring tendency of human thought to project upon the natural
world ... categories and values derived from human society and then to
serve them back as a critique or reinforcement of the human order,
justifying some particular social or political arrangement on the grounds
that it is somehow more "natural" than any alternative. [1983:61]

Conclusion

How, then, do these findings integrate with the approach provisionally outlined
in Chapters 1 and 2? This approach consisted of using four constructions of
discourse in the analysis: discourse as a totality of argumentative strands,
discourse as an active solution, discourse as constructed from resources and
discourse as an intertextual product. It also involved keeping some sort of tension
between these formulations in order to maintain the flexibility of the approach. It
is through this tension that a way of combining the elements discussed into some
sort of practical method of analysis suggests itself. It would be possible to begin
with a statement such as 'this is my definition of environmental discourse and
this will therefore be the best method of examining it' - an approach which would
follow from the strong theoretical position or the 'closed fist of logic' which were
described in the introduction and which seems to pre-empt an open exploration of
the issue. However, I would like to proceed more along the lines of
'environmental discourse could be defined and perceived in a number of different
ways and a discussion of these conflicting possibilities should be illuminating
thus relying more on the 'open palm and looseness of rhetoric' in my argument
than on the 'tightening of the logical wrench'.

It could of course be argued that this is in itself a theoretical position
which is masquerading as more 'open' and 'plural' for rhetorical reasons. However, it seems necessary to have some sort of systematic approach in order to
make any argument about or analysis of an issue. This would presumably go
against a radically post-modern treatment, but I have so far lacked the
imagination to visualise an effective treatment of this kind. The position which
will be taken is, therefore, to some extent an objectivist one, but will hopefully be
both flexible and reflexive in its treatment of the discourse, thereby avoiding a
dogmatic and prescriptive approach.

The problems and issues discussed so far can be tackled in terms of four areas of
tension or argument, all of which are interlinked.

1. The first area of tension is between the two determinant levels of meaning in
discourse. That is, between a perception of a piece of discourse as something
which can be understood as an entity in itself, whose meaning is determined by
the relationship of different elements of the text to each other, as opposed to the
perception of a piece of discourse as only being comprehensible in terms of its
social and historical context and origins. Within this area of argument can be
included the relational and particular levels of meaning which Raymond
Williams discusses, the accounts of the construction of meaning given by
Williamson and Barthes, involving various formulations of the different levels of
discourse and the relationship between these levels, and Lévi-Strauss’ concept of
bricolage in which 'already wrought' elements of discourse are combined with
each other to form a new construction. It can also include the conflict between
discourse as strands and discourse as solution which was described earlier - it
may be possible to separate a text out into its already formed component parts
and argue that it is on this level of common beliefs that the meaning of the text is
determined, but within the discourse these parts are in solution and their
significance is affected by the construction of the text itself.

2. The second area of contention is between the perception of language as a
reflective medium and the perception of it as an active and constructive force. In
some ways this argument is entwined with the first one in that it is concerned
with the construction of individual texts. However, it focuses more on the
question of whether the rhetorical power of a piece of discourse is inherent in its
constructive use of language or whether it comes from an accurate representation
of a situation which exists elsewhere. This area can, then, encompass the issue of
'cooking' processes which was discussed above: are our perceptions of nature
dependent on a valid description of an objective reality or are they mediated
through the culturally determined frameworks of language, which actually construct and give significance and meaning to nature.

3. The third problematic area follows on from this distinction between a natural and a cultural order. The strategy of moving between a natural and a cultural order makes use of both sides of the argument. By suggesting that natural phenomena are part of an objective reality which lies outside of cultural constructions, the movement of an item or action from the latter to the former can act as a powerful strategy of authentication in which certain things are placed outside the arena of argumentation. This move is emphasised by Barthes and Williams in their discussion of the political strategy of 'naturalising' things so that they 'forget' their social and historical context. But it is also involved in the notion of a reflexive writing practice which questions the possibility of a 'neutral' writing style [for example the styles discussed by Barthes of *la clarté* and the *écrivant*]. These can be seen as an attempt to remove what is described from the arena of argument - the style presenting itself as a transparent reflection of reality. This distinction is also evident in the definitions of analysis and material which were discussed in the introduction with analysis linking itself to the natural order of facts whereas material is perceived as being embedded in a social and cultural order.

4. The final area of conflict is between a postmodern multiplicity of meaning and an objectivist unitary meaning. This area involves the three levels which were identified at the beginning of the chapter: the level of the construction of the thesis, the level of the construction of environmentalism and the level of the environmental debate itself. It includes the problem, which exists on all of these levels, of how to take up a critical or political position within a post-modern perspective. Two alternative ways of dealing with this question can be suggested, neither of which seem very satisfactory at the moment.

Firstly, I could argue that no political position will be taken in the thesis at all; the discourse could be described in terms of its construction rather than in terms of whether it is right or wrong. This does not seem, however, to be a
tenable argument; if I am going to claim that language is constructive rather than reflective then it is not possible to argue that my own discourse is just *describing* something which exists elsewhere. It also brings up the question of why I am doing the thesis in the first place; is describing how discourse is made up, whilst bracketing off any value judgements about this discourse, a justifiable form of analysis for a fairly lengthy piece of work?

The second approach which could be taken is to argue that an examination of the construction of discourse is in itself an intrinsically political form of analysis. Following Barthes and Williams it would be possible to claim that a questioning of taken for granted meanings will undermine any idea of a 'natural' discourse which is without a social history and so could not be any other way, and that this questioning has a political function as an attack on the status quo. Up to a point this seems a satisfactory position. However, whilst effective in arguing *against* the acceptance of particular meanings it is not nearly so successful as a positive argument to *support* a particular meaning. This seems to require some idea of an objective reality from which to argue. The whole thesis could, in part, be seen as a practical attempt to come to a political position, and this issue will be returned to and discussed in every chapter.
PART 2: READING ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSE.

Chapter 5.
Introduction.

The second part of the thesis will examine in detail a set of texts which are concerned with nature and the environment. By using and developing the approach set out in Part 1 I will try to fulfil the aims outlined in the Introduction [see below], and in the concluding part of the thesis this approach will be evaluated.

It will be remembered that the general objectives formulated in the Introduction were:
1. To examine some of the constructions or representations of the environment or natural world in contemporary society.
2. To identify methods of organisation and strategies of argument which are present across a range of environmental texts.
3. To examine similarities and differences between texts which tackle the issue on a number of different levels.
4. To investigate the way in which environmentalism is entwined with other issues in society.

The limited quantity of the material which will be analysed precludes the making of any wide generalisations about environmental texts; however, I have tried to include examples not only of texts in which the issue of the environment is entwined with different topics, but also of texts which are constructed within a variety of contexts and for differing audiences. By doing this I hope to be able to explore in some depth the differences and similarities in the construction and organisation of the texts.

Three of the four chapters in this section will deal with how nature or the environment is linked with other issues. Chapter 6 discusses the construction of
the natural world in the arena of consumption by examining two advertisements; Chapter 7 is an investigation into the relationship between women and the environment through a selection of texts concerned with 'eco-feminism'; Chapter 8 considers the interplay between science and environmentalism in the analysis of a newspaper article. The final chapter in this section deals with the reflexive aspects of some of these texts and also uses material gathered in a discussion about the environment.

Although the basic approach which was outlined in Part 1 will be followed, this will be supplemented in each chapter by ideas and arguments from other sources. These new dimensions to the argument come from a variety of disciplines including sociology, feminism, cultural studies, discourse analysis, rhetoric, and anthropology.

In Chapter 6, ideas about rhetoric and dilemmatic constructions in discourse which originate with Billig et al. [1988] will be introduced. Chapter 7 includes arguments from the anthropological work of Douglas [1966] as well as from the feminist writings of Coward [1984] and Haraway [1991]; theories about narrative from Todorov [1977] and about argument from Woolgar and Pawluch [1985] are also included. The discussion of science and environmentalism in Chapter 8 again uses Todorov's model of narrative and introduces the more sociological work of Yearley [1991] and cultural theories of Fiske [1987] along with the idea of 'interpretative repertoires' [Gilbert and Mulkay 1984]. Finally ideas from the arena of reflexivity are discussed in Chapter 9, including those of Lawson [1985] and Billig [1992].

Although these arguments come from a diversity of sources they all make contributions to the understanding of discourse - their particular relevance to the study will be discussed as they are introduced in the following chapters.

Finally, before beginning the analysis I would like to clarify the use of two concepts which are central to the thesis and about which some confusion may arise. These are my formulations of politics and science.
Politics.
The notion of the political is referred to throughout the thesis, and as it is entwined with my critical argument it seems necessary to be clear about how I am formulating the political aspects of discourse. Primarily my use of the term is in opposition to what could be called the 'factual'. If an account of a situation is within the political arena it can be argued about, and although this account may be being promoted as the best one it allows for other possible constructions of the situation. However, if an account is 'factual', it attempts to exclude itself from the political arena by presenting itself as the only account possible which cannot, or need not be disputed.

There are two aspects of this formulation which are followed through in the thesis. Firstly, an attempt is made to identify the 'factual' or 'indisputable' elements in discourse and to examine their construction in the same way as any other element is examined. By treating such elements as constructions in the same way as all other elements of the text and therefore implying that they could have been constructed otherwise, this method can to some extent be seen to bring everything into the political arena. This idea of politics is tied up with the idea of the postmodern - as Bertens argues 'if our representations ... are ultimately without ground then they must be the effect of power structures and are all unconsciously political.' [1995:187]

The second aspect of this formulation which is examined in the thesis is the subsequent problem which such an understanding leads to. Bertens again claims that

if all is politics, even the legitimations derived from metanarratives, then there is no extra-political Archimedean point, through which the world can legitimately be moved through political intervention. [1995:189]

This problem will be discussed from several angles throughout the analysis and will be returned to in the conclusion².
Science.

The issue of science must also be more clearly formulated and this leads on from the discussion of politics above. In the material which I examine science is constructed as the most privileged of all metanarratives. Williamson [1978] argues that in our society science is no longer seen as a method through which we see nature but as nature itself. So the scientific version of nature is not popularly understood as being a version of nature which has come about in a social context and through the imposition of a particular form of categorisation and organisation, but as the 'reality' of nature, which reveals what is 'really' there. Scientific statements about nature are not, therefore, generally considered to be political statements which are only true within a scientific paradigm but as universal truths or 'facts'.

In this study I will, however, be treating science in terms of a metanarrative which exists on the level of bricolage, that is, as it is understood through culture and not as a discourse which has some privileged position outside a social context from which it can speak. I will therefore examine how this metanarrative is constructed and its function within the text in the same way that other strategies for removing elements from the arena of argument are examined.
Chapter 6.

Green Advertisements

Nature is the primary referent of a culture. It is ‘the raw material’ of our environment, both the root of all technological development and its opposition; that which technology strives both to improve and to overcome...It has meaning in terms of what it has changed. [Williamson 1979:103]

Introduction

In the next two chapters the interchange or slippage of meaning between the human and the natural world will be discussed. As was mentioned in Chapter 4, the strategy of moving from a cultural to a natural order can have a number of applications, such as acting as a means of depoliticising an issue or action, or removing it from the arena of argument. As an introduction to this issue, I would like to examine the above statement by Judith Williamson, which was briefly discussed in Chapter 4, in more detail.

Williamson argues that the relationship between nature and culture is very complex and, to some extent, paradoxical. Nature is excluded from culture but is essential for its definition and thus an integral part of it, it is the material basis of our culture, but also functions as its opposition, and our technological development is both formed from nature and used to overcome it. This complexity is a fertile ground for representation.

In this chapter some organisations of discourse which make use of this complexity will be examined in the context of two advertisements. The interplay between the natural and the social world will be looked at, both in terms of how the natural world can be perceived as being social and also how some societies and social issues can be perceived as being natural. These organisations will then be discussed in terms of the tension between the relational and the particular levels of discourse. Finally, a conceptualisation of these two levels will be introduced which goes some way towards dealing with the fractures and inconsistencies in the texts.
The two advertisements [Appendix Documents.2 & 3] which I have chosen to discuss both make use of ideas about nature and the environment, although each approaches the issue in a different way\(^1\). They make an interesting contrast in that although on a superficial level they could be seen as promoting very diverse products [the first advertisement is for sugar and the second for cosmetics] they use very similar constructions. The link with environmentalism is also very different - the sugar advertisement makes no explicit reference to green issues, whilst the Body Shop text assumes a sympathy with environmentalism on the part of its consumers. However, both advertisements make use of the natural and social order, and a movement between the two, in the promotion of their product.

1. A society of 'experts'.

The first piece of discourse is an advertisement which was published as a double page spread in the Radio Times [1990] and formed part of a series of advertisements, in the press and on television, for sugar [Appendix Document no.2]. The construction of meaning in this advertisement is both complex and condensed. One way into an analysis is to sort out the main themes or resources which are used within the text.

The first half of the text operates with a resource which compares nature to human society. As has already been mentioned, such a distinction is a familiar one in environmental discourse. There are two formulations of this relationship which seem to work simultaneously here. Firstly, nature is the 'other' against which human society is defined, as in 'only humans treat a sweet tooth as a bad habit. Wild creatures know better,' and, 'where animals naturally tailor their diet...we humans ... sometimes eat more than we need.' In this formulation a direct contrast is made between humans and all other creatures which 'belong' to nature. The second formulation portrays human society as having originated in nature but somehow gone astray from its roots. We have forgotten 'Nature's rules for a healthy lifestyle,' and have had to 'compensate by faddish dieting'. So in this formulation, humans once were a part of nature with 'natural' habits but have
become alienated from nature and have consequently developed an unbalanced lifestyle.

The next resource referred to is one of scientific knowledge about food. The advertisement lists 'facts': a lump of sugar contains 16 calories; a person needs 1500 calories a day just to stay alive; half of the necessary calories should come from carbohydrates.

The third theme which organises the discourse is not itself present in the text at all. The two main claims of the advertisement - that sugar is a 'good' food and that people should not feel guilty about eating it - gain most of their significance from other texts which claim that sugar is a 'bad' food and that people should feel guilty about eating it. The main heading: 'Is sugar a natural part of our diet?' and the whole orientation of the advertisement are only comprehensible within the context of this other discourse which is not overtly present.

In the advertisement there is also slippage between the three areas of meaning of the term 'nature' described by Williams [1976]. The first meaning, as 'the essential quality and character of something' is evident in the explanation of animal behaviour - they 'naturally' tailor their diet to suit their way of life [this could also be seen as an example of 'natural' as 'obvious' as described by Barthes see Chapter 3 note 9]. The second and third areas of meaning 'the inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both' and 'the material world itself taken as including or not including human beings' are more difficult to separate out. In the statements '[b]ecause in Nature, sweetness guides you to goodness' and '[w]e forget Nature's rules for a healthy lifestyle' both these meanings seem to be operating simultaneously. The constructive character of the language is thus evident in the text, particularly in the movement from one discourse to another.

Two different 'cooking processes' or organisational frameworks are also used to construct our understanding of nature, and although these could be seen as incompatible with each other, both are used to reinforce the argument that sugar is a 'natural' food. Each framework puts forward an account of how we gain knowledge, and both these forms of knowledge [according to the advertisement ]
promote the eating of sugar. The first way of understanding nature is, as has already been mentioned, through a comparison between human and natural society. The use of 'both sides of the cooking process' referred to by Williamson is evident here. Nature is firstly constructed as 'the other' to society but it is also, paradoxically, formulated as a 'society' itself by describing its operation in recognisably 'social' terms. It has 'rules', it has 'lifestyles' to which animals 'naturally tailor their diet', it has 'experts', the animals themselves. So this construction of nature is formed from our discourse about how human societies operate. Having been 'socialised' it can then be used to compare to 'real' human society. The second formulation of the relationship between society and nature then comes into play. This is constructed as one of alienation in which humans have forgotten their 'authentic' relationship with nature. Because of our central heating, labour saving technology and abundant food, 'we humans' have forgotten nature's rules, we have upset the balance. This alienation from a natural lifestyle has given rise to behavioural problems - faddish dieting, irrational food phobias, feeling guilty about eating sugar.

So first of all nature is formulated in terms of a human society, its members are endowed with human characteristics - then these characteristics are read back as a judgement on our own behaviour. Our behaviour [not eating sugar] is compared unfavourably with the behaviour of animals, who know better, they are the experts - instinctively more knowledgeable than us. In this construction our knowledge of what we should eat is innate, we should listen to our natural, animal instincts if we want to know which food is nourishing.

We are then referred to a very different organisational framework through which we can understand nature and know what we should eat, that of science. In this version our knowledge comes from scientific experts - the nutritionists who produce facts and figures, numbers of calories, elements of nutrition. These two ways of understanding nature are juxtaposed in the advertisement in such a way that they do not conflict with each other. The knowledge of one set of experts [the animals] is used to reinforce that of the nutritional experts - both are advocating the same values and behaviour - balance, variety, moderation, eating
sugar. The 'naturalisation' of sugar is accomplished in the first part of the text and then reinforced by science without any conflict being apparent.

Three points can be highlighted from looking at this advertisement. Firstly, although the text does not present itself as overtly 'green' it utilises arguments and distinctions which are often encountered in more explicitly environmental arguments, in particular the distinction between culture and nature; secondly, the formulations of this distinction are shown to be very flexible constructions which can be mobilised in a number of different ways; and finally, a scientific discourse can be used to add authenticity to an account which has a very different epistemological base.

2. Close to source - the Body Shop.
The second piece of discourse is in the form of a leaflet which was available in 'Body Shops' around the country in 1990-91 and is entitled 'What is natural?' [Appendix Document no.3] The written text is subdivided into six sections: an introductory paragraph, and sections entitled 'What does natural actually mean?', 'Natural ingredients: the background', 'The Body Shop approach to natural ingredients', 'Why does the Body Shop use natural ingredients?' and 'The Body Shop Code of Practice'.

In a similar way to the sugar advertisement, this text does not present itself as environmental discourse, however, it does orientate itself more explicitly to a cluster of issues and values which are often included in overtly 'green' discourse. For example, the advertisement claims that The Body Shop 'uses only natural ingredients which are easily renewable: we do not use materials from any plant or other source which is scarce or under threat'. It is, however, prepared to suspend its principle of only using natural products in order to 'use synthetic ingredients as acceptable alternatives to those "natural" ingredients obtained by cruelty, such as spermaceti or musk'. The 'save and recycle' motif on the back page and the coarse and dull 'recycled' texture of the paper on which it is written all signify environmental concern.

This concern is also linked to global issues, and a sympathy with, and awareness of, developmental issues in the third world are expressed in the text.
For example, it is claimed that the jojoba plant which is used in Body Shop products 'can grow on some of the poorest land in the world... and can provide livelihoods and employment for people who have few opportunities'. The use of these products 'encourages sources of natural ingredients in the third world thus creating trade'. There are further references to the 'return to nature' movement, which is grounded in the 'genuine need to improve personal health and well being, to improve the quality of life.'

So, although the leaflet is not directly labelled as environmental, it engages with many issues which could fall into the category of green concerns. It provides an excellent example of the ubiquitous character of environmental discourse and how it is employed in a wide range of texts.

The particular rhetorical strategy which will be examined first is entwined with another environmentally orientated factor. This forms one of the most striking features about the Body Shop as exemplified in this leaflet, that is, its self-conscious rejection of many of the marketing techniques which are employed by the mainstream cosmetics industry in order to encourage consumption. The Body Shop's emphasis upon recycling of packaging, the absence of gloss and glamour in the advertisement, and the concern with the 'raw' state of many of its products, all stand in sharp contrast to the more familiar promotion of beauty products. It could, in fact, be argued that the major determinant of meaning for the whole range of Body Shop products is this difference from the mainstream cosmetics industry; a distinction which is stressed throughout the advertisement, and is clearly demonstrated in the statement: 'we do not use any ingredients to create an image, or to make false claims, or to manipulate our customers'. The Body Shop thus lays great stress on the distance of its methods of promotion from the techniques which usually surround consumption.

In order to reinforce this distinction the text describes how the term 'natural' is used to sell many products: 'advertisers and manufacturers of all kinds have discovered that the idea - and ideal - of what is natural appeals to ever-increasing numbers of consumers'. There is thus no attempt to cover up the fact that the term can be used to promote the financial interests of producers.
However, the implication is that other manufacturers use the term in an attempt to manipulate the consumer through the use of covert techniques of persuasion and by concealing the 'truth' about their methods of production and marketing. The Body Shop's answer to this is to give the consumer a great deal of information about the production of its goods and the ethos which lies behind this production, the argument being that she or he can then make an informed decision about whether to buy a product instead of being 'tricked' into buying by clever marketing techniques. The idea of revelation and openness, of exposing the methods of production in a pragmatic way as opposed to the mystification and prevarication of mainstream producers is a strong theme throughout the advertisement.

The motif of revelation also plays an important role in the specific way that nature is used in this advertisement. The use of 'naturally based ingredients' is seen as being part of an approach which reflects the 'realism' behind Body Shop products. This idea is manifested in the use of the term 'close-to-source' as a description of the ingredients, meaning that they are more 'natural' or processed as little as possible. Not only are the ingredients which are used 'close-to-source', but the knowledge of which ingredients should be used is also close-to-source in that it comes from 'traditional people' who live 'closer to nature' than do the members of Western societies. These ingredients are chosen because of their positive effects upon well being rather than as 'beauty' products - the idea of beauty becoming by implication a rather superficial notion. The combination of these ideas constructs an image of some 'authentic' and essentially meaningful life-style and way of understanding the world which is grounded in nature and which the extraneous concerns of western society have concealed from us. By using Body Shop products we will somehow remove this superficial veneer of civilisation and participate in a more authentic and meaningful way of living.

This notion of referring to a lifestyle which is 'closer to nature', as a way of validating the use of certain ingredients is reinforced by claims that 'in some societies untouched by Western "progress" and unpressurised by advertising, these traditional practices continue'. The implication is that if people use these ingredients when they are not pressured by advertising then it must be because of
the effectiveness of the ingredients themselves. In this way non-western societies become a sort of model on which to base our lifestyle; their behaviour is more valid than ours because it is grounded in a culture which is not under pressure from progress and advertising. The lifestyle of these societies is, therefore, motivated by practical concerns, by a need for things that 'work' rather than things that add a superficial veneer to life.

The significance of Body Shop products is thus constructed by using a theme of openness and revelation. The products originate in a form of culture which is more valid and authentic than ours; simple, safe, close-to-source and utilitarian rather than decorative - a 'natural' society.

It could, then, be argued that the strategy used in this advertisement to persuade us to buy Body Shop products is a reverse of the strategy used in the sugar advertisement. Whereas in the latter, a 'social' discourse was projected onto the natural world and then read back as an indictment of our own society; in the former, a 'natural' discourse is projected onto the culture of non-western societies and the resulting construction is then used to criticise modern methods of consumption and to justify the ingredients and recipes used by the Body Shop. Both advertisements, however, show the flexibility and versatility of the nature/culture divide and illustrate the ubiquity of ideas about the environment.

Discussion
Levels of meaning.
I would now like to look at the analysis of these advertisements in terms of one of the areas of tension or argument which was outlined at the end of the last chapter, involving the two determinant levels of meaning in discourse. The discussion will focus on the tension which exists between the discourse as something which can be understood as an entity in itself and as something which is comprehensible in terms of its social and historical context.

In the last chapter, various conceptions of resources were discussed. In terms of bricolage, already formed elements of discourse were made use of which brought with them constraints from their previous functions; Williamson's systems of meaning were also discussed in which elements were
borrowed from the context of previously established formations and used to give significance to new products and commodities. There have been other attempts to tackle this issue within more clearly labelled environmental writings. For example, Green Political Thought [1990] by Andrew Dobson, and The Roots of Modern Environmentalism [1986] by David Pepper, both provide an analysis of the political and philosophical elements or resources which they see as underlying green discourse. However, they do not look in any detail at how these concerns are taken up in specific texts. Although both use empirical examples in their work, these are treated as the expressions of underlying sets of principles, and the emphasis is very much upon these principles.

A more discourse-based study is undertaken by Rosalind Coward in The Whole Truth [1990], in which she examines the alternative health movement and identifies what she considers to be a new philosophy of the body, health and nature which underlies this movement. Coward's formulation of the discourse is, however, like Dobson and Pepper, to treat it as the expression of a coherent and self-contained philosophy, which is adopted by those who use alternative therapies. Although a wide range of empirical resources are examined, these are perceived as simply expressing a particular position, which can be identified and then presented in its pure form as a distinctive and reactionary philosophy. Any contradictions or variations within the discourse are marginalised or ignored altogether rather than explored in order to assess their function within the text as a whole. This leads to a version of the relationship between the resources [the underlying philosophy] and the discourse [the empirical examples] being constructed as one in which a formal set of beliefs is imposed upon people via the teachings of the alternative therapies.

As already mentioned, the approach taken in the thesis does not follow the assumption that a piece of discourse can be fully understood by separating out the underlying resources and examining them in the abstract. Although the discourse undoubtedly orientates to philosophical or political resources, it also 'evokes and acts constructively upon that background, altering, challenging and recruiting it for the accomplishment of social actions' [Edwards 1991]
The two advertisements which were examined above can be used to illustrate this point. Initially, it is evident that the construction of both texts is heavily influenced by previously existing themes or elements. In the sugar advertisement, the previously existing discourse which condemns sugar as unhealthy is so dominant that the whole text can be seen as an attempt to detach the practice of eating sugar from this discourse and embed it in a more positive one. Similarly in the Body Shop advertisement, the text is orientated towards a rejection of an established position and set of practices which are associated with the mainstream cosmetics industry. A major factor in the construction of these texts is, therefore, the contemporary context of problems and issues which surround these products. However, although these previously existing elements formulate the discourse on one level, on another level it is the advertisements themselves which act upon these resources, 'altering, challenging and recruiting' them in order to accomplish rhetorical tasks.

In the Body Shop advertisement, for example, the mainstream cosmetics industry is enlisted as a foil against which the Body-Shop can define itself. Sharp contrasts are made between the two, mostly by implication, as in the claim that 'we do not use any ingredients to create an image, or to make false claims, or to manipulate our customers'. Possible similarities, such as a common use of the term 'natural' in the promotion of products, are employed to differentiate between the other manufacturers, who are formulated as using the idea as a marketing ploy to attract consumers, and the Body Shop, who incorporate the idea of natural products into their overall ethos of high ecological and humanitarian principles. Both advertisements make use of the resource or notion of a balanced and beneficent natural society upon which civilisation has not impinged, but this theme is open to use and interpretation, and is formulated in different ways to fit in with the overall promotion of the products. It would be unconvincing to describe these advertisements simply as expressions of the position that a 'natural' society is superior to a 'technological' one.

It is also evident that more than one theme or resource is made use of within the discourse and that these elements are not necessarily compatible with each other in terms of consistency or form. It is the constructive work within the
advertisement which 'dissolves' them all together so that they function to persuade us to eat sugar or to buy Body-Shop products. The slippage and movement which occurs between these resources thus gives rise to, but also overcomes or avoids, problems and conflicts. For example, in the sugar advertisements the text utilises resources which imply opposing views of science; in the 'natural experts' theme, science is seen as the cause of our forgetting nature's rules through technology, whilst in the 'nutritional expert' theme it is seen as the cause of our discovering these rules through nutritional knowledge. However, by selective use of these resources and careful positioning of each in relation to the other, both elements are interwoven to produce and reinforce an argument for eating sugar.

Through a consideration of these advertisements, I hope to have shown that the meaning or significance of the discourse comes from an interplay or tension between the relational level and the particular level. Although both pieces of discourse are undoubtedly constructed to a considerable extent from previously existing resources, the significance of these resources is moulded and adapted within the text itself. Furthermore, whereas other accounts, such as those put forward by Pepper [1986] and Coward [1990], formulated examples of discourse as expressions of consistent positions or philosophies, there seems little evidence of these resources appearing as tidy and concordant systems of meaning. For example, in the area which was focused on in the first half of the chapter - the relationship between nature and culture - there is no evidence of a constant definition of this relationship which underlies the text. On the contrary, the issue is manifested as an arena of movement and argument rather than as a fixed position.

The notion that resources or strands do not appear as completed statements but rather as areas of continuing arguments is not a new one in discourse analysis, and it would seem useful at this point to consider an approach which takes these factors into consideration.

The dilemmatic approach.
The dilemmatic approach, which comes from the work of Michael Billig and others [Billig 1987; Billig et al 1988] is relevant in its particular construction of what have been described above as resources, and is in many ways consistent with the position taken by Williams [see Chapter 3]. This approach emphasises the contrary themes involved in the composition of resources and the way in which they are formed from the ideological traditions within a society. The presence of these contrary themes provides the possibility for deliberation and arguments. This approach does not, therefore, see the use of socially shared resources as 'a way that permits the individual who has dutifully accepted society's values to generate automatically all necessary thoughts, actions and argumentative discourse' [1988:20] The availability of these resources provide themes of understanding which enable people to think and comprehend the world in a way that is particular to their society, but the conflicting character of these themes does not ensure that ready made answers to problems or dilemmas are available.

A dilemmatic approach provides a way of accounting for the complexity and general untidiness which is evident in discourse and constructs an account of social discourse which stresses its potential for change and its lack of satisfactory conclusions. This approach could, then, be perceived as a way of dealing with the tension which exists between the two determinant levels of meaning in discourse. Because it originates in the context of psychology its focus is rather different from the present study - it is offering an alternative way of looking at individual understandings of the world to that of psychological theories, such as cognitive psychology, which tend to ignore the social aspects of thought. However, although a consideration of the thinking of individuals is not a major issue in this thesis, the same tension between already formed themes of thought and the agency of individual utterances, whether they are perceived as conversations, thought processes or texts, seems to be a central concern held in common.

Not only do these theorists criticise the individualistic and non-social account of discourse as given in cognitive psychology, they also set their work in opposition to a particular formulation of ideology in which
individuals are often seen as the blinded bearers of a received ideological tradition. All the individual can do is to act according to these received constraints and to pass them on to the next generation. In this respect, ideology is seen as something which closes the mind and switches off thought. [Billig et al 1988:2]

They therefore locate their position as avoiding two polarised positions: the highly individualised conceptions of cognitive psychology in which discourse is perceived in terms of the individual processing of information, and the more sociological, but equally constraining perception of discourse in which it is formulated as a vehicle for a set of rigid and unquestioned ideological beliefs, consistently reproduced throughout society. The dilemmatic or rhetorical approach is consistent with Moscovici's [1984] concept of the 'thinking society' as a suitable subject of study, in which neither of these extremes is dominant but in which ordinary discourse [and thought] results from the tension between the two.

In their book Ideological Dilemmas [1988], Billig et al put forward a theory in which individual thought and dialogue is perceived as having 'historical and ideological roots; for the concepts involved, and their meanings, are constructed through the history of social dialogue and debate.'[1988:7] Their position on this is thus very close to that of Raymond Williams, with a shared concern for the social and historical origins of the elements of discourse. However, the aspect which is developed in the work of Billig et al is that of argument. Although Williams stresses the importance of debate in the construction of language, and the impossibility of separating the meaning of concepts from the issues and arguments which they are being used to discuss, he does not stress the use which is made of contrary themes within discourse.

In the advertisements which have been examined above there is evidence of argumentation or dilemmatic themes on several levels. Firstly, the overall orientation of both advertisements could be seen as part of an ongoing argument; the sugar advertisement is constructed as an answer to the accusation that sugar is unnatural and bad for you; the Body Shop advertisement is constructed in
opposition to mainstream cosmetics marketing and production. In the sugar advertisement this argumentative element is implicitly present whereas in the Body Shop advertisement it is spelt out quite clearly - but both texts can be seen as taking their meaning from what they are against.

More specifically, the texts engage with a dilemma surrounding the nature/culture divide. Although both advertisements use this distinction as the basis for argument, they then go on to problematise and manipulate the distinction in their descriptions of 'natural societies' and 'close-to-source' production methods. The descriptions of resources given by, for example, Pepper and Coward, which perceive discourse as the expression of an internally consistent, underlying position or philosophy, do not really provide an adequate account of how flexibly these resources can be employed, with the same resource providing an arena for variable and often conflicting arguments.

**Removal from argument.**

Whereas the dilemmatic approach emphasises the argumentative aspects of the discourse, the texts can also be used to illustrate how strategies which remove phenomena from the arena of argument are constructed. As discussed in Chapter 4, the movement between the orders of nature and culture can be used as a way of 'naturalising' things so that they take on the aura of an 'objective' reality which cannot be argued about. This is achieved in a number of ways in the advertisements. Firstly, the presentation of the calorific values and daily nutritional requirements in the sugar advertisement is a good example of a 'neutral' rhetorical style in which information is given in a seemingly objective way which precludes argument. The nutritional information is not presented as being contingent in any way, it is simply stated as 'scientific fact', which requires no back up.

The second strategy of naturalisation is entwined with the motif of revelation, which constructs some societies and forms of knowledge as being 'closer-to-source' than other, more westernised lifestyles. By presenting these societies as somehow nearer to a 'natural' way of life than our own society, the 'close-to-source' cultures take on an authenticity which has supposedly been
covered up in western countries by a superficial veneer of civilisation. These cultures are thus removed from the social order and placed in a close-to-nature category, where behaviour and lifestyle are not determined by society but by the practical demands of the environment, and cannot thus be argued about or changed, the implication being that we should model our behaviour on these cultures as they possess an objectively determined 'correctness' which we have lost. This argument for 're-naturalisation' - that in order to save the planet [and ourselves] we should go back to some original Garden of Eden state in which we were uninhibited by culture, is prevalent in several versions of green discourse and will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

Conclusion.
In this chapter a number of points have been made which raise issues about both environmentalism and discourse in general. These points are intended to reinforce and clarify the approach to discourse which was introduced in the preceding chapters. Rather than taking the discourse to pieces and pursuing the ideas which lie behind it, this study aims to take a more holistic approach which examines how it is that such a diversity of issues and perspectives have managed to combine together to make up recognisable wholes. How have all the variations and contradictions, which must inevitably arise when such a bricolage of ideas and issues are combined, been dealt with in the production of the discourse?

The ubiquitous character of environmental discourse seems evident in the material examined above. Although neither of the advertisements were clearly labelled environmental, they both engaged with a cluster of ideas and assumptions about the environment. So what were the forms, devices or structures which held the discourse together and which combined the environmental elements of the text with other issues being discussed? At this stage a number of potentially interesting areas can be identified.

Firstly, a link was formed through the explanation of how we know things - the epistemological framework; both a scientific and an innate account of knowledge were utilised. This is an area which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 8.
Secondly, the formal structure of the discourse gave it coherence. By this I mean the organisational devices which impose a pattern onto a piece of discourse and which help to mould it into a single account. The best example of this is the motif of openness and revelation which was used in the Body-shop ad and which linked together the idea of de-mystifying methods of production and marketing, the use of ingredients which 'work' in a practical sense rather than merely concurring with a superficial mystique of beauty treatments, and knowledge which is revealed by 'close-to-nature' people whose lifestyle is not affected by the veneer and hype of 'civilisation'.

Thirdly, there was the intertextual use of resources and the interchange and slippage of meaning which occurred within the constructive use of these resources. This was perceived in the paradoxical character of the nature/culture relationship, where the movement and organisation of this relationship was used in the construction of the overall argument of the advertisements. This illustrated the tension or interplay which exists between the relational and particular levels in the discourse.

Finally, the argumentative dimension of the texts was explored, both from a dilemmatic perspective, which gave a more expedient account of the variability and inconsistency which was apparent in the texts than did other more systematic descriptions, and also from the perspective of 'naturalisation' in which the movement from a social to natural order was used to authenticate various factors and remove them from the arena of argument.
Chapter 7.
Nature, Eco-Feminism and Environmentalism.

The category of nature is a field of multiple exclusion and control, not only of non-humans, but of various groups of humans and aspects of human life which are cast as nature'. [Plumwood 1993:4]

Introduction
This chapter will continue to examine the movement between nature and culture, and the implications and functions of such a movement which were introduced in the last chapter. It will emphasise in particular the link between such a movement and the account of power within gender relationships. Several issues will be explored in this context: the theme concerning the involvement of constructions of nature in the establishment of objectivity will be further pursued through a discussion of more examples of discursive strategies for constructing factuality; also, the question raised in Chapter 1 concerning the problems of establishing a political position within post-modernism will be considered. Each of these issues will be examined by focusing on representations of gender and nature.

The discussion will be in three sections. The first section will consider a prevalent method through which sexual difference is explained and justified in everyday discourse with reference to the 'natural world'. The second section will look at more theorised accounts of the relationship between women and nature in eco-feminist discourse. And, finally, the issue of taking a political position will be discussed and related to debates about objectivity.

1. The 'naturalisation' process.
As has been argued above, the environment or the natural world cannot be treated as a discrete or single issue. Not only does environmentalism itself take on many different forms, but assumptions about, and attitudes towards, formulations of the natural world are also involved in the discussions of many other topics, although this involvement may not be recognised or explicated. This section will focus on two main areas in which this involvement is evident. Firstly, it will look at some
examples of how 'nature' and 'the natural world' are constructed in discourse about women; a number of different accounts and arguments will be examined which are concerned with, and make use of, the relationship between women and nature. Secondly, but interwoven with this discussion, some of the ways in which particular elements or phenomena within these accounts take on a factual or objective status and are thus excluded from the arena of argument will be examined.

In Chapter 4, the political expediency of placing certain understandings of the world in a 'natural' rather than a social order was discussed and this was taken up again in Chapter 6 in the context of advertising. To understand the way that the idea of nature operates within a common sense discourse of sexual difference it is useful to clarify how this movement between the two orders functions in more general everyday discussions.

The term 'natural' is often used in talk as a way of justifying or validating particular statements or courses of action. We claim that 'naturally' we did this or that, thereby implying that our conduct does not need to be questioned or analysed because it was 'of course' the correct thing to do. There is a sense in which the expression is interchangeable with terms such as 'normal' or 'obvious' [again see Roland Barthes, Chapter 3 note 9]. Something which is done 'naturally' is something which does not need to be questioned because it is already agreed upon; anyone with any 'common sense' would have said or done the same. Although this use of the term is not overtly linked with our more usual references to a natural world of plants and animals [in fact it is interesting to note that many of the things which we do 'naturally' are of the most conventional type e.g. 'naturally, everyone was in evening dress'] the two uses of the term rest on a common assumption. As has already been argued, by labelling something as 'natural' we establish it as being outside the realms of argument. It can be claimed that by locating a specific phenomena within a 'natural' world or system, both these meanings of 'natural' come into play, making it a doubly effective method of establishing a factual or objective status for such phenomena.
The use of a particular formulation of nature as a way of justifying particular forms of social behaviour is described by Keith Thomas:

The diversity of animal species has been used on innumerable occasions to provide conceptual support for social differentiation among humans; and there have been few societies where nature has never been appealed to for legitimisation and justification.[1983:61]

Thomas suggests that we use 'the natural world' as a screen onto which we project a particular interpretation of human society. We then ignore the social origin of this interpretation and read it back as if from a permanent and stable system which exists parallel to but unaffected by our social system. In this way we can claim that the knowledge gleaned from the 'natural' system is unaffected by social influences and is somehow closer to the ontological bedrock of the 'real' world [as in the close-to-source cultures and knowledge discussed in the last chapter]. By making reference to this world we can justify particular forms of behaviour or social arrangements by claiming that they are inevitable, and therefore indisputable.

So, the concept of the 'natural' can be seen to play a complex role in discourse; not only is it used as a descriptive term to refer to particular constructions of the material world, it is also involved in strategies to establish the 'objective truth' of certain forms of behaviour. This establishment of a discourse as natural could, then, be related to the power which such a discourse can command - the ahistorical or natural discourse being one in which a particular political position is authenticated as being beyond argument.

**Sexual difference.**

How then is this argument applicable to discussions of sexual difference and behaviour? The social anthropologist, Mary Douglas [1966], illustrates the link between power and a natural order in her discussion of the use of nature as a 'doompoint' in disagreements, and she shows how this link can operate in the context of the oppression of women. She explains the formulation of nature as a 'doompoint' by claiming that it can be employed as 'one of the universal trump cards plunked down to win an argument' [1966:236] along with the other
dooompoints of time, money and God. As an example she states that in many tribal societies marital fidelity on the part of women is an agreed ideal, whereas the same is not expected of men. A common justification of this discrepancy is a belief that miscarriage is due to adultery. As miscarriage is a 'natural' danger which only affects females, the variance in ideal behaviour is sustained by finding a sanction in nature which enforces the chastity of women without involving male infidelity. Thus, the 'tribal view of nature begins to emerge as a coherent principle of social control' [1966:239] reinforcing the power relations which already exist in a society.

This example illustrates how 'nature' can be used explicitly in the regulation of sexual behaviour. The construction of a cause and effect relationship between adultery and miscarriage facilitates the control of women in some tribal societies. The use of 'nature' in arguments about the control or organisation of sexual behaviour need not, however, be so explicit or so specific, as the next example shows.

In her book Female Desire [1984] Rosalind Coward argues that:

For every form of sexual arrangement approved by this society, there's an explanation in terms of natural instincts... [i]ntrinsic is a term which seems to be particularly useful for explaining away conventional forms of 'male' and 'female' behaviour. Instinct explains male aggression and instinct explains female passivity and the desire to nurture others.'[1984:235]

Coward gives examples of popular manifestations of this phenomena from her analysis of natural history programmes on television. Her claim is that such programmes may appear to confine themselves to examining the life of animals and plants, but they implicitly offer comment on human society and supply general explanations about how organisms relate to one another. As reproduction is seen to lie at the heart of the natural cycle, the sexual behaviour and habits of different species form a central focus within these programmes. Coward argues that the examination of this behaviour often assumes as much as it explains; a whole series of preconceptions about male and female behaviour are projected onto the behaviour of animals.
Although not wanting to dismiss the possibility that there may be a certain continuum between the behaviour of animals and people, she proposes that the issue is far more complex than such programmes imply. The notion that human concepts such as father, mother, or property can just be transferred onto the animal kingdom results in a situation where explanations of animal behaviour tend to reflect the concerns of the society which has produced them more than an 'objective' state of nature. The continual presentation of male rivalry and aggression in the defence of territory, the hierarchical arrangement of species with the strongest males in dominant positions over females and younger males, and successful mating and parental behaviour being founded on the radical differences between the sexes feeds into what Coward describes as the 'contemporary obsession [with] proving the inevitability of sexual difference'. [1984:215]

Both of these examples seem to suggest that the use of nature in discussions of behaviour will inevitably lead to a reinforcement of the status quo, in this case the subordination of women in society. However, although this is usually the case, the reading off of forms of social organisation from a 'natural world' is not inherently conservative; some attempts have been made to use such a strategy in an attempt to subvert a dominant order. It would be a mistake therefore to consider the link between women and nature as always being anti-feminist.

The naturalisation process described above can thus be seen as a further example of the interplay between the natural and the social which was discussed in the previous chapter. Not only do gender relations in society take on an inevitability from the natural world in which they are 'mirrored', but also sexual relations in the animal world take on a socially gendered aspect from the 'mirror' of human society. The interplay and feedback which exists between the two systems seems to form a constant element in accounts of sexual behaviour. As Donna Haraway argues, 'Symbolically, nature and culture, as well as sex and gender, mutually [but not equally] construct each other' [1989:12].
2. Women and nature - privilege or penance?

The previous section illustrates the way in which the sexual behaviour of both men and women can be justified and explained through the use of a 'mythical' natural world, where such behaviour takes on the mantle of inevitability. In these arguments the behaviour of both sexes is rooted in the natural world, although the formulation usually serves the interests of men as the more powerful group in society. However, I would now like to examine the relationship which is constructed between men, women and nature within eco-feminist discourse where the relationship between nature and the two sexes is not perceived as being equivalent.

Eco-feminism has developed primarily from the work of cultural or 'woman-centred' feminists who claim that 'women by virtue of their closeness to the body, to nurture and to nature itself, possess qualities superior to men's.'[Evans 1991:3]

A link has been drawn between feminism and environmentalism which is grounded in 'the unity of women and nature and the oneness of women's struggle to save our Selves and to save the planet' [Daly 1988:x] In eco-feminist accounts the link between women and nature is considered to be qualitatively different from that between men and nature, and this difference is perceived as being the cause of problems not only for women but also for nature.

Three explanations within eco-feminism will be discussed which account for this differential relationship. In order to extend the discussion concerning the location of particular forms of behaviour within a natural arena, the function of narrative form in the construction of these accounts will be discussed.

The first explanation is located on a conceptual level; the link between women and nature is perceived as being inherent in various ways of dividing up and categorising the world. A second explanation is located in the methods used to gain knowledge of the natural world through scientific procedures. The third explanation is located on the level of experience; women's life experiences form a very different relationship with nature from those of men.
Each of these explanations constructs a different version of the woman/nature link and in so doing suggests a different version of the problem which exists for women and how this could be solved. A brief outline of these positions will be given below and they will then be discussed in terms of their narrative structure.

a. Transcendent dualism.

The first explanation, which locates the woman/nature link in the dualisms of classical philosophy, is utilised in the work of Radford Ruether [1976]. She outlines a theory in which spirit and nature, as represented by consciousness and the body, were set up in opposition to each other in classical times, with spirit in a transcendent position over nature. This split was then used in the formulation of class and gender relations, with women, slaves and the lower classes being identified with nature whilst ruling class men were associated with the realm of the spirit. Through the use of this dualism the naturalisation process discussed above was, and still is, employed to differentiate between the dominant group of 'ruling class men' and the rest of the world. As Radford Ruether argues,

[D]omination is "naturalised" so that the inferior ontological and moral characteristics of body in relation to mind are identified with the inferior psychobiological "natures" of women and subjugated classes. [1976:189]

This sort of justification therefore differs from the use of nature in the previous section, in that the powerful group are removed from the sphere of the natural altogether. It is only the behaviour of 'women and the subjugated classes' which can be explained in terms of the body and nature.

b. 'Mechanistic science'.

In the second explanation, women are linked with nature through the rise of 'mechanistic science'. Merchant [1980] argues that around the time of the Enlightenment there was a change in the formulation of nature. The organic formulation, in which nature was seen as a living organism, often personified as a nurturing mother, was replaced by a mechanistic model in which the natural
world was perceived as a 'neutral machine-like sphere open for the human mind's manipulation'. Merchant claims that:

The rise of mechanism laid the foundation for a new synthesis of the cosmos, society and the human being, construed as an ordered system of mechanical parts subject to governance by law and to predictability through deductive reasoning .... Mechanism rendered nature effectively dead, inert and manipulable from without. [1980:214]

The view of nature as female and the feminine power which was grounded in this construction of the natural as a living, nurturing organism, were thus undermined and devalued, according to Merchant, by the rise of the mechanistic model.

c. Experiential link.

A third explanation of the woman/nature link is on the level of experience. In this account it is female bodily experiences, especially the experience of reproduction, which are seen as the determining factor in the relationship.

Dodson Grey [1979], argues that it is the different experiences which result from having a differently sexed body and the socialisation which goes with this which determine the relationship between nature and the sexes. She claims that whilst female experiences of reproduction give rise to a consciousness of unity and affiliation with nature, masculinity is the result of a disowning of the primary sexual identification with the female through the exclusion of nurturant, tender and emotional behaviour. This results in a personality which has a need for mastery and control over both women and nature.

In each of these versions the domination of both women and nature is located in a particular formulation of the woman/nature relationship. Such explanations can be described as coming from a social constructionist perspective, in that they argue that the relationship between women and nature has been formulated within society in order to perform a particular function. In transcendent dualism, the link is constructed in such a way that it justifies domination by ruling class men. With 'mechanistic science' the construction of women and nature allows for the separation of women from the 'natural' sphere and a consequent undermining
of their power and also for the manipulation of nature by the [male] human mind. Finally, the experiential link has been constructed within society in order to reinforce the domination of men by their early dissociation from both the natural and the feminine aspects of their personality.

This social constructionist position is not, however, consistent throughout the discourse; the prescriptive message of such explanations relies not on a reformulation of the link between men, women and nature, but rather on a return to an 'authentic' or 'original' relationship which these constructions have 'distorted'. This positing of an original state lying beneath a cultural construction is a formulation which is regularly used in environmentalism, several examples of which have already been described in the previous chapter, in which an objectively 'real' position was established by locating it in a natural, and thus authentic, order. In these eco-feminist accounts it is the narrative structure of the argument which does most to establish such a position.

Narrative structure.

One of the ways in which a text comes to make sense and to gain an internal coherence is through its narrative structure. In such a reading the elements of the argument are given meaning by their relationship with each other rather than through their relationship with an external reality. The function of narrative as a sense making mechanism will be discussed more fully elsewhere [chapter 8], but one of the simplest models of how a narrative works is given by Todorov [1977] and this model will be used here.

Todorov argues that a narrative begins with a state of equilibrium or harmony which is disrupted, an account is given of this disruption and then of its resolution into another more stable state of equilibrium. A narrative thus links elements together temporally; by organising the elements of the text into a temporal progression, a chain of cause and effect is created, with one event seemingly leading to another in an ordered way. The particular formulation of the disruption will suggest a way of overcoming the problem in order to get back to a state of harmony.
It could be argued, then, that through its narrative structure each of these explanations tells a different story about how the relationship between women and nature has come into being, how this creates a problem for women and how this problem can be overcome.

In the first explanation, the problem for women originated in classical times when the dualisms of contemporary philosophy split spirit and consciousness off from the body and nature, and relegated women to the inferior realm of nature. This disruption led to the oppression of women which has persisted until the present day. In order to overcome this oppression it will be necessary to dismantle the dualism and thus return to a holistic state in which body and spirit exist in harmony rather than in opposition.

In the second explanation, an original state of harmony where people lived in organic equilibrium with nature was disrupted by the rise of mechanistic science around the time of the Enlightenment. The mechanistic model upon which this science was based enabled people to perceive the natural world as separate from society, as a neutral machine like sphere which was open to manipulation by the human mind. In this model women were once again aligned with nature and laid open to manipulation in a similar way. Women's methods of apprehending nature, which were based on their reproductive and nurturing functions became categorised as emotional or intuitional and were downgraded in comparison with objective and rational scientific methods. This story tells how the problems of women will only be overcome by the re-establishment of a holistic perspective in which humans no longer seek to control nature, but live in harmony with the natural world; in such a world the 'feminine' methods of apprehending nature through the emotions and non-rational intuition will once again take their place as valid forms of knowledge.

The third explanation is more like a biography than a historical tale. In this version, the original state of harmony with nature is the one into which every child is born - the primary sexual identification with the female parent. The disruption occurs when the male child's masculinity begins to form. This leads to a rejection of what are seen as 'feminine' characteristics such as nurturance and emotion, and a need for mastery and control in contrast to the dependence of the
small child. The affiliation of the female with nature which is established through the process of giving birth and mothering is thus scorned and the male child endeavours to control both women and nature. In order to overcome the problems of women, therefore, the process of forming the masculine personality must be changed in some way. One of the most popular endings to this story is that the so-called 'feminine' characteristics of nurturance will be expressed by fathers as well as mothers, so that the male child does not feel the need to kill off the tender and emotional facets of his personality in order to become a man.

So how does a reading of the discourse in terms of its narrative structure clarify the ways in which the relationship between women and nature functions in these contexts? In each case the original harmonious order is posited as an unproblematic and beneficial link between women and nature. This is then disrupted by a sequence of events which has been detrimental to both women and nature and which is identified as the cause of both sexual and ecological problems. The solution to these problems in each case is to get back to the original state of harmony between women and nature. In each formulation of the problem the positive character of the original link between women and nature is taken as given, all the argumentative work goes into the construction of the disruptive influences and events and how they can be overcome. By organising the stories in this way the original state of harmony is posited as an objective condition and is left outside of the argumentative arena.

One of the ways in which the factual or objective status of a condition is established is through its place within the narrative structure of an account. The organisation of an argument within a narrative sequence, such as is displayed here, concentrates the critical and explanatory work onto what are constructed as the disruptive elements within the story. Attention is drawn away from the state of affairs existing at the beginning of the narrative, which takes on the appearance of the 'normal' or 'natural' condition. The distinction between a natural and a social order is once again made use of with the 'natural' state at the beginning of each narrative being disrupted by a cultural or social reconstruction which undermines the previous harmony. Because this construction is socially
determined, it can be changed through critical analysis and argument. The aim of this argument is not however, to instate a new social construction, but rather to return to the 'natural' order of things which is outside the realm of criticism and argument.

3. Setting up boundaries.
Narrative can thus be read as a way of drawing a boundary between what is to be argued about and what is not. Some elements of the argument are taken as stable givens whilst others are taken as constructions which could be otherwise. In order to explore the notion of such a boundary which can be manipulated within arguments, I would now like to look at Woolgar and Pawluch's [1985] argument about 'Ontological gerrymandering' in which they examine the concept of a boundary between the arguable and the given, and discuss how it operates in sociological writing.

Woolgar and Pawluch begin by examining explanations of social problems which take a labelling or constructionist approach. They look at the ways in which the boundaries between what is problematic and what is not are manipulated within these arguments and claim that by various means the authors of these accounts manage to portray statements about some conditions and behaviours as objective whilst relativizing the definitions and claims made about them.

Their main example is a study of child abuse by Stephen Pfohl [1977]. Woolgar and Pawluch suggest that in Pfohl's argument the existence of 'child-beating' is taken as a fixed and objective condition whilst the various definitions of this condition, in which it has been described as 'the prerogative of the parent, part of the larger problem of poverty, a function of the psychopathic impulse of the disturbed parent, and child abuse' [1985:219], are all explained by reference to socio-historical circumstances. Woolgar and Pawluch argue that every example of the empirical literature which takes this labelling approach displays a common feature:

one category of claims is laid open to ontological uncertainty and then made the target for explanation in terms of the social circumstances
which generated them - at the same time the reader is asked to accept another category of claims on faith.'[1985:218].

Woolgar and Pawluch propose that for the labelling argument to 'work', the authors cannot avoid a claim that at least one relevant condition exists or is constant, and they propose that 'the selective application of relativism is thus crucial both in construing phenomena as social and in denying the social character of the sociologists own practice' [1985:224]

In their conclusions the authors expand this claim from a specific sociological approach to the suggestion that perhaps all accounts and explanations depend on establishing a 'reliable, dependable, non-fluid determinant of the phenomenon to be explained'[p224]. Their final comment is that a better understanding of accounts or explanations of social problems could be gained by examining the practical management of these elements.

The tension identified between a constant, harmonious, woman/nature relationship, which is taken as having existed either in some historical past or in a pre-gendered psychological state, and the constructed masculine disruption of this relationship, could thus be formulated as a common or even inevitable strategy of argument. The accounts are comparable to the labelling arguments outlined by Woolgar and Pawluch; the harmonious woman/nature relationship is not expounded but is assumed to exist, while the disruption of this relationship is explained in social and historical terms.

The tension between the given and the relative does, however, indicate the specific reflexive problems involved in using social constructivist arguments such as those discussed by Woolgar and Pawluch or put forward by the eco-feminists. If the line of argument is that certain elements such as 'patriarchy' or 'child abuse' are constructions and so could be otherwise, this may have the desired effect of destabilising these elements and putting them in a historical context but it also raises the question of why this theory of social construction is not carried through to include the analyst's own position and methods. Rather than selectively using the relativist argument to undermine the opposition's
position it could be argued that if the constructivist theory is to be consistent it should either be used reflexively on the analyst's own position or some explanation should be given for why this position is itself exempt from the argument.

This problem has been identified in feminism [and elsewhere] and the dilemma has been explored and discussed by several writers. Particularly relevant to the current argument is Haraway's [1991] discussion in which she asks if feminists have anything distinctive to say about the 'natural sciences'. She argues that language is seen as central to this problem for many feminists; biology tells stories about its origins and about nature, and women have inherited these stories in a patriarchal voice. So feminists have argued that biology is not the 'objective', 'factual' story it is made out to be, and they have attempted to deal with the male authorship of the history of biology which is the only history there is. This has been tackled from the perspective of language as a social construction; if the 'story' of biology stems not from an 'objective' state of affairs but from the patriarchal power structure both in biology itself and in society as a whole, then it must be possible to reinterpret it or reconstruct it in such a way that will promote a feminist perspective.

It is here that Haraway locates the problem in the argument. The feminist position is based on the premise that language generates reality within the context of power, 'it does not stand for or point to a knowable world hiding somewhere outside the ever receding boundaries of particular social-historical enquiries'[1991:79]. She thus argues that if feminists accept this notion and use it as a criticism of 'male science' they cannot then claim to produce their own picture of the world which does more than reflect 'various aspects of ourselves and of our social arrangements' [1991:80], unless they are going to slip back into the realm of 'facts' or positing some form of female essentialism. Haraway argues that this has been a major stumbling block for feminist science ; the feminist argument seems to be trapped between essentialism and objectivism on the one hand and epistemological anarchy, in which one story is as good as another, on the other hand. And, as Haraway notes, an epistemology which justifies not
taking a stand on the nature of things is of little use to women trying to build a shared politics. Haraway thus poses the problem of taking an unreflexive social constructionist position.

**Conclusion**

Let me return to the two issues which were outlined in the introduction: firstly, the link between the nature/culture relationship and the relationship between objectivism and relativism, and secondly, the problems of establishing a political position within post-modernism, several observations can now be made.

In the last chapter the formal structure of the text was discussed in the context of a motif of openness and revelation which linked together the organisation of the text and its meaning. In the accounts discussed in this chapter it was the narrative structure which organised the text and set up the boundary between the objective and the relative or constructed elements of the text. So, within the context of the objectivist/relativist argument, these accounts actually make use of the tension between the two positions in their construction, rather than coming down on one side or the other. The nature /culture split can be seen as a major strategy in this debate, as one of the chief functions of locating an element in the natural world is to objectify it or to remove it from the argumentative arena. The complexity of the movement and slippage between the social and natural worlds reflects the complexity of the interplay between objectivism and relativism within the text.

In this chapter, then, various ways in which nature can be utilised within discourses of gender have been identified, and attempts to deal with these strategies from a feminist perspective have also been discussed. From an examination of these feminist arguments it has become apparent that a problem arises within the use of objectivism and relativism when the strategies of the text conflict with the theoretical position which is being argued. As was illustrated by Haraway, many of the feminist texts which use the constructionist or relativist argument to undermine patriarchal stories have subsequently had to revert to an objectivist or essentialist account in order to establish an epistemological grounding for their feminist position. The alternative to this, however, would
seem to be a 'epistemological anarchy' in which any story is as good as another - a seemingly weak standpoint from which to attack patriarchy. The reflexive problems involved in taking a social constructionist position will again be examined in the next chapter, and the issue will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 9.
Chapter 8.
Green Science.

We are of course assailed by ecological problems at this junction of the 20th and 21st centuries ... I believe that the way out of this mess is through more and better science' [Horsfall 1991]

Introduction
The above statement was made by Dr John Horsfall [The Guardian 20.4.91] in an article entitled 'The hijack of reason', which will be used as the central text for this chapter[Appendix Document no.4]. Through a close examination of the text I hope to be able to explore some elements of the complex relationship between environmentalism and science and to make some tentative suggestions about how the arguments are constructed and justified. This examination will make use of several of the points made in the previous chapters. Firstly, various formal structures of the discourse will be looked at. The use of narrative as a way of organising the text and of setting up boundaries between the objective and relative elements will be re-examined; arguments which involve science are particularly rich in strategies which try to remove environmentalism from the arena of argument and place it in the domain of indisputable factual matter. Two further forms of organisation, interpretative repertoires and the use of character and individuals will be also be introduced. Finally, the problem of a clash between theory and strategy which was identified in the last chapter will again be tackled.

Scientific problems and problems with science.
Before looking at the text in detail some preliminary points can be made arising from the claims which the above statement makes. Firstly, it asserts the indisputable presence of ecological problems in contemporary society, and secondly it proposes that the answer to these problems is through science. The seemingly self-evident truth of the first of these assertions indicates how deeply entrenched the idea of a damaged environment has become in recent times. It is
difficult to imagine that anybody in Western society would deny that today 'we are assailed by ecological problems'; however this apparent consensus should not be allowed to conceal the complexity of the process by which we have come to accept this assertion or the variation which exists within the category of 'ecological problems'.

A constant stream of media images portraying ravaged rain forests and polluted waterways, coupled with more localised examples of misuses of our countryside and surroundings encourage the 'obvious' or 'natural' conviction that our concern with the environment is a direct result of these 'objective' conditions. We can see that the environment is being damaged and therefore we are concerned about it and prepared to take action. This is a popular account of the definition not only of environmental problems but also of social problems in general. The reality of certain undesirable conditions presses so hard upon our consciousness that we are 'forced' to realise that they are problems. This 'obvious' or 'natural' connection functions, as in previous examples such as the theory of 'instinct' discussed in the last chapter, as a way of removing the issue from the arena of argument; it is taken as given that this cause and effect relationship exists, because it appears so straightforward. However, the link between 'real' conditions and social problems can be questioned and a version of social problems as constructions rather than indisputable facts will be put forward below.

The second assertion made in the opening quote, that the way out of our ecological 'mess' can be found through more and better science, is intricately connected with the process of how the environment becomes a social problem. This connection is manifested in the complex relationship between science and environmentalism and the 'objective conditions' version of social problems is particularly strong in many accounts of this relationship.

That a close relationship exists between science and environmentalism is seldom disputed, indeed it is often claimed that this link with science provides the case for environmental action with its strongest arguments. Yearley [1991] describes how:
By contrast with [other] ... social problem issues, environmentalists would see their case as unanswerable by virtue of its scientific credentials. The ozone layer is disappearing and the consequence will be greater amounts of damaging radiation; greenhouse gases are accumulating and a consequence will be the expansion of oceanic waters and associated flooding. These are held to be matters of fact and there is little room for moral dispute about them'. [1991:117]

Following this line of reasoning it would seem, therefore, that the current definition of and concern with 'ecological problems' has been determined by the objective conditions of the environment, and that these conditions are established through indisputable scientific evidence. The relationship between science and environmentalism would then be quite straightforward: by a close examination of what is 'really' happening in the environment, science can define what is going wrong and consequently suggest how we could rectify these problems.

The apparently uncomplicated nature of this relationship between science and ecological problems has, however, been questioned and is increasingly becoming an area of debate, not least among scientists themselves. For example, Ravetz [1990], argues in New Scientist that

For centuries we have been taught and conditioned to assume that science is certainty. If not today then tomorrow scientists would make the discoveries that would remove our worries about disease, hunger and even our social affairs. It is hard to find a pronouncement about science where this faith is not reinforced, implicitly or explicitly .... Yet now some doubts creep in. The new global environmental problems are vast. The phenomena are poorly recorded and even less well understood. Our theories and models are constantly being modified by unexpected significant factors. Clearly, we are far from having definitive conclusions about these problems of the sort that science traditionally offers ....

Science cannot deliver certainty in knowledge on the global environmental issues, any more than it can deliver certainty on the moral issues of reproduction engineering. [1990:24]
The ability of 'more and better science' to adequately answer our ecological problems is thus a matter of dispute within the scientific community itself, and Ravetz expresses doubts about the ability of science to confine the issue of environmentalism within the scientific arena.

Yearley [1991,1995] argues that there are two major reasons for this problem. Firstly, many of our environmental problems can be traced directly to the scientific and technological character of our civilisation itself. For example, pollution caused by motor vehicles, power generation and waste disposal is the specific product of scientific and technical 'progress'. Confidence in science as a panacea for the ills of the environment tends to be undermined when it can be identified as the origin of many of these ills.

The second reason is that 'in many disputes over environmental policy, scientists are aligned on both sides' [1991:114] There are disagreements even amongst the experts over the evidence and information which must be taken into account in dealing with these issues. From this perspective, therefore, science cannot provide a single and certain solution to such dilemmas. Yearley concludes that

Science is not a sufficient guide to what conservation groups should concentrate on and prioritise; nor, often, does science provide the members' reasons for engaging in conservation activities. In a narrow sense, science does not seem to compel people to conserve particular bits of their environment nor tell them what the conservation priorities are'.

[1991:144]

Two approaches to social problems.
Yearley suggests another way of accounting for the emergence of the environment as a social problem. He argues, following sociologists Kitsuse and Spector [1981] that the relationship between 'objective' conditions and our awareness of an issue as a social problem is not a straightforward one. It is not enough to argue that the emergence of green issues has been determined by the weight of empirical evidence demonstrating the precarious state of the environment. In fact Kitsuse and Spector argue that:
The definition [of a social problem] *may* be accompanied by empirically verifiable claims about the scale, intensity, distribution and effects of the imputed social conditions; but *it may* not and theoretically it *need* not.

[1981:201]

Yearley cites Becker's [1973] idea of moral entrepreneurship to account for this process.

Certain persons develop a concern with some aspect of society which they regard as problematic; they then commit their energies to raising the public visibility of this 'problem' ... they must find a market for their ideas and compete with other campaigning groups for resources such as press coverage and public attention. [1991:51]

The point to be emphasised here, then, is that the existence of social problems is [at least in part] a result of some condition in society being *formulated* as a problem, and that this formulation is a continuing process which has to be maintained in the public arena in competition with other social problems.

It is possible, therefore, to distinguish two approaches to the establishment of the environment as a problem. In the first version, the problem status is determined by objective conditions whereas in the second version this status is a construction which must be constantly maintained.

**How does this distinction operate in the text?**

I would now like to examine how these two approaches operate within the text. In Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 the active and constructive qualities of discourse were discussed. Two versions of discourse were contrasted, the first in which the persuasiveness of a text is formulated as being the result of an accurate representation of a situation which exists elsewhere, and the second in which the power of the text comes from the constructive use of language which is active in itself. These contrasting views of the establishment of meaning within language are very similar to the views involved in establishing an issue as a social problem, which are distinguished above. The contrast between a realist approach [which is dependent on objective conditions which exist elsewhere] and a constructionist approach [which depends on the active formulation of an issue
within a text] would seem to be active on two levels in a consideration of the
current text. Firstly, on the level of a reading or analysis of the text - it can either
be looked at in terms of whether what it says is true or not, or in terms of how it
constructs the truth of its own position; secondly, on the level of the text itself, it
can be examined in terms of how the two approaches are woven into the
argument.

a. The analysis of the text.

To begin with the contrast between a realist and a constructivist reading of the
text can be clarified. The constructivist approach proposes, as Potter and
Wetherell argue, that:

social texts do not merely reflect or mirror objects, events and categories
pre-existing in the social and natural world. Rather they actively construct
a version of those things. They do not just describe things; they do things.
And being active, they have social and political implications. [1987:6]

This statement sets up the distinction between texts as transparent descriptions,
which merely 'reflect or mirror' the world and texts as active constructions which
create meanings, rather than just passing on information about already existing
situations.

If the text was taken as a transparent description of the real world, then an
analysis would use the text to gain information about reality. This information
would not necessarily be true of course, and part of the analysis would consist of
assessing the clarity or distortion of the view which the text provided. Such an
analysis could be conducted by comparing the information gleaned from this
particular text with empirical evidence. The results of such an analysis would
therefore consist of an evaluation of the accuracy of the text as a reflection of the
'objective conditions' to which it refers. It could be argued that this is the 'natural'
or 'obvious' way in which most people would read a text.

If, on the other hand, the text is approached not as a neutral medium of
description, but as an active construction, then a very different method of reading
is required. The text is no longer a resource which the analyst can make use of to
find out about some area of reality lying behind the text. Instead it becomes a
topic of analysis in its own right [Potter and Wetherell 1987:20]. If it appears to
give a believable version of an issue then the question is not 'is this version true?',
but 'what are the methods by which this sense of the real is established?' The
different elements of the text are no longer examined in terms of an external
reality to which they do or do not correspond, but in terms of an internal structure
which, on its own terms, produces a particular version of the world. The results
of such an analysis would therefore consist of a taking to pieces of the text to
show how the effects are achieved. This approach can be referred to as a
constructionist reading.

The second level on which this distinction will be examined is the level of the
text itself. This issue has already been explored to some extent within Chapter 7,
when the manipulation of boundaries between objective and relative elements of
the text was discussed. The ways in which a distinction between realism and
constructionism are used within the text will thus be further examined and the
use of this distinction as a rhetorical strategy will be related to the theoretical
position being taken in the text.

The hi-jack of reason.
From the above discussion it has become clear that the relationship between
science and environmentalism is a complex one in which science is unable to
take the role of indisputable arbiter on what is to be called an ecological problem
and how it can be solved. The relationship is problematic on several counts;
firstly, if science is perceived to be one of the causes of ecological problems,
limited confidence can be put in it to solve these problems; secondly, in many
arguments about science it is suggested that 'scientists are aligned on both sides';
and thirdly, the notion that texts which present scientific discourse as having a
transparent relationship with a reality which is non-negotiable can be questioned
on epistemological grounds.

So how does the text deal with these problems of uncertainty? Gathered
together in the article there are numerous elements: descriptions of individual
people and of groups and institutions; references to scientific, religious and
historical issues; criticisms, warnings and predictions; problems posed and solutions suggested. How are all these disparate elements combined together to be understood as a single entity proposing a particular argument about ecology? From a realist perspective the text reflects a unity which exists in reality - the argument put forward rests for its persuasive power upon a correspondence with the real world. However, from a more constructionist perspective, the appearance of a unified text needs a more detailed explanation - what elements in the text function to give this sense of unity, and how do they work? Three such cohesive elements will be identified and examined in the following discussion - narrative structure, interpretative repertoires and the use of character.

i. Narrative.
To introduce this section a brief summary of the article will be given from both a realist and a constructionist point of view. From a realist perspective, the account is taken as a description, given by an individual author, of events and individuals that exist in the real world. The article claims that ecology is and always has been a science, but that due to the popularity of the Green Movement it is in danger of being taken over by non-rational ideas and individuals who wish to link it with mysticism and religion. The main example of this tendency, given by the author, John Horsfall, is the notion of Gaia - the living earth, a notion promoted by James Lovelock. Horsfall makes a number of specific criticisms of Lovelock and then goes on to make more general criticisms of the way in which the irrational Green elements are corrupting ecology. He concludes by suggesting that in order to save the environment we must listen carefully to what the scientists say and let them guide our actions.

In order to make a realist analysis of this text it would be necessary to ask questions concerning the correspondence of the text with an external situation: has ecology always been a science? is it being linked with mysticism and religion? is the idea of Gaia untenable in scientific terms? etc. in order to answer these questions a considerable knowledge of environmentalism is needed and the analysis would result in a decision that Horsfall is correct or incorrect in his comments.
An alternative reading of the article, a constructionist reading, in which the elements of the text are given meaning by their relationship with other elements rather than with an external reality, could begin by looking at its narrative structure. The function of narrative as a sense making mechanism was introduced in the last chapter and Todorov's model can be applied again here. It will be recalled that Todorov argues that many narratives begin with a state of equilibrium or social harmony which is disrupted; the narrative then gives an account of this disruption and its resolution into another more stable state of equilibrium. Following this argument, the narrative structure of the text could be something like this: ecology was in a state of equilibrium and was progressing well as a science until this equilibrium was disrupted by mystical and religious elements in the Green movement. These elements led to much confusion as they often appeared to be scientific, but a resolution of this disruption could be found by returning ecology to real science; this would not only get rid of the problems of pseudo-science but would also get us out of our ecological 'mess' and lead us to an enhanced state of existence: 'by far the highest quality of life any human beings have experienced'.

By embedding the disparate events, individuals and ideas within the text into a narrative structure it is possible to impose an order and resolution upon a set of elements which are not internally coherent. This works in a number of ways. Firstly it links the elements together temporally. Science is located at the beginning of the history of ecology and the intrusion of irrational elements is quite a recent event; the resolution of this disruption is located in the future, when, having heeded the warnings of the text, ecology will once again be recognised as a science and will be able to continue its benign progress. By organising the elements of the text into a temporal progression a chain of cause and effect is created, with one event seemingly leading to another in an ordered way. Other elements in the text are also given coherence and significance through the narrative structure by being related to the notion of a disruption of an established order. The 'patient, rational and modest' scientists are not only constructed as the defenders of 'proper' ecology but also as the defenders of social order. The 'irrational' leaders of the Green movement, on the other hand,
are constructed as both quasi-scientists and subversives who threaten this social order. Such a contrast is reinforced by the overall title of the text, 'The hijack of reason' which encourages a reading in terms of the well known narrative of terrorist hijackings: the ordered existence of innocent people is disrupted by fanatical extremists who take them off their rightful course in some way.

The conflict between the different points of view about ecology within the text is therefore smoothed over to some extent by the effects of the narrative structure. It not only links them together into a sequence of connected events over time but also places the different proponents of these points of view into a particular relationship both with each other and with an assumed underlying state of social order.

ii. Interpretative repertoires.
The second set of ideas which can provide a way into a constructivist analysis is centred upon the concept of 'interpretative repertoires'. One of the most comprehensive analyses of scientific accounts which has been carried out in sociology is Gilbert and Mulkay's [1984] study of the interpretative methods used by scientists in their formal and informal discourse. They made use of the concept of 'interpretative repertoires' in order to understand the relationship between the construction of the discourse and its function.

An interpretative repertoire can be described as a 'recurrently used system of terms used for characterising and evaluating actions and events and other phenomena' [Potter and Wetherell 1987:149] and Gilbert and Mulkay identified two repertoires which they called the 'empiricist' and the 'contingent' repertoires. The empiricist repertoire is one in which 'speakers depict their actions and beliefs as a neutral medium through which empirical phenomena make themselves evident' and which 'portrays scientists actions and beliefs as following unproblematically from the empirical characteristics of an impersonal natural world' [1984:56]. The contingent repertoire, on the other hand, is a system in which scientists' actions are no longer depicted as generic responses to the realities of the natural world but as the activities and judgements of
specific individuals acting on the basis of their personal inclinations and particular social positions' [1984:57].

Gilbert and Mulkay treat the identification of these two formally opposed repertoires as an aid 'in making sense of the ordered variability of scientific discourse' and as helping an understanding of how scientists 'come to generate discrepant versions of action and belief' [1984:57]. They are seen as particularly useful in the analysis of how scientists account for error in science. Within the empiricist repertoire it would seem impossible for errors to occur; experimental evidence would inevitably be correct as it corresponds with the reality of the natural world. In order to account for error the scientists therefore make use of the contingent repertoire in which mistakes or errors are attributed to personal and social factors being allowed to intervene between a scientist and the empirical facts.

The use of variable interpretative repertoires can thus be seen as another way of imposing coherence onto conflicting elements within the text. For example, the theory of Gaia which challenges orthodox notions of reductionist science could not be accounted for by scientists such as Horsfall within an empiricist repertoire in which scientific data corresponds with the reality of the natural world. The account of this 'erroneous' theory is thus given in terms of a contingent repertoire in which personal and social factors come into focus. The proponent of this theory is discredited in terms of his personal ambitions which he has allowed to intervene between his work and his subject matter. To explain how Lovelock who 'seems to have been a scientist of sorts at certain points in his career' is also 'pre-eminent among the causes' of a shift towards irrationalism, the explanation comes from a contingent repertoire: Lovelock's views display a 'vivid animosity towards science', he has 'falsified many current biological beliefs ' to make his work appear reasonable, he defines conventional science in terms of finance and control.

It is not only Lovelock whose behaviour is explained in terms of a contingent repertoire. Jonathan Porritt is also involved in 'career moves and tête-à-têtes with Mrs Thatcher' and the whole body of opposition is categorised as
opportunist gold diggers... whose chief distinction over the past 20 years has been the adoption of ecological issues only when it became politic and profitable to do so.

As the entire text can be seen on one level as an account of error in science, it is to be expected that the contingent repertoire will be the most prominent. However, its effectiveness as a system of explanation is dependent upon its contrast with the empiricist repertoire, and this can be identified in the construction of the 'real' scientists and their work. The portrayal of science and the beliefs and behaviour of scientists as 'following unproblematically from the empirical characteristics of an impersonal natural world' is evident in several passages of the text. For example, ecology is described as being 'concerned with the perception of pattern and order in a superficially chaotic world', a statement which formulates ecology as a method of discovering an order in the world which already exists and is thus not open to dispute; their work is characterised as taking a 'careful, painstaking, investigative approach'; and their knowledge is based on 'empiricism rather than dogma', and comes from 'observing parts of [the world] in the hope of understanding at least the causal connections within that part'.

By using these two opposing repertoires the text constructs and justifies a distinction between 'science' and 'pseudo-science' without having to problematise the scientific beliefs of the 'real' scientists. Each repertoire brings specific aspects of the participants' behaviour into focus and the implicit motives which are embedded in these formulations of action function to divert attention away from any questioning of the relationship between science and reality.

These two formulations are in some ways parallel to the realist and constructionist methods of analysis which were discussed in the previous section. In the empiricist repertoire the epistemological base is the 'impersonal natural world', whereas in the contingent repertoire 'the social' is depicted as the basis of knowledge, in this repertoire the knowledge of [some] scientists is formulated or constructed on the basis of the 'personal inclinations and particular social positions' of individuals. In the latter, scientific accounts are no longer perceived
as 'a neutral medium through which empirical phenomena make themselves evident'.

iii. Character.

The third element which can be identified as giving unity and coherence to the text is the treatment of individual characters. This follows on in some ways from the discussion of repertoires in that it looks in more detail at the contingent repertoire in which controversial ideas are discussed in terms of personal characteristics. Approximately one third of the text is taken up with accounts of two individuals, James Lovelock and Jonathan Porritt, and in a text which taps into expansive arguments about the relationship between the First and Third world and which suggests methods for managing the whole planet, it is not immediately apparent why so much space should be devoted to the discussion of these two individuals. Apart from these central characters the text also makes numerous references to other individual scientists and Green people. In order to show how this emphasis upon individual characters functions within the text to construct a particular version of environmentalism, the distinction between a realist and a constructionist reading of character can be examined in more depth.

The representation of individual people as a device within the text is discussed by Fiske [1987], and some of his observations can be used as a way of introducing this issue. Fiske argues that a realist reading of character assumes that a character in the text represents a real person. We are given a number of 'pointers' to the character of the individual portrayed and then we fill out the personality in our imagination to create a whole person who exists outside the text. Fiske proposes that this method of reading a character seems 'obvious' and 'natural' to us because it fits in with the strong ethos of individualism which exists in our society and in which the individual is seen as 'the prime site for unifying and making sense of experience; a unified sense of experience produces and is produced by a unified
sense of the self' [1987:152]. In this ethos events and actions are perceived as being what happens to individuals and what individuals do.

In contrast to this a constructionist reading will understand character as a textual device which is built up within the discourse. Characters are understood in relation to the text as a whole and take their meaning from their relationship with other elements in the text. In this reading [according to Fiske] a character does not function as a unified set of individual characteristics but as a set of values. Character can thus be used as a way of making sense of a number of different and often conflicting values. It is still used as an explanation of actions and events as it is in the realist reading, but it functions in a different way. Fiske explains that it 'provides a framework of values by which to make sense of [actions and events], it provides the means of making sense rather than the site of that sense'[1987:161].

Fiske makes one further point which is relevant here; he argues that the individualistic understanding of events and actions which is activated by a realist reading of character has a political or ideological function. By perceiving events and actions as being what happens to individuals and what individuals do, social problems are only considered in terms of individual solutions; 'this foregrounding of the self pushes the social or political dimension into the background' [1987:165] and thus serves to prevent a connection being made between social problems and the social system.

So, following Fiske's argument, a realist reading would attend to pointers to the characters of both Lovelock and Porritt from which a rounded personality can be imagined who would exist outside the text. Plenty of such pointers can be found. For example, Lovelock shows 'vivid animosity towards conventional science' he is 'a complicated and slightly mysterious man, who knew embarrassingly little ecology and evolution when he wrote his first best seller' but 'neatly managed to turn the tables on his critics'; and he must feel 'satisfied that his ideas have had important effects in high places ... although almost entirely amongst those illiterate in the life sciences'. It is difficult to read these phrases without beginning to build up a picture of Lovelock as a person who exists outside the text. The pointers which are given join up in our normal
reading practice almost of their own accord into a 'whole' person whom we can recognise from our own experiences of people's behaviour. Lovelock begins to emerge as a clever but devious personality who seeks to influence a wide audience. As each pointer is given we refine our image of him and he becomes more real and 'rounded'.

The same is true with Porritt; he has nominated Lovelock as 'my hero' in one of the Sunday supplements; he is a 'Green Guru' who feels at home in the humanities; he claims that 'a responsibility has been imposed on us to act as God's stewards on earth' and we are warned that 'inside the campaigner who demands stringent scientific evidence in support of FOE there resides a quasi-religious mystic'. A rather different individual emerges from these pointers - a more naive and mystical character, who may appear to be rational but who is really motivated by irrational undercurrents in his personality.

In contrast to this, a constructionist reading of character treats it as a textual device which must be understood in relation to the text as a whole rather than in relation to an external reality. So the accounts of Lovelock and Porritt in this reading would not be understood as indicators of independently existing individuals but as devices which produce sense or meaning in the text. As Fiske argues, they can be seen as providing 'a framework of values by which to make sense of actions and events'. It is this function which makes the device of character useful within this particular text. As has already been described, the problem of a challenge to reductionist science by some members of the Green Movement is accommodated within the text by the use of a contingent repertoire; this makes sense of the problem in terms of the personal motives and social concerns of individuals. By making use of Fiske's argument it should be possible to expand upon this analysis and to show in more detail how the construction of character operates to gloss over conflicts of values in the text.

It can be argued that within the context of a highly individualistic society the use of character is a particularly effective device for making sense of conflicting values. We are so used to joining up bits of information about a person into some
sort of coherent whole that we have little difficulty in accounting for widely discrepant views and behaviour within one individual. The mass murderer who is kind to small children or the timid housewife who goes on wild alcoholic binges do not pose insurmountable problems of comprehension to us; theories of repression and difficult childhoods immediately spring to mind, and the conflicting values embodied in these types of behaviour can be assimilated into versions of 'whole' people. It is difficult to imagine a set of characteristics which would be so inconsistent as to be unbelievable. If all else fails we can always fall back on madness as an explanation, which is still a form of coherence, however chaotic. It could then be proposed that if conflicting ideas and values are embodied within an individual actor they will immediately acquire a unity and coherence which would be far more difficult to achieve if they were discussed in more abstract terms. Following this line of argument, the conferring of a great deal of attention to a discussion of individuals in the text could be understood as an effective and functional method of dealing with otherwise discrepant values.

The operation of this device can be clearly identified in the text under discussion. In the first section of the account the problem of a disruptive Green Movement is raised, but not specified in any detail. Various references are made to a movement which has 'adopted ... the notion of a vague "holism" as a cornerstone of its philosophy' and which consists of 'an astonishing range of irrationalists'; we are also warned of its association with 'fallacious "ecological principles" [which] may be just the sort of romance to appeal to those in need of a simple message from a new dictator'. However, we are given no more details of the values which this movement promotes, nor is any attempt made to specify exactly why it is such an undesirable phenomenon. Almost all the critical work takes place within the discussion of individual characters, where these problematic values and ideas are personified in the form of Lovelock and, to a lesser extent, Porritt.

Lovelock's central role in the argument is constructed through his allotted status as 'pre-eminent among the causes of [the] shift towards an irrationalist and fundamentalist ecology' with his idea of 'Gaia, the "living" earth'. By describing
him as 'pre-eminent' the text locates Lovelock at centre stage in the conflict between rationalism and irrationalism. His subsequent treatment within the text serves to undermine both his character and his status as a scientist and consequently to devalue the ideas and values which he personifies.

Rather than taking a more abstract approach to the challenge which Gaia presents to reductionist science the problem is dealt with in the context of Lovelock's ambiguous relationship with science. The problem of Gaia becomes a problem within Lovelock's personality:

That Lovelock should be a catalyst for irrationalism is a strange twist since he seems to have been a scientist of sorts at certain points in his career ...

and in certain capacities seems to continue to do so'

The contrast between the rational 'scientific' side of Lovelock's character and the irrational 'green' side is thus formulated as a puzzle, a 'strange twist' which needs explaining. He is both for science, in his professional capacity as a scientist, and against it, in his writings on Gaia. Further on we are given one possible response to the puzzle, the one which Lovelock himself 'would undoubtedly answer': his ideas are not irrational at all, and Gaia can be included within the category of science. This attempt at an explanation is corroborated by Lovelock's bid to develop 'respectable reductionist ideas' in his latest book. However this interpretation is rejected in the next paragraph when the problem is re-posed: 'How such methodologies fit in with Lovelock's vivid animosity towards conventional science... is not at all clear'. So Lovelock's relationship with science is repeatedly formulated as being ambiguous and in need of clarification.

Once it has been established, this inconsistency is made use of in quite a complex way. No overt explanation for Lovelock's paradoxical behaviour is given in the text. But the subsequent description of Lovelock's behaviour contains enough pointers to allow us to construct an explanation for his inconsistency in terms of a discourse which indicates an acquisitive and mercenary side to Lovelock's character.

This description begins by stating that Lovelock defines conventional science in terms of power and money: as 'anything financed and controlled by other than his own employers'. This introduces the notion that the criteria of
economics and dominance are at the fore in Lovelock's assessment of scientific matters. An interest in power is again implied in Horsfall's description of Lovelock as 'a complicated and slightly mysterious man, throwing off paradox and contradiction as easily as any professional demagogue'. This comparison of his ability to deal with his inconsistency with that of a demagogue, attributes to Lovelock an awareness of his paradoxical behaviour and formulates his reaction in terms of a political strategy. It is then claimed that Lovelock's first book on Gaian global ecology was condemned by a range of biologists as incompetent but was, despite this, a best-seller, suggesting that Lovelock has made a lot of money from peddling false ideas. This suggestion is reinforced by the subsequent use of the term 'customers' to describe those who are attracted to Lovelock's ideas; the implication being that the relationship between Lovelock and his admirers is an economic one. Finally, it is claimed that 'Lovelock must feel satisfied that his ideas have had important effects in high places although ... almost entirely among those illiterate in the life sciences'. This formulation again implies that Lovelock's main interest is in power and influence rather than the truth. The 'apparently confused motivations' of Lovelock are thus made much clearer within this account of his behaviour. His apparently ambiguous relationship with science can be explained by a deeper and quite consistent motive - the desire for money and power.

The effectiveness of this device is in part dependent upon its covert nature. Lovelock is not directly accused of wanting power and money - a tactic which could signify a personal animosity on the part of the author of the text towards him. So although the pointers which are provided leave little doubt as what Lovelock's 'real' motivations, this is conveyed without the need to resort to explicit accusations. The reader tends to feel that she has worked this out for herself, thus adding credibility to the account - there was no need to point out the underlying motivations of Lovelock's character, it was quite obvious to anyone who observes his behaviour.

The final way in which his credibility is undermined is in terms of his scientific incompetence. It is argued that Lovelock's idea of Gaia appeals only to the
'scientifically illiterate' and not to the knowledgeable scientific community. He
knows 'embarrassingly little ecology and evolution' and the 'scientific worth of
Lovelock's ideas is easily [and negatively] assessed ... by the majority of
biologists'. Furthermore, his theory of Gaia is subject to numerous interpretations
'making quite ludicrous any notion that the original "hypothesis" is testable', and
thus excluding itself from the constructed category of 'proper' science.

It can therefore be seen that by discussing discrepant values and ideas within the
context of an individual personality they can be successfully resolved in terms of
easily recognised human motives and personality traits. Not only does this device
serve to smooth over a problematic area, but, as Fiske points out it encourages an
individualistic understanding of the issues and draws attention away from the
social and political aspects of the argument. Because the problems of the
environment are discussed in terms of individuals, we are encouraged to think
that the solution to these problems will also depend upon individual action.

It is interesting to note that even when non-individualistic agents such as
institutions or practices are credited with action they are nonetheless constructed
within the framework of a personality. For example in the construction of the role
of the Church of England it is stated that:

the church clearly believes at the moment that such issues are its
birthright and will perhaps eclipse the social issues that many churchmen
have felt is their job since the collapse of public confidence in the church as
ultimate arbiter of ethics and codes of behaviour.

In this passage the Church is formulated in terms of an individual; a church
cannot literally have beliefs or birthrights, nor can it be the ultimate arbiter of
ethics and codes of behaviour. So the embodiment of values and ideas within a
character is not confined to named examples such as Lovelock and Porritt. Sets
of values and ideas can be effectively constructed and understood within the
framework of a human personality even though we know that this model is being
applied to non-human phenomena.

A similar construction is apparent in the description of scientific ecology
itself which opens the article. Ecology was
like all other sciences born of natural curiosity tempered by reason .... concerned as are all sciences in their early years with the perception of pattern and order in a superficially chaotic world; and the basic methodology of science while acknowledging the tremendous complexity and connectedness of the world attempts to observe parts of it in isolation in the hope of understanding at least the causal connections within that part.

Once again it can be argued that the practice of science was not born, nor can it be concerned, acknowledge, attempt or understand. These actions are all peculiar to human beings, but their application to a practice such as science enables us to treat it as a unified entity and encourages us to engage with it in individualistic terms, reinforcing the impression that environmentalism is 'done' by individuals.

Discussion

In this chapter a number of issues have been addressed and problems raised. The overall objective of the chapter has been to examine the relationship between science and environmentalism. This was done through a comparison of two perspectives, realism and constructivism, which were applied to both the reading of the text and the construction of the argument itself. The realist approach which was introduced in the quote at the beginning of the chapter suggested that science was the optimum way to define and solve our ecological problems. This statement encapsulated the position taken in 'The hijack of reason', the central text in the chapter. Several elements of this approach were then questioned; the definition of environmental problems, the unitary status of science, and the empirical basis of Horsfall's argument, all of which were taken as given in the text, were brought into the argumentative arena and their undisputed status was problematised using a constructivist approach.

In the process of this examination two main issues have been raised. Firstly, the distinction between a realist and a constructivist approach can be formulated as relevant to both the analysis and the text. Within the analysis it could be argued that the constructivist approach is more penetrating as it does not go along with the taken for granted assumptions of the text as to what is a
problem and what is not - there are however other problems to this approach which are discussed below. Within the text itself the distinction between what is given and what is questioned is used to try and locate 'real' environmentalism outside the arena of argument altogether, by linking it to objective conditions. However, the most striking thing about the use of this distinction is that although it is central to the argument both in the analysis and in the text itself it is ultimately very difficult to separate out realism from constructivism as each side is so dependent on the other.

The second point to be raised involves the political elements of the text. Once again taking up Barthes’ argument concerning the political aspects of 'natural' or 'obvious' modes of representation, a number of these can be located in the discussion. For example, 'real' science and scientists are presented in the text as indisputable sources of truth which uncover reality, although it is possible to argue that the strategies used in this representation rely heavily on a 'contingent' repertoire for their justification. A realist reading can also be presented as a natural or obvious way of reading which allows unquestioned assumptions to be made and accepted. Finally, a realist reading of character can be seen as a method which encourages individualistic explanations; these individual solution ideas are reinforced by the way that institutions and practices are also considered in terms of individuals. So the construction of the text should not just be looked at in terms of formal devices but rather as ways of encouraging particular frameworks of understanding.

Several factors from this chapter thus continue and expand on the previously established argument in the thesis. The interdependency of the argumentative elements in the discourse is very evident. For example, the empiricist and contingent repertoires cannot be considered as entirely separate entities because they are dependent for their meaning on each other and also used within the same discourse to reinforce each other. Once again it is the tension between the positions which is an essential part of the argument.
The question also arises once more about how a constructionist analysis can be used to establish and support a political position - to argue for something rather than against it. If a constructionist analysis is done how can it be built upon [except in complexity] or used to promote a political position? Again, it is easy to see how it could be used to undermine a position - Horsfall could be seen as inconsistent, as making use of both empiricist and contingent arguments, as trying to undermine his opponents through personal slander, of reducing the whole issue of environmentalism to the level of individual personalities. However, an opposing viewpoint could just as easily be undermined and dismantled in the same way. The temptation would be to use this sort of analysis to undermine the opposition and then to give another version in realist terms much as Haraway describes in the last chapter - a strategy which was shown to carry internal contradictions.

Conclusion
The main conclusion which comes from this chapter would seem to be a stress on the interdependency of seemingly opposite perspectives or positions. Just as in Chapters 6 and 7 the apparently opposed orders of nature and society could be seen as being inextricably linked and ultimately dependent upon each other, with arguments slipping from one order to another, the realist and constructivist arguments within the text also seem to be interdependent. Ostensibly, the text can be read as heavily in favour of an empiricist, scientific, realist position, however many of the strategies used to construct this position use relativist and constructivist arguments. This interdependence is not confined to the strategies used in the text but could also be applied to the constructionist position which I have taken up to criticise the realist position. As mentioned above, in order to move beyond a criticism of Horsfall's position it would seem necessary to implement some sort of alternative argument; and any attempt to state a position which is more 'correct' than Horsfall's would necessarily be open to the same sort of undermining and unpicking which his text has been subject to.

Is it then the case, that the constructivist position which I have tried to develop throughout the thesis is ultimately dependent upon the realist position which it
tries to oppose? This question will be examined in the conclusion when the reflexive aspects of the thesis will be discussed.
Chapter 9
Modern Arguments and Reflexivity.

[I]f a culture is to refer to itself .... it can only do so by the representation of its transformation of nature' Williamson [1979:103]

The concept of reflexivity has been mentioned several times already in the thesis; in Chapter 1 it was discussed in terms of a close scrutiny of methodology and as a way of breaking down the distinction between methods, analysis and material; in Chapter 4, a preliminary account of how reflexivity could be engaged with was given, firstly, by problematising terms and concepts and secondly, by being aware of style as a rhetorical strategy. The discussion has so far been confined to strategies used in the actual writing of the thesis. This concern is not, however, limited to the analysis, but is taken up in the green texts themselves. In fact, the above statement by Williamson suggests that all environmental discourse and discussion of 'the natural' could be described as intrinsically reflexive, because it will all contain an element of culture referring to itself. On a rather less sophisticated level, it could be argued that in many green texts there is a reflexive awareness of the existence of a discourse which has developed around environmental issues and a concern with the production of this discourse. This chapter will look in some detail at the reflexive aspects of a number of environmental texts and will draw these together with some of the ideas about the organisation of arguments which have been developed throughout the thesis. The notion of reflexivity within the construction of the thesis itself will be discussed in the concluding part of the study, in Chapter 10.

In the first part of the chapter I will examine some extracts of green discourse in terms of how reflexivity functions within the text. The way in which reflexive practices organise the arguments will then be taken up in the context of 'meta-levels' [Lawson 1985]. The material used in this discussion will include extracts from the transcript of a discussion about green advertising, the 'Hi-jack of Reason' article which was introduced in Chapter 8, and an updated version of the Body Shop leaflet which was examined in Chapter 6.
Seeing Green - reflexivity in environmental texts.

1. "Natural" has become the marketing buzzword of the eco-conscious 90's. It's used to sell everything from cereal to detergent, blue jeans to holidays. The cosmetics industry in particular has run amok with "natural" claims, compounding them with such industry double talk as "hypo-allergenic", "dermatology-tested", "100% pure", and even "organic".
"Natural" sells....Let's get one thing straight: The Body Shop has never jumped on that bandwagon, and we don't intend to hitch a ride now. [from Body Shop leaflet July 1991 Appendix Document 6]

2. The very words "deep ecology", in fact clue us in to the fact that we are not dealing with a body of clear ideas but with a bottomless pit in which vague notions and moods of all kinds can be sucked into the depths of an ideological toxic dump. [Murray Bookchin 1987:5]

3. For me the biggest problem with "deep ecology" lies in its ponderous and pretentious ring. The term has a smug self-congratulatory tone ...[it] alienates some fellow environmentalists [who don't pass the "deep" dogmas litmus test] and leads to unnecessary divisiveness within the larger environmental movement. It also reduces sympathetic response from the population at large because of its "holier-than-thou" overtones. [Gary Suttle 1986:26]

These examples show both a conscious concern with the construction and production of language and arguments, and also a less explicit display of reflexive awareness of the existence of a 'green discourse'. From such extracts a preliminary point can be made - reflexivity is often employed as a critical strategy. In each of these examples the concern with discourse functions as a way of distancing one type of environmentalism from another. There is an awareness of the discourse itself as a potentially powerful agent in the environmental arena.
In the first text the argument serves to distance the Body Shop's use of the term 'natural' from its use by other concerns as a 'marketing buzzword' which can sell products; in the second text the critique is made metaphorically, the signifier of 'depth' is detached from the usually signified concept of authenticity and attached instead to the concept of a pit which functions as an 'ideological toxic dump'; the third example examines the connotations of the term 'deep ecology' and its negative resonances amongst both 'lighter' environmentalists and the general public.

So, although these examples demonstrate a reflexive awareness of discourse as being generated through a process of production rather than just existing as a descriptive medium, they all use this awareness to undermine rival versions of environmentalism rather than to examine their own discourse.

**Meta-levels.**

The issue of self-reference is discussed by Lawson [1985] in his examination of reflexivity within theory. Lawson argues that through the reflexive examination of antagonistic positions, they can be destabilised in terms of their construction; however, in order for the position being argued to be convincing it has to avoid any self-reference or it will become paradoxical. This avoidance is usually done by the position being argued locating itself on a 'meta-level'. By 'meta-level', Lawson means an elevated site from which the position being argued can look down on the other arguments and discuss faults in their construction without having to perceive itself in the same arena.

The strategy of using reflexivity as a critique whilst simultaneously creating a meta-level from which to avoid self reference could not only be employed as a concept for discussing the extracts given above, but also for explaining a number of the issues previously brought up in the thesis. For example, in the eco-feminist arguments discussed in Chapter 7, the patriarchal positions which denigrated women and nature were destabilised in terms of their construction, whilst a meta-level was posited by claiming an original authentic relationship between women and nature. Although a reflexive move is evident in the awareness and consideration of the constructed character of the discourse,
this move stops short of an examination of the writers' own texts and position thus avoiding any rigorous self-reference. A strategy which involves the construction of a privileged meta-level can therefore be seen as important not only in theoretical discussions and arguments but also in less formalised accounts.

Appearance and reality
I would now like to examine the form of some of these semi-reflexive strategies in more detail. One of the most prevalent ways of organising such arguments is through the construction of layers of appearance and reality. This formulation has been mentioned several times already in the thesis [Chapters 1, 2 & 3] and is particularly evident in Extract 1 [p113] above.

The theme of this Body Shop text is constructed in terms of the exploitation of genuine environmentalism by other forces; a superficial green film glosses over a set of cynical motives which 'in reality' motivate the marketing and consumption of other 'green' products. This formulation is also very evident in the discussion of advertising [see Chapter 5 note 1] in which a group of four women talked about adverts from magazines which make use of environmental ideas and images. The following is an extract from the transcript of this discussion.

Brenda: I think a lot I've noticed actually I have noticed that there's been a lot of environmental advertising and it usually takes this form I think initially you've got the green idea and then when you get down to it it's what you personally are going to you know you're going to benefit well your skins going to benefit you're going to benefit from this but you're going to be helping the green movement at the same time =

Anne: =That's right jumping on the bandwagon in other words they're all coming in on it because they know people are genuinely concerned about the environment but I wonder how much is actual concern and how much s the TSB wanting to make a nice load of money by bringing people in on that level.
Brenda: I think mainly you know when you're getting down to the nitty gritty you're at you're actually erm appealing to somebody’s erm want to need to make more money on these investments so when it comes down to the actual text its its homing in to baser needs if you like it starts with this which is the er you know its almost conning you that this is the sort of approach but in actual fact when you get down to it its more its then appealing to what can I get out of this sort of [Appendix: Document no.5 p.3]

The metaphor of a superficial appearance and an underlying reality is consistently referred to in this extract: 'genuinely concerned about the environment'; 'actual concern'; 'getting down to the nitty gritty'; 'when it comes down to the actual text'; 'homing in to baser needs'; 'when you get down to it' are all expressions which construct the meaning of the ads in terms of appearance and reality. The use of the term 'actually' strengthens this construction: 'actually appealing', 'actual text', 'in actual fact'. The use of 'actual' and 'actually' work rhetorically to counteract the idea of what is 'apparently' going on. So the formulation in this piece of discourse produces an interpretation of the adverts on two levels which work simultaneously. The 'apparent' level is that the advert is of benefit to the environment and that if the public subscribe to this scheme they will be acting on behalf of the environment; the 'actual' level is the 'real' motivations of both the producers and consumers of the scheme, which is to make money.

'Double Declaiming'

So how is a meta-level constructed here? It seems to be through the positioning of the speaker as a critical reader who is not taken in by the appearance of the text - by a cynical or sophisticated reading the text can be correctly interpreted.

This strategy has been explored by Billig [1992] in his analysis of how people deal with what they read about the Royal Family in newspapers. He argues that the press are formulated by their readers as both a means by which we come to know things and also as the purveyors of deliberate lies. In an attempt to
deal with this conflict, people use two repertoires of interpretation, what Billig describes as 'double-declaiming'. Readers not only dissociate themselves from what they read but they also dissociate themselves from other consumers of the media who are imagined to believe uncritically. They claim that the truth is there in the newspapers but that a special skilled reading is needed to uncover it, and they also construct a group of unskilled and gullible consumers with whom to contrast themselves.

The construction of this meta-level from claims about being a 'skilled' reader in contrast to a 'gullible' group of readers is also evident later in the 'green' discussion when the participants are talking about an advertisement for sugar [in the same series as the advertisement discussed in Chapter 6.]

Anne: ... so its a very um presenting one thing when its really meaning another and its a very plausible argument a lot of people fall for it (.) you know natural sugar rather than unnatural saccharine or whatever other stuff you use =
Brenda: = I would say though that they're they're very much trying to appeal to the uninformed there as with the other one about the er manufacturing plant manufactured in plants
Anne: Yeah
Brenda: Erm I think they're sort of skating round the the the studies that have been done on sugar and the real real reasons for (.) not using sugar (.) they must be appealing to somebody who who er who's not really looked into any of the arguments but is sort of picking up odd little (.) peripheral bits
Interviewer: Yeah
Brenda: You know but they I think they can probably sway these peripheral ones by this type of advertising
Anne: That particular group of people is the advertisers dream
Brenda: Yeah there's [a lot of them about
Anne: [To be able to target them but they don't really understand the full story of it [Appendix: Document no.5 pp8-9]
In this extract it is evident that the participants are looking at the construction of the adverts and what they are being asked to believe. They analyse the text in terms of two levels, an appearance and a reality. They are then faced with a problem - they want to interpret the advertisement as being both effective and untrue. This problem is overcome by the construction of a group of people who will be taken in by the appearance of the adverts, to which they do not belong. In these accounts of reading, therefore, it is deemed necessary to go below the surface of the text in order to discover the reality of a situation- to find the real motives, the genuine concerns. A meta-level is constructed from which the adverts can be read and their construction analysed, the way in which they 'work' is discussed but the participants remove themselves from the category of the audience, from self-reference, by constructing a category of those who are the 'advertisers dream' who do not see the double level of meaning.

**Science as meta-level.**

I would now like to look again at the article 'The Hi-jack of Reason' [Horsfall 1990 Appendix Document no.4] which was discussed in Chapter 8. In this instance it will be examined in terms of its reflexive awareness of the construction of environmentalism. The strategy of using two levels of understanding which was considered above is again employed in the text and a meta-level is constructed by formulating a group of people who are taken in by a 'superficial appearance'. However, in this example, a contrasting and in some ways paradoxical strategy is also used in which a 'transparent' reading is promoted and used to undermine the opposition. The construction is still in terms of reality and appearance but it can be argued that two meta-levels are constructed in this text. On the one hand the 'appearance' of the mystical greens is used to construct a negative image, but on the other hand the 'appearance' of the scientists is used as evidence that they are positively good.

Horsfall treats the mystic form of ecology, which he is criticising, as a construction rather than a revelation. He describes the way in which it 'makes itself appear reasonable' and how it takes up such notions as Chaos theory to be used as 'the pit props of quasi-holistic ideas.' However, the opposing idea of
experiential realism [Lakoff 1987] which advocates that we should trust our senses and believe in appearances is also used to justify his criticisms. Horsfall spends a lot of time criticising the 'ecologically naive' and the 'scientifically illiterate', but he also talks of the 'plain speaking' empirical approach of scientific ecology and identifies himself with the 'good sense' of 'Mr Lewis of Bournemouth'.

Horsfall thus constructs two meta-levels from which he can avoid the problem of self-reference. On the one hand, when undermining the mystical greens in terms of the constructed and devious character of their argument, he excludes his own position by referring to the plain speaking empirical approach of science, but on the other hand he criticises the idea of taking a simple face value approach by referring to the scientifically illiterate and the ecologically naive thus placing himself on the meta-level of a knowledgeable and sophisticated scientist.

**See-through science**

It can be argued that this rhetorical formulation is one which is often found in popular representations of science and nature and the apparent contradiction within the construction of reality and appearance is discussed by Williamson [1978] in terms of an opposition between transparency and opaqueness.

Williamson argues that science in our society is the most prestigious and dominant 'cooking' process through which we understand nature. It introduces into nature a set of categories or differentiations which give it an order and which enable it to 'mean' in our culture. However, once this interpretation has taken place science comes to take the place of nature - 'what was once the "transparency" that brought us nature, the grid of differentiations through which it was revealed has now become a transparency which reveals nothing but itself[1978:115]. So the scientific view of nature becomes something which we see and understand in itself rather than 'the means by which we see and understand' the natural world. Williamson argues that by presenting itself as transparent and obvious, science attracts to itself a 'whole nexus of connotations' in which
what is revealed is always assumed to be more basic than what concealed it, transparency always gives the illusion of getting right to the bare bones of something, it also implies proof simply by showing: "there it is, it must be so"[1978:117]. By appearing to show how it works, science gives the impression of a 'self revealing, innocent transparency which gives science the status of a 'natural' because 'obvious' order'[1978:117]. However, there is simultaneously another aspect of science - that of its complexity and incomprehensibility to just about everybody. Science is not easy to understand or obvious - it take years of study to master and is in fact only understood fully by an elite core of experts. These two aspects of science, its transparency and its opacity, manage to exist side by side within one discourse.

The example which Williamson gives to illustrate this point is an advertisement for a washing machine [1978:116-117]. In this advertisement there is a picture of the casing of a washing machine cut away to expose the inner mechanism. This presentation uses the metaphors of both the transparency and opacity of science to sell the machine; it is constructed as transparent in that all its parts are revealed to the consumer - that's how it works, nothing is hidden - it is also constructed as highly technical and complex because very few of the consumers will have the slightest idea how it operates, they will be completely reliant upon the experts who made it for the evidence that it works at all.

There are striking similarities between this account and the way that metaphors of transparency and opaqueness are utilised in 'The Hi-jack of Reason' article. Here science is described as taking a 'plain speaking empirical approach to environmental problems', as a discipline which has 'clarified the workings of global ecology' and is built on foundations of 'patient and rational enquiry' based on 'empiricism rather than dogma'. This is in contrast to the 'woolly and imprecise ideas', the 'magical, mystical and fluffy philosophies' and the 'subtle and not easily perceived ways' of the opposing faction. On the other hand the opacity of science is constructed through criticisms of 'scientifically innocent individuals', 'the ecologically naive', 'those illiterate in the life sciences' and those whose 'academic training was not in the life sciences'. They should be heeding
those 'professional ecologists or evolutionists' who 'through the work of lifetimes figured out the mechanism and consequences of competition, predation and energy flux', such as Richard Dawkins 'who has, after all, spent a good deal of his life thinking about the essential qualities of the animate' it is 'to those we should listen carefully and say "carry on".

Here, a similar rhetorical construction is used as in the washing machine advert; scientific ecology is transparent, obvious and open to inspection but at the same time opaque, complex and only understood by experts. The reflexive concerns of the text function as a way of undermining one position and promoting another through a paradoxical strategy of being somehow in and above both ends of the argument at the same time.

"Natural" or natural.
A further example of the construction of meta-levels is given in the Body Shop leaflet entitled 'What is natural?' [1991 Appendix Document no.6] This leaflet is an updated version of the text discussed in Chapter 6, and it makes a number of similar points. However, it stresses more overtly a distinction between The Body Shop and other cosmetic companies. Its use of the term 'natural' within this construction is complex and is particularly interesting in an account whose stated aim is to define the term 'natural'. The introductory statement reads

The dictionary defines "natural" as "existing in or produced by nature".

But if you ask anyone in the cosmetics business, or in the food industry, or anyone just out doing the weekly shopping, what "natural" means, you'll get answers that are as different from that definition - and one another - as night and day.

The text, therefore, problematises the meaning and use of the central term in what could be described as a reflexive way, in that it gives attention to how cosmetic promotions are constructed. However, a distinction is made between the terms 'natural' and natural in the text; with the Body Shop or 'real' category of natural being contrasted with the 'inauthentic natural' used in other promotions. For example the following statements are made:

"'Natural" has become the marketing buzzword of the eco-conscious 90's'
"The cosmetics industry in particular has run amok with "natural" claims' "Natural" sells.' 'We shouldn't be grouped together with the myriad of other companies crying "natural"."

In these statements the term 'natural' is constructed as a hollow sales technique, employed for commercial reasons. This can be contrasted with statements which make use of an 'authentic' nature. For example,

'natural ingredients are at the heart of every product The Body Shop makes.' 'The Body Shop bases its products on natural ingredients because we believe that naturally-based products are both beneficial and interesting to use'. 'we make sure we can get the raw materials we need without negatively impacting the natural environment'

In this pamphlet the Body Shop thus makes use of the same 'double declaiming' strategy which was identified in the excerpts from the discussion transcript. In order to create a meta-level, a sophisticated reading is required to see through the 'appearance' of advertising for other products. The construction of a group who are not taken in by such sales talk is used as a selling point - the 'Body Shopper' is invited to join this group in the know. However, this is not the only construction which avoids self reference, the text also creates another meta-level in terms of ethics, 'we're not like other companies' while at the same time redefining the term 'nature'. This higher level is established through a series of claims about the ethos or philosophy of the Body Shop, for example,

[t]he Body Shop's corporate philosophy is comprehensive; we are not motivated solely by profit. We are as concerned with people's safety and welfare and the protection of the natural environment as we are with making good products .... We've taken the concept of "natural" a step further. In addition to creating products based on traditional recipes and natural ingredients we've established trade not Aid programmes in
impoverished or endangered areas like India, Nepal and the Amazon rainforest.

In this statement the boundary between the human and the natural world can be seen to move as the 'impoverished' countries and people of India and Nepal become part of the 'natural' which must be protected. A new definition of natural is established within the ethical philosophy of the Body Shop. This high ethical stand is reinforced by claims such as, '[i]t is the Body Shop's values, not the current marketing jargon or trends, that inspire and fuel the creation of every product we make. Naturally'. The natural thus comes to be contrasted with the exploitative - the Body Shop is a part of and also a protector of the natural world and sets itself above the rest of the cosmetics industry.

So, although the reflexive stand taken by the Body shop in this pamphlet is quite comprehensive - the pamphlet looks at the function of the term 'natural' [which they use] in advertising [which they do] for cosmetics [which they sell] - the construction of an ethical meta-level enables the avoidance of any self-analysis into how the Body Shop uses the term 'natural' to sell its own products.

Conclusion.

From the above examples it can be seen that reflexivity, rather than being an exclusive concern of theoretical or analytical material is a construction which is widely used in less academic discourse. There seem to be numerous examples of an awareness and employment of reflexive practices within the environmental material which has been examined. As already mentioned, the reflexive moves which are discussed above have much in common with issues examined in the previous chapters. In particular, the creation of meta-levels can be seen as analogous with the 'ontological gerrymandering' which was identified in social constructionist accounts: an opposing position is undermined in terms of its construction, whilst the position being argued is removed from the argumentative arena and thus avoids the problem of self-reference. Although this move does not seem to present any problems in the green passages discussed above, a more rigorous reflexive stance would have to question the use of meta-levels to avoid self-reference. The question of how to 'do' a more satisfactory reflexivity and
whether this has been accomplished in the present thesis will be discussed in the concluding chapter.
PART 3: CONCLUSIONS.

Chapter 10

How to find your way around this thesis and the way out.

In this chapter some final remarks will be made about the main themes upon which the thesis has been constructed. These will be undertaken in two sections, firstly, by trying to answer the questions which were posed in Part 1 concerning environmental discourse and my approach to it, and secondly, by drawing together the ideas which the thesis has generated about the issues of reflexivity and the political aspects of discourse. It is rather misleading to describe this chapter as a 'conclusion', a term which implies a final decision on something. It is perhaps more appropriate to describe it as a casting off exercise in which the loose ends of the argument are secured in order to prevent any unravelling.

Firstly, then, I would like to go back to the aims of the thesis which were set out in Part 1 and to assess whether or not these have been achieved. The first aim has been to find a way of talking about the construction of discourse which could deal with the variations, contradictions and general messiness of the issues entangled in the environmental debate. The four approaches to discourse which were outlined in Part 1 of the thesis have been used throughout the analysis in a flexible and rhetorical rather than a systematic way and these approaches have been supplemented with other theories and ideas as the thesis has progressed. This has, perhaps, led to a rather uncoordinated method of enquiry, a *bricolage* of bits and pieces which have originated elsewhere and have been assembled in my argument with no rigid overall pattern of organisation. This process has not resulted in a neatly constructed, tightly argued method of analysis which could be transposed wholesale onto other areas of social discourse. However, by providing a variety of approaches it has allowed me to adjust my argument and concerns in accordance with the demands of the texts. There are obviously numerous other facets of the texts which could have been explored and other arguments which could have been applied, but the methods which I chose were developed in response to the texts rather than imposed upon them.
The second aim has been to examine the construction or representation of the environment or natural world in contemporary society and to investigate ways in which environmentalism is entwined with other issues. The environment is represented in a variety of ways in the texts which have been analysed. It is constructed as both the opposition and the basis of society or culture, as a savage entity which must be controlled, as a victim of exploitation, as a set of scientific facts, and, significantly, as an *unconstructed* phenomenon which can be looked to for knowledge untainted by culture - a repository of original truth, knowledge and authenticity. These various formulations have not been consistently attached to individual arguments but have been used in a number of permutations throughout the texts, with a similar representation sometimes being used to justify opposing positions. Neither have representations of the natural world been confined to overt discussions of the environment - they have featured in texts which focus on other concerns such as consumption and male and female behaviour. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role which these representations play in social discourse, it has therefore been necessary to examine the context in which they are constructed, the arguments which they are being used to justify and to oppose and how they are entwined with other topics.

The third aim has been to identify methods of organisation and strategies of argument which are present across a wide range of environmental texts, and to examine similarities and differences between the texts which tackle issue on a number of different levels. A number of methods of organisation within the construction of the texts have been discussed. These have included narrative structures, epistemological frameworks, argumentative positions, interpretative repertoires, and themes or motifs such as openness and revelation and the use of character as argumentative strategies.

A comparison between the variety of texts which have been examined would seem to suggest that there are many more similarities than differences. The construction of advertisements, academic texts, discussions and newspaper articles shared many organisational features and argumentative strategies, the
level of sophistication of the constructions appeared to be similar and all the texts made claims about the 'objective truth' of their position. The main difference seemed to lie in the conventional form of the text - how it was 'labelled' by the context in which it appeared, its format, such as the use of illustrations, and the level of formality of the text, with the academic texts being presented in the most rigidly structured way. It could also be argued that the positions presented in the academic texts were more rigorously examined whilst those in the popular texts were assumed rather than explicated.

In the second part of this chapter I would like to draw together the ideas which have developed in the thesis concerning reflexivity and the political aspects of discourse. These issues have been interwoven with the text throughout the thesis and have formed organisational themes within each chapter. It would seem appropriate, therefore, to make some final comments on each of these concerns.

**Reflexivity.**

In the preceding chapter, an account was given of how reflexivity is taken up in some of the environmental texts which have been examined. Although there is much evidence of a reflexive awareness of the constructed character of green discourse, I have argued that a thorough reflexivity would involve dealing with the problem of self-reference as outlined by Lawson [1985] and that this problem is avoided in the green texts by the taking up of a privileged position or meta-level. In this concluding chapter I would like to reflect briefly on how the issue of reflexivity features in the social sciences and to make a final assessment of the reflexive aspects of the present thesis.

Although reflexivity is often considered to be one of the hallmarks of postmodernism it can be argued that it has been an integral part of social scientific writing since its very beginnings and that reflexivity is, therefore, a part of both modern and postmodern texts. As Ashmore points out, social science can be considered an implicitly self-referential discourse in that if it is about humans and their social arrangements then it is [also]
about those humans in those social arrangements who are responsible for
the production of social science' [1989:32]

A further facet of the inherent reflexivity of social science is its concern with and
examination of its own methodology. The production of sociological knowledge
frequently results not only in a body of knowledge but also in a reflexive account
and justification of the production process itself - the character of this account
depending upon the theory and methods employed. It is also evident in the
construction of arguments about social theory. By reflexively examining various
positions they can be de-stabilised in terms of their determination by social,
historical or linguistic factors. Lawson points out how this form of reflexivity
operates on the level of theoretical claims,

The claim may take an historical form: "our interpretation of society is a
function of history"; or a social relativism of the type "our views are
determined by our society and the place we take in that society"; or it may
take a cultural or linguistic form; but in each of these cases to avert the
potential paradox a meta-level must be introduced to enable self-reference
to be avoided. [1985:20].

It would, however, seem possible to make a distinction between a modern and a
postmodern reflexivity within social science by claiming that modernist
reflexivity involves a process in which everything must be organised in
accordance with a set of 'essential' or 'correct' criteria; for example there is
attendance to consistency in method, elimination of bias etc. In this way the
social scientist creates for herself an 'objective' meta-level from which to analyse
the 'material'. In post-modern reflexivity, however, with its concern to avoid
'meta-anything' [or to make everything 'meta'], there would be no attempt to
disengage from the argument through the creation of a meta-level. Whereas the
modernist social scientist would use reflexivity as a way of differentiating
between the material and the analysis, the postmodernist would include both her
own material and material from other sources as part of the same 'solution', thus
avoiding the construction of a privileged position from which to speak1.

Following the ideas discussed above, the whole thesis could be described
as 'latently' self-referential or reflexive because it is concerned with the
availability of the social through a study of language - as it is written in language it is thus implicitly referring to the social aspects of itself. It could also be argued that the themes described by Lawson are employed in the argument, in that it makes claims about the social, historical and cultural determinants or preconditions of the texts. The question, then, is whether the thesis is reflexive in a postmodern way or not. Have I constructed a meta-level from which to speak? In the thesis have I reflexively undermined the argument of others whilst taking my own argument as given?

This is a difficult question to answer for several reasons. Whilst considering the matter, I have realised how inextricably the project of modernity is entwined with my understanding of academic work. The impulse is to judge the reflexive and postmodern qualities of the thesis using modernist standards; for example, have I clarified the points I am trying to make sufficiently so that there is no room for ambiguity? do the points follow on in a logical order? have I been heading towards some demonstrable conclusion? have I been consistent in my attempt at a postmodern argument or is the idea of consistency in postmodernism a contradiction in terms?

I do not have a method for avoiding these questions, and the reflexive aspects of the thesis must therefore be seen as a compromise in many ways. I think that an awareness of the postmodern and reflexive aspects of the texts [including my own] is a central issue in the thesis, but I am unable to find a way in which the thesis can be presented free from modernist traits or methods. My argument can only, therefore, be considered as being towards a reflexive text in that I have tried to question aspects of writing an account whilst at the same time employing these same aspects within the account.

I would, however, like to argue that attending to reflexivity within the thesis has led to some interesting ways of understanding texts. The reflexive strategies of problematising terms and concepts and of being aware of style as a rhetorical move have already been discussed. A further angle can be constructed by thinking of reflexivity as a system of circuits. Steier [1991], claims that two of the most common usages of the term 'reflexive' point us in seemingly opposite directions. He argues that
when we say that someone acted reflexively, we can mean that they acted contemplatively, involving a thinking process, or, conversely, that they acted without thinking, as in a reflex action such as a knee-jerk."

[1991:163]

Both of these usages can be seen as deriving from the idea of something bending back on itself, and these seemingly paradoxical meanings can be linked in with other arguments in the thesis through the idea of reflexive circuits. As Steier states, 'a small circuit reflexivity allows us to proceed in a language whose distinctions are not questioned but are part of how we create our doings' whilst a long circuit reflexivity 'is an active questioning of the assumptions that make a small circuit reflexivity in action possible' [1991:164] In this way the writing of the thesis could be formulated in terms of a short and long circuit reflexivity. It is written by intertwining the two circuits, by using the short circuit of already formed sociological and analytic concepts with inbuilt consequences whilst at the same time using the long circuit of questioning the assumptions which make it possible to write like this. This construction is similar to the argument put forward by Raymond Williams in which he argued for language being used as if it were stable whilst at the same time being open to question.

Finally, although I have to some extent made claims about the social, historical and cultural determinants or pre-conditions of the texts, this has only been intended to destabilise them in terms of their 'factual' or 'inevitable' status. As Bloor [1976] points out, establishing that some statement is a social construction does not invalidate it unless its only claim to validity is its correspondence with some external 'reality'.

Political discourse.

Finally, I would like to draw together ideas about taking up a political position in the thesis. In Chapter 5 I outlined my use of the term political in that if some statement is political it will be both argumentative in its acceptance that things could be otherwise and also critical in its promotion of one particular position as being better than another. It is therefore used in opposition to the idea of 'factuality' in which a position is assumed or taken as being correct on the
grounds that it correlates with 'reality' in some way and so cannot be disputed. In the thesis the main theme which has been followed involving this issue is the construction of meta-levels. Various forms and methods of constructing these have been discussed, but the overall effect of them all has been that parts of the text are presented as being non-political, as privileged positions which are outside the arena of argument.

In Chapter 6 the idea of nature as an 'authentic' source of knowledge was used in the advertisements in order to strengthen the claims which were made. This 'authenticity' was used as a way of justifying the arguments in the texts through the assumption that if something exists in a particular form in 'nature' or in a 'natural' society it can be assumed to be 'true' or 'correct'. The claims which were associated with this authenticity were, therefore, presented as indisputable and in need of no further justification, and thus became non-political in that they could not be criticised as there was no possible counter claim.

Chapter 7 looked at the construction of arguments about women and nature and the formulation of meta-levels was again important. As in Chapter 6, the natural world was used as a repository of 'truth' and 'authenticity' in order to justify the 'correctness' of various forms of sexual behaviour which allowed men to control women. The strategy of locating sexual behaviour in a 'natural world' was not, however, confined to a masculine discourse. A number of eco-feminist texts were also examined which used a similar formulation of 'natural' and therefore 'authentic' forms of behaviour to justify their argument. These were set in opposition to masculine 'constructions' of the hierarchical positions of women and nature in society. The problems which this can lead to in feminist attempts to take up an overtly political position were then discussed.

In Chapter 8 the use of science to construct a meta-level was examined, and the seemingly 'factual' status of science as it appeared in the texts was deconstructed.

The use of meta-levels was explicitly discussed in Chapter 9, and an attendance to the construction of discourse was formulated as a major method of criticism within the texts.
One of the aims of the thesis has been to work out some way of taking up a critical political position within a postmodernist framework and the most effective way which has emerged from the above discussion would seem to be in terms of the tensions between oppositions. Throughout the thesis a number of oppositions have been explored; between nature and culture, between modernism and post modernism, between empiricist and contingent repertoires and between realism and constructionism. As has been argued, these oppositions, although they have formed a framework of organisation for the texts, have also been inextricably linked within the arguments so that one side of the opposition could not exist without the other; this link was also apparent in the slippage which occurred between these oppositions, so that, for example, the idea of 'natural societies' emerges from the nature/culture opposition and 'empiricist' positions are found to be justified by 'contingent' arguments in scientific discourse.

The analytic framework of the thesis is also constructed in terms of oppositions, the main ones being the realist/constructivist and modernist/postmodernist oppositions, and in the same way as above the argument which I have put forward has been formulated to a great extent by what I am arguing against. If I had chosen a different set of claims to argue against, my claims would have been constructed in a different way, and would have ended up as a different argument. This way of understanding arguments offers an alternative method of taking up a political position which undermines the formulation of a political stand as involving the adherence to a rigid and discrete set of beliefs which is decided upon once and for all. The construction of a position is inextricably linked with what is being argued against and is thus more a fluid and flexible set of moves which continually constructs and reconstructs the situation in response to a corresponding set of moves from the opposing position.

To go back to Chapter 1 and the distinction which was made between the looseness of rhetoric and the tightening of the logical wrench. I have tried to loosen the logical or taken for granted parts of the texts which would not admit any argument or indefiniteness. I have also attempted to mix up the static parts
into a solution, to emphasise the movement, interaction and variability between seemingly fixed parts of the text, to emphasise the positive aspects of argument and variation and to go against the notion that anything can be clarified and sorted out once and for all. This strategy has been used in examining both the environmental texts and the thesis itself. The most effective approach would seem not to avoid meta-levels, which have undoubtedly been employed in the thesis, but rather to allow them to be continually constructed, questioned, undermined and brought down. The thing to be avoided would then be the existence of meta-levels which are not recognised as such and seem to be beyond question. The line taken is, then, that the meta-level can be just as transitory and variable as the other parts of the argument. By putting everything back into the argumentative arena the thesis could be seen as political, with the main project being the conviction that things could be different - this would involve a continual seeking out of issues or assumptions which present themselves as outside the arena of argument and an awareness that in order to mobilise these, to reincorporate them into the flux of argument, a temporary taking up of a meta-level is often a good strategy.

This gives a rather different version of taking up a political position than is presented in modernist theories. Instead of deciding on a fixed standpoint at the beginning of an argument which is defended at all costs, taking a political position could be formulated more as a process which is constantly adjusted according to circumstances - as Barthes suggests working towards meaning rather than from it. The implications of this are that arguments and strategies are employed on a much more local level taking account of the particular context.

In an area such as environmentalism which has so many definitions and implications, and which is entwined with such a variety of other issues, a flexible, local approach would seem to be much more appropriate than one which firstly tries to sort out the 'real' issues, then to work out a monolithic plan of how to deal with them and apply this consistently in all situations.
Afterword.

So, how do you think the thesis has gone?

Unexpectedly.

What do you mean?

Well, the final form bears no resemblance to the way it was written. It appears that I did things in a linear way, beginning at the beginning and working my way through to the end, but that wasn’t how it came about at all.

So what did you do?

Sort of moved in and out, and round and round issues until I was in a hopeless tangle and then tried to sort and smooth things out. The appearance of any sort of clear organisation was the last thing to occur.

Well, that wouldn’t have happened if you’d been a bit more definite at the beginning about what you were going to do.

So you support the idea of working from meaning rather than towards it?

Yes, and so would any sensible person. When I read something I want information, not the ramblings of somebody’s mind. I’m surprised that you have managed to produce anything at all.

Well, the most difficult thing has been making everything combine together into ‘a thesis’. There were times when I felt that I just had a collection of random writings which were not connected. But I found a passage in Baudrillard [1990] which was really helpful. He’s talking about writing one of his books and he says that,
given a certain number of fragments, notes and stories collected over a
given time, there must be a solution which integrates them all, including
the most banal, into a necessary whole, without adding or removing any:
the very necessity which, beneath the surface, presided over their
collection. ...The work starts out from the certainty that everything is
already there and it will be sufficient simply to find the key. [1990:219]

*Well that doesn't sound very postmodern - necessities beneath the surface and
keys - next you'll be talking about overall arguments and unifying theories.*

Well, the idea of an underlying solution *could* be understood as a modernist
concept, but on the other hand it could be a postmodernist strategy - it is such a
satisfactory story, and the construction of a 'necessity beneath the surface'
enabled me to join the various bits together into a whole.

*So there wasn't really any necessity or key there at all, you just made it up?*

Well, once I'd made it up it was there wasn't it? This is a whole thesis isn't it?

*Well, that's a debatable matter.*
Footnotes.

Chapter 1.

1. This question of function is linked to the issue of 'ideology' in which ways of perceiving the world are judged to be either ideological, that is determined by the beliefs or interests of a particular society or group in society, or to exist outside of ideology in some sphere of 'reality' or universal 'truth'. Ideological knowledge has been variously defined in different traditions, most notably in Marxism, where it is understood as being determined by the class system. See Marx and Engels [1970], Mannheim [1936], McLellan [1986] and Larrain [1979 and 1983].

2. The idea of objective knowledge, which exists independently of the perceiver and which can be uncovered through the rigorous application of positivist methods, underpins much social scientific research. Even in the more interpretivist sociological traditions, which acknowledge the importance of understanding subjective meanings in social research, there are still attempts to eliminate 'bias' from research by preventing the researcher herself from influencing the subjects as much as possible. This obviously has links with the debate about ideology [see note 1] in which an attempt is made to remove some forms of knowledge from social or political influences. See the positivism/interpretivism debate e.g. Durkheim [1982], Weber [1949] or more recently Yearley [1984].

3. This is not intended to imply that a simple choice can be made between looking at discourse and looking at 'reality'. I will argue that the only way which we can understand or interact with reality is through discourse. See Gilbert and Mulkay [1984] and Potter [1996].

4. See Woolgar [1988].

5. See Bernstein [1983].

6. See the debate about epistemology and science debate in, for example, Kuhn [1962] and Bhaskar [1979].

7. For an introduction to the main issues involved in this area see Harding [1987].

Chapter 3
1. Key postmodern texts in the humanities include Jameson [1984], Lyotard [1984], Rorty [1989], Harvey [1989].
2. See for example Lyotard [1984]
3. See science and values debate originating in Weber [1949] and more recently in Mulkay [1979]
4. For critical analysis of Raymond Williams see, for example, Eagleton [1989] and O'Connor [1989].
5. See for example Marxism and Literature [1977] and Writing and Society [1983b].
6. For critical analysis of Lévi-Strauss see, for example, Leach [1970] and Badcock [1975].
7. I am aware that the way I develop the concept of 'bricolage' is slightly different from that of Lévi-Strauss himself. Lévi-Strauss tends to give a primacy to the concept of 'engineering' which is in my view questionable. I therefore restrict my discussion almost exclusively to bricolage while recognising the fact that this might well be contested by Lévi-Strauss himself.
8. For critical analysis of Barthes see, for example, Lavers [1982] and Brown [1992].
9. Barthes' work thus suggests a further area of meaning which could perhaps be added to Williams' list of ideas of nature - that of the natural as the obvious. This usage no doubt stems from the other meanings which Williams gives, particularly 'the essential quality and character of something' and 'the material world itself'. However, it has such a wide dissemination, that it could be seen as an area of meaning in its own right.
10. See also Williamson [1986]
11. For example Baudrillard [1968], Barthes [1967].

Chapter 4.
1. For an account of different forms of reflexivity see Ashmore [1989].
2. See Keywords [1983a].
3. See for example S/Z [1975] and A Lovers Discourse [1979].
Chapter 5.
1. This discussion was carried out in 1990 as part of my research. It involved four women aged between 18 and 45. The discussion was generated by a number of advertisements which used some reference to the natural world either in the text or pictorially. A full transcript of this discussion is included in the Appendix [Document no.5].
2. For detailed discussion of politics and postmodernism see Laclau and Mouffe [1985 and 1988] and Best and Kellner [1991].
3. Two other possible approaches to science which I'm not taking are, therefore, a. the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge approach - see for example Gilbert and Mulkay [1984], Collins [1985], Latour and Woolgar [1979]; and b. the more radical interpretations from within science such as Capra [1977 and 1983].

Chapter 6.
1. Although the Body Shop leaflet is not presented as an advertisement it is used as a way of promoting Body Shop products and I have, therefore, categorised it as an advertisement.

Chapter 7.
1. See for example Connell [1987].
2. For a full discussion of the construction of factuality see Potter [1986].
4. For example the BBC Nature programme 'Female Pride' shown in November 1989 which used 'wild life' footage to represent the dominance of lionesses in a pride of lions.
5. The versatility of the link between sexual behaviour and nature means that it can work as a justification for conflicting behaviour within both feminist and
non-feminist thinking. For example, men are represented as being aggressive because they are close to nature - they cannot help their animal instincts, but they are also seen as being aggressive because they are detached from nature - they objectify things and do not identify with victims. On the other hand women are represented as being non-aggressive because they are close to nature - they are nurturant and identify with other people because they realise the holistic character of the world, but they are also seen as being non-aggressive because they are detached from nature - they have finer feelings, are ladies, pure and untainted.


7. These explanations were first outlined by Val Plumwood in her paper 'Ecofeminism : An Overview and Discussion' [1986].

Chapter 8

1. For a detailed study of the history of ecology and environmental problems see Bramwell [1989].

2. The effectiveness of this strategy of posing a puzzle and then leaving the audience to work out the answer for themselves has been noted by Williamson [1978]. She argues that one of the ways in which adverts attract and persuade their audience is by encouraging the readers to decipher or interpret the meaning of the advert themselves. This gives the audience the impression that they have freely chosen this meaning rather than been persuaded by the advert. However, although they are required to actively decipher or fill something in, their choice of meaning is clearly not free but restricted to the carefully defined channels provided by the ad for its own decipherment. A puzzle has only one solution. A missing piece in a jigsaw has only one shape; defined by its contingent pieces... our 'active' involvement precludes an awareness of our more complex unchosen involvement. [1978:72-3]

In the same way the setting up of Lovelock's personality as a puzzle invites us to participate in interpreting his behaviour. However, the meaning which we
produce - that he is motivated by a desire for power and money - is not freely arrived at by considering the evidence. This 'solution' to the puzzle is determined by the 'contingent pieces' of information given in the text, the pointers to his personality: he behaves like a 'demagogue', his followers are 'customers' etc. By using this strategy we arrive at a pre-determined conclusion which seems to have been freely constructed by ourselves. This issue is also discussed by Wowk [1984].

3. This argument is also put forward by Rosalind Coward in her critique of the alternative health movement *The Whole Truth* [1990].

4. The 'personification' of science is noted by Williamson [1978] when she states the image of science, its ideology .... it is not truly subjectless because instead of being simply a science, it is Science - it has a proper name, almost a character ... it becomes a unified entity, rather than a practice.

[1978:111]

**Chapter 10**

1. Lawson [1985] argues that in the case of Marx, not only was his work reflexive but that he recognised and attempted to respond to the problem of self reference by building it into his social theory. Marx put forward the argument that the ideologies of social classes are determined by their social and historical position and that his own theory is itself a product of these forces. So, rather than retreating to a meta-level from which he can escape the problem of self-reference his theory is able to account for its own existence. Lawson does, however, go on to argue that the problem of self-reference has been postponed rather than overcome in Marx and that a meta-level is eventually taken up, either in the argument that 'we have reached the final stage in society/thought and that therefore unlike all previous theories, this theory has the character of a science'; or in that Marx's theory of the dialectical interaction between theory and context the theory of dialectics which describes this interweaving illegitimately excludes itself from the dialectical change that it describes, or, if it is capable of such change, it is no longer clear what the theory is asserting.

[1985:22]
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Press.


Mumbo Jumbo

Beware the environmentalists who glorify nature—just because an elephant is bigger doesn’t mean he is better than us.

I've been snipping clippings on environmental issues for some years now. It has become a full-time job. I've had to upgrade my scissors to industrial strength, and am having to build an extension just to file the batch from 1989. It seems only yesterday you couldrawl the daily papers and be lucky to find six column inches on even vaguely green topics. Now you have to be careful when you cut out the eco-article that you're not ruining another on the other side of the page.

It's the same on television. Watching The Natural World on BBC2 now means having to miss Pride of Earth on Channel 4. Just five years ago it was hard to find a single environmental programme in a month. The raised profile is well illustrated by the BBC's recent appointment of Jeremy Bulger—ex-editor of LWT's Weekend World—to edit its flagship environment programme Nature on BBC.

After years of pushing fruitlessly against a locked door, the door has suddenly burst open and we're all falling over ourselves into the bright new age of ecology. And how bright it is. We have stumbled upon a set of ideas which connect the most prosaic aspects of our daily lives with the rest of creation and the very future of the planet. Green has all the makings of the new religion. But already myths are creeping into the green litany. Myths are creeping into the green litany.

Heathcote Williams's latest offering, Sacred Elephant—featured on BBC's Animal High:—represents the militant wing of the new green theology. Williams specialises in the poetry of Angry Veneration: anger at the human destruction of God's Venerable Creatures. I was moved by his requiem for the elephant baby's brain / Weighs nine. The implication is not sure, but it seems to me that even at birth elephants are wiser than we are.

For Williams, it is not good enough simply to respect animals. Elephants are more than just our equals in creation: they are our superiors. 'With its ears it can discern a mouse / which is reassuring for mine', the suggestion is that elephants are nice to mice. And always the assumption is that only we sadistic humans indulge in the rape and pillage of our environment, in cruelty and destruction. But this is simply not true. A few nights spent in a South American rainforest or on the plains of Masai Mara should dispel any lingering notions that wild animals are nice to each other. We humans may have the sheer power and numbers to inflict great damage, but we are not by nature any more destructive than the other animals.

To the elephant, our scrap of consciousness may seem inconsequential as a space-invader blow: the message is clear: humanity now is a lowly and contemptible beast altogether, unworthy of nature. We are a blight upon this earth, and should leave the world to the honourable and perfect creatures. The Nandi and the Masai know the elephant. As a survivor from an older order And defer to its seniority In matters of land tenure. Yet another myth—that only 'noble savages' still possess knowledge of the Edenic world of harmonious nature, knowledge which we have long lost. Not so; the 'noble savage' is a myth now, and probably always was. It is now known, for instance, that when the first 'Indian' came to reach North America from the land-bridge with Asia they found a continent bursting with wildlife: mammoths and mastodons, sabre-tooth tigers and beavers the size of bears. Archaeologists now know that this incredible diversity of life disappeared with starting rapidity in the period immediately following the human invasion. The North American Indians—so long esteemed for their supposed reverence for nature—destroyed this vast array of plains mammals as they swept southwards.

Similar evidence from Easter Island has revealed that the famous stone-carving culture vanished very soon after the last forests were cleared. It seems the Easter Islanders deforested them—why out of existence ... 500 years ago. Contact with aboriginal people today is, say, Amazonia reveals much the same thing: they have an unseemly utilitarian—not to say short-sighted—approach to the forest. They cut outboard motors and shotguns because these tools make their lives easier. I suspect that it is only a lack of population pressure and a shortage of sophisticated technology which has ensured the survival of so much reforestation. And far from 'deferring to the seniority' of elephants in matters of land tenure, the Masai of East Africa are today busy felling off their lands and buying Toyota Land Cruisers.

Now I'm not saying that animals are any nastier than we humans. I'm certainly not saying that aboriginal peoples are—or were—any less ecologically 'sound' than we are. What I am saying is that there's not really a lot to pick and choose between us, and that Heathcote Williams's obsession with self-denigration is mistaken and unhelpful. If we lovely humans are to rise to the mammoth—sorry, immense—task of assuming responsible stewardship of the planet then we must have great self-confidence and an intimate understanding of biology.

My perception of our role in the environment is almost the opposite of Williams's: we humans are on the threshold of becoming the first creatures to control our biological imprints in a rational, constructive way. In biological terms we are immensely successful, and yet we are about to become the first species in the earth's history to voluntarially limit our success in the name of harmony. Oh so we may have left it pretty late, but at least we are beginning to act. I'd like to see a herd of elephants negotiate a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Five years ago the environment needed a friend; it could muster: every column inch every film story was another nut or bolt in the huge edifice of awareness which was to be built. Perhaps as a result we let our sense discrimination atrophy. It is a common enough fault among neo-skins, especially when they are in a minority. But we've got to exercise those old muscles again if we are to know the core of environmental thinking: we must learn to discriminate.

Brian Leith is a freelance television producer. His 'Green Piece' will appear fortnightly.
Appendix: Document no.2

Is sugar a natural part of our diet?
Consult the experts.

Does a bee have qualms about gathering nectar?
Does a bird feel guilty about treating itself to a sweet blackberry?
Does a bear think twice before eating a pawful of honey?
Of course not. It's only humans who treat a 'sweet tooth' as a bad habit. Wild creatures know better.

Now obviously excessive Calories, wherever they come from, will turn to fat.
But, as foods go, sugar isn't very fattening. A regular 4 gram lump contains just 18 Calories. Probably fewer than you add to tea or coffee if you take milk.
Of the 1500 Calories an average person needs each day just to stay alive, nutritionists say at least half should come from carbohydrates (sugars and starches).
Which means that in moderation there's no need to miss out on sugar.

If you like sugar, use it the way Nature does. To make nutritious foods delicious. Think how it transforms a sharp grapefruit or a high-fibre cereal.
And if you're worried about your weight, eat a little less of everything; and be a little more active.

Walking the dog for half an hour uses up 70 Calories. Swimming for half an hour, 280. An hour digging the garden, 320 Calories.

But don't feel guilty. Trying to avoid sugar isn't only unnecessary. It's unnatural.

Sugar. The more you know about it, the sweeter it tastes.
Appendix: Document no.3

Body Shop Pamphlet 1990
What is natural?
Evening Primrose

Evening Primrose is a plant with bright yellow flowers which open in the early evening. There are over 1,000 different strains of the Evening Primrose, many of which grow wild. It originated in North America, arriving in Europe in the 17th Century. The American Indians valued the plant for its healing properties, applying it topically to wounds. Herbalists in Europe began to use it extensively, and it became known as 'kings cure-all'. It was prescribed as a remedy for all sorts of ills during the reign of Charles I.

Now extensive claims are again being made for the seeds of the Evening Primrose and especially its oil, and it is used to treat diverse ailments.

Meanwhile, The Body Shop incorporates it into products such as Mostly Mon skin care products, where its qualities are appropriate and we offer 100% Evening Primrose Oil to apply directly to the skin.

Natural ingredients: the background

Natural ingredients were used in skin and hair care preparations long before the cosmetics industry existed. What nature offers us—plants, herbs, trees, and their roots, leaves, flowers and fruit; and substances from the earth—are the natural resources that people have turned to for thousands of years. People used what was easily available in their local environment: they looked to the land for materials for shelter and food, and for other basics such as cleansing their skin and hair, and protecting and decorating their faces and bodies. Plant derived materials were used in rituals of birth, death and marriage, and in some societies became imbued with religious significance.

Experimentation showed which plant extracts were effective as skin cleansers, or softeners, or astringents...which herbs were beneficial to the hair...which ingredients could be used to colour the hair or skin...Each natural ingredient had a specific purpose and use.

In some societies untouched by Western 'progress' and unpressurised by advertising, these traditional practices continue.

The Body Shop looks to these practices for ideas and inspiration. Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop, travels every year to other countries, other cultures, to learn how they cleanse, polish, and protect their skin and hair.

There is much renewed interest in the West in traditional methods of caring for the skin and hair. This is linked to the increasing revival of herbal remedies and other forms of 'alternative' medicine (at one time the only medicine, becoming 'alternative' only in the recent past).

People are finding some aspects of modern technology unsatisfactory, and are choosing other means of self-care, which they find more 'natural'. Many people now believe, however, that the combination of the two approaches; traditional and technological, is the appropriate way forward.

natural?
Body Shop approach to natural ingredients

The Body Shop's approach to making and selling skin and hair care preparations is different from the mainstream cosmetics industry. We follow the route to health and well-being, rather than the quest for 'beauty'.

Using naturally-based ingredients in our products is part of that approach. We use the term close-to source: this reflects the realism behind our products. The naturally-based ingredients in our products are used from as close to their sources as possible, within the context of safety and practicability.

Why does The Body Shop use natural ingredients?

Naturally-based ingredients have a long history of safe use. Human beings have tried and tested plant-derived ingredients on their skin and hair for thousands of years. Many are still doing so in other cultures less pressurised by advertising. The ingredients from the earth and what grows in it have been proved effective.

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera means true.
The aloe plant originates in Africa, but now grows in many warm climates throughout the Mediterranean and the Middle East, as well as in Indonesia, South China and Australia.

It's a member of the lily family, but resembles a cactus. It has rubbery, spiny-edged, grey-green leaves, which when cut and squeezed exude a thick, clear gel. Aloe vera, which is water soluble, has been used for over 3,000 years to promote the healing of skin lesions and burns.

Wherever aloe vera is grown, the local people have used it and use it on the skin... in many societies it has been known as the miracle worker, voodoo juice, the water of heaven.

More recently, scientific evidence is reinforcing what we have learned from history and tradition: the virtues of aloe vera.

The Body Shop has incorporated this very natural ingredient in its whole range of products.

natural for The Body Shop to turn to ingredients from the earth's resources: from plants and from the earth itself (clay and chalk). It is a simple approach which works: but it is an approach which has to be supported by care and commitment.
Pineapple

While in Sri Lanka, Anita Rob-litch saw that, after eating fresh pineapples, the women then rubbed their bodies with the inside of the skins. Analysis in the UK revealed that pineapple contains bromelain, which is a protein-digesting enzyme, and an excellent exfoliator. So the formulation for Pineapple Facial Wash was born.

The Body Shop

- has a commitment to natural ingredients.
- researches the past through tradition, and verbal and written history, to obtain knowledge about the age-old uses of natural ingredients.
- researches still-existing practices using natural ingredients in parts of the world untouched by advertising and other pressures.
- uses naturally-based ingredients as active constituents in formulations: they are used for function, not decoration.

The Body Shop Code of Practice

- uses naturally-based ingredients in appropriate quantities, to ensure that the formulations are effective.
- ensures that our formulations remain true to the natural materials they incorporate.
- only uses natural ingredients which are easily renewable: we do not use materials from any plant or other source which is scarce or under threat.
- encourages sources of natural ingredients in the Third World thus creating trade...
Jojoba is a yellowish unctuous oil or liquid wax obtained from the seeds of the evergreen Jojoba shrub, which grows in desert conditions, mainly in North Western Mexico.

The seeds give a very high oil yield, which was traditionally used by Apache and Mexican Indians over many centuries, as a hair and scalp treatment and for skin disorders.

Jojoba is an exciting resource as it is the only plant known so far which produces a natural liquid wax (radically different in composition from other plant derived oils) which has properties almost identical to sperm whale oil, squalene.

The Jojoba plant can grow on some of the poorest land in the world, which may be useless for conventional crops. It can provide livelihoods and employment for people who have few opportunities.

How does The Body Shop use close-to-source ingredients?

Once we have established how an ingredient from a natural source works, through book research and contact with other traditions, we look to see what it can do for our customers.

Ingredients are selected and used for their particular properties, and how these can benefit the skin and hair. Formulations use the appropriate quantity of each ingredient to ensure effectiveness. Some products contain a high percentage of the main, active natural ingredient (for example, 98% of our Aloe Vera Gel is pure aloe vera gel). Others contain lower percentages, as appropriate. When formulating a new product, we ensure that the correct balance of all the ingredients is obtained, so that the product works.

Here are some of the in
Natural ingredients in practice

Purists say that, once any natural ingredient has been harvested and processed, it is no longer natural. The Body Shop believes that ingredients from natural sources can be used in skin and hair care preparations and still retain their essential qualities, if the products are formulated with care and integrity. Many aspects need to be considered. We combine close-to-source ingredients with other, synthetic ingredients, such as preservatives to ensure that products work, last and are safe. We also use synthetic ingredients as acceptable alternatives to those ‘natural’ ingredients obtained by cruelty, such as spermaceti or musk.

The Body Shop’s approach to natural ingredients is rooted in reality. We do not use any ingredients to create an image, or to make false claims, or to manipulate our customers.

The use of natural ingredients in the cosmetics industry is an issue which needs to be debated. This is sometimes difficult as the cosmetics industry can be clouded by secrecy at one end and hype at the other: consumer confusion is the result. The Body Shop approach is to supply information about our products and the processes behind them:

- In every Body Shop in the UK there is a Product Information Manual, available for customers’ reference.
- The Body Shop Catalogue gives details of our products and how they work.
- Customer Information leaflets on topics such as skin and sun are freely available in all Body Shops.
- The Body Shop Book gives the full background to the products. (Paperback edition published 1987 by MacDonald & Co.)

Cocoa Butter

Anita Roddick was first inspired to incorporate cocoa butter into skin care products after seeing it used by women in the Polynesian Islands. She noticed that they rubbed lumps of a creamy substance into their skin and hair to make it shine...

On investigation she discovered it was cocoa butter. It is used in this way by women throughout the world; ever since they have easy access to it in their own local environment. Pregnant women in Tahiti rub solid cocoa butter over their bodies to keep the skin supple.

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Written by Sue Jackson. Design by Heather Fawcett. Illustrations by Heather Fawcett and William Webb.
Appendix Document no.4

Appendix Document no. 5
Transcript of Group discussion Nov. 1990
Transcription Notation.

The form of notation used in the following transcription was developed by Gail Jefferson.

Square brackets mark overlap between utterances, e.g.:
A: They went over [that way I think
B: [I saw where they went

An equals sign at the end of one utterance and the beginning of the next indicates the absence of a discernable gap, e.g.:
A: I was walking away from them =
B: = They didn’t give us a chance

A full stop in brackets indicates a pause. A number in brackets indicates a longer pause by the number of seconds, e.g.:
A: I didn’t (.) feel very well (3) I felt quite ill

Underlining indicates added emphasis, e.g.:
A: I really did like her

Brackets with a word inside indicate a tone of voice, or action e.g.:
A: She looked (sarcastically) very sorry (laughs)

Brackets with asterisks inside indicate that the speech was inaudible, e.g.:
A: She told me she felt (***)
Transcript of Discussion - Nov 28th 1990

Participants: A [Anne], B [Brenda], C [Cathy], D [Diane], Int. [Interviewer]
These are not the participants’ real names.

Int: I've never heard of that TSB environmental

A: It's probably a new one I should think I mean I've not read all of it yes its introduced a new unit trust well all I can say is if it's as good as the international one which we tried (laughs) it's not going to make you any money so don't bother investing in it. Erm (.) and then of course it said 'of course the price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up' well of course (.) it isn't of course is it? Erm but it doesn't really give all that much emphasis on the environmental side of it I mean it's obvious that this is an investment (.) all right you've got the famous um fin of the whale or whatever it is coming up but [it really doesn't say any more apart form the picture the words dont

B: [I'd say that (.) well I'd say I'd say the picture is very environmental=

A: = Oh yes it does but then [when you read on

B: [ And I mean you've got er Bellamy there er you know [backing it up as well

C: [Whats it got to do really with environmentalism

B: I think really mainly you know then when you're getting down to the nitty gritty you're at you're actually erm appealing to somebodies erm want to need to
make more money on these investments so when it comes down to the actual text its its homing in to baser needs if you like it starts with this which is the er you know its almost conning you that this is the sort of approach but in actual fact when you get down to it its more its then appealing to well what can I get out of this sort of

A: That's right

B: I think a lot of I've noticed actually I have noticed that there's been a lot of environmental advertising and it usually it takes this form I think initially you've got the green idea and then when you come down to it it's what you personally are going to you know you're going to benefit well your skins going to benefit you're going to benefit from this but you're going to be helping the green movement at the same time =

A: =That's right jumping on the bandwagon in other words they're all coming in on it because they know people are genuinely concerned about the environment but I wonder how much is actual concern and how much is the TSB wanting to make a nice load of money by bringing people in (.) on that level

B: Yes (.) they're jumping on the bandwagon (.) I think this one with the slug that I've got here er Roche vitamin council I wouldn't say that this falls into an environmentalist er type advert at all would you

Int: Yes er I wasn't sure you know when I had to actually get get them out of the magazine I wasn't really sure where to draw the line so I thought well I'll bring anything with pictures of nature in or refers to nature and then you know =

B: = I don't think really they're using this picture in a green or environmentalist situation they're showing the picture of the slug as sort of I suppose the thing is that you're feeling sluggish (.) but I think apart from that I wouldn't say that this was an environmentalist type advert at all I don't think it it (.) I had a look I
thought oh well perhaps in the text it's appealing to environmental issues but it
doesn't it's just sort of talking about feeling sluggish and er using vitamins not to
feel sluggish so [I wouldn't

Int: [So what ] er

B: [ I wouldn't put that as an environmentalist type advert
at all

Int: What about that one that you've got there C do you think that's (.) there's this
[one and that

C: [ No I don't think it's got anything to do with environmentalism it's just a
picture of oysters (.) and they make pearls

Int: And there's this one as well which is the same sort of pop-out thing

C: Must be a Charles of the Ritz idea mustn't it (****) just by looking (.) these
are all things that come from under the water aren't they

Int: Oh yes it is (.) I thought it was a shrubbery actually

C: I thought it was Hampton Court or something but I think its under the water

Int: Yes it is under the water isn't it (.) do you think it is?

C: Sort of jokey photography I think (.) I don't think its um particularly
environmental

Int: So how would you know how would you sort of distinguish between ones
that are and ones that aren't
C: Well this one says environmental investor for instance

B: This is definitely an environmental one (. ) Supawrap home warming without global warming

D: Wouldn't you think these two though because they're pictures of sort of things that are supposed to be beautiful from nature are almost implying that the cosmetics are sort of natural as well

B: Yes there could be an indirect erm

D: Because the pictures of I mean things like pearls

A: You see the fact that it is all green again its jumping on the bandwagon everybody wants to think of things as natural erm green's the term for it isn't it (. )

B: Yes yes I think possibly its geared to the natural side of things

A: And you see again on this one you've got words like traditional which tends to mean that there's nothing artificial in it and so that its environmentally sound (. ) traditional presented in their own traditional chipwood boxes and I think somewhere back here it said yes here we are it is this unpasteurised milk that goes into the making of Sainsburys traditional Normandy Camembert so I mean the whole point of this one (. ) saying that Sainsburys get to the root of the matter [you're going back again

B: [ I'm very surprised that

A: You're going back again to the natural side of things (. ) well without any of your chemicals or anything else Um wash the cheese with a solution of spring water, yeast and salt (. ) yeah I'll bet but (laughs)
B: Well I'm surprised that they've mentioned or using non-pasteurised milk in the light of recent worries about soft cheeses particularly I'm surprised [well

A: [Mind you I think the French soft cheeses are that that's what the problem is I think they are made of unpasteurised milk aren't they [and that's why they

B: [Yeah and yet and yet this is this is advertising that its made of unpasteurised milk

A: Yeah

B: Isn't it so I'm a bit surprised about that

A: But perhaps if you use pasteurised milk in these I mean it might just spoil the whole taste of it I mean perhaps that's the whole point of these soft cheeses

B: Yes but I would have thought that that they'd play that down by at least not mentioning it rather than actually playing on pasteurised as I say with the scares that have been going on with these particular cheeses

A: Yeah (4) I mean they make it look attractive this is the point although it looks like (. ) little eggs although that one's square in a nest doesn't it (. ) you know that's that's the way you look at it you see the round first (. ) um and so I mean I could just eat a piece of that (laughs) even though I mean I don't want it really but looking at it makes it seem attractive and the fact of course that they've got it on the green grass again it points back to the natural

B: Now you see this is where we differ I don't find that attractive I would think to myself who'd want to pick up a bit of cheese that's just been sitting on a bit of grass [you know
A: [(laughs)]

B: You know that's the way I see that advert

A: Yeah well that's interesting (.)

A: What else have we got

Int: What [about

C: [Here's an advert for sugar that er [makes it look like a highly sort of natural product

B: [ Ah I've noticed this

C: And it's telling us that it's only 16 calories a 4 grammes lump and it talks about animals naturally tailoring their diet to suit their way their way of life (.) and its all these pictures of animals (.) and it appears to be stressing that sugar's a really natural sort of thing that we must all have when in fact (.) we know that it isn't at all that way

B: Have you seen the other adverts about sugar erm er I bet you thought sugar was manufactured in plants and then they show that [its a plant

A: [About a humming bird and everything

B: No they show an actual er sugar beet is it

Int: Oh yeah
B: Where the sugar comes from so erm that's on the all on the thing for er that sugar is a very natural thing they're trying to get us back onto sugar obviously a lot of people have moved away from sugar and er

A: That's right

C: So that's telling you how nice it is (.) we can use it in the way nature does to make nutritious foods delicious (.) not mentioning the fact that nature makes nutritious foods delicious by manufacturing their own sugars and putting them into [***] forms (.) and it suggests that if we are worried about our weight we should eat a (sarcastically) little less of everything (laughs)

A: Carry on this argument its been going on for years hasn't it

Int: Yes

A: Mainly because the pro-sugar people argue that er taking sweetener artificial sweeteners etc er can be very bad for you erm but they leave out all the things that we you know have been proven over the years that too much sugar (.) not only is it bad for you healthwise but I mean it affects your teeth it affects your heart it affects everything but they make out they sell it on the fact that its pure and its not got any additives to it so its a very um (.) er whats the word I'm looking for its um its um presenting one thing when its really meaning another and its a very plausible argument a lot of people fall for it (.) you know natural sugar rather than unnatural saccharine or whatever other stuff you use =

B: = I would say though that they're they're very much trying to appeal to the uninformed there as with the other one about the er manufacturing plant manufactured in plants

A: Yeah
B: Erm I think they're sort of skating round the the the studies that have been done on sugar and the real real reasons for (. ) not using sugar (. ) they must be appealing to somebody who who er who's not really looked into any of the arguments but is sort of picking up odd little (. ) peripheral bits

Int: Yeah

B: You know but they I think they can probably sway those peripheral ones by this type of advertising

A: That particular group of people is the advertisers dream

B: Yeah there's [a lot of them about

A: [To be able to target them but they don't really understand the full story of it

B & Int: Yeah

A: Um I don't think this one's really anything to do with ecology um I mean it's rather appealing the fact that you've got the little round hedgehog on there and the [pom-pom (***) etc

C: [Its very clever isn't it

A: Its very good the way the patterns work but I don't think its got any sort of er environmental base to it apart from the fact that its got a little round hedgehog there which does look rather nice er because Comfort I mean there's nothing green about that is there I mean its all artificial I think (. ) I'm not sure what they (***) Comfort
B: I think this one's the most obvious one its quite an obvious environmental issue [kind of thing

Int: [What about this one

C: [This Ecover one that's fairly environmental (.). what's that one with all the faces on D

D: Wool

C: Wool

A: This one's really aimed at people who're um responsibly environmentally aware this one about Supawrap (.). we can rest assured that you'll not only be conserving energy but doing your bit for the environment too (ironically) reduce emissions of damaging gases (.). acid rain (.). they're really laying it on thick here greenhouse effect (.). in choosing Supawrap you have added assurance (.). no ozone damaging materials (laughs) they're going the whole hog on this one

Int: What is it actually Supawrap

A: Loft insulation (laughs) no wonder thousands of environmentally conscious home owners are already warming to Supawrap (laughs) I mean they've pulled out the whole lot here to throw at you =

B: =Yeah mind you I think its its quite the text of that is quite good

A: Yeah

B: But I think the picture is

A: Oh its pretty grim isn't it
Int: It's from the TV times is that

B: It's very er very boring

A: Yeah although perhaps it's cheap [ that might be what it is it's cheap

B: [ I think actually a lot better idea for for advertising that would have been to have the actual Supawrap all round the globe like as if I mean that would have sort of said ooh you know this Supawrap would've would've intimated that Supawrap was actually protecting the globe you know it I think it would've been a better advert than that

A: Yeah (. ) so I suppose if you read this you feel horribly guilty that you haven't got Pilkington's Supawrap which is obviously the effect that they intended when they wrote it like that

Int: Yeah

A: A very emotive piece of advertising that

B: It's quite obvious though (. ) I wouldn't you know pretty obvious it's not sort of er sneaky . A clean home and a clear conscience that's sort of (3) their slogan isn't it

Int: But do you think that's a better one than the (. ) what was the other one we were discussing ? The Comfort one (. ) that's for washing stuff isn't it as well Ecover

A: This is aimed specifically at sort of [ecology conscious people where as this isn't
B: [Yes yes at in here though is if you actually read the text its saying that minimum impact erm (..) eliminated some of the hazards that these aquatic creatures have to face so if you actually read into it its you are there must be things in there that are still hazardous to the environment you know

A: I don’t suppose you could have anything that's a cleaning product without some environmental damage to it (..) see the only problem with things like this the biggest drawback at the moment is that they definitely aren't as effective (..) as the stronger ones there's no doubt about it I mean I try whenever I can to get the Sainsbury's erm

Int: Green [range

A: [Green whatever but the bleach is utterly useless I mean it doesn't do anything it really doesn't and the washing powder's nothing to write home about (..) so if they could make them better I think more people would swop erm and I suppose the more people that buy it the more money goes into it and the better it would be so advertising in that respect is very important

B: Actually I'm surprised that such an obviously dedicated ecology ecological (..) product range I'm surprised that its quite a gentle approach I think this you know (..) its not got the hard hitting (..) impact =

A: =You mean the pictures =

B: =Yes I think the whole advert is not is not got the impact say of perhaps the um (..) the investor one (..) I thought that had got quite an impact you know even though its not like horrendous its not erm (..) like bloodthirsty or anything like that but it seemed to have more impact than this one this one =

A: = You see again I would disagree with that because the one with the whale
B: This one =

A: =Mm has been used so often that in a way its become like a pictorial cliche you know when you see a whale's tail coming up you know its going to be something like that=

B: = Well you [ what it is immediately

A: [ Whereas that's gentle you know I mean that I mean obviously TSB are going to come in very differently to these and this is a gentle sort of advertisement but I suppose its saying that these are gentle as well in other words the fish can live (.) in the [streams and rivers

B: [I think though the clean home and a clear conscience I think I think (3) this gentle approach doesn't go with that slogan really I think that they could have done a more hard hitting approach (.) and perhaps a better sales (.) a better marketing of it [ definitely more hard hitting

C: [ But I suppose the green movement is a bit sort of erm open toed sandals and loose weave [wraps and all that isn't it

B: [Yeah yeah I suppose yeah it could be argued that a more hard hitting approach would be too far the other way yeah

D: Well I was thinking that this was more erm just an advert almost trying to advertise it as an ordinary washing powder as just something to wash your clothes with instead of (.) something that only people who are very into environmental things would like so it would appeal to everybody not just sort of (.) people who already knew all about it it was more of a washing powder advert than an environment advert I thought
B: I think that I'd have to disagree with that because of the fact that the majority of the page is taken up with this picture of fish and little things.

A: You see one of the biggest criticisms of washing powders is the damage that is happening in the rivers and the amount of fish that are killed. I suppose there we have fish who are actually swimming around and looking quite healthy with it as well.

B: Yeah.

A: And I suppose that's where they're coming in on that we don't need to have rivers that are polluted and dead we can still wash and we can still keep our clothes clean and clean everywhere else but we're not harming the environment. I think it's (***)

B: [I think the only trouble with this advert is that as we've already said some of these ecologically sound products don't actually do the same job as the oh God you've (***) erm.

A: (Laughs) as the Persil [new system automatic]

B: [Yeah exactly so er that I use no I use Daz but erm so I think really a better approach for an advert of this type would be to try and convince people that they were virtually going to do the same job.

A: Trouble is with that you're going to run into difficulties because if they don't do the same job which they definitely don't erm you can only go so far otherwise you could get done in the trade descriptions act I mean if you set out to prove that the washing powders and cleaners were as efficient as the others you can't say that because they're not.

B: Aren't any of them as efficient?
A: Well I can only go on ones that I've bought at Sainsbury's I mean it may be that other ranges perhaps are more efficient but Sainsbury's usually are pretty good at things and they're definitely not as er effective nowhere near

B: What about the washing liquid [I've not used the

A: [ Erm the washing-up liquid's all right yeah that's OK its the things like the washing powder and bleach and er no the cleaning the cream that's not too bad that's not too bad its the stronger stuff that definitely isn't as er good

B: I think its a bit of a pity that they don't make a play on the on the things that are really virtually as good as the others (. ) and that you know it the trouble is if you if you try one of the products and that product doesn't work you tend to think oh I won't bother with the others then you know (. ) if they made a bit of a play on the erm products that really were virtually the same and got some support that way then they might win the others over you know for the others later or perhaps when they've developed them enough to to make them acceptable

C: That always depends whether we think there is a big difference between the products any way I mean I use Fairy Fairy liquid I think it is Fairy Snow liquid and that claims to be almost as bio-degradable as those do (. ) it just doesn't blow its trumpet about it

B: Oh does it oh I didn't know it claimed that actually

Int: Yeah it does doesn't it

C: If you look at the labels quite a lot of them say that they are (. ) environmentally sound in various ways (***
A: It's difficult to know isn't it how much of the truth is there

B: Certainly these Ecover things are quite expensive aren't they [they're more expensive

Int: [Yeah they're very expensive

A: Well you see I suppose the reason they're more expensive is that less people buy them if more people bought them I suppose the price would come down to the others=

B: =Well it might=

A: =But that's what puts a lot of people off they think well I'm not paying loads more for it specially if it's not as good

Int: Yeah

C: It's really making (.) aiming at the people who definitely want to make a gesture in buying such products

A: That's right (.) I think it was Sainsbury's a spokesman from Sainsbury's did actually say that their Green line wasn't selling as well because um you know they have a lot of criticism about it

Int: Yeah

A: Mind you they're still stocking them so I suppose that's one thing

Int: What about one like this about apple juice (.) would you think that was would you think that was a sort of environmental
C: Well its stressing its sort of homely farmy nature and its naturalness and how its all made from hand picked apples and its general the lack of mechanisation in the way its [produced

B: [Oh its Coppella I saw an advert on this actually (.) I saw an advert where these people they started off as a small family business and um [they

Int: [Oh a programme on TV

B: Yes they had did you see it ? [they had to be taken over

Int: [I saw a trailer

B: By was it Bulmers (.) they were they were actually taken they couldn't make it viable themselves and they had to be taken over

A: They've certainly presented it in a very attractive way (.) you look at it and you think oh yes I mean there you are you've got the crystal clear apple over here and then the bottle looking very attractive with the nice juicy apples there and then you've got words like er a dash of vitamin C a bottle is the only colouring or preservative we add (.) that's a good bit of marketing because nobody likes loads of additives more than anything because they cause so much problems asthma and what have you (.) so um that's aiming at people who want just pure things

D: I think you could put the glass apple though if you didn't have it compared to that you could (.) it would actually be appealing I would think it would be appealing in the advert on its own if it didn't have a bit of apple at the bottom for apple juice just saying look how pure it is because if it wasn't compared with that
then you wouldn't think there was anything wrong with that glass one because it would look like it was really refreshing and things

Int: You think there's something wrong with the

D: Well I would think that from looking at that then you would look at that one there and think oh its an artificial apple its not real

B: Yes I see

D: But if you were to have it on its own and say

B: Just this you mean

D: If you were to have just that one

A: Let's fold it over and see what it looks like you mean just like that

D: I mean if that was to say something like this is how pure our apple juice was and then have a crystal clear glass with (.) apple it would work as well but its only when you compare it with the sort of one there that looks more earthy and natural that you think there's anything wrong with that one

B: I don't think that apple glass apple works anyway to me that doesn't what is that trying to say that this is the percentage of apple apple juice

A: I suppose so yes

B: To me that's not very its not very clear anyway erm

C: I think its a joke too because the apple's made of glass and the bottle's made of glass and they're both containing the same things in different guises
A: What does that say? from (***) pressed English apples

B: Personally I don't think you need that page at all or if you want to make the point of it being 20% pure apple I would say you would be better that that it would be better put over by separating the 20% of an actual apple

Int: Yeah

B: And sort of saying this is the percentage of an apple that you get with most you know rather than this cos this to me you're sitting there thinking well what does that what's that saying it doesn't say it immediately enough you've got to look at it and most people (. . ) most people if they're looking at um at um an advert well not (. . ) I if I'm looking at an advert I'm flipping through pages through adverts and it has to be that quick to get the message across and something with an apple just an apple cut out sort of thing I think would give more more of a thing than that which to me as I say you have to sit there and say well which bit is it supposed to be or is this supposed to be there apple or whatever you know

D: I think as well they seem to be trying to imply on the other one that (. . ) its more artificial with the the glass and the fake apple being man-made and things it seems to say they're using that not just to say its only that much apple juice but also that its not as natural as [(***)

B: [Well yeah even there though I would say this is its quite a beautiful apple in in some respects I think I mean its its er a crafted object that they are sort of cutting down because there's only twenty percent apple juice in but you know even that goes against the grain to me this is a crafted object and they're trying to say this is no good sort of thing (. . ) you know whereas er (. . ) I mean artificial it is but even so it is crafted and so I can't see that its er

Int: What about all this stuff at this end
A: I was going to say=

B: =That's pretty good=

A: =The as soon as you start talking about purity and no additives etc advertisers love to make you think that things are done in the old traditional way whereas in actual fact that is not going to be true any any er business nowadays is not going to be handpicked apples in baskets with [the old presses

B: [ They were hand picked actually

A: Were they?

B: Yes they were it did show you on do you remember that thing they did actually show you them picking the apples by hand

A: And still the old presses and things?

B: I don't know about the old presses I can't remember that bit but I can remember that they were there with the baskets picking them [by hand

A: [Oh I'm surprised well it must still be a small enough business then to be able to [do that

B: [Well it was it was a family business apparently the mother of the of the business er actually thought up the recipe for it (.) but they just couldn't get it marketed on their own and er they had to bring [somebody bigger

A: [Oh so its still small well let's hope they still stay small in that case because once you start going into the larger erm say like the [ cider
B: [Is Bulmers that's taken it over=

A: =Its all its all mechanised [there's no handpicking then at all

B: [I think its Bulmers it is Bulmers cider that's sort of taken over the marketing of it

Int: So what do you think's appealing about them being hand if they were handpicked

A: Well people tend to associate the old way of doing things with the pure way without you know I mean the two go together they they people tend to think that its only the modern way where you've got additives and colourings and all the rest of it if things are done in the tradtional way then they must be pure (.) I mean it doesn't always work like that but I think that's the way the advertisers work on it I mean very few things are done by hand

D: But even really if they are picked by hand it shouldn't really make much difference to its purity whether its picked by hand or by machine I mean it [doesn't really make any difference to the apples

A: [True but the idea of tractors coming along you know with these things on them that whack them all into the baskets its not quite the same (.) its the difference when people say hand-crafted from so and so people think oh its crafted its not just factory made its crafted more care and love and attention's gone into it so it must be better

D: But that's what it is I mean that's just been put on (.) its got no benefit at all to the apple juice its been put in purely to appeal to people sort of wanting to be back to nature
A: That's right yeah

B: Actually knowing the background of this product I'm surprised that they didn't play on the fact that it was a family concern [I think that would

A: [Yes cos I think that would sell wouldn't it

B: Yeah I mean the family there all picking apples or the family in a group with the Copella you know I think would have been more original and more eye-catching way and more believable and they could've you see they could've erm cashed in on the fact that a TV programme had been made you know they could have done it so that Oh yeah its that family I saw on you know I think that might've that might've er sold better (laughs) we're turning this into an advertising thing rather than

C: It still hasn't got much to do with the environment really has it (.) environmentalism

B: No

D: Its got to do with the side of environmentalism that people (.) have decided that nature's good and nature's =

A: =Mm yeah without the colourings and preservatives and [everything

B: [I think that yeah I think what's not mentioned there is whether in fact the apples have been grown with the aid of erm

C: Fertiliser?
B: Yeah fertiliser and [sprays and stuff

A: [Pesticide cos of course there was that big controversy a little while ago about that er =

C: =Algon or argon [whatever it is

A: [Yes in this country there's a special spray that they use that America's banned it they say its cancer forming and (.) we still use it they spray it I think as the buds come on and then they spray it again later on (.) its a short name isn't it beginning with A

C: Its ar something

A: Yeah and er its been banned in not just America but other countries as well but we still use it typical isn't it (.) so it would be interesting if they now that would be a really good pointer for people if they said our apples are not sprayed except with an environmentally sound product cos I mean its no use people saying you can't use sprays at all because if you don't you could end up with grubby horrible apples and what have you I think you've got to have a sensible use of of pesticides with a view to the environment but I don't think you can just cut it out completely otherwise (.) the consumer wouldn't want to have something that was riddled with beetles or what have you I mean you want to have something that was sound

D: Well you can do it (.) erm by introducing other insects that'll get rid of the first insects because you can do it (.) if you sort of went to somewhere where there'd been no pesticides or anything you'd find that I learnt about this in biology by the way (laughs) most of the fruit and stuff isn't riddled with grubs because (.) they everything sort of balances itself out in the end its just where one things been removed that other things take over and they all sort of (***)
A: That's right now you see I like to try and follow this when I get invaded with millions of greenfly in the garden I think right my erm ladybirds will come along and eat this lot but it doesn't work (laughs) they just carry on multiplying

B: You can have masses of ladybirds and they just don't seem to munch through them quick enough

Int: What about the ones about um (.) beauty products and things like there's this one and there's the Body Shop one and what was the other one oh the one about the green (.) face that I think A had that at the beginning

A: The green face? oh yes I've got that somewhere under here here we are

D: I thought the thing about that Sainsbury's one was that all those things have been used in shampoo for ages and they've always had you've always had sort of different kinds of flowers or marshmallow shampoo and things and its never its only now they've decided to say oh this is healthy and they're from flowers cos you've always I mean mostly cosmetics have always been flower fragrance and things (.) and they've just decided to cash in on it now well I don't know if that's any different =

C: =Boots are actually doing have got the same kind of products now haven't they the same sort of =

Int: =Well would you say that was that was an environmental advert (3)

C: It certainly looks environmental I mean its sort of all these things like rose and cinnamon and

Int: What about this picture of the woman
C: The lady's very environmental isn't she (laughs) Miss Environmentalism 1990 (. ) she's an environmental girl that one isn't she

A: I wonder they'd do if they had a young man sitting there with a bunch of oats or whatever behind or [garlands of flowers round his head

B: [I expect the oats would be strategically placed (laughs)

A: This is more though a case of what we have and what we put on our skins rather than how its helping the environment I mean how would this help the environment any more than anything [else

B: [Well its not tested on animals they've got that one [down

A: [Yes is that classed as (.) is the testing on animals included in with it [I mean that's a (***)

Int: [I don't (. ) I don't know

C: Well that's another is that a different buzz or the same buzz [not tested on animals

Int: [I don't know

A: See more and more places now are actually putting that on which is nice to see because at least it does give you a choice then doesn't it as to whether you buy the product

B: To tell the truth I know this sounds horrible but in some respects I'd sooner it was tested on animals (laughs) cos I wouldn't have any problems of what it was going to do to me I think I think the way to get round that is that lot of products a
lot of preparations have already been tested on animals and why not stick to those preparations which seem perfectly good =

Int: = Not have any new ones =

B: = Not have not test new products on animals use the old products that have already been tested on animals umpteen times but the only trouble I think the reason it strikes me anyway that when you say oh well I'm glad this hasn't been tested on any animals there is the slight danger that you're going to test it on humans and its going to be detrimental to the humans

A: I think they do nowadays though don't they in a lot of cases don't they have volunteers to test it and pay them so much don't they

D: Yes they have at Fisons they test their drugs on people and the people who are working there they offer them money and put them on whatever the drugs are but that's only after animal testing though

A: They used to years ago when I worked at Fisons they used to test the shampoos out on us by giving us um free hairdos and if we were going to have the free hairdo we tested out the new Vitapoint and Sebbix shampoo and some of them made your head itch it was horrible (laughs) but we didn't mind cos we got a free hairdo perhaps you know if this is the way it goes at least people have got a choice then whether they want to be tested or not

Int: And do you think its sort of an environmental issue whether things are tested on animals or not

A: [Personally I think its a different thing

B: [I think its on the peripheral oh I would say it was on the peripheral
A: Um (.) I mean (.) it's a very emotive issue for people but I don't know whether or not you could include it on environmental damage yes its damaging the animals (.) um but do we class that as environmental damage or are we talking about the damage we're doing to the soil and the rivers and all the rest of it I mean after all we're talking about damage it does to fish so perhaps it is a valid point.

D: Well I think it's all sort of playing on the environmental back to nature and back into harmony with the rest of the world and everything else in it and so the same will go for animals that we've misused the world and misused the animals and it's all mixed up in the same thing (.) um I also think that the thing about um thinking things should still be tested on animals that there are so many things now that around (.) that you can that there isn't really much need to test them on animals I mean you can mix up things that you know aren't going to do any harm [and then you can still get new things.

B: [Ah that's what I I yeah yeah that's what I was saying in effect that the thing there's been a lot of things already tested on animals and they've been proved as safe and er because I I'm not sure but don't they sort of test things on animals time after time after time sort of thing.

A: Yes they do they give far more doses higher doses than you would have but (.) I mean there's one thing sort of doing medical experiments (.) and it just seems to me highly immoral to use animals in that way to test something like make-up which you don't need to use I mean you could argue yes we need to know whether we're going to live or die with cancer but we don't have to use the erm eyeshadow or whatever else so um (.) I mean the [fact that some are already tested on animals.

B: [Well we've already got the shadows there that we know what makes a reasonable shadow and we know what
property what goes in to a reasonable shadow er why try out a different one now (. ) we've had years of trying them out

Int: What about this one that's sort of quite explicitly links beauty with green doesn't it

A: It was the style of that that annoyed me I hate these advertisements that put them in italics in case we've missed the point you know they assume you're absolutely stupid

C: It will be aimed at women

A: Yeah yeah you can bet your life (. ) done by men and aimed at women you can bet your life

Int: Do you think most of these adverts are aimed at women ?

A: Well certainly the er the beauty ones are the cleaning ones are

D: I think the food ones [are as well

B: [I'd say most of them are

Int: Any that you think might be aimed at men ?

A: The unit trust probably (4)

Int: Why do you think the unit trust one might be would be aimed at men?

A: Because its the stereotyped view of what women are interested in and what men are interested in you've got the stereotyped male who is the financial wizard and you've got the woman in the kitchen and that's the way so many advertising
people look at it I mean you only have to look at the television to see how women and men are stereotyped I think it's pathetic I mean they are moving a bit better these days but it's still awful

Int: Mm well do you think there's anything about the actual advert that sort of I don't is more likely to appeal to men

C: It does seem to use long words just sort of general advertising puff that advertisers feel they have to use in (***) well you know the sort of things like renowned and close scrutiny all these kind of superlatives and excessive pieces of language

D: And the picture as well sort of a nature picture but that is very much a powerful side of nature as a pose to all these ones of cartoon bears and bumble bees and stuff

A: That's right I mean look at the way the headlines are its success could profit you well you don't advertisers do not use words like success and profit towards women (.) if you think of any advertisement on the television when you've got success and when you've got profit it is not women that are involved its men driving big powerful cars (.) I think the worst one that springs to mind is the Vaux is it Vauxhall or Citroen with the man driving the big powerful car and the black woman walking along past him

Int: Oh yeah

A: You know what I mean and that is a typical stereotyped view of advertisers men with power and the woman walking so this is definitely aimed at men and these are definitely aimed at women

Int: Yeah
A: I'm not so sure about yes I suppose this one would do as well

C: What sort of things do they come from

Int: They all came from er women's magazines except this is from the TV Times that one and the er Ecover one are from er Friends of the Earth sort of quarterly magazine apart from that they're all from women's magazines I think

A: Mind you you could argue from that that if they're from women's magazines the chances are they're going to be targeted at women anyway I mean something like the TV Times would perhaps yes and the Radio Times would be more =

Int: = What about that one that's a bit that's a bit bigger than

B: This thing here the very idealised type of picture of the world that we'd like (.) a nice little house=

Int: = That's the sugar one

D: I think that most of the environmental adverts are aimed at women because its still seen as slightly less than macho to be into environmental things and its mostly women that it seems to be all aimed at as far as advertising things are concerned and its much sort of the men will still have the powerful cars and things and there's not a mention about anything any emissions or anything and (.) it seems to be even though there are some for men it still seems to be mostly women that they're aiming them at

A: But you've got to remember who is it that goes and does the shopping in nine out of ten cases its women that do the shopping and women that make the choices as to what they're going to buy and that's why its targeted so strongly at women whereas when it comes to buying cars often its a male dominated area I'm not saying all the time but it often is isn't it
C: Well we've been looking at car adverts recently and er the ones we've been looking at whether its because we're just naturally green but the ones we've been looking at like diesel engines and things like that they've been playing on the you know ecological soundness so I mean that's jumping on the bandwagon as well they still say you know they'll do 0 to 60 in minus one second and they're environmentally sound

A: Its definitely the in thing at the moment isn't it er I'm not sure I believe all of them I just think they are using it to to sell because they know people are so concerned about it now

Int: Mm but you think that women would be more likely to to be interested in that sort of thing than men

A: Certainly from my experience I would say so I mean its difficult because you could generalise about this so easily couldn't you (.) but it seems to me that of the women I know most of them are concerned in one way or another about the environment and what's happening (.) but of the men I know some are and some aren't so but as I say it would depend on your circle of friends I'm sure some people are more concerned than others so

D: Well men would seem to be more likely well stereotyped men more likely to say oh its just being faddy and

1st Tape ends

New Tape

D: There's adverts in um all the free papers now with well I saw them last week if they've been there before talking about paper and how saying not recycled paper ordinary paper there's a place to write off for saying how many trees do you think
er the world lost to produce this paper and then saying for every one tree that they chop down there's another two that they um plant again so that's even the people who're making non-recycled paper are cashing in on the environment thing with these sort of big adverts in all the papers

B: Yes I've seen them

A: Although if you think about it the traditional say Scandinavian um logging companies where most of Britain's erm print paper comes from um they run it as a business and they've always planted up for everything otherwise they'd be out of business wouldn't they in a very short time if they hadn't got a constant supply so its not them that you have to worry about quite so much its a bit different to the tropical forest that they chop down because they're not being replaced

B: Is that is that chopped down necessarily for the wood though is it cleared to use the land agriculturally

A: Some of it is but a lot of its for logging interests (.) and yeah I noticed in the paper the other day that Britain's backed a scheme in Brazil for chopping down a huge area of some of the er remotest rain forest and its supposed to be against that and we've the British government have put money into it (.) I thought great

Int: So do you think that (.) buying these products you know whether they are environmentally friendly or not actually makes any difference do you think it that its effective in sort of saving the environment ?

A: Well I think you'd have to be careful cos I'm sure a lot of them do just jump on the bandwagon and they're no different to any others (.) I'm sure of that but I think if more people move towards being more ecologically aware then I think there would be a great improvement
B: I think there is er a bit of a knock on effect off these (.) I think in themselves (.) there's not there aren't any that are really (.) I mean to be that eco if it came down to it to be that ecologically sound I mean for a start off you could say well stop using make up and stop you know just stop using a lot of the products that we don't really need and use less of the ones that (.) are the you know that you might consider essential sort of thing but apart from I think this one gets the closest to being and actual (.) real environmental thing even though Supawrap (.) in itself (.) might not be partic although it says its made with er no ozone damaging materials whatsoever so that's a very good claim I think that that if you purchase that you might with the idea of conserving energy (.) and using a product that's not got ozone damaging materials then I think that that particular one might stand out as being er a solid environmental sound advert the others seem to be er jumping on the bandwagon but the the positive side of that jumping on the bandwagon is they are giving a lot of credence to the idea of being environmentally friendly so that things that are actually environmentally friendly will be treated I mean at one stage you would treat it you would be considered a freak if you er (.) were vegetarian erm (.) were were I mean I had a friend that was er growing wild flowers er in her garden to er improve the wild flower population and having a little bit of the garden completely er wild because of the environment and things like that years and years back you know and um (.) er my husband in particular looked on her as a little bit er strange you know a bit she was a bit before her time in actual fact that's what it was and now er the man in the street's more coming to this type of its getting more popularised and I do think the positive thing of all this is that it is popularising the idea

Int: You don't think that it might if its a sort of a fashionable idea it might become unfashionable ?

A: You [see this the trouble

B:     [ Well there is that there is that I think the I think the the green parties the green parties or the or the erm (3) the people who are concerned and the real
environmental issues. I think if they use this popularity to cement real ideas, I think they could use it. Yes, there is the opportunity to build on that fashion. However, if it's not fashionable at all, people just will not listen to it anyway.

D: I saw an advert it was quite a few years ago where there was Zandra Rhodes in it. It was for shampoo and she was saying, 'With all the progress science has made, I don't want to wash my hair in mud and plants. I want to make the best of what the world's got to offer me in modern times.' That was ages ago, and she was sort of saying, 'Just perhaps what might come after all these, there might come something saying things like that about, oh I don't want to wash my hair in the mud. We've got better things and stuff like that and it...'

A: [Move away]

D: Yeah, it could backfire and go the opposite way.

B: Yes, it could do you yeah.

A: You see if too many people come in on this instead of it really getting the message across, you've got a classic case of overkill. That people stop seeing it because it's so common. You know, if you have so many advertisements that are all on the same theme, it loses its impact, and people just turn over the page, which isn't what we want really is.

B: Yes, that's true.

A: Um, so it remains to be seen really whether or not people do really turn to environmentally friendly products, um, because after all the consumer at the end
of the day's got the choice (.) I mean if we stop buying things that are the most damaging then they've got to change

B: Personally I think the only real change can come from a change in (.) a real change in government attitudes I think the media can help quite a lot but in actual fact the media what its doing is the media is doing as usual its serving its own purpose I think the the real changes (.) erm have to be made at government level if you got a government in that had real environmental (.) issues on its policies then you would see real change changes in real terms I mean in actual fact I think some of the changes that could be made might even be quite small but but we'd move towards that direction we'd get more people involved in real changes this sort of thing (.) erm

Int: So is that disagreeing with what A said about consumers can sort of have a real power in

B: Well I think yeah I do think really because I think the trouble is I think erm a lot of people can be take just be taken in by this sort of thing and can sort of think well as long as I er (3) er (.) use say they say they go back to sugar oh well I'm using sugar now instead of the saccharine this is a natural product that's enough for me to do sort of thing you know I'm doing my bit whereas er a real (.) helpful thing such as bottle recycling or any other form of recycling I mean I mean look at look at on waste alone what a government could do in actual fact there've been cases where er countries have actually benefitted from using their waste in a better way perhaps using the heat generated from waste or or recycling or something like that they can use their waste but er if you've not got a government that's sort of that way inclined I mean I think at this level it would take a lot of work a lot of convincing of the everyday person um as as you say the fashion could change er you know from this type of thing the fashion could change and so you could be left with people moving onto going back to like you said going back to the things that are not natural like you know having but (.) I think if the
government gave it credence real credence then er that would be the way forward as a pose to all of this

A: I don't think there's any chance at all of doing that when we've got the sort of system that allows um bodies like say ICI to um put a great deal of money into say the Conservative party and they are not going to turn round and legislate against um a company that er makes enormous profits from all sorts of things then its not going to put restrictions on it and in the same way its not going to come down (.) against the the use of excessive pesticides or fertilisers or anything because the National Farmer's Union's got such a powerful say a powerful lobby (.) um it just isn't going to work while you've got a system where you've got these powerful parties making a lot of money who are giving money to political parties you're not going to get the necessary [change

C: [Don't you think they're giving money to the economy as well though they're keeping the economy going I mean thinking on from what you said and saying about ICI's a big employer it manufactures [***] because car manufacturers as well I mean (.) cars are one of the things they ought to legislate against because of all the emissions but they won't presumably be doing that because the car is responsible for such a lot of the way the economy runs [anyway

A: [That's right but its not the fact that you legislate and say you can't do this any more that you can't sell the things of course I mean that would cause almighty problems of unemployment (.) um but you could say look we've got to find a way of making the pesticides that we use and the fertilisers we use less powerful less destructive to the environment but they're not prepared to do that because that money keeps coming in now that wouldn't necessarily lose jobs or or stop the harm the company in any way but it would mean that they'd got to invest in new methods of doing it and look at new ways that perhaps wouldn't be so damaging to the environment
Int: What about the Body Shop who're sort of um claim that you can be both environmentally sound and profitable at the same time and who spend a lot of money on trying to you know not exploit people or not use unnatural things I mean do you think that's a good sort of way forward

A: [Mm it sounds wonderful yes its the sort of view that I wish more companies would have cos they prove that you can be profitable and not harm the environment and if they can do it so can others but you've got to have the heart to do it you've got to have the will and it seems to me a lot of people haven't got the will

B: I think I was I thought I was hearing on the radio one time there that they were going to encourage farmers because they'd had been having so many surpluses anyway that the new way forward for encouraging farmers as far as the EEC was concerned was towards more um natural ways of farming

Int: Mm

B: I I think that they and I think that there was some talk of subsidising the farmers whereas they had subsidised the farmers in previous times to produce more erm now they would subsidise the farmers to produce in an environmentally friendly way

A: Is this actually in now or is it proposed?

B: It was a proposition it was a discussion on the radio and I can't this was the talk the way that the EEC was talking about I mean they subsidise farmers anyway and they were talking about keeping subsidies to farmers because apparently the farmers needed subsidies but channeling it in different way instead of getting them to produce too much as they had done in the past getting them to produce in a more organic organic farming
A: Oh it would be a step forward if they could do that

B: I think actually from what I've seen of the I mean I was quite against the EEC at one time er I didn't like the mind you it was years ago and I was completely er uninformed about it but I didn't like the idea of the EEC at all but it does seem that the EEC's got a lot of er () rules and regulations and er ideas that are er quite sound in lots of ways

Int: So do you (.) would you all sort of agree that sort of the consumer on their own can't can't really do much

A: Well I think you can but you've got to have the will of the consumer I mean a little while ago before all this talk about the ozone layer all hair spray had the CFC's in () but because of a move away from it there was a time when there were some hairsprays that had no CFC's and ones that did and in the end all of them had to move over because people when they had a choice could move from one to the other now that to me is one of the big successes because you don't find any hairspray now um well at least none that I've seen er with CFC's in now if you can do it for that it seems to me you can do it for other things as well but you've got to have the will of the people who are buying to do it which is where the advertising comes in

B: I think there is this danger though that um if the media moves away from this particular bandwagon then () less would be achieved I think at the moment perhaps there are erm people are more aware even these sort of things are making people think towards that way and that yes this is the right way to be going so these all of these are encouraging them that this is the acceptable way and looking after the planet is advisable and necessary and all the all the guff on the television and everything as well but erm I think that the danger is that if this can help affect government's decisions and the government at the moment is er having to pick up a certain amount on the environmental friendly er way of
looking at things but if this sort of moved away there might be less pressure on government which eventually its government that can really the government that can really make big changes this can help this can help pressurise governments if you like because of the popularity of the media towards it but um I don't think on its own its got to be the knock on effect to a government this has got to be a knock-on effect to the government that could get real things done

D: Well in a way I think because this is all erm sort of putting responsibility on the consumer that in a way its drawing attention away from the real things that need to be changed like you said earlier about you might think oh well I'm going back to sugar so that's my bit [and

B: [Yeah that's right I think you're right

D: But I mean its very good that they've got rid of CFC's in hairspray but they weren't the biggest emissions of it and people will look and say oh look they've none of them got CFC's any more we don't have to worry about it

B: Yeah they might even forget and they'd sneak a few CFC's back in again you know because people have forgotten to look has this got CFC's in

D: Yeah and its sort of although all the small things are helpful there's much bigger things that they seem to be drawing attention away from that really [should be looked at

B: [Yes yes in a way in a way I think that is a really valid point that these are drawing away from the real issues the more important issues I mean like with the Supawrap its putting you know global warming's down to whether you're lagging your loft you know instead of what's happening about the power stations and things like that
B: [What about the power stations there's no mention of that (.) see we can't do anything about the power stations on our own cos we don't run the power stations now that's got to be government legislation that's going to cost money obviously I mean it can be done its not that they can't stop it for the acid rain but its going to cost a lot of money um and I suspect that one of the reasons that its been held back is probably because of all the privatisation of it and they don't want to be doing something highly costly when they might privatise it

B: Somebody made this point the other day they're privatising the company and really that that in itself was going completely against the idea of er environmentalist issues because er a company is out to make profits and therefore to make people erm buy more of their product and erm yet if it had of been er kept in state control ie perhaps well non-profit making as such perhaps but er that would have meant that they could have really got to grips with conservation issues

A: Mm I mean think of the things that have been privatised and gone from government control all the big pollut potential pollutants [gas electricity and water

B: [Yes

A: Now there there's three things that need the greatest changes in to stop all the pollution but they've moved over to private ownership and the first erm (.) aim of private ownership is not to make it environmentally friendly its to make profits for its shareholders and that is the very first aim I mean if you're going to start cleaning up water the money for that has got to be found after the shareholders get their profits now that seems to me a very retrograde step (.) but it just depends I suppose what your views on privatising water and what have you but I don't see that that's going to help in any way because private industry has never been known to go ahead on their own back I mean in the last century when there
was all the we still had cholera and all the other water born diseases it was
government legislation after the 1850's that forced the local councils into doing
the sewers and everything they weren't going to do it on their own free will
there's no chance of that they had to be forced to do it cos it cost a lot of money
and this is what will happen with these I don't see it changing it would cost too
much

Int: What what about you C do you think that sort of the individual consumer
makes any difference to er

C: No I think what people have been saying about it obscuring the real
difficulties is right really I don't think that you make a whole lot of difference
buying your Ecover I mean its nice to er I think you probably feel nice that you're
doing it but that's probably the only thing that you do for the environment

B: Its a little bit

Int: So how do you think people do feel when they buy things I mean we all do it

C: Oh I think you probably feel that you're out there in the forefront (. of
whatever it is

Int: Is that how you feel

B: I think yeah I think in a way its a bit of a cop out really isn't it I mean you buy
your Ecover and you think well that's my bit done instead of doing something (.)
really more (. define what is (. keep writing to an MP or keep or being a
  [member of the green party

C: ] Write once write once

41
A: Well I write from time to time to Stephen Dorrell and I'll give him his due he always replies

Int: Yeah

A: He sits on the fence but he you know he does reply (. ) I don't know what the postman thinks (laughs) he keeps getting these letters from the Houses of Parliament he must think there's somebody very important lives there [laughs]

B: (Laughs) [You're trying to create an impression aren't you

A: [No I fire them off occaisionally yes

B: Yeah I think really that is erm perhaps in some ways you see this is even I was looking at it as a positive thing you see this this is negative in the effect that its sort of cushioning all these other issues isnt it ?

A: Very much so yes

B: It didn't occur to me

Int: Its difficult to er imagine something being done about the environment without all this I mean there's no way of sort of by-passing it really is there ?

A: Well the good point is that it does keep it uppermost in your mind until the media decide to move on as we've said in which case it won't be but it doesn't touch on any of the things we've we've mentioned the real polluters or the um I mean there's parts of I can't remember where it was now it was on a Yorkshire Television programme um ( . ) where not even the local council has the right to test the pollution on one of ICI's plants ( . ) they don't have the right to go in its totally private even the health authorities can't do it now what other what other organisation can have such powerful um protection as that um ( . ) and until you
get to grips with that you're certainly not going to sort of make any difference by having your cheese from made with traditional whatever it is and you know this is just a tiny little speck in the ocean

C: I suppose it does all signify a kind of awareness (.) to environmental issues which might lead on to other things at [higher levels

B: [Well I don't =

A: = What we can do is force our potential parliamentary candidates next time we have an election if they do come round to Sileby erm if enough people collared them about it and said look we want to know what you're doing (.) and we're not voting for you unless you do what we say but people won't do that because (.) the main problem with its apathy

Int: Do you think that most people don't really care about the environment

A: Yes I do (.) I'd say that most [people they think about it and then move on

B: [Well I'd say I'd say that they I'd say that this sort of thing shows that that um (.) they want to care but they don't want to be uncomfortable about it ie they want to be able to stroll round the supermarket and buy one or two products that perhaps assuages their conscience (.) which is clear conscience somewhere written and erm that's their bit they don't really want to think about it any further than that erm (.) and I have to say that was I've I've until we'd spoken here I mean this discussion has sort of tended to make me think more about what what I how I am actually affected by adverts and my standing and I have to say my standing is pretty much I would say one the pleb millions of er (laughs) buy the odd odd erm bio-degradable erm washing up liquid and erm leave it at that sort of thing you know think no further erm sling the milk bottles er sling your bottles down in the bottle bank you know I mean I mean that is really going to extremes you know but erm you know so I think er I think its
certainly made me think further when you look actually look at them there's there's er more issues er raised when you actually think about it but the trouble is you er you don't think about it

A: And it costs a lot of money to do any change I mean would for example everybody be willing to pay I mean if the electricity board came up and said right we can stop acid rain we've got a special process which they can they can do I mean it wouldn't stop it altogether but it would cut it by a great deal but it will add another 20% to your electricity bill I mean how would everybody feel about that would you be happy to pay it if you thought it was going [to cut down on acid rain

B: [Well I disagree actually I think they could start even they could even they could make a start on the things that wouldn't necessarily cost so much and I also think that if if we said right we're going we're going to have a thing that really England's going to come up with er the answer to the energy crisis I mean you know they've been working on lots of ideas wave wind with different things in actual fact wind power (. ) which they at one time poo pooed completely is now being er tried out in various parts of England so I mean you know it is being considered as a definite option for places but um (. ) er I think I think like with the waste they could actually make money out of recycling things er (. ) you know even if it meant that just the sheer fact that they weren't dealing with the amount of waste that they once I mean they weren't taking the amount of rubbish away from homes that they once would have taken away er from it I mean none of these I mean one idea I mean I know they've come up now with this little er Lenor packet where you buy your your conditioner in a a little plastic coated (. ) paper package as a pose to your plastic bottle sort of thing which to me is not much different to buying it in the plastic bottle in the first place my I had an idea a little while ago why I mean they've they've got this crazy thing of people I mean perhaps some people here buy it but they have these these things now these bins where you go and buy flour and cereal and stuff loose which personally I would
never buy because the thought of somebody's hand going in there with that scoop and god knows where their hands have been etc I wouldn't buy it but if they can be tempted to buy things like that loose why not have the um fabric conditioner (.) erm washing powder washing liquid all those things (.) bought loose that you take your container =

Int: = Like the Body Shop isn't it?

B: Yeah and you fill that container well I didn't know that the Body Shop did that but the the you fill the container up and I mean think of think of the erm the fact that you wouldn't have assistants having to stock all those shelves with these individual bottles you would have a reduction in transportation costs because you'd just have one big thing of this stuff delivered to a store they could even make it attractive you know I mean nice little taps that you the kids are going to run up and enjoy filling whatever [you know

A: [And turn on and spill all over the ground [laughs]

B: [laughs] But you know I mean what I mean ideas like that if ideas like that (.) were promoted and were I mean perhaps even (.) offer prizes er on a I know I keep coming down to government and it sounds like it sounds like oh the government's got to do it all but (.) it is (.) the backing if you've got the backing of a government it isn't as if the government has to do it all but the government has to be really seen to be backing it that's how I I see it I'm not saying oh leave it all to the government they've got to do it all but if the government encouraged these practices backed that type of thing then that would make a real difference

Int: Yeah

D: I think its all a bit like charities like when they had the thing about Ethiopia and everybody gave their money on that day and then everybody almost forgot about it and felt like they'd done their bit but it doesn't mean they're not starving
any more and nothing's changed but because everybody's bought their Save the World record sometime a few years ago you feel like you've done something towards it and I think in a way charities are almost a bad thing in the same way as this is because you think that they can save it and it seems like so much money like Children in Need 17 million it seems like so much but it's really not going to do very much and it seems like these are sort of almost the same thing you're thinking oh I'll do this I'll do that and the government it should be the government that needs to do it so I don't think that you shouldn't say the government should do it cos I think they should

B: Yeah

D: Its them that need to sort of stop ICI and =

B: = I was meaning though the what I meant about the government when I was saying about the government it can sound as if you want the government to be er you know I've not got I don't have to do anything the government's got to do it all I think the government should pressurise companies and people if necessary into I mean it when I use the word pressurise they wouldn't need to pressurise there there are things that they could do that would not cost that would actually even could make a profit you could probably make a profit out of the waste I mean you know I mean why not if you're going to get the knock on effect of the profit as well well great you could use that profit on another environmental issue as far as charities are concerned well I think it's amazing to me its no wonder that that charities are abounding because people are are having to live with the thought of people living in cardboard boxes on their very doorsteps and children er social security benefits being hacked away and er with the possibility of children going hungry or without shoes and things like that and I mean this business of giving to Children in Need or Ethiopia or whatever I think it is sick when you consider that there are people on our own doorstep who're being ignored and tax cuts I mean there was a bloke the other day and I do think there is hopefully there is a swing back to a caring society because there was a there
was a talkback programme on the radio I know I listen to the radio constantly I get it all from radio but there was a programme on only yesterday morning on the radio fortunately it was some definitely well judging by the voices if you can judge things by the voices they sounded middle class and they there were plenty of people saying that we have to move back to a caring society as a whole and that they would have preferred not to have tax cuts and not to see people begging on the streets and living in cardboard boxes I mean personally I used to live across a girl used to live across the road from me er I know that they were both on social security I think I think they might have been doing a bit of moonlighting or whatever I don't know I know they managed to get a colour television and whatever and I could have at that time we didn't have a colour television and I could have been eaten up with jealousy over that instead I was only thankful that they had enough money for colour televisons or whatever er but mainly to give their to see their kids well fed I don't want to sit next I don't want to live across the road to anybody that's children have to go around without food or without shoes

Int: So so would you think that environmentalism is part of a caring society

A: I think it does go hand in hand actually because if you care about your society

B: [It hasn't though has it

A: Not yet [no

B: [What has it done I mean we're here shouting and seeing all these pictures of environmental friendly [this and lets worry about

A: [It hasn't happened yet
B: Let's worry about the animals or or er the earth or the food its comes down to self (. ) these things are all self orientated look after yourself [with nice fresh food for yourself

A: [But that's the creed we've had though for many years but I do think that if it changed around which it could very well do and if you start to care about each other again then I think caring for your environment erm can go hand in [hand with it

B: [Oh it can go hand in hand

A: It isn't at the moment admittedly =

B: = The thing the surprise is at the moment that that you've got all this and and you've you've got you're you're going to care for the forests in Brazil and we're not caring about people sitting in cardboard boxes in London (. ) I mean to me this is to me this is is (. ) er its farcical that that we're we're thinking about about (. ) erm issues such as the planet which have to thought about but we're ignoring the caring of of people

Int: So you think its a sort of a choice you either do one or the other?

B: No I don't think its a choice I think its just it just surprises me I think that this is a bit of a bandwagon (. ) that is ignoring the fact it it is like concentrating on an area of caring and ignoring a massive its its like (. ) treating a man (. ) who's got terminal cancer treating a boil on him (. ) he's got terminal cancer you know you know there's a greater (. ) whole thing behind it and you you're treating only one part of it

Int: So so environmentalism is just a part of a a bigger sort of er issue
B: Well it doesn't seem to be part the thing that surprises me is it doesn't seem to be part of it does it it seems to be existing on its own

A: Well I suppose its in its early days yet I mean sort of 5 or 10 years ago you wouldn't even have had advertisements like these they (...) they didn't exist or just the odd ones existed but (...) I mean there was a thing in the paper about

B: [Hopefully its moving towards it]

A: I think in Holland I think there's been a 20% increase in infertility in humans (...) as a direct result of all the pollution there now when you start talking about something like that you can see that pollution does affect [absolutely everybody]

B: [Why are you concerned with Holland when there's studies going round to say that there's victims of leukemia in numerous er places where there's nuclear power stations [in Britain

A: [Because I just happened to see it the other day and I thought yes its beginning I mean in the 50s the hawk population of this country declined drastically why because they were using DDT which affected the fertility and the eggs weren't hatching now it seems to me the same thing's happening now its coming through the food chain and it coming out on us mean I know in this country I don't know what the figures are but infertility is definitely on the [increase

B: [Well allergies I mean [allergies

A: [Allergies they're all tied up

B: Allergies and asthma is a major problem now isn't it?
A: Yeah that’s right so you weigh up what must it cost the National Health Service to treat people with asthma and all the other allergies and what would it cost to try and say look lets find other ways lets not put all these additives and colourings they have improved a bit because urn that E102's been taken out of a lot of foods now hasn't it because they knew it caused so much trouble um with asthmatics

Int: So um sort of what D was saying about how this sort of stuff perhaps obscures the fact that you know the governments not doing anything about it and takes your mind off it do you think that would suggest then that buying environmental things is actually a bad thing for the environment?

A: I think it we said it solves our conscience doesn't it we think oh yes I bought this that's my bit but its got to come in my opinion it has got to come from the government because as I say now that the main polluters have been privatised there's no way they're going to make it any better (.) er it won't come from a Conservative government presumably if a Labour government get in hopefully they might do something about it but whether they will or not I don't know

D: I think it'll just be a selling point when it comes to elections and once they're in its going to take a back seat again

A: Mm

D: I think its as much with Labour and (.) the emphasis on industry as it is with the Conservatives that they might say now oh we're going to do all this for the environment but I don't know whether they actually will

A: Well I mean you're quite right because after all when Labour's been in before they haven't actually stopped any of it and yet its known that there's been great pollution I mean Sellafield for example I mean they consistently denied that they were polluting the area until again I think it was Yorkshire television did that
programme about it and they sent their own scientists in to test the mud flats round it and they found enormous levels of radiation there and they'd been lying and nobody seemed to pick up on that the fact that government officials had been blatantly lying and saying there isn't any pollution when there was

Int: So if if the advertisers are lying about the environment and the government is and the big business is I mean who is it who actually cares about the environment?

A: Well I [care but I feel very frustrated about it

B: [Friends of the Earth

Int: Friends of the Earth?

B: Friends of the Earth

Int: Pressure groups?

B: Pressure groups yeah Greenpeace yeah

A: You see look at the bad publicity you get I mean you'd think sometimes from the write ups in some papers that organisations like Greenpeace are enemies of the country they're not enemies of the country they're friends of the country but they're enemies of the (.) people who do the damage and they've got the money they've got the power and they control the press

D: I think almost everybody cares about the environment but they've each got sort of different worries that take their mind of it so they might think about the environment but perhaps its only the people who're very into (.) pressure groups that will think about it constantly (.) whereas you'll you'll just sort of look at
something and think about it a bit and then another worry'll come along and take your mind of it

B: Well I think also that they perhaps feel powerless (.) they perhaps feel that the problem is too great for them to actually have any effect on

A: I mean what for example what say have we now in the fact that the rivers might be polluted or that the water board well there isn't a water board now is there the water companys what say I mean before at least we could pressurise MPs if if enough people did it because it was government run (.) but now its privately run I mean they're not going to take any notice of individuals I mean what power can the ordinary person have when its a private company they haven't got any in fact they're not accountable at all are they

D: Well you can't unless there was to be a company set up sort of aside to it as competition that was making (.) um sort of trying to be environmentally friendly so you could you could stop using the water but when its something like water and you have to use it whatever they do

A: Exactly

B: Well they could bring in legislation I suppose

Int: So if you wanted to find out something about environmental things who who would you sort of trust to give you

A: Well I wouldn't trust the government and I wouldn't trust the water board

B: No

A: And I wouldn't trust the rivers authority
A: I'd probably go to an environmental (.) erm pressure group

D: But the you could easily say that they were as far on the other side as the government is on the side of lying they were also maybe over exaggerating a lot of people=

A: =You think its political more than a political group rather than actually =

D: = Well no I don't know cos everybody's got their own interests in sort of the green issues and I'm not saying that erm sort of very strong environmentalists (.) are exaggerating but there's a lot of people that think they are and think they're just making a big fuss over nothing so there's not (..) really any completely objective group that you can go and find out about things cos the scientists are all paid by different companies for doing different things and there's not really any way just an ordinary person can find out

A: Which is why I suppose its all been in a haze of [mystery in the past

B: [ I have to disagree there slightly I think if you really were interested in finding out er (.) about environmental issues you could erm consult the pressure group er publications (.) you could keep your eye on (.) er things that were being raised in the media er there's a lot of television programmes that have been on like you've said that have that have raised the issues and er produced reports etc and things like that and then you could perhaps start to make a judgement for yourself

D: But it would still only be a judgement because (..) you can sort of balance everything out but what's to say one extreme wasn't actually right
B: Well I think then you then if I mean you'd obviously if you were interested in the subject if if you were concerned enough you would virtually have to conduct your own research and make your own mind up at the end of the day and then I mean what else what isn't there in life that you don't do that anyway I mean you know you you'd have to be swayed by (.) how (.) many things on one side appeared to (.) be what you considered truthful and how many things you know that you didn't you know you'd have to to sort of really (.) you'd have to look into it you'd have to be concerned enough to really look into it

A: The problem is of course say with water pollution is that water's not constant the pollution's there one day (.) and its gone the next cos its gone downstream or down the river and you might come along to test it and it might be horribly polluted but its moved on the current's taken the pollution further on so you could be testing it and its all right one day and then dreadfully polluted the next so its very difficult to

B: Well with that in mind you'd have to consider a a form of regular testing

A: Yeah but who would do it and who would pay for it you see this is this is the problem who would pay for regular testing [cos I mean its cheaper to do

B: [Well the pressure group you'd be back to the pressure group would they pay for the regular testing to prove their theories

D: But then what they say might not be taken seriously by everyone a lot of people aren't going to believe them (.) they'll say oh its in their own interests to say its more polluted than it is and the water authority will say oh they're exaggerating its not we sent out our scientists and they found less

A: That's right
B: Well I don't think they've got I think you can pretty well believe them cos they don't appear to have a vested interest in er proving that something's polluted when it isn't really polluted

D: Well no=

B: =They're not they've not got pressure
Tape ends.
Appendix Document no.6

Body Shop Pamphlet 1991
WHAT WE WANT TO USE

- When appropriate, we choose natural ingredients over synthetic ones. We believe that natural ingredients are safer and more effective.
- We use organic and locally-sourced ingredients whenever possible.
- We avoid the use of parabens, sulfates, and other harmful chemicals.
- We prioritize products that are cruelty-free and non-toxic.

CONCLUSION

The Natural Body Shop is committed to using natural ingredients and ethical practices in all of our products. By making environmentally conscious choices, we hope to create a healthier and more sustainable world. Join us in our mission to promote natural beauty and wellness for all!

WHERE WE'VE GONE

We have taken the concept of "natural" to a whole new level. We are now using organic and locally-sourced ingredients in all of our products. Our goal is to provide our customers with the highest quality, natural ingredients available.

NATURAL

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