DIVERSITY AGAINST THE MONOCULTURE:
BIOREGIONAL VISION AND PRAXIS
AND CIVIL SOCIETY THEORY

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Abstract

My thesis examines the bioregional movement in North America; its vision, values, strategies and tools for community building and networking towards a more sustainable society.

The interrelated problems of the over-consumption of natural resources, the dominant cultural construct of people as consumers, and the decline of human community provide the context for my research in radical planning.

The goal of my inquiry into bioregionalism (which places cultural change at the center of its paradigm for societal transformation) is to reveal lessons for a "post-Marxist" theory of civil society. This latter theory proposes a dual strategy of horizontal communicative action among associations in civil society combined with strategic vertical campaigns to democratize both state and corporations. However, it offers no ecological or cultural critique of consumption. My thesis addresses this gap. A civil society theory that incorporated lessons about consumption and cultural transformation from bioregionalism might, in turn, have lessons about integrating horizontal and vertical strategies for bioregionalism which has not sufficiently theorized its political economic strategy.

I use two concepts, "social capital" and "eco-social capital", to analyze bioregional experiences. Eco-social capital refers to social capital informed by an ethic of human kinship with the natural world. Using these concepts, I first show how ecological kinship corresponds with the conservative and respectful use of resources in aboriginal societies.

My study of bioregional praxis shows that story telling, earth ceremonies, ecological restoration, etc. bond bioregional actors to each other and to the "community-of-all-beings" in particular places. Social and eco-social capital provides them with spiritual resources for dedicating lives to long-term societal transformation while eschewing commodity consumption. Bioregionalists' experiences and strategy support a diverse and democratic civil society which respects and cares for the natural world.

An eco-centric civil society theory would strategize long-term generational transformation in both cultural and political economic terms. Bioregional horizontal community and networking would be complemented by strategic vertical campaigns to curb the power of both state and corporations over civil society, thus strengthening democracy and a sustainable strategy for greatly reduced consumption.
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General Introduction to the Thesis

This thesis is a study of the bioregional movement in Canada, the United States and Mexico from its gestation in the early 1970's to the beginning of 1998. It examines the vision, values, social change strategy and community building and networking tools/methods of the movement.

This study is conducted in the context of the twin problem of the unsustainable over-consumption of natural resources centered in the large urban regions of advanced capitalistic consumer societies and the decline of community and associational life in these same societies. It may be argued that these two problems are linked together through positive feedback loops: decline of community life creates an appetite for private over-consumption which furthers decline of community life. The end could be catastrophe for civilization as stocks of natural capital decline to a point where loss of ecosystem function, structure and integrity is so great that recovery becomes impossible.

A change in direction is possible, a revival of community and associational life in civil society leading to a change in the culture of consumption and to corresponding changes in the economic and political structures and institutions of civilization. A new body of theory thematizing such a democratic transformation based in civil society offers promising insights for social movements seeking to address the crisis of civilization. This self-proclaimed "post-Marxist" theory breaks with the Marxist theory of the
dictatorship of the proletariat, the conception of the working class as the primary agent of social revolution, and with the dream of abolishing the state. Instead, a dual strategy, based in civil society, is proposed to replace it. The dual strategy envisions horizontal communicative action targeting identities, norms, and institutions in civil society to defend and strengthen the democratic character of civil society. Horizontal strategy is combined with vertical campaigns of "bridging" and developing influence for legal, policy, political, and economic reforms to democratize both the state and corporate sectors. Together, the combined strategies support each other (Cohen and Arato 1992).

However, the theory lacks both an ecological critique of consumerism and a cultural critique of its underpinnings in the narrowly conceived modernist construct of "economic man" (sic). Certain contemporary social movements such as bioregionalism have developed a praxis of social change that challenges this modernist construct. My thesis shows that bioregionalists integrate cultural change into the center of their paradigm of social transformation. They critique consumption, and they work to implement changes in their lives and others, chiefly through horizontal efforts in civil society building place-based communities and networks which respect ecological limits. Bioregionalists support strategies aimed at reducing aggregate consumption and supporting reductions in individual consumption and attempt to implement them in their daily life. Moreover, reductions in consumption and the demanding life-work of organizing for sustainable social change have been supported - in the experience of many bioregionalists - by certain emotional/spiritual benefits of bonding both with other humans and with the natural world in particular places. Using an analytical concept that I call "eco-social capital", I have identified this bonding process as a synergistic energy involving feelings of joy and love.
The eco-social capital concept emerges from the discourse on social capital, specifically a social capital critical of under-socialized concepts of economic man as an atomized, individualistic consumer. This view of social capital theory, like civil society theory, emphasizes the importance of horizontal relations. Social capital refers to: norms of cooperation, reciprocity and mutual aid; relations of trust; and organized networks (Putnam 1993 a, b). My study shows how bioregionalists have built social capital through their horizontal community-building strategy and how social capital and eco-social capital helps to support this work.

While bioregionalists spend much of their efforts in this horizontal work in civil society, they also put some effort into pursuing vertical reforms. However, they have not sufficiently theorized their strategy vis à vis either the state or the corporate sectors with respect to strategic vertical reform and its relationship to horizontal community building. That is, they have not sufficiently theorized their strategy for vertical political and economic institutional transformation that would support lasting changes in civil society. In particular, they have not developed any common theory or strategy with respect to the entrenched power of finance capital and large corporations.

It seemed to me that an inquiry into bioregionalism that drew cultural insights from its formation of social and eco-social capital and then used them to inform civil society theory could strengthen the latter theory considerably by including cultural change as a fully integrated dimension of theory. In turn, this revised or reconstructed theory (with its understanding of combined horizontal-vertical strategies) might inform social movements like bioregionalism with some insights into selected vertical strategies for political and economic institutional change in state and corporate spheres that supported efforts at horizontal change in civil society.
The search for cooperative solutions to the crisis of civilization inevitably raises questions as to what is fundamental about human nature and culture. These include questions about the ability of human beings to live cooperatively, questions about the relationship of humans to the rest of the natural world, and questions about the meaning of human life. Some, such as classical conservative philosopher Thomas Hobbes, argue that humans have never lived cooperatively, that the original condition of humankind was a war of all against all.

Today, there is good evidence, examples of which I present in this thesis, to suggest that during humanities' early days in the domestic mode of production (gathering, hunting and horticulture), many human groups did indeed live cooperatively and did so in the context of a worldview that conceived of humans as part of the greater family of life on planet earth, a worldview that placed the human community in the greater "community of beings" (the natural world). I make the case that modern society has some important lessons to learn from these societies, lessons about cooperative living among humans, about living with care and respect for all life, and about the conservative use of natural resources. My review of the domestic mode of production, which is prior to my inquiry into bioregionalism, serves to challenge the narrow construct of the human individual of neo-classical economics with a more socialized concept informed by an anthropology with both socio-cultural and ecological underpinnings.

Introduction to chapter one

In this chapter I discuss the problem that sets the context for this thesis. The problem has a basis in the over-consumption of natural resources in the
urban regions of the advanced capitalist consumer societies. Related to the over-consumption problem is the problem of the dominant cultural construct of "man" (sic) as an individualistic consumer. In this context, I discuss the decline of human community and associational life as consumerism has spread in the consumer nations. I also discuss two major opposing views of the problem: the neo-classical economic view which sees no natural limits to material growth; and, on the other hand, the ecological economic view which identifies escalating consumption and material growth as serious enough to jeopardize sustainability.

I share the latter view. From this perspective, the whole dynamic of material growth and commodity consumption calls for major societal and cultural transformation in order for civilization to become sustainable. This position is known in the planning literature as the radical planning tradition (Friedmann 1987).

I then discuss a "post-Marxist" civil society theory of democratic social revolution that has examined certain contemporary social movements for radical change and developed a promising strategic analysis for transformation based, not on the working class, but rather on the development of dense networks of associations in civil society, combined with citizen-led campaigns for political and economic reform. I critique this theory for its lack of ecological understanding and its failure to address the problem of over-consumption and the related cultural construct of "economic man".

I also discuss a second body of theory centered around the concept of social capital which is critical of the "under-socialized" concept of economic man (sic). I discuss the definition and history of the social capital concept and its anthropocentric bias. I then introduce the concept of eco-social capital and the need to understand, given the problem of the decline of community, how
both social capital and eco-social capital can be created. This, then, is the theoretical context for my inquiry which introduces my research question.

The rest of the chapter describes my methods of data collection and analysis.

**Problem Statement**

The "real world problems" (Marshall and Rossman 1989, 33) that lie behind the theoretical concerns of this thesis are twofold. The first problem is the rise of an atomistic, individualistic concept of "man", often referred to as *homo economicus* (Daly and Cobb 1989). *Homo economicus* relies on an ever-increasing dependence on material (manufactured) capital accumulation for personal security and self-esteem. The second problem is the over-consumption of resources in the advanced capitalist consumer societies, particularly in urban regions, that necessarily accompanies the accumulation of material capital. This phenomenon is described as "Fatal Consumption" (Boothroyd et al. 1999). Both over-consumption and the economic concept of the human individual are promoted by a hegemonic capitalist paradigm. Consequently, these two problems are intertwined. Furthermore, the rise of *homo economicus* has been accompanied by the decline of cohesive human community, especially in these same urban regions.

The general theoretical problem which emerges from a consideration of the above problematic is how to think more profoundly and strategically about socio-cultural transition and the transformation to a sustainable society from contemporary capitalist industrial-materialist society. This theoretical problem will be discussed after a consideration of the real world problem.
The Real World Problem

There are two different world-views that take almost diametrically opposed stances to the above problematic. They are the economic or neo-classical world-view and the ecological world-view. For the proponents of the neo-classical economic world-view, there are few problems of over-consumption that economic growth and technological development under free-market conditions cannot solve. For example, Lester Thurow has dismissed resource availability as a problem for economic growth by arguing that the interplay of demand and supply necessarily solve the problem:

The world can consume only what it can produce. When the rest of the world has consumption standards equal to those of the U.S., it will be producing at the same rate and provide as much of an increment to the world-wide supplies of goods and services as it does to the demand for goods and services. (Daly and Cobb 1989, 40)

In this view, the only problem is the human technological ability to produce the required output. With this argument any possible exhaustion of resources is dismissed. In a similar vein, George Gilder rejects biophysical limits to growth:

The United States must overcome the materialistic fallacy: the illusion that resources and capital are essentially things, which can run out, rather than products of the human will and imagination which in freedom are inexhaustible --- because economies are governed by thoughts, they reflect not the laws of matter, but the laws of mind. (Daly and Cobb 1989, 109).

In this view, the only limits to growth are in our heads.

Economist Julian Simon agrees with this view. In discussing the inexhaustibility of "natural resources", Simon had this to say: "You see, in the end, copper and oil come out of our minds. That's really where they are" (Daly
and Cobb 1989, 109). In "The Ultimate Resource", Simon employs a mathematical rather than an ideological argument to show that concern for absolute shortages of natural resources is misplaced:

The length of a one-inch line is finite in the sense that it is bounded at both ends. But the line within the endpoints contains an infinite number of points; these points cannot be counted, because they have no defined size. Therefore, the number of points in that one-inch segment is not finite. Similarly, the quantity of copper that will ever be available to us is not finite, because there is no method (even in principle) of making an appropriate count of it. (Daly and Cobb 1989, 40)

Like Simon, also using free-market ideological reasoning, economist Walter Block has argued that, "Far from economic growth and population being a danger to the human race, the very opposite is true. Additional people can create more resources than they use up, thanks to technological improvements and a marketplace that allows specialization, division of labour, and world-wide economic coordination" (Block 1990, 305). Moreover, Block then adds his own empirical argument that with respect to human population "the earth is virtually empty, as anyone can attest who has taken an airplane ride and bothered to look out the window" (Block 1990, 304). This is Block's empirical evidence for an empty world! These arguments are illustrative of some of the better known proponents of the now dominant free-market economic world-view that simply denies biophysical limits to either economic or human population growth.

Opposed to the free-market economic world-view is the ecological world-view of a smaller but growing number of thinkers (e.g. Daly and Cobb 1989; Goodland 1991; Rees 1995; Wackernagel and Rees 1996). In this view, the Western industrial growth modal of capitalistic production and consumption has become unsustainable. For example, members of the UBC Task Force on Planning Healthy and Sustainable Communities estimated that industrial
society has overstepped the limits of the planet's natural carrying capacity by up to 30% (Rees and Wackernagel 1994; Rees 1996b; Wackernagel and Rees 1996). Their figures are supported by independent research from several other countries. These studies tell us that the dominant Western philosophic/scientific paradigm embodied in our industrial system cannot be made sustainable by mere minor reforms (Rees, 1995; IIED 1997).

In this view, economic growth of the dominant global industrialist system has a cumulative global ecological impact which has been called the aggregate "ecological footprint" of human society (Rees and Wackernagel 1994; Rees 1996a; Wackernagel and Rees 1996). This global ecological footprint (EF) is already excessive. That is, there is insufficient natural capital to sustain a growing industrial society more than a few decades with prevailing technology, given ozone depletion, climate change, desertification, deforestation, resource draw down, and destruction of and threats to foodlands (Brown and Kane 1994). In the ecological view, the sheer size of the human enterprise combined with both human population growth and throughput growth now threatens irreversible global ecological destruction.

Perhaps the most alarming indicator of the profound crisis of industrial civilization is the accelerating rate of loss of biological diversity now occurring on the planet. Currently, according to the self-admitted conservative estimate of Harvard evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson, we are losing 27,000 species every year. Moreover, Wilson warns that the current extinction spasm we are entering promises to be the greatest of all extinction spasms in the planet's entire existence (Wilson 1992). The primary cause of species extinction is loss of habitat due to human-induced appropriation of material and energy flows from nature that would otherwise sustain other species (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1981; Wilson 1992).
As Western industrial civilization has proliferated, destroying habitat and endangering biological diversity every place it touches, so too has it acted to undermine the diversity, strength, and character of human community. The hegemony of consumer/productivist civilization has never seemed so complete. This system, named and analyzed by Lewis Mumford as "the modern Megamachine" (Mumford 1970), often seems to be an overwhelming phenomenon, holding forth the illusion of reform while continuing its destructive direction (Chomsky 1989; Harvey 1989; Marcuse 1964, Mumford 1970).

The loss of community is arguably more advanced in those societies where consumerism is most developed, particularly in the advanced industrial consumer countries. In these countries, especially in certain urban centres, large ecological footprints testify to enormous consumption levels (Folke et al 1997; Rees 1994; Wackernagel and Rees 1996). The ecological footprint is important as a critical heuristic in thinking about and measuring consumption levels. The ecological footprint begins with the assumption that every category of energy and material consumption and waste discharge requires the productive or adsorptive capacity of a finite area of land or water. By adding the land requirements of all categories of consumption and waste discharge of a population living in a given area, the ecological footprint measures the land area required for that population to maintain its levels of consumption "wherever on Earth that land is located" (Wackernagel and Rees 1996, 51-52). Rees and Wackernagel explain that the size of the ecological footprint is not fixed, but is dependent on money income, prevailing values, other sociological factors, and the state of technology. Most importantly, they warn that the ecological footprint of a given population is the land area exclusively needed by that population to maintain its consumption levels and that "flows and capacities used by one population are not available for use by others" (1996, 52). Since much of the
material and energy flows used by high consumption centers in the advanced
capitalistic countries are drawn from other areas outside those centers both in
the advanced countries and in many underdeveloped areas in the rest of the
world, it is clear that the ecological footprint is a also a measure of the
inequalities of economic imperialism. Moreover, high consumption in advanced
centers, because it does deliver goods and services to those populations, can
compensate them with commodity consumption for any loss of community
relations. This dynamic highlights the crux of the problem posed for civil society
transformation in the Western consuming nations.

It is precisely in these same high consumption centres where community
is perhaps the least robust. Indeed, a wide range of thinkers have discussed
the decline of human community in the West (Daly and Cobb 1989; Friedmann
1987; Freund and Martin 1993; Harvey 1989; hooks 1990; Polanyi 1957; and
Relph 1987). Of course, there are great regional variations between and within
countries with a concentration of both consumption and finance capital control
within a global hierarchy. In this global hierarchy, urban consumption centres
dominate rural and so-called "third world" hinterlands (Galtung 1971, 1979;

But what of the high-consuming populations in the advanced industrial
and high-tech centres of the hierarchy? I have claimed that a decline in
community is evident in cities and urbanized regions of high consumption
societies. What do I mean by "community" and why do I and others claim it is in
decline? This will require an extended discussion.
The Definition and Decline of Community

The term "community" has been used to define levels of social interaction from small scale close-knit groups of people living together in some common vision of collective living arrangements to various more loosely defined groupings of people at the neighbourhood, district, regional, national, and even at the global scale. It has often been overused to the point of near meaninglessness. Something more precise is needed. When I use the term "community" I prefer there to be a geographical dimension. Yet, others would prefer not only to include communities of interest in the term, but to favour interest over geographical place. Some even appear hostile to geographically defined community in the name of contemporary urban, large scale organization and cosmopolitanism of modern cities which they assume can provide suitable substitutes to the values of the human community that they destroy (Daly and Cobb 1989, 171). I side with Daly and Cobb who argue against individualism and cosmopolitanism as solutions to problems of community life.

Daly and Cobb define community very broadly as a normative term that meets four conditions: one, membership in the community contributes to self-identification; two, there is extensive participation by its members in the decisions by which its life is governed; three, the society as a whole takes some responsibility for its members; and, four, the responsibility includes respect for the diverse individuality of its members (Daly and Cobb 1989, 172). I would also include in my definition of community the requirement that to be a member of a community people plan together over time for their long-term common betterment and need to have at least some personal acquaintance with other members (Boothroyd and Davis 1991).
Like Boothroyd's and Davis's, my definition of community focuses on personal involvement and person-in-community as essential. It eschews anonymity, and yet remains open to a broad pluralistic sense of community that avoids parochialism and homogeneity. These later are not inevitable aspects of geographically-based community. The Boothroyd/Davis definition is open to both communities of place and communities of interest, but it rules out large interest groups such as labour unions, professional associations, business corporations, or churches (Boothroyd and Davis 1991). My definition of community also rules out whole cities, but permits neighbourhoods, districts, and towns up to about five thousand people. That is to say, there is a necessary size limit to the notion of community, if anonymity is to be avoided.

In this context, Kirkpatrick Sale has reviewed a range of anthropological and historical evidence that shows that: one, humans evolved in small communities or bands which averaged around 300-500 members; and two, larger tribal groupings and early cities averaged around 5,000 individuals (Sale 1980, 179-191). Urban planner Hans Blumenfeld has suggested that the size at which people can know every other person by face, voice, and name in a community is around 500 (Sale 1980, 183). The figure 5,000 for the larger groupings of early medieval cities, and neighbourhood districts within contemporary cities is based on historical experience and a variety of planners' estimates of optimal spatial scale - small but still viable units through which individuals can traverse fairly easily by walking, and yet are large enough to contain and support schools, playgrounds, a variety of stores and services, and public buildings as well as residences (Sale 1980, 185-186). Based on his evidence, Sale has argued that these two ranges of suggestive numbers, one around 500, the other around 5,000 to 10,000, represent optimum face-to-face community for the former and an extended association or wider alliance for the
later. Sale also argues that the larger number represents the optimum for an effective economic society in which basic specialization of production for goods and services as well as legislative, legal, political and security tasks would be supported. He points out that several real-world independent states and self-administered dependencies work well at this size, including Anguilla, the Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands and Saint Helena (Sale 1980, 187-88).

My definition of community, then, combines both interest and geography. It is a flexible definition that includes small face-to-face communities as well as broader associations of people in somewhat larger economic units. I also want to include a sense of "polity" in my definition of community similar to John Friedmann's concept. A political community, Friedmann argues, defends itself against external powers that threaten to restrict or abolish its own powers. From the state, it demands both responsiveness to people's wishes and accountability for its actions. From the corporate economy, it demands service for the common ends of the community, and from civil society, it demands conduct in conformity with the moral norms agreed to in assembly (Friedmann 1987, 338-339). Finally, in my definition of community I want to include something the male thinkers above have left out, something emotional that is essential to at least the small face-to-face scale of community. American cultural critic, bell hooks, has expressed the deep emotional experience of community she felt in growing up in a segregated community of black people in small town Kentucky. This was a sense of belonging and togetherness, a sense of caring and support, a sense of power (though contained), and a sense of "sweet communion" which hooks understood was "rooted in love, relational love, the care we had towards one another" (hooks 1990, 35).

It is important to note that while my definition of community includes communities of interest, it places more emphasis on communities that combine
both interest and geography. This is key because some may argue that the decline of geographical community has been compensated for by the rise of communities of interest, such as those formed through use of the internet. While this may be true in some cases, it is crucial to keep in mind that the vast majority of humans do not have access to the internet. It is also worth noting that an internet community may know no loyalty to place (particularly if it "substitutes" for place-based community). Internet communities would therefore be preferred by the corporate sector since indifference to place exposes local resources to exploitation without resistance.

Why do I and others claim community as broadly defined above has declined, especially in advanced urban centres of the so-called first world? There are many reasons. First, since the last half of the nineteenth century there has been an enormous growth in size, economic power, and political influence of private business corporations. Economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi has made this phenomenon one of his major themes. Simply stated it is this: the pursuit of material self-gain and economic power in the formal market economy has become an institutionally-enforced incentive to participate in this type of economic life. This development has worked to erode social and community life (Polanyi 1968). The history of this transformation of economic power relations will be discussed shortly. It has generally resulted in the decline of community power to make decisions regarding daily life with decisions over every aspect of life being increasingly made in corporate boardrooms.

The decline of community life has not been linear. For example, in the first third of this century many communities in Canada organized producer co-ops, consumer co-ops, and credit unions to foster community growth (Boothroyd and Davis 1991). Social capital was actually increased in Canada after an
earlier period of decline. However, during the economic boom of the 1950's and 1960's many co-ops either withered or consolidated into large mainstream businesses administered with little community involvement in decision-making. Also, the rise of welfare state ideology changed the way people thought about the relationship between communities and the state. The growth of the welfare state saw governments willing and able to support people to stay in their communities even if the local economic base had collapsed. The community became a place with survival rights, but it had ceased to be an agent of planning (Boothroyd and Davis 1991).

This was the period of top-down master planning, the heyday of operations research and systems analysis, developed in great part out of military logistics for large scale planning in world war two. In the bomb ravaged cities of Europe after the war, redevelopment took the form of "clean sweep planning" (Relph 1987, 144). Clean sweep planning is planning without regard for physical or historical constraints. Relph has pointed out that its main rationale was that there should be as few obstacles as possible to an entirely modern solution, assuming that there was little or nothing of anything old worth saving. Bombed out cities in Europe provided perfect palates for clean sweep planning. Between 1945 and 1960, in working-class districts of London, Amsterdam and Paris, great open-block complexes of Bauhaus and LeCorbusier style apartment residences were built to replace row houses and tenements that had been destroyed in the war or subsequently declared unfit to live in (Relph 1987, 144-147). Relph comments that most clean-sweep developments resulted in drab, dreary groups of prefabricated concrete sections, surrounded by open spaces too barren and windswept to be of much use for anything. The modernist promise of community renewal failed to materialize. The real social effect was to undermine community life:
The drab new surroundings frequently seem to have promoted not the egalitarian happy city of to-morrow but a whole range of personal and social problems including depression, vandalism, difficulties of supervising young children in ground-level playgrounds from upper floor apartments, and the joyless experience of sharing elevators with gangs of juvenile delinquents. (Relph 1987, 146-147)

In Canada, and especially in the United States, clean-sweep planning - without the bombed out cities - was promoted as "urban renewal" and slum clearing, beginning in the early 1950's. Relph comments that urban renewal was seen as a form of radical surgery to clean out unsafe, unsanitary, overcrowded dwellings which fostered social and economic problems. The philosophy of the entire process was captured by a US Supreme Court ruling rejecting an appeal against the expropriation of a store in Washington, DC. The ruling reads: "experts concluded that if the community were to be healthy, if it were not to revert again to a blighted-out slum area, as though possessed by a congenital disease, the area must be re-planned as a whole --- it was important to redesign the whole area so as to eliminate the conditions that cause slums" (Relph 1987, 147). In this spirit many poor or black communities were entirely bulldozed out of existence to be replaced by projects of great gray or dull brown apartment slabs in bleak, windswept landscapes.

Another aspect of urban renewal that has worked to undermine community in poor neighbourhoods is the thoroughly paternalistic approach taken to slums and slum dwellers. Jane Jacobs has argued convincingly that attempts to wipe away slums and their populations succeed, at best, in shifting them from one place to another. However, the more common result has been to destroy communities. For Jacobs, urban renewal "destroys neighbourhoods where constructive and improving communities exist and where the situation calls for encouragement rather than destruction" (Jacobs 1992, 270-271). She
further points out that moving people out or encouraging the more successful slum dwellers to leave actually perpetuates the process of slum creation and has destroyed many neighbourhoods in the U.S. that had started unslumming by building on the forces for regeneration that existed within the slums themselves. One exception to the urban renewal process was her own neighbourhood in New York City which was saved from “disastrous amputation only because its citizens were able to fight city hall” (Jacobs 1992, 272).

Unslumming, then, depends on the retention of a considerable part of a slum population within the slum and on whether the residents and business people find it desirable and practical to make and carry out their own plans right there (Jacobs 1992, 272). In other words, it depends on the retention of community vitality within the slum area itself.

Another major reason for the decline of community since the second world war was the rapid spread of automobiles and the proliferation of road and expressway systems beginning in the 1950’s and still continuing today. The automobile is much more than just an artifact. In the twentieth century it has been a major means of expanding consumerism and throughput growth. Not only has the automobile played the major role in the organization of industrial expansion named and known as Fordism, but it symbolizes the implementation of the ideology of consumption. Freund and Martin have pointed out that the automobile is the centerpiece of a vast system of auto-centered transit. They define auto-centered transit as a technological system with major impacts on public policy, land use, cultural patterns, social relations, community, natural resources, environmental quality, and options for the spacial mobility of individuals. An auto-centered transport system is one in which the car is the dominant or only means of conveyance used for everyday activities (Freund and Martin 1993, 1-2). It is beyond this thesis to discuss fully the negative
effects of the automobile system on our society, our culture, and on ecosystem ecology. However, with respect to issues of community there are several ways in which the auto and auto-centered transport systems have contributed to the decline of community in cities.

The road and expressway system has experienced enormous growth since 1945 in both the US and Canada. Highway planning and engineering have greatly expanded a landscape that had begun to be built in the 1930's, a relatively featureless landscape oriented exclusively to machines and machine speeds (Relph 1987, 158). This landscape has contributed to the paved-over destruction and fragmentation of wildlife habitat as well as to what Jane Jacobs calls the erosion of cities. She argues that the erosion of cities has been an incremental process, but the cumulative effect is enormous:

And each step, while not crucial in itself, is crucial in the sense that it not only adds its own bit to the total change, but actually accelerates the process. Erosion of cities by automobiles is thus an example of what is known as 'positive feedback', an action produces a reaction which in turn intensifies the condition responsible for the first action, and so on, ad infinitum. It is something like the grip of a habit-forming addiction. (Jacobs 1992, 249-350)

Expressways, freeways, boulevards and streets, road widenings, parking lots, malls, used and new car lots, garages, and gas stations together comprise the extensive auto-dominated environments in cities that have contributed immensely to the erosion of cities that has ironically been promoted as urban renewal. Many communities have been uprooted by this process.

Another effect of the automobile system has been to allow the planning of segregated cities. Segregated cities refers to the creation of large single use districts in many cities since 1945 (Relph 1987, 138-165). This was also part of the clean sweep planning approach to urban renewal. The mobility gained
through the creation of segregated cities was paid for by the loss of urban communities. Expressways penetrate, weave, and loop around almost every city in the developed world. They have made the enormous scale and segregation of cities possible by making all districts theoretically accessible from other districts by a quick auto trip. They have also divided up cities, separating industrial districts from residential areas, poor ghettos from rich districts, etc (Relph 1987, 162). Jane Jacobs railed against this loss of diversity at the district level, arguing that such segregated land-uses contributed to the loss of diversity which was essential to the vitality of urban communities (1992).

Apart from expressways, road widenings, parking lot proliferation, and other manifestations of auto dominated land use, the sheer numbers of automobiles came to dominate many streets and contributed to the erosion of urban community life. A 1970 study of a residential neighbourhood in San Francisco by Donald Appleyard illustrates the phenomenon. The Appleyard study showed the corrosive effects on community life of the growing zone-of-influence of cars. Through interviews and actual mapping of the residential use of street and yard space, Appleyard was able to show that as traffic increased, what was defined as “home territory” by residents progressively shrank. This loss of home territory proceeded in stages from full use of the street carriage way, sidewalks, front yards, porches, and interior front rooms, one by one loosing the use of each space till even the front rooms of the homes were abandoned because of excessive traffic noise. The final stage was moving out of the neighbourhood altogether to become traffic refugees. As the residential use of the street and yards declined, so did the friendly neighbourly visits, exchanges, acquaintances, and friendships evaporate. Eventually, long-term meaningful relationships fractured and community life declined (Engwicht 1993, 48-54).
Geographer Edward Relph has commented on the sameness or monotony of the modern urban landscape. The elements that came together since 1945 to make the segregation, automobilization, and cosmopolitanism of cities were represented in planning through newly instituted official planning processes. These planning processes drew on a limited repertoire of ideas and procedures, mostly conceived before the war. They included single zoning of land uses, neighbourhood units, Bauhaus-style layouts for public housing, and assembly-line standardization of town planning, or what Relph calls “planning by numbers” (Relph 1987, 140-41). This top-down form of planning was also called rational planning. It spread at first in the developed industrial countries, later more globally. Rational planning by experts removed or seriously eroded the ability of local communities to control their own lives. Some now refer to the modern urban landscape, the rational planning process behind it, and the corporatisation of cities as "global monoculture". Its success represents the advantage of space over place. What David Harvey remarked about the power of the international financial class of the nineteenth century remains true of those who control the forces of the modern megamachine in this century: “Those who built a sense of community across space found themselves with a distinct advantage over those who mobilized the principle of community in place" (Harvey 1989, 32). And so we return from the theme of the decline of community life to the theme of the drive for growth in the global hierarchy.

Socio-cultural Aspects of the Drive for Growth and Consumption

To understand socio-cultural aspects of the drive for economic growth, consumerism and the rise of aggressive individualism, I will briefly examine its history. The deep roots of this global phenomenon probably go back to the
foundations of Western civilization (Mann 1986; Schmookler 1984). However, the more immediate economic and cultural roots of this problematic can be found in nineteenth century economic liberalism and the institution of “laissez faire” or free trade that Great Britain launched. This was accomplished by the “great transformation” that took place as the economic sphere was freed of its social and political fetters via the market mechanism to the point where the economy was no longer embedded in civil society (Polanyi 1957). By this I mean that the economy no longer directly served the needs of civil society, but rather followed the “grow or die” ethic of nineteenth century free market liberalism (Polanyi 1957). People have thus come to serve the economy as much or more than the economy serves them. A disembedded or largely autonomous economic sphere also meant that exchange value became privileged over use value, national markets over local markets, and the formal market over the informal economy in civil society. All of this further undermines local community.

The late nineteenth century creation of huge corporate trusts and the concentration and centralization of capital were facilitated by the legal transformation of corporate entities into “persons” with individual rights but limited liability (Dodd 1934; Grossman 1994; Korten 1995). This expansion in size and reach of financial and corporate power, in combination with the creation of national markets and the creation of mass advertising, formed the basis for growth-driven consumer/productivist society of the mid-twentieth century (Ewen 1976). The expansion of the state, which rivaled the growth of huge corporations, eventually helped to ameliorate some of the worst working and living conditions created by nineteenth century industrialism (at least in the advanced capitalist countries). However, the expansion of the state sector came at a cost; the creation of a hierarchical, state-citizen relationship of
dependency where the increasingly isolated individual citizen became more and more dependent on the growing state. These vertical state-citizen relations of dependency helped to undermine horizontal social relations in civil society (Cohen and Arato 1992). In this whole century-long process, civil society became increasingly separated from and dominated by the formal economic and political spheres.

On an even broader historical stage, the roots of this system have been traced to the Renaissance with the marriage of scientific materialism and mercantile and colonial capitalism (Berman 1981; Merchant 1980). This is still the dominant form of culture informing the capitalist industrial growth model today. Behind the conspicuous consumption and possessive individualism fostered by the advertising industry, is concealed the dominance of finance capital and transnational corporate control over social and geographical space. Those who have built geopolitical and economic hegemony across space now dominate place-oriented communities in cities and urban regions. In turn, urban regions dominate their rural hinterlands. Marxist geographer David Harvey, in his historical analysis of the rise of this phenomenon in the last half of the nineteenth century, underlines the specific advantages of space over place:

The Parisian revolutions of 1848 and 1871 were put down by a bourgeoisie that could mobilize its forces across space. Control over the telegraph and flows of information proved crucial in disrupting the rapidly spreading strike of 1877 in the industrial centres of the United States. Those who built a sense of community across space found themselves with a distinct advantage over those who mobilized the community in place. (Harvey 1994, 32)

Harvey's analysis refers to a logistical military advantage. At the level of culture a somewhat parallel advantage pertained for space-oriented economies of growth over place-oriented economies of subsistence. Within the mass
culture of urbanization in North America, social competition with respect to both lifestyle and command over space helped create and mobilize consumer "sovereignty". This mobilization would ensure that consumption for consumption's sake matched capitalist industrialism's drive toward production for production's sake and accumulation for accumulation's sake (Ewen 1976). Urban regions in the upper levels of the global hierarchy have become the nexus of consumerism, dominating vast hinterlands and drawing down their resources. The aggregated ecological footprints of such regions now span the globe (Folke et al. 1997; Rees and Wackernagel 1994; Rees 1996b; 1997b). Thus, the erosion of community through the control of space over place was compensated for and masked by the mass consumption of commodities in the advanced industrial/consumer nations.

The accelerating depletion of vast rural hinterlands is a real world problem facing all humanity, but it is generated primarily in the consumption centres of the global system. Therefore, locating research about concepts of socio-cultural, political, and economic transformation in a North American urban regional context means focusing on the spatial core of the sustainability problem. How can we build, or re-build, healthy and sustainable communities in such centres of conspicuous consumption whose material reach is global in scope?

In order to address the question of over-consumption, a purely economic analysis is not sufficient. The question begs a cultural understanding. The rise of international finance capital and corporate power in the nineteenth century, its subsequent concentration and centralization in urban centres under the control of a small elite, and the great transformation in market relations led to the creation of the global megamachine in the twentieth century. This development was accompanied and made possible by another transformation,
the shift in cultural consciousness about what it meant to be human. We need to understand how the great transformation to a capitalist market economy driven by excessive consumption in the centers was made possible by a change in the concept of the human being. That is, we need to consider the cultural core of *homo economicus* or economic man (*sic*).

The phenomenon of economic man has been explored by several authors, so the following argument merely draws on their thought. As national and international markets grew, undermining the independence of local and regional markets and businesses, a new concept of the human individual as utility-maximizing economic man, or *homo economicus*, came forth to take the place of the culturally diverse, tradition-oriented, more community and socially embedded human being. *Homo economicus*, the modern middle-class image of the individual, disconnects the individual from traditional community at the level of self-understanding (C.A. Bowers 1993, 26). Instead of the community or even the family as the basic social unit, private accumulation by the atomized individual - cut off from community involvement - becomes the chief measure of success in a society based on unlimited consumption.

In a predominantly cultural analysis of the "great social transformation" from kinship and local community to the world of the capitalist market, Robert Bellah and his colleagues link the cultural changes surrounding this great social transformation to the emergence of the modern middle class in America (Bellah et al. 1985, 117-121). They point out that the term "middle class" emerged only in the last decades of the nineteenth century. This, of course, is the same period of the great economic transformation (to a laissez faire market society) analyzed by Polanyi. The eighteenth century concept of the "middle rank" of society as a moderating force for equilibrium between extremes of wealth and poverty gave way in the nineteenth century to a perception of a
middle class composed of people on the rise, aggressive, mobile, calculating and ambitious. This new class and the society it more and more defined were seen as rising indefinitely to new levels of affluence and progress. In the United States at least, this concept of the middle class, the utilitarian/expressive individual primed for consumption, supplied the dominant cultural model for an all-encompassing process of escalation that would eventually attempt to include the entire globe.

For Bellah and colleagues, this middle class concept "gives us our central, and largely unchallenged, image of American society" (Bellah et al. 1985, 119). This late nineteenth century definition of the middle class as an aggregate of such individuals, as a group that "seeks to embody in its own continuous progress and advancement the very meaning of the American project" reveals a "peculiar resonance" between middle class life and individualism in America (Bellah et al. 1985, 151). Indeed, this new self was the very image of the middle class consumer that was heavily promoted by the emerging advertising industry in the late nineteenth century, the new "captains of consciousness" (Ewen 1976). To-day, this concept of the atomized individual consumer is central to the hegemonic culture of growth-driven consumer capitalism. It is promoted daily in the mass media by contemporary "captains of consciousness".

In England a very similar concept of man emerged as early as the seventeenth century. The Aristotelian idea of "man" (all of this thought is deeply patriarchal; see Plumwood 1993; Bigwood 1993) as essentially purposeful, rational activity became even more narrowed over the centuries until it became a severely atrophied concept of rationality whose behavioural essence "was increasingly held to lie in unlimited individual appropriation, as a means of satisfying unlimited desire for utilities" (MacPherson 1973, 5). This new
behaviour and the individualistic utilitarian concept that informed it increasingly became more deeply rooted in the expanding market society as part of the liberal tradition from John Locke onward. For MacPherson, the result was an uneasy compromise between two views of man's (sic) essence: man as consumer and man as creator. Liberal thought evolved in an emerging market society and assumed, quite correctly, that society was a market society operating by contractual relations between free individuals who offered their powers in the market with a view to getting the greatest return they could. However, these powers of the individual whether "natural or acquired" were seen as merely instrumental to maximizing utilities and humanity's real essence was as an "infinite" consumer (MacPherson 1973, 4-6).

For ecological economists Daly and Cobb, the view of humans as "homo economicus" is the most important of all the ideological abstractions of contemporary economic theory. They point out that the chief feature of "homo economicus" as a utility maximizing individual is extreme individualism. Economic theory built on an anthropology of "homo economicus" has no doubt encouraged a much less inhibited quest for personal gain in the business world, yet Daly and Cobb dispute the reality of "homo economicus" as the natural state of human nature. If humans were normally or naturally insatiable, they point out, then aggressive want-stimulating advertising and planned obsolescence would not be necessary. However, "homo economicus" has encouraged the separation/abstraction of the extreme individualist from socio-cultural concerns for justice, fairness, or the well-being of the community as a whole (Daly and Cobb 1989, 85-89). The individualism of "homo economicus" encourages a view of society as merely an aggregate of such isolated, alienated individuals. Consequently, argue Daly and Cobb, the image of humans as "homo economicus" is a major obstacle to the development of a
concept of the individual as a person-in-community (Daly and Cobb 1989, 159). The dominant economistic image of individualism in our contemporary consumer society is considered in this thesis to be at the cultural heart of the problematic being addressed.

The roots of individualist thought are very deep. They go back at least to the very beginning of the modern era. The individual, for John Locke, existed alone in a state of nature, prior to any society which itself comes into existence only through the voluntary contract of individuals trying to maximize their own self-interest, not through cooperative or kinship relations. For Bellah et al. the Lockean position, enormously influential in America, amounts to an "almost ontological individualism" (1985, 143). The ontological individual, they argue, is the conceptual basis for both the utility maximizer and the expressive individualist. Expressive individualism was part of the romantic rebellion against the concept of the human as a calculating utility maximizer. Bellah and associates hold up Walt Whitman as an example of expressive individualism in its clearest form, as an individual not concerned with material acquisition, but with the rich emotional, sensual, and intellectual development of the self. As Bellah and his colleagues explain, utilitarian and expressive individualism correspond with the split between public life in the economic/occupational sphere and the sphere of private life of the family. Many feminists have argued, and Bellah and his colleagues also point out, that in the nineteenth century middle class American family women were seen to be invested with the characteristics of expressive individualism (the heart, the emotions), while men embodied those of the calculating utility maximizer (Bellah et al. 1985, 88-89). Under the patriarchal relations of the nineteenth century this split privileged the utility-maximizing male individual, the utilitarian, over the expressive individual. This split between male and female, mind and body, reason and emotion, and
between the autonomous self and the separate other is essentially dualistic Cartesian thinking put into the service of the industrial and financial capitalist revolution of the nineteenth century. In this cultural, social, and economic transformation the middle class consumer as “homo economicus” became the model for the twentieth century explosion in consumption for all classes in the advanced industrial world.

As Bowers has pointed out, the conundrum of the infinite utility-maximizing consumer presents a particular responsibility to those who are part of western consumer society, a responsibility for the ideology of consumerism. This ideology which arose in Europe and reached its apogee in the United States equates personal identity and success with consumerism (Bowers 1993, 191). The example of the atomized middle-class consumer as a model for the whole world in our contemporary era of global markets has now become the dominant form of culture, equating cultural identity and meaning with success in the marketplace and with the ever expanding consumption of commodities.

The above analysis suggests that the material problem of over-consumption has both an economic and a socio-cultural basis. It also suggests that there is a need for transformation and transition to a sustainable society. If this analysis is correct, the momentum of the global megamachine combined with the pervasive socio-cultural influence of “homo economicus”, demands more than merely minor reform. In short, the above twofold real world problem provides the context for the broad theoretical problem this thesis will attempt to address: how to think more profoundly and strategically about socio-cultural and political-economic transition and transformation from contemporary capitalist industrial growth society to an ecologically sustainable and socially just society.
The Theoretical Problem

The general theoretical concern of this thesis is how to think more profoundly and strategically about the needed socio-cultural transformation to a truly long-term sustainable society, specifically with respect to the above described real-world problem. However, this problem may be recast in somewhat more focused terms as the need to integrate theory about cultural transformation with theory about political-economic transformation to sustainable society. Historically, there has been much theory-making on political economic transformation, but little work on integrating this with theory on cultural transformation. A diverse body of thought that has been preoccupied with the problem of the revolutionary transformation of capitalism. Its roots are in the nineteenth century and the thought of utopianism, social anarchism, and, in particular, historical materialism (Marxism). Planning historian John Friedmann has located the thought of these “three great oppositional movements” within the planning tradition of social mobilization or radical planning (Friedmann 1987, 225). In particular, Marxist thought contributed much to political theory with respect to the role of the state and broad institutional transformation.

However, certain theory builders in Europe have recently emerged from the Marxist tradition with a very different framework from more traditional Marxist and neo-Marxist thought on political economic and social transformation. This new framework may have an important contribution to theory in social transformation toward sustainable society even though it does not concern itself specifically with sustainability issues, nor does it challenge the dominant cultural ideology of anthropocentrism. This will require some discussion to explain.
According to Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, who have done an extensive review of Marxist thought about the role of civil society and its relationship to the state, it was the circulation of post-Marxist ideas which initiated the contemporary international dissemination of theoretical discourse about civil society (1992, 71). These two social theorists have played a central role in advancing civil society theory in "Civil Society and Political Theory" (1992). Arato worked at the Max Planck Institute where he became familiar with Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action. Cohen was sponsored by Habermas for a research fellowship at the same institute and taught political science at Columbia (1992).

Civil society theory breaks with the Marxist conception of the working class as the primary agent of societal revolution (or transformation) and consequently with the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Also abandoned is the dream of abolishing the state which, in Marx, is identified as the hegemonic element of a state-civil society relationship. In its place is the theorizing of a radical democratic alternative in which the state is not overthrown, but democratized on the basis of a diverse and democratic civil society.

For their part, Cohen and Arato argue for a three-part conceptual model that includes civil society, the state sector, and an economic sphere (1992). They credit the Italian Marxist Gramsci for first developing this "highly original" three-part conceptual framework. They also observe, however, that Gramsci's concept of civil society was presented in a confusing terminology, sometimes defined as the counterpart of the state, or as a part of the state along with and counterposed to political society, or as identical with the state (1992, 144-45). This confusion in Gramsci is perhaps the reflection of a long and changing history of the term going back to classical and even medieval political thought.
For Hobbes and Spinoza "civil society" was inseparable from the state and its laws (Keane 1988, 38). For Marx, the state was the determining element and civil society the element determined by it (Marx 1975, 615). Thus, in Marx's conception, civil society was identified not with liberation, but rather with bourgeois rule from above. Gramsci's definition was influenced by the work of both Hegel and Marx. Marx stressed the negative, atomistic, and dehumanizing features of civil society (Cohen and Arato 1992, 117). For Marx, civil society included all classes and their economic relations. The will of the state in modern history then, for Marx, is determined by the changing needs of civil society, the supremacy of one or another class, and the development of the productive forces and relations of exchange (Marx 1975, 616).

On the other hand, Thomas Paine and de Tocqueville clearly opposed civil society to the state. For de Tocqueville, civil society was a self-organizing, legally guaranteed sphere not directly dependent on the state (de Tocqueville 1969; Everton 1996). De Tocqueville, of course, based his conclusions on his observations of what he termed the rich associational life of free citizens in a strongly democratic America in the first half of the nineteenth century (1969). In short, the concept of civil society has been marked by two very different approaches - the promise of liberation from below on the one hand, versus links to rule from above on the other (Cohen and Arato 1992, 118).

Gramsci, still within the Marxian tradition, tended to treat civil society in functional terms as the sphere responsible for the social integration of the whole and therefore, for the reproduction of bourgeois hegemony or for the creation of socialist hegemony. For Gramsci then, "civil society appeared as the central terrain to be occupied in the struggle for emancipation"(Cohen and Arato 147-149). However, Gramsci never critiqued the Soviet system which, having captured state power by using the self-organized institutions of civil society,
then promptly abolished civil society and its institutions. In contrast, Cohen and Arato break with this tradition by treating civil society as both an end in itself and as the societal means and base for continuing and expanding the democratic revolution of the enlightenment.

It was for this reason that Cohen and Arato proposed their theoretical model which differentiates among three spheres; civil society, political society and economic society (1992). They argue that from the point of view of what they call civic humanism, we cannot properly theorize modern social relations in the hope of transforming those relations if we do not differentiate among these three spheres or sub-systems. Following Polanyi, they point out that the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century produced an economic society, the market economy, that threatened to subsume and reduce autonomous social norms, relationships, and institutions (1992, 122). Cohen and Arato advance their three sphere model as a civil society-centered model. They point out that their model focuses on the empirical possibility of democratization in civil society while also underlining the normative necessity of democratization because civil society norms since the enlightenment call precisely for democratization (1992, 411).

Finally, they emphasize that their model lends itself to the defense and expansion of civil society against: one, the deleterious effects of a greatly expanded, dominant, corporate economic sphere; and two, the overextension of the administrative apparatus of the interventionist state into the social realm (1992, 24). For Cohen and Arato, the political inference of their model, and the reason why they are specifically post-Marxist, is that civil society-based social transformation theory abandons the Marxist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the use of social mobilization for the purpose of overthrowing the state. In this view, the theoretical concern for social transformation (as
opposed to social reform) remains, but the emphasis shifts to theorizing about
democratic forms of transformation.

In Cohen's and Arato's model, the civil society sphere is composed of
both public and private elements: the intimate sphere or the family, the sphere
of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and
institutions of culture and public communication. It also includes a domain of
individual self-development and moral choice as well as a legal domain of laws
and rights needed to "demarcate" all the other components from the state and
the economy (1992, 346). For Cohen and Arato, the concept of civil society
indicates a terrain that is endangered by the logic of administrative and
economic mechanisms, but is also the primary locus for the potential expansion
of democracy under liberal democratic regimes (1992, vii). In the latter sense,
civil society is the sphere of emancipation, of freedom. Clearly, we see here
that the civil society concept in Cohen and Arato remains a contested terrain,
susceptible to colonization from without via the logic of the self-regulating
market, the bureaucratic apparatus of the welfare state, or a combination of
both.

The political sphere on the other hand, in addition to the dominant state
sector and parliament, also includes political associations and parties. It is by
definition a public sphere. For Cohen and Arato, political society in the form of
representative democracy shares with the modern civil society sphere two key
institutions that mediate between them: the public sphere and voluntary
associations. Politically relevant public discussion through public media,
political clubs, associations, and parties is on a continuum with parliamentary
discussion and debate. The civil and political spheres thus share a large
portion of the public sphere. It follows that in representative democracies
political society "both presupposes and must be open to the influence of civil
society (1992, 412-413). However, Cohen and Arato (and Polanyi too) refer to the fact that, since the creation and expansion of the market economy, the state sector likewise has experienced enormous and complementary growth in tandem with the market sector, leading to the rise of the welfare state. Cohen and Arato then note, as have many from the left and the right, that the success of the welfare state has created a great crisis of solidarity. The welfare state disorganizes social networks and replaces mutualist forms of association, self-help, and horizontal cooperation with vertical, functional, reified state-citizen relations in which the citizen is reduced to the role of a client. This process, they explain, "fully matches the effects of the capitalist market economy" whose growth has also replaced horizontal with vertical relations (1992, p.40).

The economic sphere in Cohen's and Arato's model principally represents the formal market-dominated sector, but the economic sphere also includes, for example, collective bargaining and representation of workers on company boards. Cohen and Arato point out the low degree of public participation in the essentially private economic sphere and speculate that mediation in this sphere might involve a plurality of forms of property (for example, consumer and producer cooperatives) in which civil society could both gain footholds in economic society (1992, 713, n. 340) and seek innovative forms of limiting capitalist economic hegemony as well as political hegemony by the state (1992, 471).

Cohen and Arato (after Habermas) repeatedly stress that we should not lose sight of "the utopian promise" of the liberal and democratic norms of modern society inherited from the Enlightenment. They argue that we should not reduce these to mere legitimation devices for capitalist industrialism as has so much of Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis. Regardless of this important caution, Cohen and Arato do adopt Habermas' theory of the colonization of civil
society analyzing both the monetarization and bureaucratization of social relations that have created a set of social benefits and securities at the cost of creating a new range of dependencies and destroying or severely atrophying existing solidarities. All this has served to undermine peoples' capacities for self-help and cooperative forms of horizontal communication for resolving problems at the base of society --- in civic communities. They cite, as one example, the "therapeutization" of everyday life fostered by social service agencies which contradicts the very goal of therapy - the autonomy and empowerment of the patient - creating a cycle of dependency between the individual citizen turned client and the therapeutic apparatus (1992, 445-451).

While Cohen and Arato make an important contribution to breaking with the Marxist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the working class as the sole or chief agent of societal transformation, they have little to say about the ecological problematic of modern society. For example, they do not address the problem of over-consumption. Consequently perhaps, they do not include any substantial discussion integrating a cultural analysis into their theory that challenges the anthropocentric dimensions of the dominant modern Western world-view on consumer society and its construct of *homo economicus*. However, their three sphere framework, since it focuses especially on civil society, does integrate a cultural domain for theoretical analysis - the normatively democratic "terrain of cultural modernity" (1992, 7, 25).

At the same time, their framework may contribute to theoretical clarification with respect to the political sphere in the thought of those contemporary movements that do put much more emphasis on ecologically-centered cultural transformation and consequently do challenge anthropocentrism and *homo economicus* more profoundly. Specifically, for social movements in modern civil society, Cohen and Arato propose a concept
of "self-limiting revolution" or "self-limiting radicalism" as an alternative to limited reform on the one hand, or totalizing revolution on the other (1992, 26, 32, 72). In this view, social movements concerned with societal transformation should pursue a dual strategy of democratization from their base in civil society. With respect to civil society, the strategy would be a horizontal one, targeting cultural models, norms, and institutions of civil society focusing on processes of communicative action which would constitute the "reflexive [focusing on process] continuation of the democratic revolution" (1992, 26, 523). This "defensive" strategy would seek to defend and enhance civil society by preserving and developing its communicative infrastructure through efforts to redefine identities, reinterpret norms, and develop egalitarian, democratic associational forms. With respect to the political sphere, the "offensive" strategy would seek to develop spaces within political society that could be democratized through a politics of bridging and building influence for institutional reform (1992, 531-2). The envisioned goal of this prong of the dual strategy is "the reflexive continuation of the welfare state" (1992, 26), rather than its abolishment. This part of the strategy would seek to "accomplish the work of social policy by more decentralized and autonomous civil-society-based programs" (ibid). In Cohen and Arato's concept of a self-limiting revolution, then, both the political and economic spheres remain partially differentiated from the civil society sphere rather than being collapsed into civil society by a totalizing revolution that attempted to abolish the state and the formal market economy. The term they use for this is de-differentiation.

To illustrate their dual strategy they discuss the example of the feminist movement of the 1970s and 80s in the United States. On the one hand, the feminist movement pursued a strategy of contesting norms and structures of male dominance in civil society through a focus on identity, self-help,
consciousness raising, and proselytizing through the underground press, their own alternative publications, and the universities. This was a horizontal strategy of spreading feminist consciousness and achieving institutional changes in social relations based on traditional, inegalitarian gender norms in civil society. On the other hand, the feminist movement also pursued a strategy of focusing on political and economic inclusion and attempting to exercise influence vertically throughout the legal and political system to fight discrimination and attain equal rights (1992, 551). Cohen and Arato point to the extensive political and legal successes of this dual strategy. They conclude their case study by suggesting that: "as most analysts stress ... these political and legal successes have as their prerequisite and precondition success in the cultural sense - in the prior spread of feminist consciousness", but also that "without a politics of influence aimed at political society, success in the first respect would be unlikely and limited" (1992, 552-53).

Given all of the above, the general theoretical problem addressed by this thesis can be focused on the need for more understanding of how to go beyond Cohen and Arato by integrating ecological understanding into their theory and the need to understand how a reconstructed Cohen and Arato framework may contribute to the strategic thought of current movements in civil society, such as bioregionalism, that make ecologically-centered cultural transformation an integral part of their praxis.

There is another body of thought which contributes to theoretical insight and reflection on a civil society-based strategy for social transformation that would address cultural and ecological issues of over-consumption. To explain requires an extended discussion.

Social capital theory challenges the cultural claims of free market neoclassical economists built in great part, as we have seen, on an
anthropology of *homo economicus*. The concept of social capital, developed (but not invented) by social theorist James Coleman (1990) and further refined and applied by social scientist Robert Putnam (1993 a, b), refers to features of social organization, particularly networks, norms, and relations of trust that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit.

In a twenty year study of regional governance in modern Italy, Putnam and his co-investigators found that regional governments were most effective in creating innovative day care programs, family clinics, job-training centres, promoting economic development, pioneering environmental standards, generally managing the public's business efficiently, and satisfying their constituents when a strong spirit of civic engagement existed in the regional population. Many citizens' associations, active community organizations, high voter turnout, and strong engagement in public issues were characteristic of these regions. At the core of this civic heritage (traced back to the eleventh century) were rich networks of organized reciprocity and civic solidarity: guilds, religious fraternities, and tower societies for self-defense in the medieval communes; and, in the twentieth century, mutual aid societies, cooperatives, and neighbourhood associations (Putnam 1993 a, b). Putnam explains that these dense horizontal social and political networks foster strong norms of generalized reciprocity: a continuing relationship of exchange that is at any time unrequited, but that involves mutual expectations that a benefit granted now should be repaid in the future. However, in generalized reciprocity expectations of repayment are lax and not measured by an economists' weigh-scales and narrow calculations. Trust is an important component. For Putnam, reciprocity practiced over time builds trust and "trust lubricates social life" (Putnam 1993 b). It is of key importance to note that Putnam's analysis is based on the horizontal nature of these dense relationships. It is through horizontal reciprocal
relationships that the trust essential to building social capital is most effectively realized. Granovetter also analyses the horizontal character of trust relations in social capital in achieving group or network objectives (1985). In my study of bioregionalism, an important focus is the horizontal character of their community-building efforts, both locally and inter-bioregionally.

Now, Putnam argues that the norm of generalized reciprocity serves to reconcile self-interest and solidarity and is therefore highly productive because communities with this norm can more effectively restrain opportunism and resolve problems of collective association. Dense networks of social interaction also facilitate communication and coordination that amplify information about the trustworthiness of individuals. In addition, dense social ties facilitate gossip and other ways of cultivating reputation, information on which trustworthiness is built. Finally, networks of civic engagement “embody past successes at collaboration which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration” (Putnam 1993 b). Putnam stresses the self-reinforcing and cumulative aspect of social capital: “Successful collaboration in one endeavor builds connections and trust - social assets that facilitate future collaboration in other, unrelated tasks” (Putnam 1993 b).

Coleman has pointed out that - like other forms of capital - social capital is productive. For example, in communities where tools and other equipment are extensively shared, social capital allows each person to get his/her work done with less physical capital (Coleman 1990, 307); that is, social capital increases the productivity of manufactured capital. It is this productivity of social capital that raises the possibility of replacing some of the natural capital throughput with the increased use of social capital to address the problem of over-consumption. Moreover, social capital acts as a social structural resource for individuals that can be used to realize their interests. It is therefore an
important resource for individuals and "can greatly affect their ability to act and their perceived quality of life" (Coleman 1990, 305, 317). In addition, social capital has a public good aspect that "distinguishes it from the private, divisible, alienable goods treated by neo-classical economic theory" (Coleman 1990, 315). Coleman explains that because it is an attribute of social structures in which an individual is embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the actors who benefit from it. Rather, social capital as a concept that refers to relationships between individuals, has, by definition, a public good aspect. However, it is this relational quality of the concept of social capital that lends a certain "intangible character" to it (Coleman 1990). Social capital is not a material substance like physical capital, nor is it easily measurable like financial capital or even human capital. On the other hand, the concept of social capital lends itself to social ecological analysis in the sense that it is about relationships rather than things. While this is perhaps the reason for its intangible and even ambiguous character, it is also the most salient aspect of the concept from the perspective of social transformation. Therefore, it is this relational character of social capital that I will make use of when examining bioregional community.

Since its inception, the social capital concept has been associated with local community relationships. The term social capital was first used by economist Glen Loury to refer to the resource endowment of "nontransferable advantages of birth" conveyed by family and local community relations, peer influences and friendship networks that are useful in the development of the child for later-life productivity and social development (Loury 1977; 1987). This particular origin has had much influence in the subsequent development of the concept. In this usage, social capital is generated through family and community relationships. It is a community "good" which can benefit the
individual. The context for Loury was an examination of differential group relationships in societies where race plays a major role in social status and where social capital may vary greatly according to the ethnicity or race of a community. Two Dutch sociologists used the term in a similar way to describe how social networks create the social capital that can help in finding employment (Flap and deGraaf 1986).

Coleman developed the concept more fully than Loury, elaborating and enhancing the social relations content of the term. Coleman challenged the "broadly perpetrated fiction in modern society" of the independent individual fostered in part by the conception of *homo economicus* in classical and neo-classical economic theory (Coleman 1990, 300-302). As we have already seen, in the abstract fiction of *homo economicus* society consists of a set of independent individuals acting to achieve independently-arrived-at goals guided by the "invisible hand" of a perfectly competitive marketplace. This "under-socialized" concept of humans as atomized economic maximizers in self-regulating markets supports a narrow view of social relations as merely a "frictional drag that impedes competitive markets" (Granovetter 1985). In contrast, for Granovetter the atomized and anonymous market of neo-classical economics is virtually nonexistent in real economic life where economic transactions of all kinds are rife with actual social connections. This is to say that attempts at purposive action by economic actors are embedded in ongoing systems of social relations. Granovetter explains that the embeddedness argument stresses the role of personal relations and structures or networks of such relations in generating trust and discouraging malfeasance (Granovetter 1985).

Taking his cue from Granovetter, Coleman has emphasized that social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among
persons, being lodged neither in individuals nor in the implements of production. Coleman conceives of social capital as social-structural resources which can become a capital asset for the individual. However, this is not to confuse social capital with human capital. Human capital is defined by Coleman (and many others) as those skills and capabilities that are acquired by individuals to enable them to act in new ways. Human capital is embodied in these skills and knowledge in the individual. Social capital is contained in the relations among persons, but it can be an important resource to enhance and support the development of human capital.

Yet, from an ecologically-centered perspective, problems remained with the social capital concept. Putnam's study of democracy in Italy takes no account of the growth problematic. The most successful regions in terms of effective citizen participation in regional programs were those in the north where industrial throughput growth is strongest. Moreover, the concept of social capital in both Coleman and Putnam is thoroughly anthropocentric. For the purposes of this thesis the concept is not entirely sufficient; it challenges *homo economicus* as an atomistic entity, but not the culture of consumption that utility-maximizing *homo economicus* embodies. If humans cooperate more effectively in their development, but continue with exponential growth, the problem remains - at best - only partially solved. While social capital points to the need to theorize cultural transformation, it fails to specifically address the ways humans relate to the natural environment; it fails, that is, to address the relationship of human capital to natural capital or, less prosaically, to nature. However, another concept has emerged to address this gap.

Fikret Berkes and Carl Folke have advanced a definition of cultural capital designed to capture a similar range of socio-cultural variables to those that define social capital, but that also specifically seeks to integrate the
missing ethical or moral variable that relates to natural capital (Berkes and Folke 1994). They define cultural capital as the interface between natural capital and human-made capital. Human-made capital refers to the produced means of production generated through economic activity. It is also referred to as "manufactured capital". However, it is important to caution that Berkes' and Folke's use of the term "culture" includes a recognition of many distinct societies (cultural diversity) and of many different definitions of culture among anthropologists. Their definition also recognizes that the concept of "nature" is itself culture-specific. They add that a cultural diversity of ways to deal with the natural environment is a significant part of cultural capital, quoting Gadgil to point out that cultural diversity may be as important to conserve as biological diversity (Berkes and Folke 1994). Cultural diversity, in this view, may be an adaptive strength in the pursuit of sustainability. Philosophy, values, ethics, and religion of a culture are central to Berkes and Folke's definition of cultural capital.

Berkes and Folke emphasize that manufactured (or human-made) capital is never value-neutral, but is a product of and embodies/reflects evolving cultural values, norms and world view (that is, cultural capital). For example, with respect to the modern system of production, they analyze how cultural capital and manufactured capital reinforce each other in a positive feedback loop that diminishes natural capital:

Technologies (tools, skills, and know-how) which mask the society's dependence on natural capital encourage people to think that they are above nature. The more extensive this change, the more of similar type of technologies will be developed and the more impacts on natural capital there will be. Positive feedbacks between cultural capital and human-made capital are established which enhance this trend. There will be resource depletion and environmental degradation to feed an industrial society that requires ever increasing amounts of raw materials, and that generates ever increasing amounts of waste. Therefore, cultural
capital plays an important role in how we use natural capital to 'create' human-made capital. Thus, human-made capital is never value neutral, but a product of evolving cultural values and norms. (Berkes and Folke 1994)

In particular, coming from an industrial society that has masked our dependence on natural capital, we need, in Berkes' and Folke's view, to "restore a semblance of the 'community of beings' world view of ancient pantheistic traditions" (Berkes and Folke 1994). Restoring this ancient ethic as an important part of our cultural capital, they submit, would be a creative use of this form of cultural capital to help meet the contemporary challenge of reintegrating people with nature.

I have borrowed the "community of beings" form of cultural capital to provide a new context for analyzing social capital development or formation. Social capital that is informed by the "community of beings" ethic is a new, adapted form of social capital that I call ecologically-centered, or eco-centric, social capital. By this I mean an eco-social capital concerned with both inter-human and inter-species relationships. Eco-social capital, then, is concerned with the formation of both inter-human and inter-species bonds.

Now, Coleman has pointed out that the loss of social capital in modern society raises the important question of social capital formation; that is, how can social capital be brought into existence (Coleman 1990, 362, 663). What does it take to generate social capital? Indeed, given my focus on "eco-social capital", the question becomes how does social capital that is informed by a "community of beings" ethic come into existence in civil society?

The theoretical concerns of this thesis are located within the radical planning tradition. The radical planning tradition relies on action from below, from the space of civil society where the people, as Friedmann argues, can
break into politics to re-assert their voice as the legitimate arbiter of their collective fate. Moreover, Friedmann explains, the concerns of radical planning are quite properly a part of planning in the public domain. Planning is not exclusively a function of the state. Indeed, as Friedmann has argued, "planning in the public domain could originate anywhere, including civil society" (Friedmann 1987, 298). More specifically, as Friedmann has also pointed out, "in social transformation, theory and practice become everyone's concern: responsibilities for both are multiple and overlapping" (Friedmann 1987, 393). Moreover, Friedmann too, has come to focus on civil society as a pivotal dimension of transformational change (Friedmann 1996). In the radical planning tradition, then, theory and practice are not viewed dualistically; ideally, there is a dialectical convergence of the two in what is known as praxis or the integration of theory and practice whereby practice informs theory which, in turn, informs practice.

In the last half of the twentieth century, particularly since the nineteen sixties, certain radical traditions have arisen within society raising questions about cultural (as well as economic and political) transformation to an ecological world-view and a sustainable society. Oppositional movements such as social ecology, deep ecology, ecofeminism, and bioregionalism have also been viewed as part of the radical alternative in planning thought (Beavis 1991, 75-82). These movements typically place a much deeper emphasis on cultural change as a foundation for socio-political and economic transformation than Marxism generally has. That is, Marxism has tended to view culture as a dependent variable (for an extended review of this entire body of thought from an eco-centric perspective see, Eckersley 1992).

Of these movements I have chosen bioregionalism as a subject of research for my thesis. There are several reasons why bioregionalism makes a
good subject for the concerns of this thesis. First, bioregionalism has emphasized cultural transformation in both its thought and practice. Second, the bioregional movement has a broad strategy for initiating struggles for economic, political and structural transformation from below, a fact which links it to the older concerns of transformative theory and the traditions of radical planning. Third, bioregionalism is a movement within civil society that has managed to combine many of the features and concerns of social ecology, deep ecology, and ecofeminism as well as a number of other radical movements. These diverse origins and expressions are combined in a social movement that in many ways incorporates much of the cultural diversity and sensibilities of the so-called "new" social movements of the nineteen sixties (Carr 1990). For these reasons, the bioregional movement presents an important paradigm to consider from the perspective of integrating cultural analysis within transformative theory. It is particularly relevant in the context of a culturally diverse contemporary society which nevertheless remains ideologically dominated by anthropocentric *homo economicus*.

Fourth, bioregionalism is based on a strategy of building local "communities of place" in civil society which are networked at broader geographical scales from the local watershed and larger regional watersheds to the continental scale. Berg has defined "communities of place" as self-organized communities with the intention of overcoming modern individual alienation by learning to cooperate and work together toward restoring and maintaining natural systems, finding sustainable and self-reliant ways to meet human needs, and developing support for individuals engaged in this work (Andrus et al. 1990 137-144). This strategy of bioregionalism situates each community within the natural "place" or ecological community it inhabits. In turn, these local communities of place are envisioned to become networked at
broader scales as a greater community of communities. Bioregionalists believe that this strategy can assist individual human beings to make major changes in their cultural and economic life-styles toward healthy relationships with each other and with the natural environment (Forsey 1993, 1-9).

Finally, while bioregionalists spend much energy and time in horizontal efforts aimed at redefining and reclaiming identities, norms, and institutions in civil society and some effort into vertical campaigns for political reform (reported in the body of this thesis), they have not sufficiently theorized their strategy with respect to either the state or the corporate sector. Most particularly, the bioregional movement has not developed either a theory or a strategy to contend with the entrenched power of international finance capital or the large corporations. Thus, an inquiry into bioregionalism that revealed cultural insights from its vision and practice might have some valuable lessons for civil society theory with respect to the latter's lack of ecological understanding and cultural critique of economic individualism. In turn, a revised civil society theory (with its understanding of combined horizontal-vertical strategies) might have some valuable insights into strategies to democratize state and corporate sectors.

The bioregional approach to building community is the focus for parts one and two of my research question which is an empirical study of the movement. The above theoretical discussion informs parts three and four of my research question.

Research Question: This thesis attempts to answer the following four-part question: 1) what is the nature of the bioregional movement experience with respect to building communities of place and their networks? 2) what lessons can be gleaned from bioregional praxis with respect to building networked
communities of place to inform a civil society theory of democratic transformation? 3) how might civil society theory informed by bioregional praxis be revised? and 4) how might a revised civil society theory inform bioregional praxis?

Inquiry Approach

The empirical part of this thesis is based on an exploratory study of the bioregional movement in North America. In order to answer part one of the research question, I first explore, extensively and in-depth, what bioregional praxis is with respect to its values, strategy and tools for building communities and their networks. My approach to the study is qualitative. The term qualitative comes from the Latin, *qualis*, meaning "whatness" (Van Manen 1990, 33). This suggests that qualitative research explores the "whatness" of a phenomenon, meaning its nature, its most essential characteristics, that which makes it what it is. The "phenomenon" I am exploring is bioregional communities and their networks; so, my approach begins with a fundamental phenomenological question about the "whatness" of bioregional communities and their networks. That is, I attempt an in-depth, naturalistic exploration of bioregional groups and communities to address the question of what are they "really" like. In other words, I try to ground my study in a "laying open of the question" (Van Manen 1990, 34), in this case, part one of my research question. Thus, my phenomenological approach to studying bioregionalists' experiences with place-based communities examines the nature or character of such experiences in as much depth as possible.

This is a most appropriate approach to take, since phenomenology is the study of direct, lived experience. Moreover, phenomenology has made a
particular contribution to the study of human-nature relationships, a key aspect of my research. Originally, phenomenology was intended to provide a solid foundation for the empirical sciences. However, according to Abrams, the work of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty; that is, their careful study of perceptual experience, began - unexpectedly - to reveal the "the hidden centrality of the earth in all human experience" (1997, xi). The centrality of the earth as part of the lifeworld of human experience is a key aspect of bioregionalism explored in this thesis. Lifeworld is used here in the sense Abrams (after Husserl) gives it: "the world of our immediately lived experience as we live it, prior to all our thoughts about it ... not a private but a collective dimension, the common field of our lives and the other lives with which ours are intertwined" (1997, 40). My own approach to the study of bioregionalism is therefore grounded in phenomenological investigation.

However, an equally important focus remains on the more instrumental "how" question. How do bioregionalists go about building communities of place in the highly consuming societies of North America where the robustness of local community has declined with the rise of homo economicus? What tools, methods, or processes do they use? How do they use them? What lessons can we learn from bioregional praxis for social transformation theory? How might we apply them?

For the purposes of this thesis, these two aspects of the question, the phenomenological and the instrumental, are intimately related. If I am to derive lessons from an exploration of bioregional praxis to inform civil society theory in part two of the research question, an intimate knowledge of both the "what" and the "how' is needed.

Thus, my purpose in pursuing part one of the research question, is to attempt to plumb the depths of bioregional intentional community-building
though naturalistic, phenomenological inquiry to illuminate its "whatness" and to explore how bioregionalists do what they do; what strategies, what tools/processes do they use, what meanings do they give to their efforts? How do they apply their strategies and tools? What difference does it make in their lives? Methods for data gathering and analysis for part one are explained in subsequent sections of this chapter. I also use social and eco-social capital as sensitizing concepts to aid my inquiry. Their use is explained in the following pages.

To answer part two of the research question, I attempt to induce lessons from my exploration of bioregional experiences, lessons for civil society theory with respect to its failings noted above.

Part three of my research question is a theoretical exercise. Using the lessons discovered from the empirical inquiry, I revise Cohen and Arato's theory with suggestions for an eco-centric version of civil society theory. However, while bioregionalism may have an important contribution for "post-Marxist" social transformation theory, I also suspect that bioregionalism has not adequately theorized its own practice of societal transformation with respect to either its relationship to the state or to the formal market economy. Therefore, to answer part four of my research question, I attempt to look at the bioregional movement's strategy critically, using the revised eco-centric civil society theory.

My theoretical approach is located in the radical planning tradition which has been referred to as the tradition of social mobilization (Friedmann 1987, 75). It asks the general question: how does social mobilization to effect radical transformation occur? Thus, my approach falls within both social science and the humanities, since it includes anthropological and sociological dimensions as well as historical and philosophical inquiry.
Traditionally the social sciences and the humanities have confined themselves to human-centered questions and concerns, leaving the natural sciences to deal separately with questions of non-human nature. Few social scientists address questions concerning relationships between human and non-human nature. In contrast, my study is informed by an ecologically-centered perspective to research. Social questions are of crucial importance to my research. However, since human cultures and economies are, in fact, located within natural systems, the study of human systems and cultures must be approached through a more holistic social ecology. A social ecological perspective challenges the separate and anthropocentric treatment of human social science and recognizes both the interdependence of human and natural systems and the primacy of humankind's "obligate dependence" (Rees 1990) upon the natural world. From the perspective of eco-centric science, the test of "good" science would not be that it "works" in the sense of enabling humans to exploit the world around them more efficiently, but rather that it "works" in the sense of enabling humans to live in ways that preserve and foster the health, safety, and well-being of both the human and non-human community (Eckersley 1992,116).

It is important in qualitative research to locate the researcher in the research. In this case, I am an "observing participant" in the bioregional movement, not merely a "participant observer" (Willms and Johnson 1992). That is, by using "participant" as the noun in this expression, I emphasize that I became involved in the movement first as a full participant, not primarily as a researcher joining some organization or activity primarily to observe others. However, while I generally share the bioregional movement's vision of socio-cultural and political economic transformation to sustainable society and I am a participant in various aspects of bioregional praxis, I also attempt to retain a
critical perspective. I have been involved in bioregional movement activities, somewhat peripherally at first, since the early 1980's. In 1988, at the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University in Toronto, I decided to make bioregionalism the topic of my research for my Master's degree. It was during this period, inspired by the literature of the movement and by my personal experiences at the third and fourth continental congresses of the movement in 1988 and 1990 and the tenth Ozark Area Community Congress, that I became fully committed to the vision and praxis of bioregionalism. This long association has afforded me the opportunity to explore bioregionalism qualitatively for a decade and to learn about it through the "complete depth of the subjectively lived experience" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 377-392). I see this grounded participation with my research subject as a strength of qualitative research and as essential to my phenomenologically-based inquiry. My lived experience with the bioregional movement and the research I conducted for my Master's degree have helped to prepare me for the in-depth qualitative exploration reported in this thesis.

While my long-term involvement in the bioregional movement and the lived experience gained is an asset in qualitative research, sustaining a critical viewpoint toward the subject of my research as a full participant is a difficult task that needs to be explicitly acknowledged and addressed. As a long term participant in the bioregional movement and in a variety of other social movements over a total period of 28 years and as an activist who has engaged with others in critical self-reflection on attempts at social change and transformation, I recognize the difficulties. However, this does not mean that critical self-reflection is impossible. In my experience in several social change movements over the years, I have encountered numerous individuals and participated in several collectives that have engaged in critical self-reflection
exercises. Indeed, for some, critical self-reflection is an essential aspect of good activism.

In this case, my critical self-reflection as a bioregionalist is aided by three factors: 1) my own experience of critical self-reflection over almost three decades of movement activism, 2) the use of Cohen and Arato's post-Marxist theoretical framework (which itself is an exercise in critical reflection) to analyze the bioregional movement, and 3) the use of a research tool to aid in perceiving my subject through a different lens, the related concepts of social and eco-social capital.

In this thesis, I use social and eco-social capital as "sensitizing" concepts that assist me to explore the empirical part of my research question - the what and how of building bioregional communities of place and networks between them. A sensitizing concept functions to organize data in a way that simplifies them and shows important patterns and relationships (Alcoff and Potter 1993, 276). Taken from symbolic interactionist theory which requires (like phenomenology) that the researcher actively enter into the world of people being studied, sensitizing concepts aid the researcher to become sensitized to the data, to the experience being studied. Like Geertz, symbolic interactionists view explanatory theories as interpretive, grounded, and "hovering low over the data" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 124). Research approaches using sensitizing concepts also seek to improve the concepts themselves by naturalistic research which depends on faithful reportorial depiction of the phenomena investigated and on analytical probing into their character (Pyne Addelson 1991, 91).

Moreover, my use of both social capital and eco-social capital as sensitizing concepts aims to alert me as researcher (as well as the reader) to nuances and details that throw new light on both the concepts and on the series of lived experiences in bioregional community-building being investigated.
Methods of Data Collection

Bioregional Literature Analysis

Bioregionalists have produced a growing body of literature. I use the communities of place and eco-centric social capital concepts as the framework for an exploration of bioregional literature on bioregional values and practice. This includes a review of bioregional literature in books, popular journals, pamphlets, and newsletters. In addition, from 1988 to 1990, I conducted a series of unstructured interviews with 40 bioregionalists which I draw on to enrich the information from the literature. The method used is textual analysis of the literature and the interviews, focussed by the use of eco-centric social capital as a sensitizing concept.

Experiential Sociology

From 1988 to 1996, I attended four bi-annual continental gatherings (each about one week long) of the movement. I have also attended the tenth annual Ozark Area Community Congress in 1989, the Third Cascadia Bioregional Gathering in 1991 (held in Oregon), the fifth annual Shasta Bioregional Gathering (held in Northern California) in 1997, and twelve of the seventeen annual Hat Creek Gatherings (held in BC) from 1981 to 1997. Each of these regional gatherings were 3-4 days long. In addition, I conducted 3-4 day visits to bioregional communities in the Mattole River Valley in California, Alpha Farm in Oregon, Planet Drum in San Francisco, and many visits to the Bridge River Valley in B.C. Over all of this time I have conducted a long series of unsystematic naturalistic observations and hundreds of unstructured
conversations with a wide variety of bioregionalists in these diverse settings. Naturalistic observation "occurs in the natural context of occurrence, among the actors who would be naturally participating in the interaction, and follows the natural stream of everyday life" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 377).

All of this experience has contributed to my in-depth immersion and "existential sociology" of the movement (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 377-392). This existential, or experiential, sociology has afforded me the opportunity to explore bioregionalism qualitatively from within as an "observing participant" and to learn from a phenomenology of the "complete depth of the subjectively lived experience" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 377-392). These experiences contributed to the depth of my "tacit knowledge" of bioregionalism (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 491-493).

While the above experiences helped contribute to a profoundly informative experiential sociology for me, they were not gathered in a disciplined scholarly manner structured by the research question or the concept of eco-centric social capital. Indeed, many of them occurred before I developed the research question or researched the social capital concept. However, these initial experiences did help prepare me for another series of more focused, but still naturalistic observations on bioregionalists' experiences of eco-centric social capital. This second series of naturalistic observations took place at the continental gatherings in Kentucky in 1994 and in the State of Morelos, Mexico in 1996.

**Phenomenology of Place**

Place, as discussed in detail in chapter three, is a central category of bioregional thought. From my own lived experiences of place, I gathered
intuitive, experiential, and qualitative empirical data. One way to gather data on place is through the researcher's own direct experience of it (Low in Zube and Moore 1987, 279-303). In this method, the researcher's own bodily and emotional/cognitive experience of place becomes the data gathering instrument. In an illuminating article on the role of the body in learning, Associate Professor of Dance, Peggy Hackney analyses body-learning through movement analysis (1988). She adopts a phenomenological explanation of movement and of the role of the body in it:

All ---types of intelligence involve tuning-into movement at a pre-conscious level, because the very act of perception is a movement phenomenon. The concept of 'relationship' in itself involves an interaction, a moving between --- 'information' may be located in books, but 'knowledge' resides in a personal claiming of that information through interactive involvement with it ---forming a feelingful relation with it and encoding the knowledge bodily ---The first step in any creative process (and learning is certainly a creative process), is the act of merging, identifying and becoming one with that which is there to be known --- the ability to know through merging happens bodily. It is an almost cellular knowledge --- grounded and made vital through moving -- -I would like to have every child and adult experience intimate participatory knowledge, passionate knowing. And this kind of knowing happens in a profound way the more the whole of who we are is involved in the process. (1988)

Such phenomenological learning can also be viewed as a phenomenological geography (Relph 1976). It has a planning antecedent in the "walking surveys" of Patrick Geddes (1949) and Lewis Mumford (1968).

I realize that this method remains controversial in academia. However, I think it is crucial to a study of bioregionalism to which "place" is central and especially in this study which focuses on communities of place. Just as human systems are necessarily in a state of "obligate dependence" on natural systems, so too is the human brain (and thus the mind) in a state of obligate dependence on the human body - both for its sustenance and for its data gathering and, yes,
its knowledge. Contrary to Descartes' famous cogito *ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am), there is no knowing independent of the body. I have been consciously using this somatic method of gathering data on bioregional sense of place on various occasions since 1988. Training in movement analysis through yoga and dance classes over several years, combined with 10 years of regular dance-oriented yogic exercise in the 1970s and 80s helped train and prepare me for this bodily form of knowing.

**Focused Key Informant Interviews**

I conducted a series of 20 interviews with selected key informants of the bioregional movement from 1994 to 1998. These interviews were done with veterans of the movement (a minimum of 10 years) with a deep level of commitment, knowledge, and experience at bioregional praxis. The interviews were recorded on audio-tape. They help to capture bioregionalists' views on the state of the movement after the first 20 years of its existence, but more importantly, to provide data on the self-reflection of veteran bioregionalists with respect to bioregional transformation strategy. The questions were designed to elicit information and reflection on the state of the movement, its strengths and weaknesses, its strategy for social change and for community building without referring to social capital or civil society theory. The interview schedule is in appendix A-1.

**Proceedings of the Continental Congresses/Gatherings**

While these proceedings could be regarded as part of the literature of bioregionalism, I have reported them in a separate category here for two
reasons: one, they provide a detailed record of the resolutions and the work of various committees and councils which supply crucial data on common positions in a movement which places great value on diversity and inclusiveness. Second, they provide additional data as an aid to my memory of my experience at these gatherings.

Field Notes

I wrote field notes at two of the continental gatherings (III and VII), and at a "Greening Our Cities" conference in Vancouver as an aid to memory.

Methods of Data Analysis

As noted, phenomenology is the study of lived experience. However, on the one hand, the raw sensory data of experience is too comprehensive, too holistic to be meaningful. On the other, excessive formalism in reporting lived experience removes the particulars of experience. Thus, along with Clandinin and Connelly (among others), I make the assumption that experience is both temporal and storied (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 415). When persons note something of their experience, they do so not by the mere recording of experience over time, but in storied form. In this view, "story" is neither raw sensation, nor cultural form. Rather, "stories are the closest we can come to experience as we and others tell of our experience. A story has a sense of being full, a sense of coming out of a personal and social history" (ibid).

Therefore, in my inquiry into the experiences of bioregional actors and communities, I make use of narrative accounts. Narrative names the structured quality of experience to be studied, and it names the patterns of inquiry for its
study. In my inquiry, I follow the device of calling the experience or phenomenon "story" and the inquiry "narrative". In this sense, the actors lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas the narrative researcher attempts to describe such lives, collects and tells stories of them, and writes narratives of the experiences (ibid).

To frame the empirical part of my inquiry, I use civil society-based theory for my analysis of the bioregional strategy of building communities of place and the community of communities network. Cohen and Arato's civil society three-sphere framework for democratic societal transformation focuses on the formation of horizontal relationships between and among independent citizen's groups, organizations, networks and social movements in the civil society sphere. Guided by this broad framework, my analysis focuses on bioregional strategy and tools/methods for creating and strengthening such horizontal relationships. Within this broad framework, I use both social capital and eco-social capital as sensitizing concepts to analyze contextualized examples of bioregional community building, focusing on the trust, norms, and networks of social capital and on the "community of beings" ethic which eco-social capital points to as search lights or flags to aid the analysis.

There are four parts to this empirical inquiry. The first is a descriptive analysis of bioregional literature, the interviews, and the proceedings and resolutions of the continental bioregional gatherings to explore bioregional values and philosophy. This has two purposes. The first is to provide a general overview of the philosophy of bioregionalism as expressed in the literature, in interviews, and in principles and resolutions passed by consensus and reported in proceedings as a context for the rest of the inquiry. The second purpose is to describe bioregional philosophy specifically with respect to its understanding of the "community of beings" ethic.
The second part of the empirical study is to explore specifically the bioregional praxis of building communities of place and networks through a definition and "thick description" of bioregional strategy and definitions and thick descriptions of contextualized examples of a set of tools and processes I have identified that bioregionalists use for the formation of eco-social capital. I use ecocentric social capital as a sensitizing concept for this and subsequent steps in the empirical part of my inquiry. A "thick description", as defined by Denzin, "gives the context of an experience, states the intentions and meanings that organized the experience, and reveals the experience as a process. Out of this process, arises a text's claims for truth or its verisimilitude" (1994, 505).

The third part is an exploration of the attempted implementation of bioregional strategy in five locations, both rural and urban, in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. This is done through five narrative accounts supported by data from the interviews and a selection of literature (local newsletters and pamphlets), my own observations, and "thick descriptions" of place.

Fourth, I explore the history and praxis of the continental gatherings of the movement in community building and networking through a narrative account of the seven gatherings, using "thick descriptions" supported by data from the proceedings, the interviews, and my own observations and experiential sociology of the four gatherings which I attended. This concludes the empirical part of the inquiry.

In the theory building exercise which follows, I attempt to glean lessons for the Cohen and Arato theory from my inquiry into bioregional praxis and then to describe what a revised eco-centric theory might look like.

Finally, I attempt to draw out the implications of a revised emancipatory theory for bioregional movement strategy and a broader socio-cultural and political economic transformation to sustainable society.
I caution that there is a limitation in my use of the eco-social capital concept in my empirical inquiry; the fact that I did not specifically look for negative instances where trust and emotional bonds were not formed in attempts at community building. Nevertheless, during my inquiry I did encounter examples of certain problems with the formation of bonds of trust which I describe and discuss.

**Writing as Inquiry**

I reject positivistic and post-positivistic views that claim that the written reporting of inquiry is merely the "write-up" of the research field work where the "real" discovery takes place. I side with postmodernists in many fields of qualitative research who also reject these claims (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 516-529). For me, writing my inquiry is an important part of the discovery process in qualitative research. Indeed, much of the task of making sense of data in qualitative research is achieved through the interpretive process of writing, reflecting, re-writing, reflecting, re-writing, etc. It is an iterative process, and most importantly, it is part of the creative act of generating knowledge:

Interpretation is transformative. It illuminates, throws light on experience. It brings out, and refines, as when butter is clarified, the meanings that can be sifted from a text, an object, or a slice of experience. (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 500-515)

Therefore, in my narrative accounts into bioregional experiences and their meanings for practitioners, I make use of "thick descriptions" to throw light on these experiences and meanings.

In my thick descriptions of bioregionalism and the experiences of bioregionalists, I first present the philosophical and value context of the
bioregional movement. That is, I state the intentions and meanings bioregionalists carry with them as they act with respect to both bioregional beliefs and with respect to the strategy and tools they use to build community. I include thick descriptions of contextualized examples of both the strategy and the tools. Then, in each of the narrative accounts in chapters five and six, I include thick descriptions of bioregionalists’ practice and experiences in local contexts and at the continental meetings. The goal here is to lead the reader - vicariously - into the experiences being investigated, into the details, the nuances, the multiple dimensions of the phenomenon toward --- discovery. Only then, after the phenomenological exploration, do I take up the admittedly somewhat speculative task of engaging in the process of theory construction, or rather re-construction and the exercise of using the re-constructed theory to suggest lessons for bioregional theory and practice.
Ch. 2: Eco-Centric Social Capital: The Ecology of Kinship

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine society characterized by the domestic mode of production (DMP) in which levels of social capital were very high and consumption of natural capital was very low. This purpose is to provide a deeper understanding of eco-centric social capital that may have some relevant ethical and cultural lessons for modern society. I examine societies in the DMP that practiced a "community of beings" form of cultural capital. I show that the sparing use of natural capital was correlated with high levels of social capital associated with the DMP and that this was a result of their sense of ecological kinship. The exploration of the ecologically-centered understanding of kinship in societies practicing the DMP also aims to deepen a self-reflective qualitative understanding of the eco-centric social capital concept.

It is important to make the link to contemporary society. To begin this task, after examining DMP societies, I consider briefly the contemporary informal economy for its size and qualitative potential as a base for social capital creation in modern civil society.

This chapter opens with a brief exploration of the importance of community size in the development of strong horizontal socio-cultural bonds and a definition of what I mean by a mode of production.

The Case for Small Community

Historically, horizontal networks of mutual aid have been manifested most strongly and most clearly in small, decentralized communities. Taylor has
provided us with a definition of small community that integrates the concept of
generalized reciprocity and shared values or norms with another core
characteristic or requirement of small community - that relations between
members be direct and many-sided (Taylor 1982, 26-29). Coleman too has
referred to the importance of what he terms “multiplex relations” in the
development of social capital (Coleman 1988). In other words, for the practice
of general reciprocity to become fundamental to community structure and
cohesion, direct and many-sided relationships need to be nurtured in fairly
small and stable communities.

Fikret Berkes discusses the importance of small communities in relation
to their ability to avoid the tragedy of the commons problematic identified but
misunderstood by Hardin and subsequent conventional resource management
literature. Berkes argues that “to many whose worldviews are shaped by the
urban-industrial society in which they live, with little intimate contact with
neighbours and other members of society, the ‘tragedy’ may appear inevitable.
By contrast, use of the commons for long-term sustainable yields “is relatively
more likely in the case of people living in small groups with tight communal
control over the resource base and over social behaviour” (Berkes 1989, 2, 71,
73). The literature on common property regimes has provided extensive case
studies which demonstrate how such regimes still work in today’s world (Berkes

So, the existence and use of social capital can perhaps be most clearly
defined and understood by first looking at societies where small community was
the predominant or sole form of social organization, communities where there
was no state and where the economy was not seen as separate from society. In
societies of small communities with very high stocks of social capital, what we
moderns call "the economy" was so deeply embedded in social relations that it
was not even perceived as a phenomenon. It was simply part of the life of the society. I shall consider examples of this embeddedness when examining societies practicing the domestic mode of production, but first it is necessary to explain what I mean by a mode of production.

**Modes of Production**

A conventional definition of a mode of production refers to an entire system of production of goods and services in a society that encapsulates both the forces or means of production and the social relations of production. Mode of production has been a central concept for Marxism, but non-Marxist sociologists now also use the concept widely (The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought 1988, 536). The forces of production are sometimes referred to as factors of production. Conventional definitions of mode of production traditionally include four factors of production: land, labour, entrepreneurial skills and capital, with capital sometimes sub-divided into finance capital and physical capital. Also, a conventional, neo-classical mode of production analytic framework regards these factors merely as inputs into the production process.

For Marxists, it is the relationship between the social relations of production and the means of production that determines the pattern and direction of the development of the entire system of production. In this view, the forces of production are never found in a neutral or random state, but are always organized and developed by particular groups or classes in their own interests. For example, in the capitalist mode of production, the owners of capital (or the bourgeoisie) own and/or control the land, the factories, and the machines allowing them to dominate and exploit the workers who own only
their labour power which they must sell to the capitalists in return for wages. In the Marxist view then, the direction of the further development of the mode of production is set primarily by the capitalists.

In my definition, inspired and informed by ecological economic thinking on forms of capital and also on a prior knowledge of Marxist political economy, the human production system or mode of "production" is viewed as a mode of production and consumption; that is, production and consumption are seen to be directly related aspects of an integrated human economic system. The way we consume is very much tied into the way we produce and the way we produce strongly influences the way we consume. It is a dialectical relationship. As production grows, so does consumption and as consumption grows so must production. For example, when the industrial mode of production became so productively successful in the nineteenth century, it became necessary to create masses of consumers and national markets to supplant the great variety of small local and regional markets. As discussed in chapter one, this was done through the creation of advertising and a mass media (Ewen 1976). In turn, the rise in consumption subsequently stimulated further increases in production and so on in a huge positive feedback loop that is now leading us into the global marketplace.

In my definition of a mode of production and consumption, I include six factors of production: natural capital (not only land, but all nature's goods and services), human capital (skills and knowledge of labour and management), social and cultural capital, physical or human-made capital and finance capital. In this definition, I have collapsed labour and entrepreneurial skills and knowledge into one category - human capital; and I have added two other factors of production, social capital and cultural capital (wherein "world-view" is its most salient meaning).
As noted, all human modes of production are actually modes of production and consumption. We therefore cannot consider the various factors as merely inputs to production; we must also consider their role in consumption. For example, natural capital is a factor in production, but natural capital can only be a factor of production by being consumed. Now, social capital may have the potential to replace some, or even a great deal, of natural capital as a factor of production and therefore to reduce natural capital throughput while at the same time enhancing and supporting human capital. Human-made capital will also have a different relationship to both human capital and natural capital if eco-centered social capital grows to replace a sufficient amount of natural capital throughput to achieve sustainability.

With a general understanding of what I mean by a mode of production, I can examine the general characteristics of earth-based societies practicing the domestic mode of production. In part, the purpose is to look toward an understanding of economic activity that is truly embedded in dense systems of horizontal, many-sided social relations which are themselves embedded in the greater ecological community. In this analytical probing exercise I also attempt to deepen the notion of eco-centered social capital so that it becomes a useful qualitative baseline for examining social capital in contemporary society.

Consider first the question of embeddedness; that is, the fact that our modern industrial market society is the only society in history in which the economic sphere has not been embedded within social relationships and instead has come rather to dominate the sphere of civil society as the work of Cohen and Arato and Polanyi has shown. In other words, our modern society far from being the "universal" model its ideology has led us to believe it is, is, in fact, quite atypical.
In short, if we want to shed light on the relationship of economic society with civil society in any potentially sustainable future way of life then we need to advance beyond the perceptual boundaries of our atypical market society. Our present thinking is too narrowly restricted by the very economic norms of the industrial model we seek to change. Since our modern society is atypical, we need to understand how more typical or normal societies function. In other words, we need to examine our human roots in societies where civil society - not economics - was the dominant sphere of social relations. An explicitly comparative approach may aid in casting a clearer light on our own contemporary situation, in particular, on the possibilities of transforming the industrial capitalist mode of production into a sustainable mode of production.

The next section examines the domestic mode of production, arguably the most sustainable way of life since humans have been on earth. I develop an overview of its main features with respect to social capital and eco-social capital in societies using the domestic mode of production.

The Domestic Mode of Production: Introduction

With its roots deep in the Paleolithic, the domestic mode of production (DMP) used by gathering/hunting and horticultural societies was by far the longest running production/consumption system humans have ever experienced, comprising more than 99% of our time on earth. This fact alone speaks volumes for the sustainability of this system over the (very) long term. Many different cultures are included within the DMP, but thanks to the fairly comprehensive overview provided by the economic anthropology of Marshall Sahlins we have a definition and an analytical framework which helps to capture certain common features of the spectrum as found in a broad range of
societies still practicing the DMP in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (1974). Furthermore, Sahlins' examination provides a basis for comparison with our own industrial mode of production as a mode of production.

By contrast with the industrial mode of production (IMP), the DMP may be defined initially as a form of social organization for material production and consumption in which the required level of resource throughput is determined largely by the nature of its social relationships and its "connectivity" to non-human nature. This is an entirely different form of economy than our own in which, as discussed, a positive feedback type of relationship between production and consumption drives throughput growth. It's actually very difficult to speak of "an economy" as such in reference to the DMP. Sahlins has pointed out the following important caveat when discussing Paleolithic or Neolithic societies: "structurally speaking 'the economy' does not exist in the DMP. More precisely, 'economy' is something that generalized social/kinship groups and relations, notably kinship groups and relations, do" (1974, 76), rather than a distinct, separate, specialized organization. In other words, in such societies economy is a function of society for it is society, in the form of family or band production groups producing for their own subsistence, that directs what to produce (and therefore what to consume as well). Furthermore, Sahlins adds, "the household is to the tribal economy as the manor to the medieval economy or the corporation to modern capitalism: each is the dominant production-institution of it's time" (ibid). In the DMP, the household is charged with production, with deployment and use of labour power, and with the determination of economic objectives. Of course, "household" here conveys a range of different family forms, mostly some form of extended family. Cooperation in production can (and occasionally did) extend beyond the household, but this does not compromise the autonomy or economic purpose of
the household, the domestic management of labour power, or the prevalence of
domestic objectives across the social activities of work (1974,78). Given the
centrality of domestic management of production, Sahlins named this system
the domestic mode of production.

Karl Polanyi has also compared gathering/hunting societies with modern
economies. He has observed that in the household economy the individual's
motives spring from situations set or governed by facts of a non-economic order
whether of family, politics, or religion. He remarks that the term “economic life”
in this context would have no obvious meaning: "In contrast to kinship, magic or
etiquette with their powerful keywords, the economy as such remained
nameless" (Dalton 1968, 85). Again, the economy is seen as thoroughly
embedded in civil society to the point that the very concept of an economy did
not exist.

In summary then, in the DMP, the household is the management unit of
production, of the deployment and use of labour. The household is also where
what we would call economic objectives are determined. The principal
relations of production are therefore the inner relations of the family or domestic
group. All these production decisions are domestic decisions for the purpose of
domestic consumption, satisfaction, health, and happiness. As Sahlins
explains, "the built-in etiquette of kinship statuses, the dominance and
subordination of domestic life, the reciprocity and cooperation, here make the
'economic' a modality of the intimate" (Sahlins 1974, 77). Production, then, is
attuned to the family's customary requirements. Sahlins comments that this
means production is for the benefit of the producers who are also the
consumers. In the DMP then, Sahlins finds an economy that is ordered primarily
by kinship relations.
Now that we have a working definition of the DMP, we need to examine its main features with respect to the potential of social capital to be a replacement for natural capital. This examination will centre on what Sahlins has called the "structure of underproduction", although it might better be named production for livelihood.

The Structure of "Underproduction" or Production for Livelihood

In our materialistic consumer society we tend to consider affluence in terms of the possession of things, the endless accumulation of material products. Indeed, this is the at the heart of the definition of economic man. In contrast to modern affluent consumer civilization, Sahlins has counterposed what he calls the "original affluent societies" (Paleolithic gatherer-hunters and Neolithic agriculturists) of the DMP. Perhaps the most striking feature of such societies is what Sahlins has termed their "structure of underproduction" (1974, 41).

The structure of "underproduction" of the DMP refers to the observed reality across a number of ethnographies from around the world reviewed by Sahlins where production was not only low by comparison with more materialistic societies, but low relative to the existing possibilities and abilities of those societies themselves. Underproduction in this sense was not necessarily inconsistent with a kind of affluence. That is, all the peoples' material wants could easily be satisfied even with "the economy" running below its production capacity, given their modest (by our exaggerated standards) ideas of satisfaction. In Sahlins view then, these "underproductive" economies do not use all their available labour power, or fully engage all their technological means, and therefore also leave much of their natural resources untapped.
We moderns have consistently seen these subsistence economies as materially impoverished, surviving only in a state of brutal hardship. This view is changing, but to regard such societies as "affluent" still shocks our consumerist sensibilities. However, as Sahlins points out, poverty is, at least in part, a social status, and, in this sense, is an invention of civilization. For Sahlins, poverty is neither a small amount of goods, nor just a relation between means and ends, but above all a relation between people. In this sense, poverty has actually grown with civilization. Our contemporary, overproductive, global economic era in the last half of the twentieth century has also been a time of mass starvation, more than any other in the history of humanity. While Paleolithic and Neolithic communities had what we would call a "materially low" standard of living, the lower material wants of peoples within a domestic mode of production were usually met. As Sahlins has put it, referring to the low material wants of these societies, there is a Zen road to affluence: "Adopting the Zen strategy, a people can enjoy an unparalleled material plenty - with a low standard of living" (1974, 2).

Using many examples, Sahlins described and analyzed this structure of production for livelihood in three interrelated areas: the underuse of resources, the underuse of labour power, and the underproduction of household livelihood. Now, as we have seen, whether the domestic group was a single family or a group of families, production was primarily for the benefit of the producers; that is, for the domestic group itself. There was generally a large range of variation in household production. Even with their low "Zen" standards of material need, a fair percentage of domestic groups sometimes failed to provide their own customary livelihood (subsistence), although that was what they were organized to do. We shall see how such shortages were dealt with in these societies below. Now however, I want to keep the focus on production.
Sahlins points out that production for livelihood is essentially production for use value. Production for livelihood then is, by definition, production for a "specific useful character responding to the producers customary requirements" (1974, 84). Production within the producing/consuming domestic group, the household, merely meets their materially low, "Zen" demands. Sahlins further observes that even when there is exchange between households, clans, or broader groupings, both the exchange transaction and the production for it, are oriented to livelihood, not to profits. Thus, in the DMP, production is under no compulsion to advance to the physical capacity that it would if oriented for exchange value on a market. On the contrary, Sahlins argues that production for use value is discontinuous and irregular and sparing of labour power. Viewed from within our modern, overproductive, consumer culture, production for use value is seen by Sahlins as a system of production for livelihood with limited economic goals defined qualitatively (not quantitatively) in terms of a way of living. Production, then, "is under no compulsion to proceed to the physical or gainful capacity, but inclined to break off for the time being when livelihood is assured for the time being" (1974, 84). Production is intermittent. In this ancient (and in some places still extant) system, what we moderns call "economics" is only a part-time activity or else it is an activity of only part of the society (1974, 86). These points can be illustrated when we examine the nature of work in the DMP.

Work in the DMP has an entirely different character from work in our modern market economy. In the DMP there is what Sahlins calls an intrinsic discontinuity in the very way work is organized: "Work is accordingly unintensive: intermittent and susceptible to all manner of interruption by cultural alternatives and impediments ranging from heavy ritual to light rainfall" (1974, 86). For example, the intermittent and almost casual character of work in such
societies is depicted by the following description from an 1960s ethnography of
Australian Arnhem Land hunters:

apart from the time (mostly between definitive activities and during
cooking periods) spent in general social intercourse, chatting, gossiping
and so on, some hours of the daylight were also spent resting and
sleeping. On the average, if men were in camp, they usually slept after
lunch from an hour to an hour and a half, or sometimes even more. Also,
after returning from fishing or hunting they usually had a sleep, either
immediately they arrived or whilst game was being cooked. --- The
women, when out collecting in the forest, appeared to rest more
frequently than the men. If in camp all day, they also slept at odd times,
sometimes for long periods. (Sahlins 1974, 19-20)

In this example, we also see that while men hunted and women
gathered, both took plenty of rest. Using a range of other examples, the
underuse of labour power is well documented by Sahlins using different
ethnographies and other documents of nineteenth and early twentieth century
explorers describing a range of societies still using the DMP in the modern era.
Of course, reflected in these ethnographies there is great variation indeed
across such a broad range of geographical and cultural space. As well, much
work was seasonal and often required considerable effort over a concentrated
period of time. Nevertheless, typically, the ‘working week’ if averaged out was
found to be 15 to 20 hours in many of these societies (1974, 14-32). The
evidence discussed by Sahlins draws on a number of empirical, quantitative
studies of more or less contemporary gatherer-hunter societies including the
one cited above, Richard Lee's work on the !Kung Bushmen and Woodburn's
on the Hadza in Africa, and several more from Australia (1974, 20-32). Based
on this evidence, Sahlins argues that: "A good case can be made that hunters
and gatherers work less than we do; and, rather than a continuous travail, the
food quest is intermittent, leisure abundant, and there is a greater amount of
sleep in the daytime per capita per year than in any other condition of society" (1974, 14).

Generally, Sahlins' evidence shows that the individual "working career" in DMP societies tended to be much shorter and much more intermittent leaving plenty of time for a greater number of other activities than in our modern industrial system. Sahlins comments that this dimension of underproduction in the DMP conformed to European prejudices about "lazy natives", while suggesting that the more appropriate conclusion was that Europeans are overworked. Indeed, reading ethnographies discussing the casual attitude to what we call "work" in gatherer-hunter societies and the amounts of time available to them for socializing and sleeping may make the reader from an overproductive, overworked, workaholic industrial society envious of many qualities of these original affluent societies. Sahlins dismisses such attitudes as "bourgeois enthnocentrism" (1974, 3). Of course, such statements challenge modern linear notions of progress from "primitive" stages of human evolution tied to the struggle for mere survival, through the agricultural revolution to our superior, modern, advanced form of society. Such conventional understanding fails to take account of the revolution in anthropology that occurred in the 1960s.

The misnamed 1966 "Man the Hunter" conference in Chicago, based on much new field research, was a watershed in thinking about gatherer-hunter, or more properly perhaps, foraging societies. First, the notion of "man-the-hunter" as the major breadwinner of early societies was overturned. As Richard Leakey commented almost 30 years after the event, the conference was important "not least for the recognition that the gathering of plant foods provided the major supply of calories for most gatherer-hunter societies" (1994, 63). Among other things, this helped to overturn the male bias in anthropology which had ignored or downplayed the role of women the gatherer. In his paper at the Chicago
conference on the Kalahari !Kung Bushmen, Richard Lee showed that vegetable foods comprised 60-80% by weight of their total diet and that although men's and women's work input was roughly equal in terms of time spent, women provided as much as two to three times as much food by weight as the men. Lee commented that through his own and other work at the conference and previous to it, "We have learned that in many societies, plant and marine resources are far more important than are game animals in the diet" (1979, 30-48).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsistence Base of Hunter-Gatherers (Old World and South America)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Dependence on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. !Kung Bushman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dorobo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mbuti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Hazda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gwi Bushman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gilyak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Yukaghir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ainu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Andamanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Semang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Aranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Murgin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Tiwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Dieri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Wikmunkan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Walbiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Paraujano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Shiriana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Yahgan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Ona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Alacaluf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Chamacoco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Aweikoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Botocudo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

adapted from Lee and Devore 1979, 46.

Others have argued that not only was women's role in gathering the major contribution to subsistence in gatherer-hunter societies and actually supported hunting, but that gathering was also associated with their role in the production of children and milk as providers for the whole society. Moreover, in this view as Sally Slocum argues, mother-children groups worked together as gatherers and were the basis of the first human social units, whereas male hunters were often peripheral in such matricentric family groups (Reiter 1975, 43; Mies 1986, 55-56). In other words, it was the lengthening of the "already strong primate mother-infant bond" over a longer time period that contributed to "increasing the depth and scope of social relationships" (Reiter 1975).

For his part, Lee focuses on the finding that "with a few conspicuous exceptions, the hunter-gatherer subsistence base is at least routine and reliable and at best surprisingly abundant" (1979, 30-48).
In spite of this revolution in anthropology thirty years ago, the notion persists that life in the Stone age was nasty, brutish and short, so it is perhaps necessary here to belabour this point. More recent evidence from paleopathology should dispense with this prejudicial notion of modernism. One example of what paleopathologists have learned from human skeletons concerns historical changes in height. Paleopathologists studying ancient bones from Greece and Turkey found that the average height of gatherer-hunters in the region was five feet ten inches for men and five feet six inches for women. However, with the adoption of agriculture heights went down reaching a low of five feet three for men and five feet one for women. By classical times, heights were on the rise again, but modern Greeks and Turks have still not "regained the heights of their healthy hunter-gatherer ancestors" (Diamond 1992, 186). Height is only one indicator of health. Another example from Central America supports the argument that early human societies provided good health for their members. Indian skeletons excavated from burial mounds in the Illinois and Ohio river valleys before agriculture became the primary mode of production around 1000 A.D., were, as one paleopathologist complained, "so healthy it is somewhat discouraging to work with them" (1992, 186). Interrelated with the underuse of labour power was the underuse of natural resources. Actual production was substantially less than what was possible. While the underuse of resources was more difficult to measure than the underuse of labour power in gatherer-hunter societies, Sahlins nevertheless has good anecdotal evidence for it. In addition, he produces a wide range of quantitative research from a range of different studies on swidden (controlled burn) cultivators showing very low levels of resource use; that is, very low intensity of land-use with long fallow periods typically several times the
The following table adapted from Sahlins (1974, 44-45) illustrates his point:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Potential Maximum</th>
<th>Actual as % of Potential</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naregu</td>
<td>New Guinea</td>
<td>288/m²</td>
<td>453/m²</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Brown &amp; Brookefield 1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimbu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsembaga</td>
<td>New Guinea</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>313-373</td>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>Rappaport 1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Maring)</td>
<td>(local pop)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yagaw</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>30/km²</td>
<td>48/km²</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Conklin 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanaoo</td>
<td></td>
<td>(arable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamet</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>2.9/km²</td>
<td>11.7-14.4/km²</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>Isikowitz 1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(arable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iban</td>
<td>Borneo</td>
<td>23/m²</td>
<td>35-46m²</td>
<td>50-66</td>
<td>Freeman 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Sut Valley)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuikuru</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>2041</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Carneiro 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(village)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndemdu</td>
<td>N. Rhodesia</td>
<td>3.17/m²</td>
<td>17-38/m²</td>
<td>8-19</td>
<td>Turner 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Lala</td>
<td>N. Rhodesia</td>
<td>&lt;3/m²</td>
<td>4/m²</td>
<td>&lt;75</td>
<td>Allan 1965: 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaka</td>
<td>N. Rhodesia</td>
<td>&lt;4/m²</td>
<td>10+/m²</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>Allan 1965: 122-123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sahlins comments that in almost all the cases investigated, "still not numerous but from many different parts of the globe", especially where the people have not been confined to "native reserves", the actual production is substantially less than the possible (1974, 42).

Since Sahlins published his economic anthropological overview of the DMP, a variety of other cultural and ecological anthropological literature confirms - from a range of analytical approaches - the seemingly light impact of the underuse of natural resources in native North American societies (Brody 1981; Cronon 1983; Feit 1973; Tanner 1985; Turner 1983).

So, now we have a working overview of the DMP with its structure of underproduction systematically interrelating the underproduction of household livelihood, the underuse of labour power, and the underuse of natural resources. Of course, it is important to remember that what we see from a contemporary cultural lens as "underproduction" was not seen in this way by societies practicing the DMP, but rather as production for their livelihood, sometimes disparagingly called "subsistence economies". Therefore, so long as this mode prevails customary modest standards of livelihood will remain restrained. Sahlins characterizes this dynamic of subsistence production as "the contentment of the household economy with its own self-appointed objective: livelihood. The DMP is intrinsically an anti-surplus system" (1974, 82-87). In order to illustrate this last point in sufficient detail for a specific time and place, I draw on the work of ecological historian William Cronon which I believe confirms Sahlins's work from a different framework and methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dogomba</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>25-50/m²</th>
<th>50-60/m²</th>
<th>42-100</th>
<th>Allan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1965: 240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cronon examines in great detail the life of First Nations peoples in early colonial New England (1983). With extensive documentation and rigor, Cronon lays out the evidence for the abundance of wildlife in the forests and shores inhabited by the tribal nations of Micmac, Abnaki, Mohegan, Delaware, Mahican, Penobscot, Powhatan, and so on at the time of the Europeans' arrival. His reconstruction of ecological history is based on an interdisciplinary methodology which includes early travelers' descriptions (tempered by a critical approach to the European ethnocentric Christian mind-set of those centuries), a contemporary understanding of ecological succession theory and the concept of ecosystems, an investigation of relict stands of old-growth forests in Connecticut, tree ring and pollen analysis, extensive research into the pattern of colonial legal activity, archaeological evidence, and a review of modern ecological literature on the condition of contemporary eastern forests. His treatment of the relationship between culture and environment examines and explicates the ways people created and re-created their livelihood, analyzed through changes in both their social and ecological relationships. His study focuses on relations at the local level "where they become most visible," but they do so for Cronon with the small region as his unit of analysis (1983, 6-14).

Cronon describes the great diversity and abundance of forests and seashore habitats encountered by the early colonists, including the great abundance of mammal, bird, fish, and forest life, as well as the great variety and patchwork of forest plant associations across the regional landscape (1983, 22-32). One point that emerged from Cronon's analysis of this documentation that all European witnesses agreed upon was the "incredible abundance of New England plant and animal life" (1983, 22). He notes not only the seasonal and successional changes, but also the longer range post glacial climatic warming, the shifting composition of diverse forest communities over time, and the
complicated migrations of individual species each arriving in the region by
different routes and at different rates. In his descriptive analysis, Cronon
considers not merely cyclical and self-equilibrating ecological communities, but
random disturbances sometimes of giant proportions like the pathogens which
almost wiped out the region's hemlocks 5,000 years ago.

In this broad context, Cronon describes in detail the native peoples'
daily, seasonal, and annual patterns of adaptation to the cyclical and changing
ecological dynamic. Cronon describes how they lived in seasons of abundance
and of occasional winter scarcity, for both existed as his detailed account clearly
shows. For example, two broad regional variations are described; the hunting
and gathering societies of northern New England above the latitude for maize
growing, as well as the mixed economy of those groups in southern New
England that grew maize and supplemented this with hunting, gathering, and
fishing. Cronon describes how the Indians, both agricultural and non-
agricultural, adapted their lives to the cycles of the seasons, to abundance and
scarcity. The principle social and economic grouping of New England Indians
was the small village of a few hundred people. However, the villages were not
fixed geographical entities. Their size and location changed on a seasonal
basis, breaking up and reassembling as social and ecological needs required.
For Cronon their mobility was an important key to their light impact on the
landscape. For example, in summarizing his descriptions of New England
Indians' seasonally adapted life, Cronon compares and contrasts the regional
variation between northern and southern groups:

The relationship of the southern New England Indians to their
environment was, if anything, even more complicated than that of the
Northern Indians. To the seasons of hunting and fishing shared by both
groups were added the agricultural cycles which increased the available
food surplus and so enabled denser populations to sustain themselves.
In both areas, the mobility of village sites and the shift between various
subsistence bases reduced potential strains on any particular segment of
the ecosystem, keeping the overall human burden low. (1983, 48)

Mobility across the regional landscape then, for both Northern and
Southern groups in colonial New England practicing the DMP, was a key to the
build-up of anything more than small seasonal surpluses for overwintering (and
these only in the south). Early European visitors such as Thomas Morton
characterized New England Indians as being "rich in Land, and poor in all the
Comforts of Life" (Cronon 1983, 79). Cronon points out that, like Morton and
other European observers of Indian life, the philosopher John Locke failed to
notice that the Indians themselves did not recognize themselves as poor and
that the endless accumulation of capital which he (Locke) saw as a natural
consequence of the human love for wealth made little sense to the Indians.
Cronon himself makes the link to Sahlins' "Zen road" to affluence: "'wants',
Sahlins says, may be 'easily satisfied' by producing much or desiring little"
(Cronon 1983, 80). Like Sahlins, Cronon has also documented the Indians
relaxed attitude toward personal possessions using various early accounts of
what anthropologists now call usufruct rights. For example, the Micmac of Nova
Scotia were described by one contemporary as "so generous and liberal
towards one another that they seem not to have any attachment to the very little
they possess, for they deprive themselves thereof very willingly and in very
good spirit the very moment when they know that their friends have need of it"
(Cronon 1983, 61-62). Cronon comments that Europeans often interpreted
such actions as the supposed generosity of the "noble savage", while
suggesting that a better interpretation would place such behaviour in the
context of their seasonal round of life in which accumulation of possessions
made little sense given the ecological reasons of mobility already examined.
Moreover, Cronon adds that in New England Indian society a system of reciprocity similar to the potlatch ceremonies of the Pacific Northwest, in which wealthy individuals gave away much of what they owned to establish reciprocal relations of obligations with potential allies (1983, 46). However, this rather instrumentalist interpretation fails to recognize the spiritual dimension of gift giving and general reciprocity which I discuss below. The next section discusses general reciprocity in the context of the DMP.

**Generalized Reciprocity and Redistribution**

Now it is time to examine more closely the claim of original affluence put forward on behalf of the DMP's system of production for livelihood. First, I've mentioned the fact that some households did not always meet even their own modest "Zen" standards of consumption requirements. If this is so, how can Sahlins defend the system as affluent?

The answer lies in the system of generalized reciprocity that pertained at the level of the domestic group (whether foraging bands or villages), especially with respect to the sharing of food. In the DMP, food sharing between haves and have nots was an important key to the success of generalized reciprocity (Sahlins 1974, 210-219). A simple definition of generalized reciprocity refers to a system of total sharing within the family, band, or village, associated especially (but not only) with food sharing. It does not necessarily mean that food is divided equally among the people, but it does mean that no one goes hungry if food is available. If food shortages exist in the territory food will be shared with visitors or those seeking help (Leacock and Lee 1987, 8).

However, the concept of general reciprocity is also used by Sahlins to convey the sense that a form of exchange takes place. Several forms of
reciprocity represent a continuum of forms of exchange. For Sahlins, the most generalized reciprocity is the solidarity extreme where the material side of the exchange transaction is repressed or subsumed by the social. In this form, the expectation of return exchange for "gifts" is indefinite, not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality. This form takes place within close kinship relations. Failure to reciprocate even over a long period of time by a recipient does not cause the giver to stop giving. This is of key importance because this extended giving called "general reciprocity" suggests that merely instrumentalist or economistic explanations for such behaviour are insufficient. I return to this point shortly.

From this generalized reciprocity extreme, the continuum moves out to less "pure" forms of kinship dues and chiefly dues where there is more definite expectation of commensurate return within a finite period of time. The continuum proceeds on out to "balanced reciprocity" or direct exchange. This can take the form of either "gift-exchange" or out and out trade where the material side of the transaction is at least as critical as the social. At this extreme, transactions are conducted with those beyond immediate kinship relations. Sahlins characterizes the distance between these poles of reciprocity as a "social distance" (1974, 191-195). Reciprocity then, whatever form it took on the continuum was the cultural norm that governed redistribution in the DMP, normally ensuring nutritional success for all families in a mode of production characterized by a structure of production for livelihood.

Social Capital in the DMP

In the DMP we see civil society writ large. In it, the economy of production for livelihood only exists as a function and attribute of kinship relations. It is embedded in those relations. As we have seen, what we would
call "economic" activity is a part-time affair whether from the point of view of the individual or the domestic group. Extended kinship relations - civil society itself - is where economic direction is set and decisions are made and where most of the essential production and consumption are carried out. Kinship relations set the pattern for and also embody the relations of production. The relations of production are therefore contained within civil society and are not part of a separate economic or political sphere.

In the DMP, the quality and extension of kinship relations are not limited to those who are strictly kin. Even within the most extensive clan organizations people still behave toward each other as if they were kin. More than this, though, as Anthropologist Stanley Diamond has argued, all meaningful social, economic, and ideological relations have a kin or transfigured kin character. Diamond refers to this transfigured kin character as a "personalism" extending from the family outward to society and ultimately to all of nature (1974, 144-145). However, I have found the best explanations of such a personalism to be those of certain First Nations writers. It is captured in the popular phrase, "all my relations". For example, writer and thinker, Dennis Martinez points out that the relationship between the people and the earth, expressed in the well-known ceremonial phrase "all my relations", is really an indigenous concept of general reciprocity. Reciprocity, in this sense, is a very powerful but simple and straightforward concept that means helping our relatives so they will help us, in this case all our relations, the plants, the animals, the birds, everything on our earth. This personalism of relationships is understood as a "caretaking responsibility" associated with a subsistence livelihood (Martinez 1993). Note also that this indigenous understanding of general reciprocity takes us beyond a merely human-centric notion of social capital. The next section on cultural
capital examines this broader, bio or eco-centric understanding of kinship in more detail.

If the relations of production are embedded in kinship relations, what then are the essential features of such relations? Much has been written about this already so I have merely arranged a composite list of these features from a number of sources which I think we need to consider in order to better analyze social (and cultural) capital in the DMP. It should be pointed out for clarity that the following list, which includes an important First Nations contribution, is an attempt to reflect only the broad parameters of what the literature says about similar features of many, if not most, of the societies practicing the DMP:

1. Collective ownership of the means of production - the land or natural capital - at the level of the band.
2. Access to the technology - virtually everyone had skills for making essential tools.
3. Reciprocal access - beyond the band level - to the means of production through marriage ties, visiting, and co-production.
4. Little or no emphasis on accumulation.
5. Generalized reciprocity within the family, band, and clan.
6. Individual ownership of tools within a system of usufruct.
7. Many of these societies practiced consensus decision-making and direct participatory democracy. Community was seen as a collective responsibility and no one role was any less significant than another.
8. Many were non-hierarchical and egalitarian in social structure.
10. Intensive and extensive nurturing of children.
11. Many-sided, engaging, personal relationships throughout an individual's life cycle.
12. A great deal of leisure time.
13. Cultural integration - sacred and secular united - all life sacred.

Taking my expanded or eco-centric definition of social capital and applying it to the above discussion on general reciprocity and the above list of characteristics of the DMP, it can be seen that levels of social capital were
extremely high in the DMP. Moreover, at the scale of the family, band, or clan, social capital was ubiquitous in both production and consumption as the examples examined previously in this chapter have illustrated. Norms of reciprocity, cooperation, pooling, sharing, and mutual aid were the social institutions comprising these dense networks of intense, horizontal interaction. Direct and many-sided personal and social relationships gave rise to very high levels of information about one another and enabled the formation of deep bonds of trust based on this information. Of course, this is not to be read as if DMP societies did not experience "bad actors" in their populations or that their lives were without any social conflict. What I do intend to mean is that, in comparison with our modern alienated, atomistic society, societies that practiced general reciprocity as a basic norm of life in small groups reflected relatively high levels of social capital expressed in strong kinship relations. Such societies engaged intensively in the sharing of oral histories through storytelling and by public ceremonies and ritual, bonding people to each other and to their ancestors. The fabric of social life was evidently very rich indeed. We have also seen that human capital, the knowledge and skills associated with the technology of the DMP, was perhaps as ubiquitous and developed as social capital. What we to-day would call civic engagement was almost universal in the DMP, a daily fact of life for the individual-in-society, the civic individual.

More importantly perhaps, particularly from the point of view of replacing natural capital with social capital, high throughput of natural capital was neither necessary nor desirable in such societies. This is a very encouraging conclusion for it suggests that high stocks or levels of social capital can provide a meaningful and powerful substitute for the heavy consumption of natural capital in our society if we can learn to build and enhance dense, horizontal,
mutualistic relations and institutions of our own; if that is, we are prepared to learn some essential lessons in civics from foraging peoples.

Let me now compare this situation briefly to that of modern society. As we have seen, in the DMP the economic sphere, the sphere of production, was deeply embedded in civil society; that is, in kinship relations. In this system the household was the dominant production institution of its time. This meant that production was geared to the needs of the domestic group. Consumption was therefore harmonized with production in a structure of production for livelihood; that is, for life's basic necessities. This situation contrasts sharply with our modern system of production for the marketplace. Here the economic sphere is not only not embedded in civil society, it dominates civil society and consequently kinship relations as well. In modern society, the private corporation is the dominant institution of production in our time. This means that production is not geared to use value or the needs of kinship or civil society, but rather to exchange value and to the self-regulating market mechanism. Particularly over the last 150 years or so (the period of the great transformation), the market mechanism has worked to create what can be seen, in contrast to Sahlins' structure of production for livelihood in the DMP, as a structure of overproduction geared to commodity consumption.

Finally, what has emerged from this analytic review of the DMP is the simple fact that in a structure of production for livelihood a large amount of time is available for the creation, development, and nurturing of social capital as we have seen. In the "Zen" road to affluence, material production of basic necessities is just that. It is not allowed to interfere with or fragment the profoundly rich social, cultural, and spiritual life of the people. Rather, material production is itself part of - embedded in - kinship relations. Indeed, as we have seen, kinship relations governed material production. In any truly affluent
society, the affluent will have plenty of time available to enjoy their affluence. Affluence can be viewed, in this more basic sense, as the disposable time of individuals and groups to enrich their social, cultural and spiritual life. We have seen that social capital increases through use and therefore those with social capital tend to accumulate more through even greater use (Putnam 1993b). In societies where affluence is measured in the richness of social relations rather than the amassing of material wealth or the frenetic consumption of commodities, everyone's time is freed up to produce high quality, diverse, and many-sided social relations. Social capital in extended and intense use does appear to require a lot of time, but it produces even more social capital while also enriching human capital. In societies with relatively high stocks of social capital practicing the DMP, the required time to build up these stocks through intense use may be a crucially necessary additional factor for the flourishing of social capital.

Of course, in societies where productive, or economic, activity is embedded in social relations, social capital is also built up through organized work sharing. This is unlike the economic sphere of modern industrialism where mass production work is alienating for so many, is characterized by vertical relations of dependency, and robs labour of valuable time to build a rich social and cultural life. In the DMP by contrast, productivity is not associated with quantitative success in material production. Rather, it is associated with the modest or subsistence production of material life. However, the productivity of social capital in the DMP is instead associated with its own reproduction and growth. The result then, of the productivity of social capital in the DMP is the production of rich, many-sided, dense, horizontal networks of social relations while conservatively using both natural capital and human labour. This is the "secret" to the productivity of social capital in the DMP. I would also suggest it is
the secret to the impressive longevity, to the proven long-term sustainability, of
the DMP. One does not give up such a rich, socially affluent, way of life easily.
For example, it took a considerably long time for agriculture to spread across
Europe. From its origins in the Near East around 8000 BC., agriculture
advanced across Europe "at a snail's pace" to reach Greece around 6000 BC,
and Britain and Scandinavia some 2,500 years later (Diamond 1992, 183).

Cultural Capital as "Community of Beings" in the DMP

As we saw in chapter one, the concept of cultural capital was designed to
capture a largely similar range of socio-cultural variables to those defined by
the term social capital (Berkes and Folke 1994). In my examination of the DMP
we have seen: first, that kinship relations were extended from the family to the
band and clan levels. In other words, kinship relations were extended out into
civil society to the point where kinship relations were coterminous with civil
society. That is, all social capital in this situation took on a kinship or
transfigured kinship character. Secondly, we have also seen that kinship
relations were not considered to be limited to the human community.

The extension of transfigured kinship relations to all of nature noted
above is also captured by Berkes' and Folke's ancient "community of beings"
ethic discussed in chapter one. Moreover, in this concept we have the crucial
link between social and cultural capital. Obviously, as we have already seen,
earth-based societies whether from the stone age or our age do not make the
hard and fast distinctions that our modern industrial culture makes between
human and non-human life, between the social and the natural world. This
simple fact has enormous bearing on the conservative use of natural capital in
the DMP. Such cultural capital considerations are entirely absent from Sahlin's
otherwise comprehensive and outstanding analysis of stone age economics. More generally, it is very difficult to find any discussion of the "community of beings" ethic in the anthropological literature, other than as anecdotal accounts of "superstitious" beliefs. Therefore, to understand how the cultural capital reflected in the "community of beings" ethic informs behaviour vis-à-vis the relationship between social capital and natural capital, I have relied on literature from a variety of First Nations.

The case for production for livelihood and the link between social and cultural capital has already been made. The following discussion serves to: illuminate the depth and rich spiritual quality of the social capital/cultural capital linkage in the DMP; provide an ethical understanding of the use of natural capital in societies practicing this ancient mode of production; and begin to identify what lessons from the DMP we in the industrial mode of production might learn to apply to our contemporary dilemma.

The Haudenosaunee or Iroquois Six Nations Confederacy are well known for the fact that their "Great Law" provided both inspiration and many ideas which were embodied in the United States Constitution. In 1977, they presented a series of position papers to the United Nations in Geneva on the global crisis facing all humanity. This address to the "Western World" was later published by Akwesasne Notes as "A Basic Call To Consciousness" (Six Nations Confederacy 1978, 49). It identifies Western Civilization - a whole way of life - as the very "process" of abuse of both humanity and nature that is at the root of our global crisis. The "basic call" advanced by the Iroquois Confederacy is that humans need to reclaim consciousness of what the Haudenosaunee refer to as "the Sacred Web of Life of the Universe". In their message they assert: that the Earth is a very sacred place; and that the role of humans, according to their own ancient traditions or "original instructions", is to be "the
spiritual guardians of this place". For them, human relations were thoroughly integrated with and dependent on all life. The following quote captures this relationship beautifully in poetic prose:

In the beginning, we were told that the human beings who walk about on the Earth have been provided with all the things necessary for life. We were instructed to carry a love for one another, and to show a great respect for all the beings of this Earth. We are shown that our life exists with the tree life, that our well-being depends on the well-being of the Vegetable Life, that we are close relatives of the four-legged beings. We give a greeting and thanksgiving to the many supporters of our own lives - the corn, beans, squash, the winds, the sun. When people cease to respect and express gratitude for these many things, then all life will be destroyed, and human life on this planet will come to an end. (Six Nations Confederacy 1978, 49)

The philosophy of the kinship and sacredness of life was not peculiar to the Six Nations. Similar sentiments can be found over and over again among the First Nations. In a report written by a team of native people published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development in Winnipeg, First Nations authors, Clarkson, Morisette, and Regallet describe why, in Native traditions, respect for people and for the earth is linked together in order for people to survive and care for at least the next seven generations:

When we begin to separate ourselves from that which sustains us, we immediately open up the possibility of losing understanding of our responsibility and our kinship to the earth. When we view the world simply through the eyes of human beings we create further distance between ourselves and our world. When the perceived needs of one spirit being is held above all others, equality disappears. From this basic understanding, our ancestors assumed their role as the spiritual guardians of the earth. One of the most significant illustrations of this is the central belief that the whole of creation is a sacred place. At the first level of understanding we can see the relationship between humans and their basic biological needs as they relate to the earth. The second level creates the relationship that ties the biological need to the spiritual. This is a dialectic relationship. More than ingesting the fruits of our labour through one orifice and discharging them through another, it is a fundamental alliance with the earth. (Clarkson et al. 1992, 5)
In this world view, the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material, the human and the non-human are tightly woven together. Here we can clearly see the link between general reciprocity and the "community of beings" ethic. Reciprocity, expressed in the phrase "all my relations" is extended beyond the human as a kinship ethic that includes the whole earth. The practice of this ethic informs the use of both social and human capital as well as the very respectful way that natural capital was used in the DMP.

When reflecting on the meaning of these First Nations' passages in light of our analysis of the DMP, we can now understand that in the DMP, social capital was informed by a form of cultural capital infused with the spiritually profound and extended kinship philosophy of the "community of beings" ethic. This discussion has presented only a brief insight into the way nature was respected in DMP societies. Nevertheless, we have been able to see why cultural capital clearly played a key role in the conservative use of natural capital in this mode of production. More than this, it is evident that the ancient "community of beings" ethic was responsible for the high quality of care practiced in the use of other organisms and resources. It was not only a matter of using fewer resources, but also of using them with care and spiritual attention. We have seen that economic activity was only a part-time affair in the DMP. Now we can also see that the "community of beings" ethic informed the way work in the economic sphere was carried out just as it informed the whole way of life in the DMP.
Reflections on Eco-centric Social Capital and the Three-Sphered Civil Society Framework

What has been learned about social capital and natural capital from the foregoing analysis of the DMP? First, there is a very definite, strong negative correlation between social capital and consumption; that is, very high levels of social capital are associated with very low throughput of natural capital. This contributes an enrichment of the social capital concept, one that is directly relevant to replacing natural capital with social capital. Moreover, a consideration of cultural capital, in particular the "community of beings" ethic, has itself enriched and transformed the social capital concept by expanding the concept of kinship relations beyond human social relations to all other species and to the biosphere. Expanding the norm of general reciprocity to include all of life is not simply a symbolic act, but is directly related to the conservative and spiritually respectful use of natural capital in the DMP.

This discussion has also revealed a more nuanced understanding of the concept of eco-social capital. First, eco-social capital both informs and subsumes social capital. High levels of social capital in DMP societies are associated with the eco-social character of the "community of beings" ethic. Moreover, the deeply spiritual meaning attached to this earth-centered ethic provides a potentially strong motivation for the careful, respectful, and sparing use of natural resources, viewed not as mere commodities, but as kin. The ecological kinship norm found in the "community of beings" ethic is thus identified as a spiritual resource for humans. If affluence is to be associated with the richness and diversity of one's social, or rather, eco-social relations then the possession of commodities appears as a very poor substitute. The analysis of the DMP using the eco-centric social capital concept has thus
helped to reveal that affluence need not be positively correlated with high throughput of natural capital.

What can we learn from the analysis of the DMP, in terms of the three sphere analysis of our modern industrial mode of production? How much of what was the norm to the peoples practicing the DMP could apply to modern society, a society in which the formerly all-embracing kinship/civil society sphere has become atrophied and dominated by the economic and political spheres? Related to replacing natural capital with social capital, we have seen that social capital is extremely robust in the DMP where civil society, not the political or economic sphere, is the predominant sphere of social relations. It follows, then, that Cohen and Arato's perspective on civil society is appropriate for theorizing the creation and building of social capital. Their three-sphered framework, together with the eco-centered social capital concept, becomes the starting point of theorizing social transformation in contemporary bioregional theory and practice.

Using this framework, I apply my eco-centered concept of social capital to examine the bioregional project: building networked communities of place as a strategy of socio-cultural transformation. First however, a brief examination of the sphere of civil society in our contemporary industrial era will help to clarify potential for democratization of our modern, civil society sphere. This examination supports Cohen and Arato's contention that significant democratization of the sphere of civil society is possible.

Civil Society and the Informal Economy

The contemporary industrial consumer mode of production provides an almost total contrast to the DMP. In our society, natural capital is squandered
and civil society has been marginalized by the political and economic spheres. The hub of the domestic mode of production, the household, has been trivialized or ignored altogether as a factor in production. As many feminist analysts have pointed out, women's work in the home does not even count as productive labour.

For example, Marilyn Waring has given us a detailed analysis of the consistent omission of women's domestic labour in both the United Nations System of National Accounts and in many different systems of national accounting. In all these systems, the household is simply not counted as part of the economy. Women are invisible as producers in their capacities as housewives (Waring 1988). Their knowledge and skills do not qualify as human capital. Of course, this applies also to men who do domestic work in the home, but as Waring and others have shown, the vast majority of the work done in the home is still done by women, even after 20 years of feminist organizing and education. However, what is relevant for this thesis is the question of the size of the household and community economy.

There are several different names for the household and community economy in modern society; the hidden economy, the informal economy, the dual economy, the gray (or black) economy, the barefoot economy, and the cooperative or love economy. Hazel Henderson who uses the term "love economy" has made a very useful distinction between such economic activities as illegal drug and other criminal activities (transnational corporate barter deals, tax-dodging, and cash moonlighting) of the formal economy on the one hand and all the "traditional, loving, unpaid work in the subsistence, household and community sectors described earlier by Sahlins, Polanyi, et al" on the other hand (Henderson 1991, 152). The former list she categorizes as the undocumented "underbelly" of the GNP formal sector. The latter list, of course,
is what concerns us since it is activity in the sphere of civil society. Henderson refers to sociological studies (economists generally ignore the informal economy) in France, Sweden, Canada, and the U.K., showing that about 50% of all productive work is unpaid (Henderson 1991, 120). These figures suggest a huge potential for a civil society-based informal economy based on horizontal forms of social capital.

Another aspect of the love or caring economy is the volunteer sector which itself is huge. Barbara Brandt in "Whole Life Economics" cites another study showing that 51% of all U.S. residents over age 17 do volunteer work (Brandt 1995, 20). While there remain difficulties with measuring the informal economy, it is clear that this sector is enormous. Brandt has made a very useful list of the various components of the informal economy which helps to characterize the size, importance, and potential of the informal economy for transformational analysis and action in the civil society sphere. She presents six major sources of informal human economic activity which have emerged to make this formerly invisible economy visible: 1) unpaid domestic activities for home and family, commonly known as women's work; 2) women's biological activities of pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding; 3) household production and neighbourly exchanges of goods and services; 4) volunteer activities for community and public good; 5) innovative new economic models and institutions, such as worker ownership, consumer cooperatives, land trusts, community money systems, etc.; and 6) economic forms from nonwestern and non-industrial cultures. As Brandt points out, many of these informal activities are beginning to become more broadly recognized as spaces in the struggle for democratization partly because of the efforts of women, partly due to changing values, and partly to the growing failure of the formal sector to meet peoples needs (1995,108-110). The sheer size of all these activities taken together is
impressive. Moreover, it is clear merely from an initial examination of the above list that these are all activities that take place in civil society. For Henderson, Brandt and for a number of feminist analysts, the "home-grown economy" functions as a support base for the formal economic sector. Equally, or perhaps more importantly, Henderson's "love economy" can provide a minimal social safety net from the GNP dominated "world trade roller coaster" (1991, 119).

What I find hopeful in this analysis is that, in spite of the very real marginalization of the hidden economy (its domination by state and corporate sectors) it remains a huge terrain with potential for a strengthened democratization through the building of eco-social capital. While the economic and political spheres have come to dominate civil society over the past century and a half, civil society and its concomitant economic life as represented in the informal economy has not disappeared. Civil society, then, remains the most promising sphere for the theoretical and practical effort to begin building eco-social capital in our times. Bioregionalism is a social movement operating in civil society. The rest of this thesis undertakes to analyze and learn from the praxis of bioregionalists by using the civil society-based theoretical framework and the eco-centric social capital concept to probe bioregional experience.
Bioregionalism: A Brief Orientational Introduction

This chapter serves two purposes: one, to introduce bioregional values and philosophy; two; to begin an analytical probe of bioregional values for new insights on social and eco-social capital and their formation. The core values of bioregionalism I have identified are: place, reinhabitation, bioregion, home, and bioregional community. Other basic bioregional values include: interdependence of species, self-respect and respect for others, awareness of spirit, local knowledge and wisdom, social and ecological justice, diversity, wildness, spirituality, and celebration. The following short general introduction to bioregionalism provides the context for a more in-depth exploration of these values.

Bioregionalism is both a philosophy of life and a social movement in civil society based on cultural and social praxis. Moreover, bioregionalists attempt to integrate an economic and political praxis with their cultural and social praxis. In simple terms, the bioregional movement is inspired by and organized around the concept of local community, complemented by broader efforts at regional and inter-regional networking in both rural and urban environments. For example, bioregionalists were among the first to initiate community-based projects, proposals, and visions toward ecological or green cities (Berg 1983, 1986, 1988; Berman, Bookchin, Callenbach, and Snyder 1981; Rappaport 1986; Register 1987; Todd and Todd 1984; Todd and Tukel 1981). The term "green city" first appears in the bioregional literature in 1983 (Berg 1983).

For over two decades the bioregional movement has been slowly, but steadily growing. In 1984 the first Planet Drum Directory listed about 50 groups
that would identify with bioregionalism (Judy Goldhaft 1989). By 1995, Doug Aberley’s content analysis of Raise-the-Stakes (the major continental networking journal of the movement) showed there to be about 100 such groups and about another 278 classed as allies of bioregionalism (29 April 1996, personal communication).

Bioregional educator Frank Traina has pointed to two major methodological difficulties with measuring the impact of the bioregional movement: first, people and groups are doing things advocated by bioregionalists without being aware of the formal bioregional concept; second, few people are bioregionalists only, often identifying themselves as also: greens, environmentalists, eco-feminists, social ecologists, deep ecologists, conservationists, restorationists, ecologically concerned Christians or Jews, green Buddhists, neo-Pagans, or Earth oriented spiritualists, etc. There are also First Nations’ peoples who practice ways of life close to bioregional practices. Furthermore, bioregionalists do not pay dues to any organization and local bioregional groups report to no larger organization (1995, 9). All of this makes counting bioregional heads difficult.

The numbers may be greater than Aberley’s content analysis of Raise-The-Stakes shows. In any event, there is no question that bioregional ideas are spreading throughout the environmental movement and even more generally (though to a somewhat lesser extent ) in society at least in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. There are now over 60 bioregional publications in English and Spanish (most of these regional or local magazines or journals), plus another 140 publications who include material on bioregionalism (Doug Aberley, 29 April, 1996, personal communication).

A number of published bioregional thinkers are now well known in the environmental movement and beyond. These include; Peter Berg, Thomas
Berry, Wendel Berry, Earnest Callenbach, Raymond Dasmann, Dolores Lachapelle, Susan Meeker-Lowry, Joanna Macy, Stephanie Mills, Bill Mollison, Judith Plant, Kirkpatrick Sale, Gary Snyder, Starhawk, and John and Nancy Todd. Thanks to the bioregional press (particularly New Society Publishers), there is an even longer list of more recently published bioregional thinkers, including: Doug Aberley, Margo Adair, Van Andruss, Rachel L. Bagby, Barbara Brandt, Beatrice Briggs, Alberto Ruz Buenfil, Sharilyn Calliou, Mike Carr, Catherine Cholette, Jim Dodge, Caroline Estes, Helen Forsey, Gwaganad, David Haenke, Freeman House, Sharon Howell, Gene Marshall, David McClosky, Marnie Muller, Chris Plant, Mark Roseland, Jamie Sayen, Whitney Smith, Kai Snyder, Brian Tokar, Frank Traina, George Tukel, Eleanor Wright, and Seth Zuckerman. Others who are more well known, empathetic to bioregionalism and/or published in the bioregional press include; Murray Bookchin, Jane Jacobs, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Winona LaDuke, Jerry Mander, Marge Piercy, Reed Noss, William Rees, Richard Register, Jeremy Rifkin, Vandana Shiva, Charlene Spretnak, and David Suzuki. Still other sympathizers publish in local and regional magazines, journals and newspapers of the bioregional movement. Represented in the lists above is a rich diversity of thought from a variety of backgrounds and experience. The movement includes everyone from activist poets and eco-philosophers, scientists and back-to-the-landers, to urban and (bio) regional designers and planners. Some have had considerable influence through their writings.

Some bioregionalists do not regard bioregionalism as a social movement, particularly at the continental level. Traina (1995, 9) suggests that by some definitions it may make more sense to speak about a bioregional community. In my view, bioregionalism is a social movement, but it is also a community of communities. Indeed, much of this thesis illustrates and analyzes
this aspect of the movement. The key question is: how do bioregionalists go about building their communities and networks?

In the bioregional movement there is great respect for cultural, social, and religious diversity. Bioregionalism is greatly enriched by the diversity of people, ideas, and social movements out of which the movement arose. Relevant social movements include; the green movement, the eco-feminist movement, the permacultural movement, social ecology and municipal libertarianism, deep ecology, the Mexican ecology movement, various indigenous peoples and tribes, the Christian "creation spirituality" movement, some from the new left, various all species projects and councils of all beings, the neo-pagan or wiccan movement, Zen Buddhism, the Earth First! movement, and the Rainbow Tribe or Rainbow gathering movement (Carr 1990, 77-101).

What are some of the typical activities carried out by bioregionalists? Bioregionalists undertake: ecological restoration projects such as creek and stream daylighting and restoration; permaculture (to be explained in this chapter); community gardens; urban forestry; bioregional mapping; bioregional education; renewable energy (including solar, wind, micro-hydro, home and business retrofitting); proximity or mixed-use integrated density design, planning and zoning; socially and ecologically sustainable regional planning; urban eco-village projects; alternative transit planning; recycling and reuse projects; green or eco-city calendars and volunteer directories; community currency and barter-exchange networks; community land trusts; a variety of all-species projects (to be explained shortly), and publishing groups. The above activities are social and human capital intensive rather than finance capital intensive, often depending on large amounts of volunteer time, cooperation, and initiative.
Bioregional literature often expresses a conscious attempt to communicate in popular rather than academic language. This does not mean, of course, that bioregional literature is necessarily less theoretical or intellectual than academic writing. On the contrary, bioregional literature contains a richness of social and cultural change theory and expression that was developed, in great part, out of practice. As noted in chapter one, the bioregional movement is a movement of *praxis* whereby, ideally, theory and practice inform each other in dialectical interaction.

Much bioregional thinking appears in essays, poetry, local and regional journals, books, and in the self-published proceedings of the Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering and the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas (formerly, the North American Bioregional Congress). A content analysis of this expanding literature would reveal a philosophy rooted in practice, in the activity of building local community, and in networking regionally and inter-regionally in diverse social movements across the North American continent (or as bioregionalists refer to it “Turtle Island”, after a common indigenous expression). We would also see that the overwhelming majority of bioregionalists' efforts at social change take place within the sphere of civil society. Most bioregional thinkers are attempting to live-in-place or reinhabit their cities and bioregions within a wide variety of projects, communities, and settings. Peter Berg, one of the key founders of the movement and perhaps its most well known popularizer, constantly challenges himself and others with the motto, "what's the *do* of it"?

When we encounter bioregional thought in the literature we must first do so on its own terms. Much of bioregional literature attempts to integrate thinking and feeling, poetry and philosophy, vision and ideas, often with step by step practical suggestions about what to do next. Indeed, at the epistemological heart of the bioregional paradigm is the coming together of ecofeminism and
bioregionalism, rooted in a praxis of what ecofeminist/bioregionalist Judith Plant has called "thinking feelingly" (Andruss et al. 1990, 79-82). In examining bioregional concepts in the literature therefore, I look for both thought and feeling woven together to engender emotional as well as intellectual inspiration. The philosophy and poetry, the vision of transformation, as well as stories of the now numerous attempts to implement the vision in various contexts in Canada, Mexico, and the United States all hold something of this character.

**Core Bioregional Values and Vision**

First, this section explores four core concepts at the heart of bioregional thought upon which we can say that the bioregional paradigm (in the larger sense of culture and world-view) rests: the concepts of place, reinhabitation, bioregion, and the concept of home. It then discusses some other key bioregional values that happen to be shared with other post-industrial earth-centered movements. This exploration of core ideas provides a good understanding of bioregional philosophy.

**Place**

A fundamental premise to bioregional thinking is that humans all live in a "place" and that we all have a responsibility to the places we live in for the life support supplied to us by that place. Developing a philosophy and practice around place is the foundation of bioregionalism. Peter Berg has perhaps expressed this understanding of responsibility to place, most directly:

Wherever you live the place where you live is alive and you are part of the life of that place. No matter how short a time you've been there, or
whether or not you're going to be leaving it and going to another place, it will always be that situation throughout your life. The place that you end up being in is alive and you are part of that life. Now, what is your obligation and your sense of responsibility for the sustenance and support that these places give you and how do you go about acting on it? (Cayley 1986)

As well as responsibility to place, we also see in this passage the eco-philosophical view that humans are part of a living planet. This is the 'Gaian' world-view. However, in bioregional understanding the spirituality of the living planet is experienced directly, not abstractly, through direct relationship with one's immediate "place". The essence of this specific, grounded phenomenological experience of "place" is perhaps most powerfully expressed in the poetic prose of "Living Here", an early bioregional document of the Frisco Bay Mussel Group, who were, according to Berg (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 53), the first self-consciously "bioregional" organized group:

The uniqueness of each place comes in part from ecology and climate, but even more from the biota, the animals and plants that live there, shaping the landscape, its character, and one another as they evolve together. Each species which forms a strand of a living community has its own history and has entered the regional fabric at some point in geologic time, bringing the mysterious information of its own previous being.

This subtle and deeply resonant wisdom of place deserves respect and reverence, for those who thoughtlessly destroy information so long in the gathering are guilty of a crime against consciousness. --- We should protect it and as much as possible restore it, for these living roots which penetrate far into the past not only maintain the biological integrity of our home region, but nourish our spirit and sense of place as well. (Berg 1978, 124-131).

This passage illustrates the responsibility and obligation to place humans have in return for the sustenance/life-support and spiritual nourishment that resonance with place furnishes. A great deal of bioregional spiritual sensibility is grounded in this resonance with place as will become evident.
Much bioregional prose and verse, like the above text, expresses "poetically" the emotional and spiritual place-bonding to which the above passage speaks, integrated with its more "prosaic" information. We shall see other examples of this style throughout much of this inquiry. Berg tends to emphasize the sense of responsibility to place engendered by these emotions shown by the above example. It is directly out of this emotive responsibility to place that the idea of reinhabitation flows.

Reinhabitation

Bioregional thought has developed a key concept for a grounded social and cultural praxis which suggests answers to Berg's question of how we should act on our responsibility to place, once we have accepted the biosphere's vital life-support function for human existence. This concept is "reinhabitation" or "living-in-place". Berg and Raymond Dasmann, an ecologist working at the time with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, collaborated on creating the following definition very early in the development of the movement. It is perhaps the single most quoted phrase of bioregional literature:

Reinhabitation involves learning to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation. It involves becoming native to a place through becoming aware of the particular ecological relationships that operate within and around it. It means understanding activities and evolving social behaviour that will enrich the life of that place, restore its life-supporting systems and establish an ecologically and socially sustainable pattern of existence within it. Simply stated it involves becoming fully alive in and with a place. It involves applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter. (Berg 1978, 217-220)
From this definition of reinhabitation we can see that bioregional praxis relates simultaneously to ecological restoration and an evolving social/cultural commitment to living in place, a praxis of "becoming native to place". Doug Aberley, a bioregional planner, mapper, and teacher has described bioregionalism as "a teaching which helps people to both describe the bioregion where they live, and then to live within its natural capability to support life on a sustainable basis" (Aberley 1985, 145). This praxis of "becoming fully alive in and with a place" clearly implies involvement of the whole-person. A transformation of the self is implied in this cultural/social praxis, a revolution grounded in an awareness of particular ecological relationships of place developed through one's very attempts to reinhabit.

While the awakening of ecological awareness (of self and other) through the experience of place can occur almost any place at any time with any person, the growth of that awareness over time into ecological wisdom and socio-cultural behaviour change is, by definition, a profoundly engaging process. For those raised in modern culture, learning to reinhabit a place as a responsible member of the larger ecological community takes time and personal commitment. One must break out of old habits and move beyond modernism and its critics to actual behaviour change. A sustainable pattern of life cannot merely be proclaimed or made into "policy" by politicians or planners. Ceasing to be exploiters of biotic communities cannot be achieved simply by recycling, becoming a vegetarian, wearing cotton clothes, riding a bicycle to work, or subsistence living in the country, though all these behavioural changes might be part of a bioregional praxis. Moreover, bioregional living is not only about individual behaviour change, as valuable a starting point as that is. Social and cultural transformation is vital and implies a profound shift in political, economic, and ecological relationships. Reinhabitation must become a lifelong process
for both individuals and communities. Indeed, many bioregionalists acknowledge that for true social transformation, bioregional reinhabitation must become a long-term, intergenerational process.

Another critical point to emphasize is Berg's and Dasmann's stress on reinhabitation taking place in "an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation." In fact, there are few pristine "wildernesses" left, few areas that have not been injured by the megamachine of industrial growth society. However, the emphasis on ecological restoration is particularly crucial, for its potential application to disturbed urban regions. Despite its rural roots in the back-to-the-land movement (Aberley 1985; Carr 1990; Traina 1995), bioregionalism at its core implies a reinhabitory approach to urban regions where, after all, most people actually live, at least in advanced industrial countries. This brief reflection on urban-rural links in bioregionalism touches on moving beyond the locality of place and brings us to the third core concept, the concept of a bioregion.

**Bioregion**

In "Growing a Life-Place Politics", Berg defines bio-regions as "unique life-places with their own soils and land forms, watersheds and climates, native plants and animals, and many other distinct natural characteristics" (1986). Berg also points out that bioregions "exist within the planetary biosphere as unique and intrinsic contributive parts" (1983, 19). These definitions support a concept of bioregions as unique regions, literally *life* regions, each with their own make-up all interconnected in the web of life that comprises the ecosphere. Bioregionalism thus comprises a holistic understanding that values the parts as well as the whole, an understanding that respects bioregional differences while
acknowledging larger life-support processes that each bioregion contributes to the ecosphere. We will encounter more illustrations of this planetary understanding as we move through the bioregional literature.

As a first approximation to specific identification, Berg and Dasmann argue that a bioregion can be determined by the use of climatology, physiography, animal and plant geography, natural history, and other descriptive natural sciences (Berg 1978, 217-220). Berg and Dasmann explain that in a "gross sense" nobody would confuse the Mojave Desert with the fertile valley of California. Between major bioregions the differences are sufficiently marked "that people do not usually attempt to practice the Sonoran desert way of life in the Oregonian coastal area" (ibid). However, they also recognize that there are many much more subtle biogeographic intergradations between bioregions. Seemingly simple at first glance, the concept of "bioregion" actually encompasses many complexities.

Jim Dodge, an early bioregionalist and writer, provided a list of the physical and biological criteria often advanced for defining bioregions: biotic shift, watersheds, land forms or topography, and elevation (Andruss et al. 1990, 5-12). Biotic shift is the percentage change in plant/animal species composition from one place to another. The percentage change is not always agreed upon and can vary from a 15 to 25 percent shift in species composition. The biotic shift concept also suggests soft and permeable boundaries between bioregions. Soft boundary interpretations appear to be favoured by most bioregionalists. For Dodge, watershed, usually taken to mean drainage area, can often be a defining criteria for determining a bioregion's shape and extent. However, he also adds that rivers, especially large and long rivers, can pass through areas with different soils, climate, vegetation, elevation, and latitude, areas which look and feel quite different one from another.
Dodge also discussed two other criteria for defining a bioregion: cultural/phenomenological which implies "you are where you think you are" and; "spirit places" or "psyche-turning power-presences" (ibid). Dodge considered the latter to be a more provocative criterion wherein a bioregion is defined by the predominant psychophysical influences. With this criterion the concept of bioregion moves beyond mere descriptive geography or natural science ecology.

Dodge's thinking accords with other early bioregional thought that the cultural dimension of the bioregion concept is integral to its very definition. Berg and Dasmann actually began their groundbreaking definition of a bioregion with the assertion that "the term refers both to geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness -- to a place and the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place" (1978, 217-220). This inclusion of culture in nature distinguishes the bioregion concept from many natural science ecological concepts of "eco-regions" that typically exclude human culture from the natural world, generally considering cultural issues separately from issues of natural science ecology. In contrast, the concept of a bioregion is a fluid, dynamic, and fairly open one which places human community within natural communities and recognizes links between human terrains of consciousness and geographical terrains. The very process of defining a bioregion, far from being only a natural science ecology exercise is also grounded in attempts to locate culture in nature through the praxis of living-in-place.

There is yet another dimension of bioregions. The concept of bioregion transcends a strictly local definition of place. As Berg and Dasmann have put it, reinhabitation involves developing a "bioregion-al" identity (1978, 217-220). This wider bioregion-scale identity means that the terrain of consciousness extends beyond the very local ecosystem scale. The question of what
geographical scale we should attempt to reinhabit thus becomes a fluid one dependent on the diversity of scales both physical and socio-cultural found in different bioregions and in the consciousness of reinhabitants.

For bioregionalists, the question of appropriate geographical scale is thus an open one, linked to the question of the appropriate scale of human community. As such, it bears directly on the subject of this thesis, building social capital on a broad civil society scale in more than merely local ways. Significantly, it is clear from the bioregional literature that a reinhabitory strategy beyond the scale of local "place", includes thinking about broad (bio) regional approaches to self-reliant economic and institutional changes. For example, in a 1983 article challenging classic environmentalism to go beyond "more than just saving what's left", Berg points out that there are four different inhabitory zones within many bioregions: the city, the suburbs, rural areas, and wilderness areas. Each zone would have a distinct focus for reinhabitation which I will explore later in chapter four examining strategy and tools. The point here is that reinhabitation is conceived early in the chronology of bioregional literature to have both a very immediate local inhabitory community locus and to include a broader transitional strategy toward societal change beyond the local scale. For Berg, to focus reinhabitation at the scale of the bioregion calls for "a full pronouncement of values and a thorough implementation of social, economic, technological, and cultural practices that affirm the natural basis of the human species in life-sustaining processes of the planetary biosphere" (1983).

Home

The final core concept I examine is the bioregional understanding of home. As noted, bioregionalism is, in part, a profoundly cultural approach to
social transformation. A good illustration of this is the movement's redefinition and revaluing of the notions of "home" and "community" (Community is discussed in the next section). As we shall see below, the revaluing of "home" is informed by the connections between ecofeminism and bioregionalism. Judith Plant who has been a pioneer in drawing these links writes about the notion of home as follows:

Home! Remembering and reclaiming the ways of our species where people and place are delicately interwoven in a web of life - human community finding its particular place within the living and dying that marks the interdependence of life in an integrated ecosystem. This is the pattern of existence that bioregionalism explores. For this term is about being and acting and is more than just a set of ideas. It is the practice of coming to terms with our ecological home. (Andruss et al. 1990, ix-xi)

In bioregional thinking home is a place-grounded concept, but home is also valued in a broader, ecologically-centered way. The experience of "home" in a particular place and in particular ecosystems is linked to a sense of kinship with all life. It is a "remembering and reclaiming" of the ancient "community of beings" ethic.

In the face of modern alienation, atrophy of community, and dominant patriarchal relationships bioregionalist ecofeminists see the re-definition of home as crucial. Plant writes of the need for a redefinition and revaluing of the concept of home from both a feminist and a bioregional point of view. This revaluation of home by both ecofeminism and bioregionalism is a core concept for each. It has done much to draw bioregionalism and ecofeminism together.

As many have pointed out, the word "ecology" comes from the Greek "oikos" meaning home. Learning to be at home on earth through reinhabitation, through coming to experience ecological relations "in place", is a much broader concept of home than even the extended family. As we have
seen, our industrial growth civilization has so expanded the domain of the
market that the domestic sphere has atrophied. Feminists have been
concerned with revaluing both the personal and the political; the domestic and
the public spheres, particularly in the sphere of civil society. In revaluing home,
we need to expand the personal to the political as well as bringing the political
into the personal. Ecofeminist-bioregionalist thought has advanced the concept
that "home" understood as the domestic sphere needs to be revalued and
reclaimed by men as well as women. As Plant argues: "the historical and
indeed present reality is that these life activities have been undervalued and
have been a source of oppression for women" (Andruss et al. 1990, 21-23).
The concept of reinhabitation is thus enriched by its relationship to a redefined
concept of home. It means, for men and women alike, revaluing home in both
an ecological and socio-politico-cultural sense. On the one hand,
biregionalists redefine home to include the local watershed, the other species
of the watershed, the local landforms, etc. However, the bioregional sense of
home also means expanding the intimate sphere of care and responsibility, of
family and kinship, usually associated with home outward to include one's
larger bioregion.

Socio-culturally, it means re-uniting the personal and the political, the
domestic and the public spheres by transforming both. Transforming the
patriarchal sense of home, ecologically and culturally, does more than simply
redefine the roles of men and women in the home. It also enlarges the
importance of domestic life to include the public aspects and dimensions of the
civil society sphere once again. Culturally, the civil society/public sphere,
where concern for and experience of community values has atrophied and
where the values of care and nurturing have been undermined by the power of
the formal economy and the welfare state, is being revalued and reclaimed in
bioregional thought. Bioregional reclaiming of civil society means bringing the kinship values of the domestic sphere, restricted under the patriarchy to the sphere of women, out into the larger civil society domain. In short, the concept of home is transformed in bioregionalism by extending the nurturing values associated with the domestic sphere into the domain of civil society. The expansion of kinship values into civil society has been a major contribution to bioregional thought by ecofeminists in the movement.

Conversely, in bioregional thought, political power needs to be de-centralized a great deal, and much more fully democratized. Numerous bioregional thinkers have emphasized that bioregionalism is very much about the de-centralization of power, about more self-governing forms of social organization. Bioregional ecofeminism additionally argues that "the further we move in this direction, the closer we get to what has traditionally been thought of as 'woman's sphere' - that is home and its close surroundings. Ideally, the bioregional view values home above all else, because it is here where new values and behaviours are actually created" (Andruss, ibid). On a social capital reading, the importance placed on an enhanced, expanded domestic sphere, "home" - with its inclusion of the local web of life - is identified as a nurturing incubator of eco-centric social capital within civil society. A bioregional view of kinship, like the ancient community-of-beings ethic, subsumes social capital in eco-social capital.

The central importance of a transformed concept of home is reflected in the fact that the North American Bioregional Congress (NABC), the original continental networking organization of the movement, adopted a mission statement called "Welcome Home!", at its initial congress in 1984 (Aberley 1997). "Welcome Home!" was reaffirmed at NABC II and III and is the first item
in the printed proceedings of those continental congresses and of NABC IV. I cite this mission statement at length because:

1. it reflects the fully developed and agreed upon bioregional understanding of, and empathy for, a revalued concept of home;
2. it makes a feelingful connection between local human community and ecological community health, and;
3. it can be understood as a melding of ecological restoration with the work of rebuilding and restoring human community, or in other words, re-building ecologically-centered social capital:

A growing number of people are recognizing that in order to secure the clean air, water, and food that we need to healthfully survive, we have to become guardians of the places where we live. People sense the loss in not knowing our neighbours and natural surroundings, and are discovering that the best way to take care of ourselves, and to get to know our neighbours, is to protect and restore our region. Bioregionalism recognizes, nurtures, sustains and celebrates our local connections with:

- Land
- Plants and Animals
- Springs, Rivers, Lakes, Groundwater & Oceans,
- Air
- Families, Friends, Neighbors
- Community
- Native Traditions
- Indigenous Systems of Production & Trade

It is taking time to learn the possibilities of place. It is a mindfulness of local environment, history, and community aspiration that leads to a sustainable future. It relies on safe and renewable sources of food and energy. It ensures employment by supplying a rich diversity of services within the community, by recycling our resources, and by exchanging prudent surpluses with other regions. Bioregionalism is working to satisfy basic needs locally, such as education, health care and self-government.

The bioregional perspective recreates a widely-shared sense of regional identity founded upon a renewed critical awareness of and respect for the integrity of our ecological communities. (Andruess et al. 1990, 170)
An earth-centered social capital reading of the above mission-statement highlights the combined ethic of community ecological health and restoration. "Welcome Home!" invites people to take care of the ecological health (including, of course, the human ecology) of the places where they live and work. In this core statement about home, the values of care and kinship normally associated with the nuclear family are extended to the entire local ecological community and even onto their wider water connections with the oceans. Informed by this enhanced ethic, the social capital of home and family is extended out into the neighbourhood and the bioregion and even beyond that to the continental and planetary biosphere scales; but the basis and the starting point, is still one's local home place. In other words, the broadest planetary ethic is very much celebrated and nurtured, yet remains grounded locally in the immediacy of recognizing needs at home. In this way the kinship ethic of "social" capital is given a much broader ecological dimension.

"Welcome Home!" integrates a strong sense of celebration into its message of home-based action to build healthy kinship relations. Later in this chapter, I look more closely at "celebration" in bioregionalism. Celebration plays an essential role in the movement and in building eco-social capital as we shall see.

In revaluing home, a bioregional eco-feminist view also revalues traditional men's and women's roles. As Plant argues, the patriarchal concept of home will not be transformed without the enlightened perspective offered by feminism:

We know that it is non-adaptive to repeat the social organization which left women and children alone, at home, and men out in the world doing the 'important' work. The real work is at home. It is not simply a question of fairness or equality, it is because, as a species we have to actually work things out - just as it is in the so-called natural world - with all our relations. (Andruss et al. 1990, 21-23).
Thus, an ecofeminist bioregionalism calls clearly for a transformation of patriarchal values in the context of an increased societal valuing of home care and home work that includes full participation by men as well as women. Plant clearly advances such a strategy as an adaptive approach to the contemporary crisis of the nuclear family. Such ecofeminist values challenge the neoclassical view of *homo economicus*, promoted almost daily in the mainstream press where, for example, the definition of adaptation is narrowly limited to accumulating capital and maximizing consumption.

These four concepts; place, reinhabitation, bioregion and home form the core of the bioregional vision which is perhaps most familiar to people outside the movement as the ideas of bioregionalism. This is not the only way to perceive the set of core bioregional beliefs. Other typologies could be constructed that capture the essentials of bioregional thought. However few, if any, bioregionalists would disagree that these four would be included in any typology of core bioregional ideas, and that - taken together - they are very specific to bioregionalism.

The above exploration of these core ideas has revealed that place, reinhabitation, bioregion and home are very much interlinked concepts that form the ground for a truly broad understanding of the need for planetary-wide transformation in cultural and social capital.

There are also a number of other important key bioregional values which must be discussed to more extensively capture the full core of bioregional thought and values. While these other values are perhaps less well known as being part of bioregional thought and vision, they are also essential to the bioregional value system. Foremost among these is the bioregional concept of community.
Community is another deeply held core value for bioregionalists, one that is closely associated with home. For bioregionalists, community has a much different meaning from the many diverse definitions of community which remain purely human-centered. In part, bioregional thought on community has been inspired by explorations of the meaning of community for earth-based cultures which themselves display great diversity in culture and community organization. Like the bioregional concept of home, an exploration of the bioregional concept of community helps to illustrate and deepen our understanding of bioregionalism's strong emphasis on cultural change in its approach to social transformation. First, however, I think it is important to generally outline the most common uses of the term "community" made by bioregionalists. While bioregionalists themselves do differ somewhat in their use of the term "community", my purpose here is to focus on what the diverse views have in common.

Helen Forsey, an ecofeminist bioregionalist who has lived many years in a rural intentional community, has outlined common uses of the community concept by bioregionalists. Forsey begins her overview by pointing out that in our contemporary society the word "community" has been so overused its meanings have become so diffuse as to be almost useless. Yet, she also argues for its continued use because "the images it evokes, the deep longings and memories it can stir, represent something that human beings have created and recreated since time immemorial, out of profound need for connection among ourselves and with Mother Earth" (Forsey 1993, 1).

Bioregionalists themselves use the term community in several different ways. Forsey outlines four uses of the word by bioregionalists. The first is
"intentional community" where the people in an intentional community have deliberately chosen to live and work together with clear common agreements and ties to a particular place. The second refers to existing neighborhoods or villages where people already living in close proximity to each other are looking at the reasons why they are there, and building on their basis of unity. The third refers to temporary communities formed in the context of political resistance, such as blockades, marches, or peace camps. The fourth refers to geographically dispersed but still close-knit networks of common concern and mutual support (Forsey, 1993, 2-3). In my experience and understanding, bioregionalists are involved in all four types. However, when I use the phrase "communities of place" in this thesis I mean intentional communities as defined by Forsey whether rural or urban. I will also use the term in Forsey's second sense to refer to local neighbourhoods and in her fourth sense referring to networks as communities of interest and mutual support. In chapter five on bioregional reinhabitory praxis in rural and urban settings, I look at some examples of contemporary bioregionalists' efforts at building "communities of place" as well as the other forms of community outlined by Forsey.

Given some differences among bioregionalists over the concept of community, there is, nevertheless, a strong agreement that community is key to building a bioregional movement. At the first continental congress of the movement in 1984, the "Community Empowerment Committee" linked human community to ecological community and to the work of reinhabitation: "Human communities are integral parts of the larger bioregional and planetary life communities. The empowerment of human communities is inseparable from the larger task of reinhabitation --- learning to live joyfully and sustainably in place" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 16). At NABC III many participants were speaking about local community as a fundamental building block of
bioregionalism (personal conversations and NABC III Proceedings 1989, 73). The congress as a whole passed a resolution "to support the community movement as an essential way to carry out the ideals of the bioregional movement" and an affirmation that the continental congresses were held "in the spirit of community" (1989, 73).

In order to deepen my exploration of the community concept in bioregional thought, I now consider some examples of how community in earth-based societies is understood in the bioregional movement. I caution that these views present a very different conception of humans than the utility-maximizing individual of neo-classical economics. Bioregionalists often subscribe to a view of the human individual in pre-historic society as a genuine social being evolved in a cultural context of intensive small group cooperation whether in foraging bands or Neolithic villages. An important part of this concept is the idea that the local community was the primary unit of human habitation rather than the individual (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 16). Bioregionalists have drawn on anthropological sources to support their view, including the works of Leakey, Lee, Sahlins, and others who all emphasize the importance of close cooperation in the cultural and social evolution of humans. In addition, the work of Kirkpatrick Sale (discussed in chapter two) pulling together studies on the small scale of early human cooperative social organization has informed bioregional thought on human community with respect to the important question of the ability of the human individual to know and engage in many-sided relations with others. This human scale criteria for community is critical for the successful building of trust and mutual aid, two key elements of social capital.

To examine and learn from the long story of human origins in gatherer-hunter societies how humans adapted for thousands of generations, has been an important dimension of exploration at the core of much of bioregional
thought and values about community. Various bioregional writers and thinkers have contributed to this examination (Andruss and Wright 1984; Berg 1978, 1; Berry 1988, 180-193; Snyder 1977, 1980, 23-30). The following is an attempt to describe the essence of this thought.

All human cultures have roots - however distant they may be - in earth-based traditions. The time when humans lived in an understanding and a way of life that respected other species and the ecosphere as well extends over thousands of generations. With respect to sheer long-term sustainability that earth-based way of life dwarfs our own modern period. The modern industrial system has so far lasted for only about twenty generations. Even the beginnings of large-scale agricultural production occurred only some 500 generations, or 10,000 years ago. In contrast, band life in the Paleolithic era lasted for thousands of generations. A critical question emerges from this reflection. Why were early human societies successful for such a long time? Bioregionalists suggest that the answer lies in adaptation through cooperation.

My own introduction to this aspect of bioregional understanding has been largely informed by long discussions with several bioregionalists in British Columbia. Among them, Van Andruss and Eleanor Wright have written of the "organized set of customs" that integrated human life with non-human life (Andruss and Wright 1984). For Andruss and Wright, the way of life of gatherer-hunters was integrated not only in the sense of being integrated with their ecological community, but also in the sense of being a whole culture; that is, one in which humans organized their lives in the larger ecological community through co-operation, through close social and cultural bonding in small groups or bands with each other (Andruss and Wright 1984). They argue that such whole cultures spanned the generations; that is, there was strong cultural continuity from one generation to the next. For Andruss and Wright, small
human bands were self-governing adaptive units of social and cultural primates. This argument clearly locates human activities and way of life within a long animal heritage.

Why were these societies able to succeed for so many generations? Kelly Booth, another B.C. bioregionalist, observed that there is more to human adaptation than can be learned in the lifetime of one individual. Learned patterns, Booth argued, were "registered in the customs of the group" (Booth 1984). Thus adaptation, seen as a group affair or process, challenges the individualistic capitalist view of adaptation. The revolution in anthropology discussed in the last chapter advanced a similar understanding of gatherer-hunter cultures. In the bioregional view, whole cultures lived out their myths (or origin stories) together. Whole cultures, on this view, refers to generations of societies linked by their origin stories. Through collective telling, re-telling, and re-enacting their mythologies the people produced and fostered continuous, adaptive cultures. Bioregionalists attempt to emulate such practices in contemporary settings. My examination of the contemporary use of story by bioregionalists in the next chapter discusses in detail how such practices can assist in building community. For now, further exploration of the notion of bioregional community is required, particularly with respect to the concept of the individual as social being.

Dolores LaChapelle, a bioregionalist from the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, writing about "our roots in the old ways" discusses anthropologist Dorothy Lee's experience of what it meant to be a "social being" living in a society that practiced general reciprocity (LaChapelle 1988, 84). After adsorbing through participant-observation something of the way of life of the Tikopia, an isolated Polynesian island people, Lee realized one day through the simple experience of embroidering a blanket for her daughter that, even
though she did not like the task, she was thoroughly enjoying the experience. On reflection, she saw that she wasn't just sewing to please her daughter, but rather that her action took place within a relationship which contained social value. Lee realized that she had discovered what it meant to be a genuine social being, not merely Dorothy Lee, an individual. For her, somehow a boundary had disappeared. This discovery gave her the key to understanding certain social motivating forces in the life of the Tikopia she was studying, but the usual anthropological terms such as "obligation" or "duty", terms attempting to describe Tikopian social being and the Tikopian practice of general reciprocity, failed to capture what was really a process that, experienced phenomenologically, "brimmed with joy". Lee realized that for an individual in this society, external incentives such as "obligation" were not needed to motivate the individual to be a social being. After her direct experience, Lee began to understand that the previously defined limits of her own self had begun to change and that the Tikopian self was different from the Western concept of self. This helped her to understand that in Tikopian society the individual was embedded in a system of social relationships where affection was not merely an expression of the ego, but rather "a sharing, a social act". Similarly, work among the Tikopia was always socially shared. Lee points out in her summary that with this social definition of self, work can take place among the Tikopia without the incentive of reward or the fear of punishment because work as social participation is meaningful. Moreover, the "social" understanding of being Lee encountered was embedded in a concept of "universal interrelatedness", because for Tikopians, "man (sic) was not the focus from which relations flowed" (Lachapelle 1988, 84-85). Here again, we see social capital subsumed by eco-social capital.
To explain further the ecocentric kinship perspective and the powerful social motivation for the individual embedded in a system of generalized reciprocity, LaChapelle also draws on the experience of Jaime de Angulo, who lived with the Pit River Indians of Northern California in the early part of this century. De Angulo reported that for the Pit River people, the generations were part of a continuous flowing process:

The total society generates and the children belong to that society—Everybody really exists in a continuous world of generations, of being the children of the world they are living in, so you're a very bad child if you do not venerate Father Tree, or any other aspect of your parent world. (LaChapelle 1988, 86).

In this society, the world of generations includes the human and the non-human. Sharing in this kinship world, as LaChapelle points out, grows out of relationship, relationship embedded in the generations. Indeed, the generations are so tightly interconnected in this view that everyone participates in "being the children of the world they are living in". In a sense, then, social capital among humans is also a bonding across generational time. Yet, the "social" space in this world of extended kinship stretches beyond the merely human. Children and adults alike venerate "Father Tree" and other aspects of their "parent world". Elsewhere, LaChapelle discusses the work of another anthropologist, Ruth Benedict, to reinforce her points.

Benedict describes such sharing societies as "synergistic" cultures (LaChapelle 1978, 120). Benedict, who spent many years working in various primal cultures, analyzed their non-aggressive social patterns. Non-aggression is high in societies where "the individual by the same act and at the same time serves his own advantage and that of the group --- Non-aggression occurs not because people are unselfish and put social obligations above personal desires, but when social arrangements make these two identical." (LaChapelle
The synergy discussed by Benedict and LaChapelle is an important component of social capital previously unidentified in the literature. An understanding of it may cast some light on the contemporary problem of social capital formation.

The motivating power of such synergy for the individual living in these cultures is well illustrated by the personal experience of Dorothy Lee described above. Living among the Tikopia, Lee directly experienced social being wherein the self is understood as part of a universal interrelatedness in which relations do not start from the ego, nor are they “defined in terms of the emotions of the ego, but rather as --- a sharing, as a social act” (Lachapelle 1988, 84-85). I cite Lee’s example partly as an illustration of how social capital acts to inform and nourish human capital, especially when we understand human capital to include not only skills and knowledge, but also wisdom. This woman from modern, individualistic society was able to personally experience a strong motivating synergistic force, so strong that the direct, joyful experience of it helped her to redefine the boundaries of her self. This synergy is an expression of what I understand to be the motivating power of social capital. It is the emotional joy in social capital that Putnam and Coleman have omitted from their concept. The joyful personal experience of social capital, its synergistic motivating power, I identify as an essential nourishing and motivating force for community building. Moreover, LaChapelle, enriches the merely human-centered explanations of Lee by linking the synergistic power to the broader ecological community, symbolized by "Father Tree" in the citation from De Angulo.

Communities were adaptive, LaChapelle argues, because they were truly ecological communities; that is, human communities were an integral part of their local ecological communities. In short, they were true communities of
place: "Community is sharing a particular physical place, an environment, not only with other people but with the other beings of the place, and fully realizing that the needs of all the beings of that place affect how you live your life" (LaChapelle 1978, 120). In LaChapelle's "community of beings" definition we see the ancient kinship ethic woven into the present era, implying that we moderns may yet reclaim an aboriginal sense of ecological community. Indeed, such an ecological understanding and valuing of community is broadly shared among bioregionalists. Other examples of the motivating power of eco-social capital are explored in the following pages and chapters.

**Other Basic Bioregional Values**

One excellent way to review other major bioregional values is to reflect on the set of bioregional education values which were approved by full consensus at NABC I and III and reaffirmed at NABC IV. The comprehensiveness of these values makes them appropriately illustrative. As much as the *Welcome Home!* statement, the following twelve principles generally reflect other core bioregional values:

1. Bioregional education emphasizes the interdependence and kinship of humans with all that exists, based upon our understanding of local ecosystems and their relationships with the planetary ecosystem.
2. Bioregional education values self-respect and respect for one another as essential components of respect for other life forms and all ecological processes.
3. Bioregional education recognizes no separation of learning from life. We are all teachers and students. The process of bioregional learning is one of active participation and sharing within the human community and the natural environment.
4. Bioregional education honors the products of intellect while remaining grounded in a joyful and empowering awareness of spirit.
5. Bioregional education affirms the importance of handing down traditional local knowledge and wisdom.
6. Bioregional education is guided by the vision of long-term sustainability of the Earth community, and it promotes the transformation from anthropocentric values to geocentric and biocentric values.

7. We seek to assist bioregional education by publicizing existing and developing new clearinghouses for networking information on ecological data, theory, social ecology, local knowledge and methods of innovative learning.

8. Bioregional education proceeds from the premise that Earth is a community of entities that form a living organism of which we are part.

9. Bioregional education shows us how our daily actions and those of our society affect the health of the Earth community.

10. Bioregional education validates and nurtures bonding between the individual and the planet through sensory, emotional, spiritual and intellectual channels.

11. Bioregional education integrates social and ecological justice issues. The domination of people and the domination of nature have a common root.

12. Bioregional education facilitates discussion, planning and action for a sustainable, humane economy and society. (NABC Proceedings I, II, III, and IV)

The first of the twelve education values, the interdependence and kinship of humans with all that exists is based on, as declared above, "our understanding of local ecosystems and their relationships with the planetary ecosystem". The expression of these relationships is phrased precisely in terms of an earth-based understanding of ecological kinship. Considered through an eco-centric (or earth-centered) social capital analysis, the bioregional value statement linking interdependence with kinship can be understood as a restatement of the ancient "community of beings" ethic. While it is clearly inspired by and grounded in a certain modern ecological understanding that values integration of social and natural ecologies, it also joins in with many ancient human traditions, earth-based traditions, whose cultural foundation rested on non-anthropocentric or earth-centered value systems. As we saw in chapter two, it was a certain profound quality of social capital informed by a kinship form of cultural capital that distinguished many hunting and gathering
societies and characterized their very high levels of social capital. Of course, bioregionalists have not originated these ancient value systems, but often see themselves as merely joining in the multi-millennia-old mainstream of human cultures that have always valued kinship this way. As David Haenke commented in the proceedings of the first continental congress in 1984, "...bioregionalism is rediscovery and reinterpretation (to creatively deal with the ecologically-diminished reality in which we presently live) of the old ways by those who see that we cannot continue in the present profane ways." (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 3). But, what do bioregionalists mean by "the old ways"?

At the heart of this long continuity of belief is the ancient connection with the land. Bioregional poet, essayist and writer, Gary Snyder in a series of essays entitled "The Old Ways", has observed that those "inhabitory" peoples practicing the old ways will speak about a piece of land being sacred or all the land being sacred. Snyder then comments: "This is an attitude that draws on the mystery of life and death; of taking life to live; of giving life back - not only to your own children, but to the life of the whole land." (Snyder 1977, 59-60). In this particular essay, based on a public talk given in 1976 in the early days of bioregionalism, Snyder was speaking about reinhabitation as a rejoining of the old ways turning again to the land and to place, but this time infused with a contemporary ecological critique of some essential problems of modernism. He concluded the essay with the following:

The wisdom and skill of those who studied the universe first hand, by direct knowledge and experience, for millennia, both inside and outside themselves, is what we might call the Old Ways. Those who envision a possible future planet on which we continue that study, and where we live by the Green and the Sun, have no choice but to bring whatever science, imagination, strength, and political finesse they have to the support of the inhabitory people - natives and peasants of the world. Entering such paths, we begin to learn a little of the Old Ways, which are outside of history, and forever new. (1977, 66)
Of course, by "outside of history" Snyder did not mean some abstract ahistorical truth, but rather was referring to the remarkable continuity of a sacred inhabitory ethic across great stretches of time and among many different indigenous cultures. In an interview some years later, Snyder asserted that the real "norm", the real "grain of things" in the larger picture for humans across the millennia is living close to the earth, more simply, more responsibly (Snyder 1980, 112). Through the re-inhabitory praxis of living out this earth-centered ethic, bioregionalists want to re-connect with and learn some essential lessons from what I shall call the ancient human cultural mainstream, essential lessons from the "old ways" that bear upon praxis in the present.

Native people who have participated in bioregional movement gatherings have often spoken about our human connectedness and interdependence with the earth. For example, at the first continental congress of the bioregional movement the Native Peoples Committee in its statement of philosophy asserted the profound spirituality of the kinship ethic:

Spirituality is the foundation for our way of life. We affirm that our spiritual roots are the source of the strength, endurance and wisdom necessary for our struggle to transform our culture. Indigenous Indian spiritual traditions and those of other Indigenous People of the world provide essential support for a way of life which respects connectedness with all creation. Humans are a species dependent upon, not more important than the universe, the plants and the animals. (NABC I 1984, 25)

Interdependence with all life, the sacredness of all life, and kinship with all life, together form one intertwined thematic continuity linking contemporary bioregionalism with indigenous cultures of the past and the present. This profoundly spiritual kinship understanding is the ancient "community of beings" ethic which has clearly not died out. Rather, it is still alive and is now growing
once again in the bioregional movement and in many indigenous communities
and nations which are reclaiming their traditional wisdoms.

The theme of interdependence in the first resolution on bioregional
education includes - as part of the kinship ethic - the understanding that local
ecological relationships are interdependent with earth's ecosphere. This
statement clearly contextualizes place-oriented local ecosystem and bioregion
scale human interdependence within a broad ecological recognition of
planetary interdependence and kinship systems. Such a thoroughly
interdependent value claim supports the broadest interpretation of bioregional
spiritual philosophy, a philosophy that embeds human values within a planetary
kinship system. Far from being a parochial philosophy, a bioregional
understanding of kinship opens itself to the ancient human cultural mainstream
or, in other words, the "community of beings" ethic.

The second bioregional education value integrates and embeds human
self-respect and respect for other humans with respect for all life forms and
processes. This value makes more explicit what was already implied in the first
education value. Recognizing kinship with all life-forms and processes
philosophically also implies and values human respect for one another as
humans. Yet, something else is added in this resolution; self-respect. Self
respect is included and embedded in the larger respect for human and non-
human others, but it is also affirmed as a value itself. Here the strengths of
earth-centered kinship values with respect to both human and non-human life-
forms, and both self and other, are conjoined as essential components of a
more ethically profound understanding of respect. Such respect for self and
other is essential to building earth-centered social capital in an ethnically mixed
post-modern society. The bioregional movement is only one among a number
of social movements struggling for the healing of intercultural social relations. In chapter four I examine this intra-human question more closely.

Bioregional education resolution number three places emphasis on learning directly from life processes - beyond the classroom - through active participation and sharing in human and natural communities. In such a direct learning from life approach, eco-centric social capital can be generated through the shared learning process itself. This dynamic is explored more thoroughly later.

Bioregional education resolution number five affirms the crucial importance of traditional local knowledge and wisdom. As we have already seen in our discussion of place, bioregional reinhabitory praxis grounds itself in local knowledge of both biophysical and cultural history. Without adsorbing these local values in one's life-long learning process the bioregional project cannot really begin. Bioregional educator Sharilyn Calliou, discussing implications of bioregional education for the classroom teacher, has stressed the importance of developing locally-based materials and, through this local grounding process, the principles of bioregional thought deemed necessary for species and planetary survival can be imparted. While bioregional praxis does very much stress skills development, bioregionalism "is not merely imparting skills, but about developing conscious philosophical understandings guiding life" (Traina 1995, 67-75). The question then, for Calliou, is how to teach the intangibles of bioregional thought necessary for species and planetary survival. This can be best achieved by teachers who practice the principles of living-in-place. For Calliou, local ecological caretaking must become a primary reason for schooling (ibid).

Resolutions number six and eight explicitly recognize that bioregional education values involve a transformation from current anthropocentric values
to geocentric and biocentric values guided by the vision of long-term sustainability of the earth community. Bioregional education is based on the premise of the earth as a community of entities that form a living organism which includes the human community. Thus, this broad vision of a planetary community is viewed as complementary to - and as important as - the bioregional emphasis on local place and community.

Resolution ten states that bioregional education values and nurtures bonding between the individual and the planet through intellectual, sensory, emotional, and spiritual channels. Note that none of these are privileged over the others. This value affirms a holistic, phenomenological approach to education which recognizes that learning is most profound and lasting when bonding via all these various "channels" takes place through an experiential learning process. When successful, such experiential bonding is the living expression, or manifestation, of interdependence and kinship. Here, the "community of beings ethic" is experienced phenomenologically through such bonding.

Resolution eleven affirms the need to recognize that the domination of nature and the domination of people spring from the same source and that we need to integrate social and ecological justice issues. Bioregionalists understand that the destruction of natural ecologies is being accomplished by the same system and the very same systemic processes that are destroying social ecologies. Bioregional thought explicitly values social as well as environmental justice. More on this value and attempts to implement it are discussed in chapter six.

Finally, resolution twelve affirms that bioregional education involves and facilitates planning and action toward a sustainable society as well as teaching and learning. Again, praxis is stressed over mere intellectual content. This
resolution explicitly links bioregional education values to a generalist concern for social change in society as a whole, a concern that has become atrophied in our society under the influence of individualism. As we saw in the introductory chapter, the middle-class, utilitarian, individualist ethic - the dominant cultural mode of the late nineteenth century - has spread almost everywhere with the growth of middle-class consumer values and behaviour. A key problem posed by this thesis is how to build social capital, particularly earth-centered social capital, when it has been so pervasively undermined in the past 150 years. Bioregionalists propose that education in the broadest sense, including both formal and informal learning in and out of schools, must be carried out and modeled by individuals who work to become re-embedded social individuals at several levels; at home, in local community, neighborhood, and watershed as well as bioregionally. The work must then be complemented by networking continentally, and even globally, as well as celebrating and spreading bioregional values across these broader geographical scales. Bioregional education fits into the bioregional strategy of building community which is examined in chapter four along with various tools bioregionalists use for this praxis.

With respect to the formal education system itself, Calliou has made the point that a bioregional education that accents the interdependence and kinship of humans with all that exists cannot be merely another add-on program, but must have an interdisciplinary "across-the-curriculum resonance". (Traina 1995, 71) She argues that the concern of bioregional education to engage in discussion, planning and action toward sustainable society be accompanied by teacher education empowering teachers to reflect on their own life situations, to speak out, and to act:
Bioregionalism could provide teachers with a way to focus dialogue about becoming empowered to live in an ecologically responsible life-way and empowering learners to also do so. The school alone cannot provoke social change. Healthy schools can only exist in healthy societies and bioregionalism discusses ways to think about change needed to heal our local and global collectives. (1995, 70)

With respect to the problem of the autonomous utility-maximizing individual, bioregional education values point to a conception of the human individual-in-society, a socially concerned and embedded individual who exercises the rights and responsibilities of a full citizen of the biosphere in individual and collective ways, locally and globally.

Clearly, bioregionalists are people who believe in and attempt to practice a set of values that are paradigmatically different from the dominant value system. Bioregional education is more than a classroom adventure. It is about spreading general bioregional values far and wide like pollen on the wind to be received by those ready for them. In fact, the first journal devoted to bioregional education was called "Pollen". It was published by Frank Traina, a bioregional educator and writer who has been focusing his efforts on bioregional education for many years. At the earlier continental congresses, Traina worked with others in the education committee to help formulate the above education values. Other bioregionalists, speak of bioregional "seed" groups and "seeding" other movements (Carr 1990, 168). For example, Berg has spoken about education as the "insinuation" of bioregional values and ideas into other contexts:

We didn't want to own bioregionalism. We knew we couldn't. If it was to be successful, people would start thinking of it as a useful tool to start fitting their interests with, and we would make it our job to start the information about bioregions specifically coming --- in a way that you could say, it was insinuated. (audio-taped at the Green City panel, NABC III 1988)
This comment by Berg underscores an important point. Dogmatism in social movements in the radical planning tradition, particularly the sectarian politics around ideologically "correct" interpretations, plays a very destructive role with respect to fostering the key ingredient of trust in social capital formation. In bioregionalism, on the contrary, education is not about owning bioregional ideas, but about giving the bioregional vision and bioregional values away to take root and grow in their own way, just as each seed is unique and takes root in soil that is particular to that place. Moreover, bioregional education is about much more than new pedagogical techniques. As Calliou has pointed out, bioregional education is a paradigm shift re-teaching humans to learn how to live within the carrying capacity of a natural, local ecosystem: "Teaching about one's eco-social home has possibilities for restoring an ethical foundation to a very secularized Eurocentric worldview" (Traina 1995, 74).

Bioregional education has very much to do with reclaiming and re-generating a form of cultural capital informed by the "community of beings" ethic. The vision of education worked out at the continental gatherings was created by practitioners, teachers, educators, and reinhabitants. In the view of Frank Traina, a fundamental obstacle to implementing this ancient ethic is the lack of respectful values and feelings about nature. Drawing specifically on education resolution ten (above), Traina argues that bioregional education addresses a fundamental problem of modernity when it validates and nurtures bonding, defined as the building of a personal relationship with nature, including feelings of connectedness and emotions, as well as respectful values and feelings about nature. Traina believes this personal, emotional component of bioregional education is crucial to the success of the cultural paradigm shift bioregionalists seek:
Having been raised in a culture which treats natural things as resources, we have to unlearn this attitude and learn another, and we have to help ourselves and others learn a different way of relating to nature --- The method of bioregional education is to bring back romance into our relationship with nature. In this respect it can be viewed as a reaction against the cold scientific treatment of nature which sets nature apart from the human. Bioregional education puts the human back in the proper natural context. (Traina 1995, 94-95)

In short, profound personal bonding to the other (the "romance" of human and non-human) is essential for regenerating a "community of beings" informed cultural capital as a societal ethic (see next chapter).

Ecopsychologist Elan Shapiro has also discussed bioregionalism's values and what they can tell us about ourselves as modern alienated individuals. Shapiro argues that prevailing economic and psychological pressures move us to think of ourselves as individual units, as supposedly autonomous individuals. Thus, what we're specifically missing are actual feelings of connectedness. In modern society, most of us have become alienated, disconnected from where we live. Bioregionalism, Shapiro argues, is saying that you cannot have a sense of self that's separate from a sense of place and that we need to connect self and place again to have the richness and the connectedness that both individual humans and human communities need:

For example, if you think of a person as part of a web of life, a web of intimate, reciprocal relationships, then everything is feeding our lives. We're feeling fed by what's around us and we're feeding back into what's around us. --- What bioregionalism means - which people might not get from terms like 'Gaia consciousness', or 'deep ecology' or 'planetary healing' is that in order to survive on this planet, in order to be whole, we need to realize how important it is that we're a part of the immediate place where we live. We need to know this place in detail, we need to love it in the detail. (Shapiro 1993, 17-19)
The profound place-specific and grounded emotional bonding described by Shapiro and Traina and advanced by bioregional education values integrates and "feeds" ethical concerns for healthy social and natural ecologies. Note the language here. Romance and love; that is, feelings of connectedness with the natural world, are identified as essential nourishing experiential components of the "community of beings" ethic. This loving emotional bonding to both other humans and the "community of all beings" in the places we live I can now identify as necessary for the building of earth-centered social capital. Such bonding generates earth-centered social capital which, in turn, nourishes individual human capital. Other examples are examined in the body of this inquiry.

As we saw in chapter two, social capital is about relationships, but the extended relationships described in the definition of earth-centered social capital have their reflections, their meaning content, manifested within the hearts and minds of individuals. The emotional meaning for individuals that such bonding imparts has the potential to supply the spiritual fuel and motivation necessary for homo economicus to transform away from individualism and consumerism toward socially embedded individuals in ecologically embedded societies. In other words, high levels of social capital, far from representing deep sacrifices in the abandonment of consumerist heaven, promise rich earthly rewards of nurturing emotional interconnection for the embedded individual.

Diversity as a Bioregional Value

Although not exclusive to bioregionalism, diversity is another value central to bioregional understanding. This includes both biological/ecological
diversity as well as socio-cultural diversity. One of the early bioregional publications "Reinhabiting a Separate Country" is in great part a celebration of ecological and cultural diversity in Northern California. It contains many different stories and oral histories of people and places in the city, the river and delta, and the mountains and a recognition that adaptive and diverse human cultures offer humans as a species the richest possibilities for wholeness and survival (Berg 1978). The first continental congress of the movement in 1984 consensed on the "Welcome Home!" mission statement which is, in part, a celebration of diversity (both ecological and cultural). At NABC IV, a Declaration of Bioregional Autonomy was consensed on recognizing the "biological, geological, climatic and cultural uniqueness and diversity of each bioregion the world over" (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 26). In the first publication of the New Catalyst/New Society Bioregional Series "Turtle Talk", the editors gave tribute to diverse approaches to the "regeneration of culture" within the bioregional movement:

In the final analysis it is the diversity of approaches represented in 'Turtle Talk' that is most appealing. Here, at last, there is recognition by key thinkers and activists in the movement that they hold just one straw of truth, and that the way to prevent that truth from being broken is for the straws to be combined in a strong whole. Unexpectedly perhaps, even former Earth Firster Dave Forman stresses this: 'If diversity is good for an ecosystem it is good for a social movement as well'. (Plant and Plant 1991, 10)

Diversity then is understood in the bioregional movement as a strength. However, it is important to caution that "diversity" should not be read to mean unlimited ideological diversity. The goal is to reach a unity within the diversity. For example, feminists often recognize diversity as a way to value differences within a larger unity, using the metaphor of the patchwork quilt to express this concept. Bioregionalist women honoured this concept at NABC I by organizing
the sewing of a patchwork quilt representing the back of a turtle to celebrate bioregional diversity across Turtle Island (a common indigenous name for the North American continent). Quilting is examined as part of the bioregional tool kit in chapter four.

Bioregionalists have attempted to implement their beliefs in diversity in their own lives as reinhabitants and in their encounters with each other during such events as the various regional and continental congresses and gatherings. Later, I examine the movement's praxis in this regard, since it bears directly upon the process of building social capital. I evaluate this praxis specifically through exploring the history and experience of the continental congresses where there have been some remarkable successes (the movement is already very diverse in composition) and some disagreement and controversy (see chapter six).

Wildness as A Bioregional Value

In modern Eurocentric society wilderness as a concept has been infused with very contradictory meanings. A short digression here is needed to provide a context for exploring "wilderness" and "wildness" in bioregional thought. Keith Thomas traces the changing history of the term from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century in Europe (Thomas 1987). In the seventeenth century, "wilderness" meant an inhospitable barrenness, a terrible wasteland, unproductive, unattractive and frightening to civilized people. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, "wilderness" had been converted, in part by the growth of better roads and tourism, into a highly valued aesthetic and even a religious experience. For the romantics of the nineteenth century, nature improved by human touch was nature destroyed, and so real "wilderness" was
conceived to be pristine or absent of human influence (Thomas 1987, 254-269). In the United States, as William Cronon has observed, a similar conversion occurred later in the nineteenth century with such thinkers as Thoreau (Cronon 1996, 69-90). The idea of wilderness as pure and unsullied by human presence still has great influence in the environmental movement today. A classic example provides an illustration. The Sierra Club's naturalist founder John Muir fought to make the pristine Yosemite Valley a national park. This was central to the founding of the Sierra Club. From the early photographs of Carlton Watkins to Ansel Adams, Yosemite became America's most photographed park, a model of untouched sublime "wilderness". This romanticism ignores the real history of Yosemite in which the U.S. Army emptied the valley of its original inhabitants, the Miwok people, in 1851. This was almost 20 years before Muir arrived there, without any knowledge of the previous human presence, to discover the "untouched" wilderness which moved him to flee civilization. Now we know it was the Miwok people's use of controlled burns that contributed to the biological diversity and park-like beauty which inspired Muir and so many others (Solnit 1992, 50-84). Cronon critiques this emaculate conception of wilderness, arguing for a concept of wilderness that includes human home-making (Cronon 1996, 69-90). This concept is similar to the bioregional understanding of wilderness.

Bioregionalists recognize both otherness and kinship in wilderness. Frank Traina explains:

Wildness exists not only in the wilderness, but in the wildness pervading our daily life: our beating heart, our circulatory system, our genetic dependence on air, food, water and a healthy quality of habitat and environment. Wildness is the nature all around us which has overwhelming ultimate power over us. Wildness is the original homeland of the human species --- Wildness is the awesome other which is both fragile and overwhelming. (Traina, 1995, 8)
Interwoven in this view of wildness are several of the bioregional values discussed above; interconnectedness, home, and the theme of the other. There is also the connection to the "wild nature" within ourselves, our beating hearts, our circulatory systems, etc. For Traina, the very goal of the bioregional movement is to learn how to create a human culture in tune with wildness (ibid).

Pulitzer Prize winning poet and essayist Gary Snyder, his family, and a group of neighbours are reinhabitants in the foothills of the Sierras in Northern California. Snyder also writes of otherness and kinship in wilderness. In "The Practice of the Wild", Snyder points out that the term wild has been defined in our dictionaries in largely negative terms; undomesticated, unruly, uncivilized, uncultivated, uninhabited, dissolute, unrestrained, licentious, unruly, loose, wanton, spontaneous, etc. Snyder proposes that we turn this around 180 degrees and look at wild for what it is, rather than what it is not. He suggests that we view wild animals as free agents living within natural systems. Similarly, plants can be viewed as self-propagating, self-maintaining, flourishing in accord with innate qualities. Land can be seen as a place where the original and potential vegetation and fauna are intact and in full interaction and the landforms are entirely the result of non-human forces.

Conversely, Snyder then argues for a sense of kinship in wilderness: "It has always been a part of basic human experience to live in a culture of wilderness. There has been no wilderness without some kind of human presence for several thousand years. Nature is not a place to visit, it is home - and within that home territory there are more familiar and less familiar places" (Snyder 1990, 7). While Snyder is perhaps most known as a poet, his expression of values is grounded in a long practice of reinhabitation in a particular place.
With these bioregional concepts of wilderness a very different image of nature from that of the dominant Western one begins to emerge. This image is new only in comparison to the dominant cultural mode of Western civilization. Bioregional concepts of wilderness and wild are a part of the re-birth of the ancient "community of beings" ethic where wilderness and home were synonymous with human be-ing in the world. In fact, Kirkpatrick Sale has traced the etymology of the word human to its oldest roots. The ancient Indo-European word for earth, *dhghem*, is the root of the Latin *humanus*, the Old German *guman*, and the Old English *guman*, all of which meant human (Sale 1985, 7). To be a wild human is to be part of earth, it is to be an earthling.

For Berg, wilderness should be the greatest shared value for an ecologically sustainable society, because wilderness embodies systems, designs, and purposes that are "eco-energetic", or efficient in terms of using energy and resources. Berg further argues that the idea of wilderness has the power to help people to become liberated from what Berg calls "late-industrial" forms of control. Wilderness as a value can inspire people, including people in the city, "the new urban person who belongs in the ecological era", to become more conscious of resources, of what they consume and then to get involved in "neighbourhood culture" to create urban wild habitat, urban stream restoration, community gardens, solar retrofitting, secondary materials recycling industries, etc. (Plant and Plant 1990, 22-30). Moreover, wilderness is "the enduring source of a bioregion's spirit and regenerative power" to be maintained both for its own sake and as a "reservoir for reaffirming natural systems through reinhabitation" (Berg 1983, 1-2). In Berg's sense, wilderness plays a key role in reinhabitation on an urban bioregional scale as an anchor for the four "inhabitory zones" within every bioregion; wilderness zones, rural areas, suburbs, and the inner city as we saw in the above discussion on bioregions.
The point to highlight here is the centrality of wilderness as a liberatory spiritual value for bioregional reinhabitation in all four zones.

**Spirituality as a Bioregional Value**

Spirituality is another important value for the bioregional movement. A discussion of fundamental values for any culture (even a culture in a process of emergence such as bioregionalism) would include the subject of spirituality or religion. Strictly speaking, as Traina has remarked, bioregionalism itself is not a religion; yet, in his view, the spiritual values of the bioregional movement could be described as representing the religious institution of the bioregional movement (Traina 1995, 6). Bioregionalists are tolerant and generally supportive of inclusiveness with respect to bioregional spirituality. For example, at the continental gatherings of the movement there has been a healthy acceptance of a diversity of spiritual practices (see chapter six). This raises the question whether there is any common theme in bioregional spirituality.

Frank Traina has captured a certain commonality in the movement with respect to bioregional spirituality:

Because bioregionalism takes such a strong moral stand with respect to the well-being of nature and the Earth, and since it demands commitment and offers people meaning, it takes on - even unwittingly - a spiritual tone. People from many different religions and philosophies consider themselves bioregionalists. The movement has a pervasive sense of the sacred. (Traina 1995, 6)

This sense of the sacred common among bioregionalists centers around a belief in the sacredness of all life, including all the interdependent creatures and ecological systems of the earth. It is associated with bioregionalists' sense
of the earth as a "community of entities" (education values 8-10 above). Clearly, bioregional spirituality is linked to a "community of beings" ethic.

However, as Traina has also pointed out, some bioregionalists have argued that the topic of spirituality should be kept entirely separate from the bioregional movement (1995, 6). There is considerable controversy within the movement over this topic (see chapter six).

**Celebration as A Bioregional Value**

The final key bioregional value identified is celebration. Bioregional reinhabitant Marnie Muller describes the process of getting to know our bioregional "homeplace" as bringing forth a deep sense of celebration and appreciation. For Muller and for many bioregionalists, bioregional celebration grows out of a sense of community and communion with the life of the region. Muller further argues that celebration and appreciation are at the heart of bioregional education and getting to know our bioregional homeplace through reinhabitation brings forth this deeper sense of celebration and appreciation:

It is a way of exploring our ecological as well as our cultural heritage. Celebration can take the form of an All Species day or it may take a more quiet form, like a walk in the woods. Bioregional celebration grows out of a sense of community as well as communion with all the life of the region. It is the sense that we are all dwelling in this shared homeplace. We are always in an intimate relation to our bioregional homeplace. Its life systems of air, water, soil, and carbon pass in and through us each day. Knowing home is an integral aspect of knowing ourselves. (Traina 1995, 91)

Celebration offers a way to experience the joy of communing with the life of the bioregion. Often bioregionalists experience the connection as an interaction. For example, Muller illustrates this interactive sense of communion in a brief story:
A talented dulcimer player who is a friend of mine once confided, 'I don't really play music, it plays me. Perhaps, getting to know one's bioregion is like that; perhaps it 'plays' us as much as we 'play' it. May we sing the bioregion as it sings us. (Traina 1995, 85-91)

In these examples we see celebration woven together with some of the other bioregional values explored here. Celebration is identified here as a key part of the bonding process between humans and the "community of beings" essential to eco-centered social capital formation. The bonding processes affirmed, fostered, and engendered by celebration, offers a positive, pro-active alternative to the alienation and anomie of modern civilization. It underscores the centrality of cultural transformation, in this case cultural transformation with respect to the relationship between humans and the rest of nature, advanced by bioregionalists.

Traina, in his discussion of celebration as a bioregional value, refers to the oftentimes too depressing message of the environmental movement in its efforts to motivate people to "save the earth", citing Theodore Roszak to highlight the problem: "Are dread and desperation the only motivations we have to play upon? What are we connecting with in people that is generous, joyous, freely given, and perhaps heroic?" (1995, 9). To Roszak's complaint Traina offers: "the values and practices of bioregionalism" which "emphasize a positive loving relationship with the natural world and seek to joyfully celebrate the natural world" (1995, 9). Again love and joy are identified as aspects of a "community of beings" experience and thus as key motivating dimensions of eco-social capital formation.

Brian Swimme (a nuclear physicist) and Tom Berry (a bioregional thinker and writer) have argued that the principle role of the human in the universe is celebration:
If we were to choose a single expression for the universe it might be 'celebration,' celebration of existence and life and consciousness --- we remain genetically coded toward a mutually enhancing presence to the life community that surrounds us --- our own special role is to celebrate this entire community to reflect on and to celebrate itself and its deepest mystery in a special mode of conscious self-awareness. (Traina 1995, 9)

While all bioregionalists may not agree fully with this affirmation of genetically encoded mutualism (thought many probably would), most would agree that celebration is essential to building community.

Celebration in the bioregional movement is a tool as well as a value (see chapter four). Celebration, growing out and contributing to a sense of community and communion with all life, is identified as crucial for the intense bonding essential to the regeneration of earth-centered social capital in bioregionalism.

**Conclusion**

Using earth-centered social capital as a sensitizing concept, this chapter has explored bioregional values which aspire, among other things to both inter-human and inter-species kinship and community. This review has shown that bioregional values aspire to a strong version of earth-centered social capital, similar in two fundamental ways to those societies of the domestic mode of production. First, bioregional values incorporate a sense of the "community of all beings" ethic, the form of cultural capital identified as essential to an earth-centered understanding of kinship in domestic mode of production societies. This is not to say that bioregionalism would have us move back to a gatherer/hunter or horticultural mode of production. I have never read or heard anyone in the bioregional movement make such an impossible claim. What it
does mean is that, in the bioregional paradigm, the sense of ecological kinship captured by the ancient "community of beings" ethic is a form of cultural capital that informs bioregional community building values in contemporary society.

Chapter two identified the "community of beings" ethic as a spiritual resource for humans in DMP societies. In this chapter, I have identified this same ethic as a spiritual resource for bioregionalists. This ethic is thus identified as a potentially powerful motivating factor in the formation of eco-social capital which requires further inquiry into both its articulation as a motivating factor and into ways and means of encouraging its generation.

Second, in the vision and values of the bioregional movement, kinship with the earth and its biological diversity includes a strong kinship with others of our own kind as well, similar to the strong sense of kinship we saw in societies practicing the domestic mode of production. Thus, in both cases we see that social capital is subsumed by eco-social capital, but this also suggests that the formation of eco-social capital may a potentially more powerful motivator than social capital as conceived by Coleman or Putnam. That is, the recognition of kinship with other species, far from undermining inter-human kinship, appears to strengthen it. This requires further inquiry.

We have also seen that, with respect to the social capital concept of Coleman and Putnam, a personal experience of intense joy in genuinely social acts can reward the individual immensely and is therefore another potentially strong motivator. The motivating quality of this synergetic, joyful energy is thus identified as an aspect of social capital ignored or overlooked by Coleman and Putnam. There is an obvious potential in this direct experience of synergy that merits further investigation for social capital formation.

From my examination of bioregional values in this chapter certain motivating emotions - joy, romance and love - are identified as dimensions of a
direct emotional and visceral experience of the "community of beings" ethic for bioregionalists. This too calls for empirical inquiry into the phenomenon.

Finally, what can be said at this early stage in my analysis about eco-centered social capital? In the literature on social capital there is a range of quantitative studies that generally ignore qualitative, cultural aspects of the concept (Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies 1996). Spirituality, joy and love, for example, are omitted in such studies. Yet, such cultural capital content appears essential to an understanding of how either eco-centric social capital or social capital is generated and maintained. For this purpose, quantitative studies have told us little, if anything. There is a need for close qualitative inquiry and analysis. Eco-centered social capital employed as a sensitizing concept for my examination of bioregional values has already identified promising clues for this exploration. The next chapter takes on the challenge of exploring them further in my examination of bioregional strategy and tools for building community.
Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of bioregional strategy and organizational and networking activities in and among local community-based groups, councils, committees, and networks in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Included is an overview of bioregional economic strategy which is integrated or embedded within the overall strategy. This initial examination of strategy provides a context for introducing a range of specific methods and tools used.

Tools/methods for community-building explored include: consensus decision-making and conflict resolution, re-evaluation counseling, sharing circles, story, ritual and ceremony, all species projects, undoing "isms" workshops and alliance building, bioregional mapping, ecological restoration, permaculture, and bioregional education. The purpose of exploring these tools is threefold: first, to describe them and illustrate their use in bioregional strategies through contextualized examples; second, to continue my inquiry into eco-social capital formation; and third, to begin my attempt to identify lessons from bioregional values and practice for a civil society-base theory of democratic political economic transformation.

In this exploration, I use eco-social capital as my sensitizing concept to analytically probe the descriptions and contextualized examples of the various tools. In this inquiry, I am looking for a more comprehensive cultural understanding of how these tools work (in bioregionalists self-understanding of them) to build community and how social capital and eco-social capital are formed through the use of these tools.
We saw in chapters one and two that: social capital includes networks, norms (of cooperation, civic solidarity, etc.), and trust; and, that eco-social capital is social capital informed by a "community of beings" world-view. In this chapter, I specifically explore the role of trust in the formation of social and eco-social capital. As well, in my exploration of bioregional values, I have made an initial identification of aspects of social capital and eco-social capital in chapter three that requires further examination. How do potentially motivating dimensions of social and eco-social capital - synergistic joy and love, and other spiritual dimensions - get expressed in bioregionalists' self-understanding of these tools and how they work? What is the role of trust? From this exploration, what more can be learned about the charter of social and eco-social capital, especially with respect to the potential motivating power for their formation? Are the bioregional values of inter-human and inter-species kinship experienced as motivating emotions through the use of these tools? Does the use of these tools generate and/or strengthen the experience of kinship for bioregionalists? Do these tools help to form social and eco-social capital? How do these tools help to form social and eco-social capital?

**Bioregional Organizing: From Local to Continental Scales**

Because of its great emphasis on living-in-place and home, some analysts have misunderstood bioregionalism as a parochial philosophy. In chapter three, I showed that this is not the case. Bioregionalists locate and ground their efforts at social transformation in particular places, but they do so within a planetary consciousness and a much broader regional and continental networking strategy. In short, bioregional values and practice link local community building to broader socio-cultural transformation.
I begin my exploration of strategy with Peter Berg's descriptive analysis of bioregional political work. Berg has always been at the forefront of bioregional political thought. For example, in 1976 he wrote a political essay that had widespread influence among early bioregionalists. The piece, "Amble Towards Continent Congress", called for local groups to initiate a broader political process of networking and alliance building at a continental scale. This preceded the first continental congress by eight years. In another key influential article, "Growing a Life-Place Politics", first published in the bioregional journal "Raise-the-Stakes" in 1986, Berg advocated locating bioregional political activity in a culturally-based politics of place. In 1986, the second continental congress of the movement took place. The movement was attracting new adherents. It was a good time to advance a vision of local organizing networked at broader scales.

Berg, as a good political pamphleteer, has the ability to both capture the essence of what people are doing and thinking and then nudge them a little further with an enhancement of the developing vision. In "Growing a Life-Place Politics", Berg argued that bioregional politics starts with individuals who identify with real places and find ways to interact with the life-web around them. Berg advanced three "reinhabitory" principles to guide this work: restoring natural systems, satisfying basic human needs, and developing support for individuals engaged in reinhabitation. In this essay, Berg attempts to answer the question, how to develop support for individuals? Bioregional political work depends on working together cooperatively with "closeby watershed neighbours" to form "seed groups", the basic units of "bioregional political interaction" (Andruss et al. 1990, 137-144). From there, several seed groups of neighbours working on a wide variety of different projects can join together to form a broader, but still local community organization at the local watershed
scale. Berg argued that the local watershed level of organization should become a "watershed council", acting as a forum for addressing watershed issues based on the three reinhabitatory principles. At this level, reinhabitants can more effectively engage and contend with established local government agencies and organizations to deal with immediate problems and press for "eventual self-determination in the watershed" (Berg 1990, 137-144). Seed groups and watershed councils would eventually join together to form an even broader form of network, a federation or congress, at the level of the entire bioregion (Berg 1990, 137-144). In Berg's view the most basic level of politics for these groups should be oriented to transforming the local culture of the people involved, from an industrial, commodity consuming culture to a culture of reinhabitation or living-in-place. Moreover, this local bottom-up strategy must eventually lead to broader political questions. For example, when I asked him what a bioregional politics would look like, Berg responded:

--- From my point of view, the politics will follow the culture; the culture of reinhabitation in a bioregion will lead the politics and the politics will be, how do you carry that out? At what point do we need the power of control over our own lives here and to what extent. (Berg 1989)

Here it is clear that, for Berg, political work is embedded in cultural work, in the work of incubating a "culture of reinhabitation". In his political essays and pamphlets, Berg consistently links political action to the problem of cultural transformation. To become sustainable, cultural change at the level of individuals and local seed groups is seen to require support by broader levels of social and political organization. Berg has played a key role in helping to articulate this understanding in the bioregional movement.

Moreover, all these levels of organization (seed groups, councils, and congresses) are meant to be applied in both rural and urban settings. As Berg
has succinctly and ironically commented in discussing urban contexts: "Cities don't hover on space platforms. They are all within bioregions and can be surprisingly dependent on fairly close sources for food and water, at least --- Green City proposals aren't based on simply cleaning up the environment but rather on securing reciprocity between the urban way of life and the natural life-web that supports it" (Berg 1990, 137-144). I discuss green city organizing in a separate section later. For now, its important to note that cities are generally seen in the movement as a key part of a broad bioregional perspective and strategy of societal change. Bioregionalism is not simply a back-to-the-land movement. Moreover, it is of major importance to underscore Berg's argument that bioregional green city proposals call for achieving reciprocity between urban regions and their life-supporting ecosystems. This is a recognition of the profound implication of human dependence on natural systems as a prerequisite for a transformatory cultural approach to frame broader political organization. In moving toward reciprocity with the natural life-web, the cultural change that this requires informs the political work that, in turn, seeks changes in government and state institutions that support the cultural changes in civil society.

The next level or scale of organization is the continental congresses. Berg suggests these are "an important new political forum" that can engage people in organizing "exchanges of expertise, work parties and cultural events to support member groups" and help focus attention on crisis situations in particular life-places as well as fostering the work of "thinking like a continent" (Berg 1990, 137-144). Berg directly confronts the apparent contradiction in bioregionalism of thinking on a much broader geographical scale (like a continent) while committing much effort to local organizing. Berg openly recognizes that, from a local bioregional perspective, it is difficult enough to understand one's
own watershed and bioregion. However, Berg also argues that this broader continental level of bioregional movement organization is necessary to “confront the problem of arbitrary (and multiple) government power over bioregions” (Berg 1990, 137-144). Many bioregionalists agree with him and have demonstrated it by putting in the enormous time and effort (compared to the small resources of the movement) needed to organize a series of bi-annual continental gatherings in which broader political concerns have been accorded a very important place. However, I caution here that not all bioregionalists support the continental level of organization, while others are sometimes simply too busy working at reinhabitation at both local and bioregional scales to attend (personal conversations with bioregionalists). In any case, many bioregionalists have been attempting to implement this multi-level strategy for two decades. Chapters five and six examine attempts to implement it at the local, bioregional and continental levels. However, it is now necessary to complete my initial overview of political economic strategy by examining the principles of bioregional economics and the strategy for what bioregionalists call "bioregional economic conversion".

Bioregional Economic Conversion

Bioregional economics, like bioregional culture and bioregional politics, begins with place, community, and neighborhood, but extends to watershed and bioregion. For Berg, bioregional economic formations must meet basic human needs and support the work of reinhabitation to be sustainable. The principles of bioregional economics contrast sharply with neo-classical or conventional economics. The cold, calculating language of *homo economicus* is absent in bioregional economic thought, which has been inspired, in great
part, by the "small-is-beautiful" Buddhist economics of E.F. Schumacher (note the parallel with the "Zen" road to affluence or Buddhist economics of the domestic mode of production analyzed by Sahlins). For example, the vision statement for a bioregional economy (passed by consensus at the third continental congress) illustrates the caring, compassionate, "Buddhist" character of bioregional economic thought:

A bioregional economy manifests itself through qualities of gift, trust, and compassion. Bioregional economics is a tool for implementing a social agenda informed by relationships, interdependence, and diversity; and is sensitive to the scale of the Earth's systems. Bioregional economics distributes the gifts of the Earth to sustain the health and richness of the biosphere in which we live and through which human needs are fulfilled. Decision-making is based on principles of local, democratic self-control and, secondarily, through mutually friendly, cooperative and compassionate relationships between and among individuals, groups, communities, bioregions, federations, and all species. A bioregional economics is expressive of a universe of beings evolving and working harmoniously toward the fulfillment of our individual destinies and our common future. A bioregional economy reflects the oneness of all life. (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 67-69)

In this vision statement of economies which manifest through "gift, trust, and compassion" and reflect "the oneness of all life", we can identify three key aspects of eco-centric social capital: trust, norms of general reciprocity, and a kinship with the "community of beings". Bioregional economics then, is by definition about trust, interdependence, mutual aid, and cooperative and compassionate relations among humans and between humans and "all species". Moreover, in these envisioned economies, "decision-making is based on principles"; which means that a bioregional economics is embedded in a cultural/philosophical matrix. Obviously, such a total contrast in thought and feeling between the above vision and the entrenched capitalist economics of homo economicus, raises questions about implementing the vision. Bioregionalists recognize the challenge and have begun to address the need
for a long-term strategy which embeds its economics in a philosophical and
socio-cultural matrix.

In a "bioregional economic conversion strategy", community economic
development and regional economic development are viewed as
complementary elements of a single integrated process. That is, bioregionalists
see the core of a bioregional economy as a "web" or network of strong, local
economies. Bioregional economic thinker Susan Meeker-Lowry, in "Economics
as If the Earth Really Mattered", explains that a strong local economy means a
broadly diversified economy which favours the use of local skills, knowledge,
ingenuity, and local resources (Meeker-Lowry 1988, 231). This envisioned web
of local economies (to be examined in more detail shortly) parallels and
supports bioregional political strategy of seed groups, watershed councils, and
bioregional and continental congresses.

Furthermore, the concept of an economics of human communities, both
local and (bio) regional, is expanded to encompass the larger community of
beings. For example, bioregional essayist Tom Berry states in "The Dream of
the Earth" that both social and natural ecology concepts intertwine in an
economics of the larger earth community (1988, 72). In this vision of
bioregional economics, "the natural world is the larger sacred community to
which we belong" (1988, 81). Here we encounter the vision of an economy of
kinship with all beings, the ancient "community of beings" ethic. One implication
of this integrated human and natural ecological understanding is that cultural
transformation as well as social and political change are seen as necessary for
human economic systems to fit sustainably into natural ecological systems.
Moreover, bioregional economic systems must be also embedded within
human social and cultural value systems. As we saw in chapter one, Polanyi
viewed such embedding of economics as essential to avoid the catastrophic collapse of civilization.

It is important to note that the primary goal of bioregional economics is ecological sustainability, not growth. One term for this is "reinhabitatory economics". Berg and Dasmann state in "Reinhabiting California" that the object of a reinhabitatory economics is to maintain natural life system continuities while enjoying them and using them to live (1978, 217-220). Given this goal, Berg and Dasmann even suggest that reinhabitatory economics may be more aptly defined, not as an economics at all, but rather as an "ecologics".

A framework for bioregional economies would aim for self-reliance at the level of the bioregion (rather than self-sufficiency which implies a closed system). The difference between the two concepts, self-sufficiency and self-reliance, cannot be over-emphasized. There has been great misunderstanding on this point on the part of some who have criticized the notion of self-reliance by confusing it with self-sufficiency and parochialism. Self-reliance does not imply an absence of trade and exchange between bioregional economies. If implemented, a developed bioregional economy would include careful, extensive recycling, diversification, substitution or import replacement, production for food and basic fibres first, minimization of throughput energy and materials, maximization of non-polluting processes, high quality and durable goods production, organic agriculture and permaculture, horizontal communication and transportation networks, community-based currencies and exchange systems for local economies, and community control of investment, production and sales. A self-reliant, bioregional economy would be socially and ecologically healthy and would foster a more cohesive, self-concerned populace with a developed sense of community and pride that come with the
knowledge of one's competence, control, stability, and independence (Sale 1985, 67-88).

The enormous gap between the extant global capitalist market system and the still to be realized vision of a bioregional economics underlines the perceived need for a prolonged process of bioregional economic conversion to support and complement the cultural work of re inhabitation. For example, bioregionalists have worked hard in brainstorming sessions to conceptualize a process for bioregional economic conversion. That strategy, worked out over the third and fourth continental congresses, currently comprises four general components. It has been called a "four-prong conversion strategy". The primary emphasis is on building social capital and community at the base in the informal economic sector of civil society.

The first "prong" was named "Know where we are today" (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 39-40). It begins at the local community/neighborhood level, working with the community to identify major issues, community values and resources, helping to mobilize the community to come to know its own situation in detail. This requires investigating and/or cataloguing the natural environment, wildlife and domestic animals, migration routes and patterns, and the human population; and then determining the percentage of the communities' basic needs currently being met by the community, as well as identifying what kinds of production services need to be initiated by the community. This process has been called on Ecological/Production Audit. It also investigates the kinds of production taking place, how harmful the processes are socially and ecologically to the bioregion, etc. It includes bioregional mapping and inventories (statistical and by interviews) to define the bioregion; resource audits - natural, human, energy, and technology; social relations; sacred/unique
sites; history; consumption/waste audits; and "power audits" (what are the social/political networks?).

The second prong of the conversion strategy is to oppose and undercut the dominant system in those areas where it is not in alignment with bioregional principles through: community education, boycotts, corporate divestiture campaigns, political organizing, and ecological/bioregional education.

The third prong of bioregional economic conversion is to redirect the energies and power of the old industrial/consumerist system into emerging sustainable systems through: developing support for revolving loan funds, community-based credit unions, community-based banks, various kinds of co-ops (worker, child care, agricultural, marketing, consumer, and housing), community-supported agriculture, re-manufacturing (recycling for local production), integrating appropriate technologies, implementing workplace democracy, and land use policies that promote sustainability.

The fourth prong is to establish new sustainable systems in alignment with bioregional principles: markets for cottage industries, land trusts, community currency, barter/exchange networks, co-housing, intentional communities, regional/municipal investment to support community-controlled production, priority to local economy, optimum self-sustainability (including limited non-exploitive exports, maximum self-sufficiency in food production, maximum diversity, energy, and water self-sufficiency), community ownership/control of resources, and participatory democracy (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 39-40).

This entire strategy was put forth by the economics committee at NABC IV and recognized by the entire congress through consensus as a "sketch" or simple outline of a process for bioregional economic conversion. The congress recommended the strategy as a model for bioregional activists to adopt (and
adapt where necessary) and encouraged its implementation wherever possible as an important dimension of bioregional organizing. As can be seen, this four pronged process of economic conversion focuses primarily on building up the integrated strength of local institutions within the informal economy sectors, in the sphere of civil society. This is a horizontal strategy.

The bioregional economic strategy is a parallel or complementary transitional strategy to the bioregional political strategy. Both are based in civil society, both are founded in very local community-scale activity. Both envision broader networks of exchange. Like the bioregional organizing strategy of growing a life-place politics through seed groups, councils, etc., bioregional economics is a transitional strategy in that it provides concrete places to begin at the local community level and an initial outline for a long-range strategy of economic transformation. It is crucially important to underscore the notion of a "transitional strategy". Consider the following.

The vision and strategy for bioregional reinhabitation as described, complemented and supported by the development of bioregional reinhabitory economics, is understood in the bioregional movement as a process of transformation that will by necessity take several generations to accomplish. For example, Richard Register describes a 140 year process (in several stages) for the long-term implementation of "Eco-city Berkeley" (Register 1987, 57-130). Other bioregionalists that I have discussed this matter with also understand that bioregional political economic strategy requires a long-term, intergenerational process of cultural transformation to become sustainable. Bioregionalists recognize that such a profound transition in worldview and in human institutions cannot be achieved overnight.

The above transitional strategy can be viewed as a framework to be compared with the Cohen/Arato framework for socio-political transformation.
Both rely for their implementation on actions from "below"; that is, transformative democratization of the whole of society must be based on and grounded in dense horizontal networks of peoples' organizations in civil society. On this point, both frameworks are based on apparently similar radical notions of political and economic transformation based on social mobilization in the civil society sphere. Without these changes at the base, both frameworks indicate that no lasting democratization can happen, no political or policy changes from above can be insured for sustainability against the whims of opportunistic politics or capitalistic global management schemes. However, as noted in chapter one, the Cohen/Arato framework, while theoretically appealing in some respects, offers no account of how cultural change in civil society might begin.

From my initial examination of bioregional vision and strategy, it is already clear that bioregional political and economic strategy is firmly based on including cultural transformation as the grounding focus for its implementation. However, only a closer analysis of the methods and tools bioregionalists employ to implement their vision for community building and societal transformation can reveal how bioregionalists initiate and implement their vision.

I now turn to a more detailed look at the movement's ideas for step by step approaches to local organizing within the broader framework of seed groups, councils, and congresses. This provides a context for exploring each of the specific methods/tools.

**Seed Groups and Socialsheds**

Perhaps the most complete "step by step" description of basic bioregional seed group organizing is that put forward by Gene Marshall at the
fourth continental congress in 1990. Though Marshall has referred to seed groups rather prosaically as "teams", his list of principles for bioregional organizing was published in the congress proceedings under the more poetic title "Like a Wind That Must Be Caught by Sail". These principles are based on his (and others) experiences in the Upper Blackland Prairie bioregion in Texas:

1) The importance of geography and maps. Organizing bioregionally must take place with some sort of bioregions in mind. Even if we change our sense of bioregional boundaries frequently, it is useful to learn our natural areas and create maps which define our home bioregions. This work reveals to us what is to be organized, who are included in our immediate region, who are our neighboring regions, and our relation to the entire planet. Doing this task is more than a rational task; Thomas Berry suggested that it is a shamanic journey to discern bioregional boundaries. Expect strong feelings to come up and disagreements to take place and continue to take place. Nevertheless, a sense of bioregional place is essential: it is worth the struggle.

2) The importance of having good meetings. Well planned and artfully facilitated meetings are something without which bioregional peoplehood cannot be built. Quality-wise, meetings must be as psychologically, sociologically, and spiritually healthy as it is possible for us to make them.

3) The importance of regularity and rhythm. Our bioregion has decided to hold annually a three-day congress and to schedule monthly a two-hour team meeting. Other regions have worked with four campouts a year, one each season. The size or nature of a region may suggest still other rhythms; but whatever the rhythm, the building of bioregional peoplehood needs a regular pattern that can be counted on year after year.

4) The importance of balancing nurture and action. Action alone will not sustain a group. If action alone has called a group into being, then the group disperses when the action is completed. Building bioregional peoplehood means spending considerable time in study or long-range visioning which clarifies the meaning of doing social transformation for this particular bioregion. Nurture also means doing together various tribe-building activities -- singing, dancing, celebrating, pot luck meals, etc. A structural way to hold the balance between nurture and action must be found. In our bioregion we are attempting to do this by devoting our monthly team meeting to the nurture side of this polarity. We are organizing committees, which meet at other times, to do the various forms of action. One of these committees is called the bioregional organizing committee. This committee has the responsibility of planning the monthly team meetings and mailing out a quarterly flyer describing the content and location of these meetings as well as a list of all the committees and
their contact persons. The other committees focus on specific projects having to do with land and food, recycling, education, eco-feminism, etc.

5) The importance of consensus processes. Consensus processes are key, because motivation cannot be maintained if every person does not see himself or herself participating in the decision-making processes. The remnants of hierarchical and authoritarian leadership styles die hard, but die they must. Consensus processing does not mean, however, that strong leadership must be abandoned to the swamp of no-one-in-charge-dom. A group can easily make the consensus to use the leadership skills which the group possesses. Those members who are clear committed and skilled can be asked to serve the group with their leadership qualities. Making leadership a service role rather than an honorary role is an important part of making consensus processes function. Such servant leadership then can play the roles that enable every person to participate meaningfully in the decision-making and the work.

6) The importance of reviewing basic contextual ideas. Bioregionalism is an extremely far-reaching and radical perspective that cannot be presumed to persist unaided in the minds of bioregionalists themselves. New people coming into bioregional groups may need considerable time for thinking about bioregionalism before the full implications of this radical leap dawns on them. These facts have important implications for planning the various nurture meetings.

7) The importance of symbols and symbolic practices. Spirit is like a wind that must be caught by a sail or a wind-generator to have historical effects. Symbols are such spirit-catching devices. Singing songs together catches the spirit. Conducting good sharing conversations can also catch the spirit. Spirit and symbols can be understood in a very down-to-Earth, non-spooky manner. Maps of my bioregion can be symbols which catch the spirit. Also functioning is this way are diagrams or photographs which say 'These bioregional groups have successfully experimented with nature-affirming ritual, mask-making, costuming, dancing, drama, poetry writing, music making'. If we make organizing bioregional peoplehood a central focus of concern, we will need to allow these forms of artistic creativity to flourish. (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 11-12)

This list of "principles" for bioregional organizing can also be viewed as an initial set of tools and methods for building social capital within a local seed group; mapping, artfully facilitated meetings, use of seasonal and bioregional rhythms (ritual), consensus process, celebration and nurturing, mask-making, costume, drama, dance, poetry, music, art and ritual are a large part of the panoply of methods used by bioregionalists to build community.
Marshall's description was only intended as an initial list for others to reflect on and build upon. Nevertheless, it provides at least an introductory overview of how bioregionalists begin to implement their values through drawing on a diverse tool kit for community building at the seed group level. In order to understand what these tools mean for bioregionalists and how they work a closer examination of each tool is necessary.

An Overview of Tools/Methods for Building Seed Groups, Watershed Councils, Congresses and Communities of Place.

In this section, I describe a variety methods and processes used by bioregionalists to aid in building seed groups, councils, congresses, communities, and networks. I analyze them as tools for developing norms of social solidarity, cooperation, and mutual aid; tools, that is, for building community. How can the use of these tools help overcome modern barriers of anomie blocking the formation of social capital or eco-social capital? An extended qualitative exploration into the character and use of these tools undertakes to answer this question. For this purpose, I categorize my list of tools into two sets: those that are generic to creating and fostering seed groups, councils, networks, etc.; and second, those that are specific forms of activity in themselves such as permaculture, ecological restoration projects, and bioregional education projects. I discuss the generic tools first. This list includes: consensus building processes, (including conflict resolution techniques, re-evaluation counseling, etc.); movement building activities such as undoing "isms" workshops (race, gender, class, age, etc.); the use of sharing circles; the bioregional use of story; interspecies communication (or all-species
work); the use of ritual, theater, dance, music, poetry, mime, costume and art; and bioregional mapping.

Consensus Decision-Making

In group decision-making, bioregionalists normally use the practice of consensus. In the bioregional movement, many have learned consensus from Caroline Estes, a Quaker and rural reinhabitant in Oregon, who has over 35 years of experience practicing and teaching consensus decision-making. Caroline Estes facilitated the first five continental gatherings of the bioregional movement. She has had a lot of influence in the bioregional movement with respect to consensus. Consensus processes were developed by Quakers in the nineteenth century and later by the human potential movement in the nineteen sixties and seventies (Estes, personal communication 1989). It is also known that consensus process was used by many indigenous cultures. Knowledge of consensus decision-making has become fairly widespread, particularly in social movements. In spite of this, consensus process is sometimes misunderstood or only very poorly understood and applied as a form of "group think" dominated by a few articulate or overly assertive participants. In the bioregional movement (and in many social movements), this is not accepted as good consensus process.

In the bioregional movement, consensus decision-making means that all members must agree, or at least none seriously disagree, on any group objective. This puts a great responsibility on each member to listen very carefully, remain open-minded and consider deeply, knowing that she/he must accept the consequences of the decision since each individual is considered indispensable to the process and the decision. Estes explains that consensus
is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and no one has all of it, and on a profound respect for all persons involved in the decision that is being considered (Andruss et al. 1990, 165-169).

True consensus process needs four ingredients: "a group of people willing to work together, a problem or issue that requires a decision by the group, trust that there is a solution, and perseverance to find the truth" (Andruss et al. 1990, 165-169). Its great strength is that there is never any decision that does not have complete or at least very strongly held agreement. In such a process, there are no disgruntled minorities nor weak divided groups. Consequently, good consensus process can be a powerful tool for building social capital, because it focuses as much on developing horizontal bonds of trust, mutual understanding, and respect for the process and those involved in it as it does on decision outcomes.

Consensus process begins with a clear statement of the problem, in language as simple as possible. Estes emphasizes that the problem not be stated in such a way that an answer is built in. On the contrary, there should be an openness to looking at all sides of the issue. Good consensus process also needs a skilled facilitator. For Estes, the facilitator role cannot be too strongly emphasized: "Traits that help the facilitator are patience, intuition, articulateness, ability to think on her/his feet and a sense of humor. It is important that the facilitator never show signs of impatience. The facilitator is the servant of the group, not its leader" (ibid).

Good consensus process calls for active participation on the part of all participants, including the facilitator. Each participant must take some responsibility for the quality of the entire process. Estes stresses that the consensus process "makes direct application of the idea that all persons are equal. If we do indeed trust one another and do believe that we all have parts
of the truth, then at any time one person may know more or have access to more
information but at another time, others may know more or have more access or
better understanding. Even when we have all the facts before us, it may be the
spirit that is lacking and comes from another who sees the whole better than
any of the persons that have some of the parts. All these contributions are
important. Decisions which all have helped shape and in which all can feel
united make the carrying out of the necessary action go forward with more
efficiency, power, and smoothness" (ibid).

This definition of consensus helps to reveal the importance of trust as an
essential ingredient of social capital formation, trust built on cooperative
practice and mutual respect and perseverance in searching for truthful
solutions. Good consensus process appears as a primary tool for generating
social capital.

Given the above definition and understanding of consensus process in
the bioregional movement, what is the experience of it? Does it really help to
build trust? Estes describes the experience of the consensus process at the
first North American Bioregional Congress:

Over 200 persons arrived from all over the continent, and some
from abroad, and worked together for five days, making all decisions by
consensus. Some of those present had used the process before or were
currently using it in the groups they worked with at home; but many had
not used it, and there was a high degree of harmony and unity. On the
final day of the congress, there were a very large number of resolutions,
position papers and policies put forward from committees that had been
working all week long. All decisions that were made that day were made
by consensus - and the level of love and trust amongst participants was
tangible. Much to the surprise of nearly everyone, we came away with a
sense of unity and forward motion that was near miraculous, but
believable. (Estes 1984, 19)
Thus, for bioregionalists, good consensus processes are, at bottom, about working together to build common bonds in order to move forward together whether it be in a seed group, at a congress, or in an intentional community. That is, consensus is more than just a decision-making technique. The above example illustrates the effectiveness of good consensus process in creating the trust, the sense of cooperation, and the group solidarity needed to clarify important issues and work together toward defining common goals.

Good consensus process is shown to contribute to fostering a deeper, common understanding of the issues involved, assist in building agreement and unity, as well as contribute to the development of shared feelings of love and trust. Consensus process is therefore an essential tool for social capital formation in the bioregional movement. Moreover, it is clear that love as well as trust can be generated by good consensus process. Here is another clue to enhancing the Coleman/Putnam definition of social capital. Love (again) appears as an important bonding dimension of social capital ignored by the literature on social capital.

The above discussion may have left the impression that consensus process is easy to implement. This is a mistaken reading. Consensus often requires hard work among its participants. Understanding and achieving good consensus building process requires patience on the part of all participants. Estes recommends that when a decision cannot be reached, it is often best to put it off till a future meeting so participants can have time for deeper reflection. This practice is sometimes called "laying aside", after Quaker custom. For the practical person this may seem unnecessary or impractical, but it means that individuals' opinions and feelings are highly respected and social relations are not damaged in the rush to move forward by making quick decisions. Estes comments on the importance of the technique called laying aside: "Personal
experience has shown me that even the most crucial decisions, seemingly time-bound, can be laid aside for a while - and that the time, whether a few hours or days - is wisely allowed; when again assembled, we come to a better decision than was possible in the beginning" (Andruss et al. 1990, 165-169).

In the bioregional movement, one person who seriously believes the group is about to make a wrong decision, may move to block consensus. In such circumstances, Estes observes that good consensus process requires "that the meeting see the person who is holding up the meeting as doing so out of that person's highest understanding and beliefs" and that the "individual (s) who are holding the group from making a decision must also have examined themselves well to know that they are not doing so out of self-interest, bias, vengeance or any other emotion or idea except the very strong feeling and belief that the decision is wrong - and that they would be doing the group a great disservice by allowing it to go forward" (Andruss et al. 1990, 165-169).

In Estes' own intentional community experience over many years, she has seen consensus blocked on only a few occasions and each time the person blocking was correct in the sense that the group would have made a mistake by moving forward too quickly and without due consideration.

In group processes, conflicts sometimes arise for which no quick and easy solutions appear. Two or more individuals may be in conflict. To deal with such problems, bioregionalists have adopted conflict resolution and group facilitation techniques (some originally developed by the Quakers) also used by peace groups, civil rights organizations, women's consciousness raising groups, groups in the environmental movement, etc. Such techniques started to appear as a formal process in the late 1960s and had become widespread by the late 1980s (Kaner 1996, ix). They are based on a willingness by involved
participants to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. One example suffices to illustrate.

A typical conflict resolution method is the "no-lose" (or win-win) problem solving process. In this method, all parties to the dispute participate with a facilitator in a seven step process: 1) Define the problem in terms of both people's needs with each person identifying the conflict in their own terms; 2) Restate the problem in such a way as to include both person's needs; 3) Brainstorm alternative solutions on a sheet for all to see without discussion until each person sees on the list solutions with which she/he is willing to work; 4) Each person evaluates the alternative solutions, eliminating any which are unacceptable for any reason; 5) Decide on the best solution acceptable to everyone involved in the conflict and make a mutual commitment to try it; 6) Implement the solution and set aside time to evaluate the progress; 7) Evaluate how it is working and if anyone feels it is unfair or won't work, repeat the process from step one (Coover et al. 1977, 90).

The win-win process relies, in part at least, on a technique called "active listening" (1977). This technique attempts to clarify the conflict by having the individuals involved explore their feelings on the issue(s) with a friend or someone who is considered "safe". Active listening is a way of helping a person solve his/her problems by listening attentively for the feelings behind the person's statements and reflecting them back to the person without making any judgments about the person, belittling the problem, or trying to suggest solutions. The "active listener" simply tries to reflect the person's own feelings back to them for clarification. This technique is designed to resolve conflicts in which real needs are being frustrated by miscommunication. However, it is not meant to resolve conflicts based on differences of belief, or deeply held values.
Conflict resolution methods are often used in conjunction with consensus process. As noted, the use of these processes is common in a wide number of movements in civil society. Their use in the bioregional movement has also increased in the late 1980s and in the 1990s. From a social capital reading, these methods can help to build up levels of information and trust between participants by revealing real blocks in communication and more accurate information on genuinely held beliefs and values. Such methods are potentially invaluable for social capital formation. Re-evaluation Counseling is another more elaborate method used by bioregionalists and others when two individuals are having severe problems working or living cooperatively.

**Re-Evaluation Counseling**

Re-evaluation counseling is a form of co-counseling by peers without professional intervention. It was founded as a practice in the 1950’s by Harvey Jackins in Seattle. Subsequently, it was advanced as a theory in the early 1960’s out of years of experiences with solving peoples emotional problems and neuroses (Jackins 1975, 18-19). It grew quickly as a movement of peer counseling communities and networks outside the practice of professional counseling (Rowan 1988, 78).

To the extent that re-evaluation counseling has a precursor, it can be found in the person-centered counseling developed by Carl Rodgers. The essence of Rodgers’ approach is based on the assumption or principle of the basic goodness of the person and their capability to find the answers to their problems given the time, space, and the encouragement and loving support to do so (Rowan 1988, 71-78). Similarly, re-evaluation counseling theory assumes that everyone is born with enormous intellectual potential, natural zest
for life, creativity, and lovingness, but that these qualities often become blocked and/or obscured in people as a result of accumulated distressful or hurtful experiences which begin in (but are not limited to) childhood (Jackins 1975). Glen Makepeace, a veteran bioregionalist who is trained in and practices re-evaluation counseling, observes that in the theory of re-evaluation counseling everyone in modern society is keeping painful experiences out of her/his awareness:

In other words, they're using part of their life energy to keep these blocked feelings away --- children, for instance, are not allowed to discharge their hurt --- a child that begins to tantrum is invariably stopped from doing it, or they’re allowed a little bit of a tantrum, they’re not allowed to continue, and the natural process of healing is blocked. Particularly with men in our society, they get out of touch with their feelings - with women too, but men actually get that part of the socialization process worse than women. It is less acceptable for men to cry than it is for women. What happens because of the nature of the distress pattern when we get into a situation that is sufficiently similar to the original place in which the pattern was installed on us, the pattern will be re-stimulated, and this is an explanation of neurotic behaviour, the repetition compulsion. (Makepeace 1998).

Counselors trained in re-evaluation counseling learn to recognize these distress patterns locked up in our bodies. When adequate emotional discharge (unloading hurts and other feelings by crying, laughing, raging, etc.) of these hurts can take place, the person is freed from the rigid pattern of behaviour and feelings left by the hurt. The bodily release of blocked distress patterns is viewed in re-evaluation counseling theory as a natural healing process. In recovering and using the natural discharge process, two people take turns counseling and being counseled. The person acting as the counselor actively listens, helps draw the other out and permits, encourages, and assists emotional discharge. The other person being counseled talks, discharges, and
re-evaluates. Then, the roles are reversed. In the peer counseling process, it is recognized that the "client" has to do the work and is in charge of her/his own therapy throughout the entire process. The person acting as counselor does not comment on, evaluate, or share experiences with the client. Rather, the role of the counselor is to encourage the client to talk about and come to terms with the problem by actively listening to the client, by really being there for the client in loving attention and awareness of the inherent nature of the person being counseled:

The counselor recognizes that the other person is a perfectly delightful, loving, intelligent, creative person and keeps that somewhere near their awareness. The term used in peer counseling is 'delightful attention'. It's what the Rogerians call 'unconditional love' for the person. And even just that alone will frequently help the person to discharge quite a bit, because when do you ever get such attention? Also, a person frequently feels very loving towards their counselor at the end of a session because they've just been experiencing the person loving them which, of course, the person has been doing. (Makepeace 1998)

In re-evaluation counseling, the peer relationship is crucial. The ongoing counseling of the counselor is important. The theory and practice of re-evaluation counseling is learned by all those in the re-evaluation counseling community so that no part of the process is mystifying for the participants. Re-evaluation counseling spreads mostly by one-to-one communication of the theory. Practice is communicated by an "each-one-teach-one" basis (Jackins 1975, 17). According to its founder, group and community activities and networks grew out of paired co-counseling relationships. The re-evaluation counseling communities have developed various kinds of group activities from group counseling sessions, to public workshops on peer counseling, to peer counseling discussion groups. Women's and men's groups and race and
ethnic groups based on relationship to oppression were also developed (Jackins 1975, 30-38).

The use of re-evaluation counseling to liberate blocked up energy for the purpose of releasing energy for community building and societal transformation is of great interest to a growing number of bioregionalists. For example, Makepeace describes his experience in the bioregional movement. He first encountered peer counseling in 1990 and immediately recognized its value for a social movement. Makepeace refers to the success he felt when he enthusiastically offered a workshop in co-evaluation counseling at the 1990 Maine continental bioregional congress with Joyce Marshall who had been doing peer counseling for some years with her husband Gene and a friend of theirs, Jean-Marie Manning, also a bioregionalist. In addition to the workshop, Makepeace worked successfully with a few people at the Maine event helping them deal with the problems they were having even though he was himself quite new to the process.

Makepeace views peer counseling as very useful for several purposes related to building bioregional community. First, its a very good way to get oneself in good emotional shape so that: "you're basically coming into a situation with a good perspective on other people, and with your own abilities available to you, not caught up in whatever distresses you might be having" (Makepeace 1998). Second, Makepeace, a trained group facilitator, found that re-evaluation counseling was a useful tool for facilitators. For example, if someone is having problems and disrupting during an event, they can be taken aside for a peer counseling session. Or, a facilitator experienced in peer counseling could recognize behaviour driven by some blocked emotions and set up re-evaluation counseling. Often that's all it has taken in Makepeace's experience.
Makepeace identified a third use of re-evaluation counseling from his experience living in his own bioregional community in the Bridge River: “In many of the problems that have come up over the years, we’ve dealt with them by doing co-counseling. Marital problems or relationship problems are common ones, where a person is having a difficulty and it’s hard for them to be in something like a community with somebody they’re not getting along with. And co-counseling is very useful in that kind of a situation” (Makepeace 1998).

Clearly, in the modern era where anomie, alienation, and denial are epidemic, re-evaluation counseling appears as a necessary tool for several reasons related to the generation of social capital. It fosters relationships of openness and honesty, essential for trust building. Trust then aids a participant to unblock and discharge pent-up feelings and installed patterns of oppression. Re-evaluation counseling consciously uses love as aid in trust building and emotional discharge. This movement of feelings between co-counselors stimulates bonds of trust and love. Furthermore, the feelings are established on the basis of a peer relationship, or in other words, the bonds are horizontal. As we saw in chapter one Putnam defined social capital in terms of horizontal social relations. Here in peer counseling horizontal bonding is identified as an important factor in social capital formation, but in this case love is identified as another important factor in the bonding process. That this is social capital formation is confirmed by the spread of networks of co-counseling groups and community activities.

**The Bioregional Movement Use of Sharing Circles**

The use of the circular form by bioregionalists is, in part, based on ancient peoples’ understanding of the power of circle. Since this understanding
is not common in our modern culture, I begin this section with a digression on
the symbolism and use of circles in ancient societies.

The circle is a form used by humans since the first fire circles, the first
"hearth"s at the dawn of humankind when early humans gathered around fires. Ancient stone circles are evidence of the use of the circle in pre-historic times. Stonehenge is only one of over 900 ancient stone circles found in the British Isles. They were likely used to study the cycles of the sun, the moon and certain stars, but also for various, if not well understood, ceremonial purposes (Krupp 1983; Wood 1980). The evidence available indicates that Stonehenge and many other stone circles were likely temples or ritual sites of some sort. E.C. Krupp concludes "with reasonable certainty" that the circle's formal architectural arrangements and alignments, its imposed "symbolic and visual order", along with buried human bone fragments indicate both astronomical and ceremonial purpose, the marking and enclosure of "sacred space" (Krupp 1983, 214-230).

Krupp also refers to about 50 stone circles; most found on the east slopes of the rockies or on the open plains below in both the U.S. and Canada; some, but not all, resembling wagon wheels. One in Saskatchewan is shaped like a turtle. Another in Alberta is about 4,500 years old (Krupp 1983, 142). The turtle, of course, is a common First Nations symbol for "Turtle Island" (North America). Today, we know these circles on Turtle Island as Medicine Wheels. One of the Medicine Wheels is the Bighorn Medicine Wheel, high up on an exposed shoulder of Medicine Mountain in Wyoming. It is only slightly smaller than the large sarsen stone circle at Stonehenge (Krupp, ibid). Information on the stone circle in Wyoming is also found in "The Rocky Mountain Bundle", one of the very early Planet Drum Foundation "bundles" that were published before their networking journal "Raise The Stakes" was launched in 1979. This bundle also pictures a Medicine Wheel which shows the names of the months which
particular tribes in the Northern Rocky mountains used (LaChapelle 1987, 225-227, 356).

The Medicine Wheel, common to many North American indigenous peoples, is a symbolic and sacred circle. Brooke Medicine Eagle is a metis woman teacher and healer who gained experienced in the white academic world before returning to her native roots. The Medicine Wheel, she observes, is the name given to large circles of stones found in many places in North America, used in ceremonial ways by early native peoples and often aligned with other stones or geographical features to indicate solstices and other planetary events (Medicine Eagle 1991, 284).

Medicine Eagle writes of the power of the circle symbol and Medicine Wheel for healing and building community:

The form of the circle, in which all are equally important and responsible, is a natural way to practice oneness. Coming together, again and again, to physically maintain the perfect roundness of the circling spiritual dance is a vital learning, even when there are ripples in the circle, such as individuals wishing to withdraw or wanting to run the show differently or feeling personal discomfort with others in the group. Their ability to maintain the basic harmony of the circle, even with these challenges before them, affirms their awareness of building community together. --- The circle becomes the container of all things, all happenings, concerns, celebrations, mourning, anger, all joy, so that no one and nothing is ever left out. It is within the circle, then, that the healing is created. It is within the circle that we create the wholeness and the holiness. (Medicine Eagle 1991, 419)

There were many different Medicine societies, but common to most was the concept of the Medicine Wheel as both a circle and a path that people moved through as their life cycle unfolded. The Medicine Wheel is sometimes called the "Sacred Hoop". Paula Gunn Allen, a Laguna Pueblo/Sioux is a widely respected American Indian poet, novelist, academic feminist and American Indian scholar, and teacher of Native American Studies. She has
written of the tradition and practice of the Sacred Hoop, drawing on her knowledge of many different traditions from Native American culture. For her, the Medicine Wheel or Sacred Hoop "apparent in the Plains tribes' concept" is "one of singular unity that is dynamic and encompassing, including all that is contained in its most essential aspect, that of life" (Allen 1986, 56). The medicine Wheel, then, is a symbol for each person's life cycle. But it is also understood as a series of teachings, or lessons for living life according to traditional ways as the following example illustrates.

Dhyani Ywahoo, a lineage holder of her nation, was chosen and taught by her grandmothers as a child to learn and teach the traditional wisdom of the Etowah band of the Eastern Tsalagi (Cherokee) Nation to Native and also non-Native people. Ywahoo has written that: "the Tsalagi teaching, like the Tsalagi conception of reality, is a circle" (Ywahoo 1987, xii). The Medicine Wheel, she explains, symbolizes this concept of reality:

"The Medicine Wheel of Life is a circle: all exists within the circle. The circle is named life - precious opportunity. The circle is O (zero), balance of positive and negative --- The circle teachings represent the cycle of all things that spiral in the ever-moving universe, in a process of constant change and subtle harmony together. Thus each one of us, within the circle of our own time and space, is ever spiraling with our thoughts, words, and actions toward realization of the whole. The circle represents complete harmony and balance. It becomes our Medicine Wheel" (Ywahoo 1987, 37).

Not only is the Medicine Wheel understood as a symbol for life and a teaching of how to live life in harmony and balance, but it is can also be used to: mark out a specific ceremonial space, to mark the "wheel" of the seasons, and to help practitioners live in "a sacred manner". Jamie Sams is a medicine teacher and a member of the Wolf Clan teaching lodge of the Seneca Nation. She is of Iroquois and Choctaw descent, trained in Seneca, Mayan, Aztec and
Choctaw medicine. After consulting the Grandmothers and the Elders who had been her teachers, Sams knew it was time to share the Sacred Teachings of the Medicine Wheel with non-Natives. Similar to the above examples, she also describes the Medicine Wheel as the symbol of all of life's cycles and as "the circle of lessons each person must pass through" to complete their life's journey (Sams 1990, 83).

Sams also writes of the use of stone circles for ceremonial space that mark special or sacred places and lessons of birth, growth, death, and rebirth:

"The Stone Circle of the Medicine Wheel is a symbol of Sacred Ceremonial Space that has been honored by our people for centuries as a place to come and experience the beauty of the cycles of physical life. These cycles of planting, gestation, birth, death, and rebirth are the life lessons of the Sacred Hoop --- When we as Children of Earth lose our sense of where we fit into the Medicine Wheel of life, we lose sight of the unified circle and how to live in a sacred manner" (Sams 1990, 85-87).

Bioregionalists have been influenced by such traditional philosophies and practices. Dolores Lachapelle is a bioregional reinhabitant in the San Juan Mountains of the Colorado Rockies, founder and director of the Way of the Mountain Learning Center, and a member of the Academy of Independent Scholars. She has been studying, practicing, and teaching the use of the sacred circle for solstice and equinox celebrations for many years. She points out that while stone Medicine Wheels were used by only some of the various indigenous peoples, many traditional people throughout the world literally "lived within their medicine wheel"; that is, they practiced sacred ritual "walks" or journeys around sacred places and or features of their land, thus turning the whole of their territory into a scared circle or medicine wheel. Lachapelle gives several examples of peoples who did this and argues that forms of stone circles have been used by humans since the Paleolithic, some 20,000 years ago (LaChapelle 1987, 188-190).
For bioregionalists today, the circle is also a symbol and a tool for
individual and community empowerment. From the early days of the movement,
bioregionalists have been aware of the symbolism and power of the circle.
Planet Drum is the name of the original educational, publishing, and networking
organization founded in 1973 by Peter Berg, Judy Goldhaft and others. The
very name “Planet Drum” is suggestive of many associations; the planet is
circular, so is the drum. I asked Berg where the name came from. He replied:

The whole story is really long. Laplanders use a hoop drum to give
auguries of the future. Shamans play a hoop drum and written on it are
symbols of natural events, cycles, other species, whatever. And the
shamans sing a song from that drum as a kind of ouija-board reindeer
collar bone moves around among these symbols. Well, that's what we
thought of the first things we published which were loose, separate
articles in an envelope that you opened up, they fell on the floor, you re­
arranged them. We thought the articles were the symbols on the drum
and the person reading them was the shaman; but, since then of course,
we've had all kinds of associations with it: like 'Daily Bugle', 'Planet
Drum', a drum for the planet. (Berg 1989)

From working together in local seed groups and committees to
watershed councils and bioregional and continental gatherings, bioregionalists
are learning to meet and work together in circles for various purposes including:
healing, decision-making, ceremony, and community building. In fact, the
practice of meeting in circles is associated with most bioregional activities. For
example, there are: drumming circles, plenary circles, men's and women's
circles, elders circles, youth circles, sunrise and sunset ceremonial circles,
healing circles and others (see chapters five and six).

It is important to caution that bioregionalists, in adopting the circle form as
a healing and experiential teaching tool (a "medicine" wheel), are not
reinventing the wheel, but simply reclaiming ancient traditions of earth-based
peoples from Turtle Island, Europe, and elsewhere. Bioregionalists' use of the
circle for marking sacred space, for marking the cycles of the seasons, of birth, growth, death and rebirth, is the reclaiming of "a natural way to practice oneness". Used in these ways, the circle is a tool for the direct experience of community, but not just human community. As the above passages illustrate, the "sacred hoop" is the container of all things, a "teaching" in which participants experience - together - the subtle harmonies of life and the balance of positive and negative in its "singular unity". In short, bioregionalists are using the circle as one way to experience for themselves the healing power of the "community of beings" ethic. The circle is therefore identified as an important cultural tool for eco-social capital formation. Moreover, the understanding of its teaching and healing power as described above is directly experienced by bioregionalists as a potent spiritual motivation for building communities of place. Such spiritual motivation promises enormous potential for eco-social capital formation. Next, I examine another bioregional tool that is closely associated with the circle, the development and use of 'story'.

**Story**

The use of story is another bioregional tool for reclaiming and rebuilding communities of place. Story is perhaps as old as humanity, as old as the first fire circles around which humans gathered to tell, share, and enact their stories. We usually refer to these ancient stories as myths. Many (if not all) peoples have a foundational myth or origin story. Indeed, the eminent scholar of myth, Mircea Eliade, provides a definition of myth that emphasizes common cultural origins. In Eliade's view, the following definition captures what is most comprehensive in this definition of myth with respect to gatherer-hunter (Eliade uses the term "archaic") societies:
Myth narrates a sacred history: it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the "beginnings". In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality - an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behaviour, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a "creation"; it relates how something was produced, began to be. (Eliade 1968, 5-6)

It is Eliade's definition of myth I use here; that is, one important use of myth as sacred origin stories from the "primordial Time, the fabled time of the 'beginnings'. One key point about myth made by Eliade is that in pre-historic societies, people are obliged to remember and periodically re-enact their origin stories. Oral cultures passed down their traditions via such re-enactments. Ceremonial re-enactment of myths was often done at important times of the yearly seasonal cycle in which everyone participated. The telling of these stories could last for days. A few years ago, at an environmental conference hosted by the Huron First Nation at Cape Croker on the Bruce Peninsula (Ontario), participants were told the story of the Great Peacemaker, founder of the Iroquois Confederacy. I witnessed the storyteller, Native elder Tom Porter, take two hours to tell the story in considerable detail, but he also announced that this was a very shortened version. In the old days, the complete story took ten days to tell. It was accompanied by visiting, feasting, drumming, and singing. It was a re-enactment of an ancient bonding, the coming together of 5 different peoples for the original act of creation led by the Great Peacemaker that birthed the Iroquois Confederacy.

Bioregionalists have explored links in earth-based cultures between story and place. The gods, goddesses, mythic figures and powers in the old stories of animistic societies were often familiar animals plants or other beings of place, and they were usually local deities. Dolores LaChapelle has argued
that even in the case of the Greeks, most of the original Greek gods were animals and that the Romans, before they adopted the Greek gods believed not in gods, but in *numina* or powers associated with particular places (LaChapelle 1987, 120-126). Other examples of myth linked to place in place-oriented cultures are provided by LaChapelle. One story is a story told by Dennis Tedlock about traveling with the Zunis in New Mexico:

You're going by in a car, going by a mesa with pink and yellow stripes of sandstone and about 300 feet up the side of it there's a cave up there. You're going along with a Zuni and the Zuni says 'That's the cave, you remember that story about Aatoshe ogress. That's the cave where she lived when that little girl wandered into her cave to spend the night. Right There'. Or, going by another mesa a little further down the road on the left side, the one where the people went during the world flood, it's about oh, 500, 600 feet above the surrounding countryside. 'That's where the people went during the world flood, those stripes, those stripes on the side of the mesa are the rings the water left as it went down --- Right there, that's the place'. (LaChapelle 1988, 188)

Even today, LaChapelle argues, humans can adapt to the pattern of their place through stories that grow out of place. Following what LaChapelle calls our "root-traces", the essence of which is the patterns of relationship both within us - as evolved through millennia - and those in nature outside of us, we can discover our own story of place. More than even this, LaChapelle argues, the story of a society is about the way that a people can adapt to or "fit" into its place:

Humans, too, can begin to fit just as beautifully into the pattern of their place, but not through conscious willing; instead it's more like playing. 'Story' grows out of this type of play. As the festival grows through time, the story develops. The story of a society is the way that a people fits into its place. The place gives us the *li*, the pattern, and the story is how we fit into that pattern. (LaChapelle 1987, 91)
Tom Berry, another bioregional philosopher who has deeply investigated and thought about human cultural forms as story, has written about the central importance of story for viable and sustainable human cultures: "It's all a question of story. We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not learned the new story" (Berry 1988, 123). What is the new story in Berry's view?

Berry finds the beginning of a new story in his search for a synthesis of the modern scientific story and what he calls a "numinous" view of the universe. For Berry (who comes from the Christian scholastic tradition), the Christian over-emphasis on the story of redemption is unbalanced. This lack of balance has diminished the importance of the creation aspect of the Christian story. Moreover, the scientific story (what Berry calls the "life sequence" discovered by Darwin) has largely replaced the redemption-oriented Christian story. However, Berry argues that this secular story does not see either the "numinous" quality or the deeper psychic powers associated with its own story. In his "Dream of the Earth", Berry proposes a new "universe story", a story that involves a change in our "cultural coding" that melds our scientific understanding with a "numinous" view of the universe and the "earth community" (Berry 1988, 123-137; 194-215).

Berry gives this new universe story a bioregional focus through his understanding that this planet presents itself as "a complex of highly differentiated regions caught up in the comprehensive unity of the planet itself" (Berry 1988, 163). As such each region has its own special story. As an example, Berry provides, in narrative essay form, a specific story of the Hudson River valley where he lived for many years. Berry tells a story of the valley from the time of the formation of its mountains to the story of the glaciation that
covered it with a thousand feet of ice; then, the retreat of the ice, and the story of its current geographical configuration. For Berry, the story of the Hudson valley is also the story of the Indian peoples, the original dwellers in the region. Berry then brings the story to the present with the coming of the White man and the changes wrought by farming and industry. I cite the beginning of the Hudson river story at length because it illustrates a characteristic bioregional sensibility about the emotional bonding power of story to evoke feelings of ecological community and kinship:

Tell me a story. How often we said that as children. Tell me a story. Story illuminated the world for us in childhood. Even now we might make the request: tell me a story. Tell me the story of the river and the valley and the streams and woodlands and wetlands, of the shellfish and finfish. Tell me a story. A story of where we are and how we got here and the characters and roles we play. Tell me a story, a story that will be my story as well as the story of everyone and everything about me, the story that brings us together in a valley community, a story that brings together the human community with every living being in the valley, a story that brings us together under the arc of the great blue sky in the day and the starry heavens at night, a story that will drench us with rain and dry us in the wind, a story told by humans to one another that will also be the story that the wood thrush sings in the thicket, the story the river recites in its downward journey, the story the Storm King Mountain images forth in the fullness of its grandeur. (Berry 1988, 171-172)

Berry has used the narrative form to illustrate a bioregional feeling for story. Many bioregionalists take this same spirit of story found in Berry’s engaging prose and, using older oral ways of storytelling, weave stories of place together in communal settings with children, friends, and extended family. Story is used in circles at gatherings at every geographical level - local, bioregional, and continental. Here in these circles, among other stories of place and culture, the story of the emerging bioregional movement/community is told for newcomers to orient themselves and for veterans to remember and celebrate.
One key purpose of bioregional story telling is bonding and binding people together in reclaiming their places. Bioregional stories emerging from and informed by the places where people live, told in the old oral ways, in a circle or around a fire circle, at important times of the yearly cycle such as solstice or equinox, or during the full moon, or marking the changing of the seasons can stimulate powerful bonding effects for participants. Such effects bond people to place and to each other to produce a social cohesion grounded in place. Story, as used by bioregionalists, is thus identified as another cultural tool for building eco-social capital through a shared, integrated bonding of people with people and people with place.

Such active sharing of story helps to build trust - a key ingredient of social capital - among the participants while also bonding them together with their place. That is to say, the bioregional use of story, like the ancients’ use of story, can facilitate the creation and use of ecological social capital. Through the telling and sharing of stories meaning becomes relational. All participants in the story circle share to some profound extent the individual stories increasing the social bonds of information, trust, and mutuality. Then, through sharing their stories of place in a place the participants begin to weave these stories together as part of a broader common story of place and region. Ecological social capital is thereby grounded in particular places (see chapters five and six for examples).

Additional insight into how the oral narration and sharing of stories works is provided by David Abram, bioregional all-species activist and academic philosopher. Abram, who has done a phenomenological study of differences between oral and literate cultures, writes about the direct experience of oral story telling. I cite the following passage at length because it clearly explains
how story telling works to help humans connect "in the flesh" with phenomena and how phenomena are experienced as kin.

Stories, like rhymed poems or songs, readily incorporate themselves into our felt experience; the shifts of action echo and resonate our own encounters - in hearing or telling the story we vicariously live it, and the travails of its characters embed themselves into our own flesh. The sensuous breathing body is --- a dynamic, ever-unfolding form, more a process than a fixed or unchanging object. As such, it cannot readily appropriate inert 'facts' or 'data' (static nuggets of 'information' abstracted from the lived situations in which they arise). Yet the living body can easily assimilate other dynamic or eventful processes, like the unfolding of a story, appropriating each episode or event as a variation of its own unfolding. And the more lively the story - the more vital or stirring the encounters within it - the more readily it will be incorporated. Oral memorization calls for lively, dynamic, often violent, characters and encounters. If the story carries knowledge about a particular plant or natural element, then that entity will often be cast, like all of the other characters, in a fully animate form, capable of personlike adventures and experiences, susceptible to the kinds of setbacks or difficulties that we know in our own lives. In this manner the character or personality of a medicinal plant will be easily remembered, its poisonous attributes will be readily avoided, and the precise steps in its preparation will be evident from the sequence of events in the very legend that one chants while preparing it. One has only to cite the appropriate story from the Distant Time, about a particular plant, animal, or element in order to recall the accumulated cultural knowledge regarding that entity and its relation to the human community ... By invoking a dimension or a time when all entities were in human form, or when humans were in the shape of other animals and plants, these stories affirm human kinship with the multiple forms of the surrounding terrain. They thus indicate the respectful, mutual relations that must be maintained with natural phenomena, the reciprocity that must be practiced in relation to other animals, plants, and the land itself, in order to ensure one's own health and to preserve the well-being of the human community. (1997, 120-121)

Abram's explanation of how oral story telling and sharing can work to create a lived experience of the "community of beings" for participants illustrates the spiritual communal bonding potential of story as a cultural tool for affirming "human kinship with the multiple forms of the surrounding terrain". This is an insight into eco-social capital formation which links myth as origin story to that "Distant Time" when "all entities were in human form, or when humans were in
the shape of other animals and plants". The "Distant Time" is what Eliade (as noted above) refers to as the "primordial Time, the time when the event first took place, the 'strong time' of myth ... the prodigious 'sacred time' of myth" (1968, 19).

Ritual and Ceremony

Ritual is used by many cultures, including modern industrial society. Rituals bioregionalists perform are often inspired and informed by forms of ritual practiced by earth-based cultures (defined in chapter two). However, ritual is an enormous subject, within which I focus on a very specific topic. The aspect of ritual I focus on here is the action of ritual in order to explore the question; How does ritual assist in helping people to bond with each other and with non-human nature? That is, how does ritual assist bioregionalists to experience ecological kinship? The purpose of this exploration, then, is to define and illustrate a bioregional understanding of ritual for bonding and community building.

Because ritual is such a huge and complex topic a brief, context-setting introduction is required. Traditionally, ritual occurs in a number of different forms. These include: initiation rituals or rites of passage, potlatch or give-away rituals, world renewal rituals, healing rituals, rituals to honour animals and other non-human species and place-dimensions of nature, rituals to celebrate community and mutuality, and ritual journeys around the region or territory of inhabitation of a given cultural group. All of these are practices with ancient roots (Abrams 1996; Eisler 1987; Eliade 1974, 1968; Gimbutas 1982; Griffin 1978; Krupp 1983; LaChapelle 1988, 1978; Metzner 1994; Spretnak 1991; Starhawk 1979, 1982, 1987). Although much diminished since the Christian
Church's Inquisition and suppression of Pagan practice (Starhawk 1982, 183-219), ritual use continues in our times (Adler 1986; Starhawk, 1979). While the use of ritual remains a controversial subject within the bioregional movement (see chapter six), ritual is nevertheless an important tool that is widely practiced among bioregionalists.

Some bioregionalists have studied, practiced, and taught the use of ritual. A smaller number have also written publicly about ritual. Among the most well-known are Starhawk and Dolores LaChapelle. It is important to note at the outset that, for bioregionalists, ritual is used to connect between and among humans as well as with non-human nature. I discuss both uses in this section, drawing on the work of both LaChapelle and Starhawk.

Starhawk and LaChapelle have written most comprehensively (among bioregionalists) about ritual and how it works. I begin my introduction to ritual definition and use in the bioregional movement with the definition of LaChapelle. LaChapelle has led and taught earth ceremonies and rituals for over 20 years. LaChapelle advances a threefold typology of ritual: 1) biological ritualization in animals and its further development in humans; 2) general human ritualizations such as habitual, repetitive, stereotyped, compulsive or obligatory; or as acts of displaying, posturing, gesturing, or signalizing; or as methods of formalizing, routinizing, conventualizing, etc.; and 3) 'sacred ritual' - that which enables humans to connect to or evoke "the sacred" (LaChapelle 1988, 151). It is "sacred ritual" that interests LaChapelle.

By "the sacred" LaChapelle means the personal experience, the intense sensation and awareness of being an integral part of, being alive with, the whole of life (128). This sense of awareness is also described as an experience of entering or re-entering the "process of becoming" (240). The experience of being connected to all of life has been described in similar terms
by a number of eco-centric thinkers and is understood as an "embodied" awareness, not merely a mental connection (Bigwood 1993; Boucher 1997, 40; Berman 1989; LaChapelle 1988; Spretnak 1991, 1993; Starhawk 1987). Such a view of the sacred means that what is sacred "is not outside the world, but manifests in nature, in human beings, in the community and culture we create" (Starhawk 1987, 21). John and Nancy Todd (of the former "New Alchemy Institute") name this imminent, embodied connection "a sacred ecology" and they identify it with the ancient animistic world-view of "many traditional cultures" (1984, 80-81).

For LaChapelle, life's goal is to "live in a sacred manner" by including and setting up "ritual structures in our lives where we can feel nature moving deep within us, in response to the patterns of all of nature without" (1988, 240). One central purpose of contemporary "earth rituals" (a synonym for sacred rituals), then, is to restore - through a lived, embodied experience - the connection between humans and nature that Western civilization has lost, in order to rejoin the process of becoming.

The following example serves to illustrate one important bioregional use of ritual. LaChapelle wanted to help other people "begin to feel a real connection with the non-human beings of their own place" (1988, 203). She understood that many people from the dominant culture of "Industrial Growth Society" (as she names the industrial mode of production) had a difficult time connecting to nature. She created a ritual just for this purpose, the "Breaking Through Ritual", which she first performed in 1979. The "Breaking Through" ritual is adapted from a Hakkow ceremony of the Plains Indians. Each year the participants follow the same route with LaChapelle and her co-facilitator, Rick Medrick. The journey through the mountains takes several days. During this time the participants ritually greet "other beings" they encounter: trees, rivers,
mountains, and rocks. Chanting, drumming, and dancing are performed throughout the ceremonies. The idea is that the ritual structure, adapted from the land itself, enables bonding with all the beings of place. LaChapelle has described her own experience of this:

I began to recognize just exactly what the land form does to people in each place. The resulting human/earth bonding astounded us. The more skilled Rick and I become at recognizing what the land wants from us the easier it becomes; because it's not us; it's the mountains and the river who do the bonding. We spend two days in a secluded valley, giving our people the necessary skills and beginning rituals; then two days white water rafting on the Arkansas River; followed by four days in the alpine Crestone Peaks area. I teach Tai Chi every day and we do rituals whenever the mountains or rocks or trees tell us to. (LaChapelle 1988, 204)

LaChapelle reports that many participants in the "Breaking Through" ritual journey testify to life-changing experiences for themselves - after which they can no longer "take Industrial Growth Society seriously", in the sense at least, that they have broken through the boundaries of it's narrowly rationalistic world-view and connected with non-human nature. LaChapelle comments that such a ritual journey provides a "fundamental pattern" for restoring the connection between humans and nature:

When you give a group of people the chance to live as hunter-gatherers always lived, daily moving together through the place, where the trees and rocks and waterfalls are 'sacred' - worshipping the beauty and chanting the songs these natural beings give you - then you 'remember' deep inside that 'this is how it always was'. And then you are home! (LaChapelle 1988, 204)

While the above example illustrates a little of what participants do and experience during this ritual journey, the question of how ritual works to produce the experienced effect needs more exploration. It is extremely difficult
to convey effectively a sense of what happens during an earth ritual to produce
the bonding effect to someone who has never experienced it. Margot Adler,
who did a comprehensive study on neo-paganism and contemporary earth
religions in the United States, reports that a certain professor giving an arts
class on ritual stated that “the only way you can learn anything important about
ritual is by doing them” (Adler 1986, 163). This was an important observation
because it recognized the limitations to a purely intellectual approach to
understanding ritual. It implies direct and embodied experience is necessary (I
return to this shortly). However, there are some findings to consider from the
field of brain research which reveal something of how an embodied connection
is thought to work in terms of Western scientific understanding.

The idea that ritual can actually work to bring about experiential
knowledge of a "sacred ecology" is not considered rational, not in Western
positivist and post-positivist thought at least. Nevertheless there is a
neurobiology of ritual, a Western neurophysiological explanation of how ritual
works that LaChapelle has reviewed and discussed.

LaChapelle begins her discussion by pointing out that Carl Jung opened
up the study of the deeper layers of human consciousness to include the human
unconscious and the collective unconscious. Jung described the psyche as
reaching down from the “daylight of the mentally ... lucid consciousness into the
nervous system that for ages has been known as the ‘sympathetic’” (Lachapelle
1988, 154). Lachapelle also gives an account of two decades of empirical
research on the physiological processes of the nervous system which occurred
since Jung’s initial work.

In presenting her overview of this research, Lachapelle observes that
previous biological research on repetitive stimuli on the brain to facilitate a state
of ritual-induced awareness was not sufficient to explain all its effects because
the organs of the body are homeostatically interconnected by the nervous system as well as the brain. Research on the entire nervous system was needed for a deeper understanding of the effects of ritual action. The following is an abbreviation of LaChapelle's synoptic explanation of the science of the nervous system.

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) consists of both the parasympathetic (PNS) and the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). The SNS mobilizes the organism for flight or fight. The entire SNS can be excited by stimulation of only a few nerves, thus readying the muscle structure for running or any other physical action, and the cessation or reducing of activity in organs not immediately needed for escape or fighting.

The parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) responds only to a more generalized stimulation of its components. Sweats, emetics, purgatives, drumming, and chanting (all methods used in sacred rituals) excite the PNS. General stimulation of this system results in pleasurable states such as sleep, digestion, and relaxation.

In addition, two systems have been named that reflect the shifting needs of an organism from energy-expending to energy-conserving behaviour. The first is the ergotropic (having an affinity for work), the startle or "what it is?" response, associated with the SNS. This response expends energy. The second is the trophotropic, which conserves energy as it relaxes skeletal muscles and synchronizes cortical rhythms. The trophotropic (having an affinity for nourishment) is associated with the PNS. Generally, if one of these systems (PNS or SNS) is stimulated, excitation in the other system is inhibited. A condition called "tuning" may be accomplished by stimulation of either the PNS or the SNS, or the use of drugs that activate or block one or the other systems of
mental activity. Methods used to facilitate ritual-induced altered states also result in "tuning".

LaChapelle reports that Gelhorn and Kiely have devoted extensive research on the effect of "tuning" on the nervous system (LaChapelle 1988, 155). They found that excitation of the ergotropic system, brought about by such actions as drumming, chanting, dancing, and the use of gourd rattles produces such strong activation of the ergotropic system that eventually the ergotropic system becomes supersaturated so that the trophotropic system is activated, resulting in participation of both systems. If stimulated long enough to the next stage, that of "tuning" is reached where the simultaneous strong discharge of both autonomic systems creates a state of stimulation of the median forebrain bundle, generating not only pleasurable sensation but, in especially profoundly experienced cases, a sense of union or oneness with all those present.

The above description depicts the neurophysiological basis of bonding in the language of the scientific research literature reviewed by LaChapelle. However, LaChapelle also supplies her own caveat to this explanation: research done on how any particular brain chemical performs out of context of the entire brain/body system or the context of the natural environment, LaChapelle warns, will continue to miss the point, focusing instead on particular chemicals. No one brain chemical, LaChapelle argues emphatically, is the single cause of anything (LaChapelle 1988, 155-156). In order, then, to pursue her investigation more comprehensively, LaChapelle looked at triune brain research.

LaChapelle reviewed theoretical research by Paul MacLean, neuroscientist and chief of the Laboratory of Brain Evolution and Behaviour, on the triune brain. In addition to the left/right hemispheric functions of the cerebral cortex, this research has looked at the older structures of the brain. Along with
the neo-cortex, the more "recent" development of the brain associated with human development, there is the limbic system or old mammalian brain, and the even older reptilian brain, the most interior layer of the brain surrounding the top of the spinal chord. The limbic brain surrounds the older reptilian brain, while the neo-cortex is the outermost layer. The three "brains" are different in structure and millions of years apart in evolutionary time, but MacLean's term "triune" indicates that the three brains are actually one integrated organ. However, while the limbic brain and the reptilian brain have abundant connections with each other, they have only more indirect communication with the newest brain, the neo-cortex (LaChapelle 1978, 71-72).

In modern culture we tend to think that all of consciousness can be found in the neo-cortex (LaChapelle 1978, 72). However, there is a growing critique of Western culture's lack of mind/body connection in Western dualism as part of a complex set of dualisms which also includes: human-nature, intellect-emotions, male-female, etc. (Boucher 1997; Berman 1989; Bigwood 1993; Devall and Sessions 1985; Gray 1981; Griffin, 1980; Merchant 1980; Naess, 1989; Plumwood; 1993). LaChapelle offers ritual as an essential cultural tool for the mind to reconnect with nature through re-connecting with our own nervous systems and our own bodies. LaChapelle (drawing on work by systems philosopher Gregory Bateson), argues that while the mind as a whole is an integrated network of circuits, the conscious mind registers only the bits and pieces of the ongoing circuits which go through all three levels. In this view, the neo-cortex is dependent on the older parts of the brain.

Ritual, carried out over several hours or more, LaChapelle goes on to argue, can act as a catalyst for going below the conscious "rational" part of the mind in the neo-cortex to access information from both halves of the older brains rooted in our neurophysiological systems; that is, in our bodies. In earth
rituals, several different techniques are used simultaneously; drumming, chanting, dancing, and other repetitive actions. It is this multi-technique approach which provides "the necessary redundancy so that the message goes through all levels and to all participants" (LaChapelle 1988, 155). This connecting action at all levels of the brain, including the autonomic nervous system (ANS), is the "tuning" of the nervous system. In this way we reach into our own nervous system to access information long suppressed by our "rational" neo-cortex.

As additional evidence for the bonding effect of "tuning", Lachapelle also cites the finding of researchers d'Aquili and Laughlin in the "Neurobiology of Myth and Ritual" on the bonding effects of "tuning": strong rhythm or repetition "of itself produces positive limbic discharge resulting in decreased distancing and increasing social cohesion" (LaChapelle 1988, 155).

The neurobiological explanation of how ritual works to bond individual participants to their own, older, neurophysiological roots, ignores the meaning of ritual for its participants. We need to return to the inquiry of the experience of those who, like LaChapelle learn about ritual by doing it. For LaChapelle, Jung's archetypes of the "collective unconscious" helped her to better understand the psychical energy or power released by these rituals. Jung's archetypes are about patterns of relationships, not substances, and that is why, LaChapelle argues, people in European cultures have such difficulty understanding them. For Jung, by contrast, the archetypes have a "divine" quality that is always based upon the animal: "They are essentially the chthonic (earthly) portion of the mind --- that portion through which the mind is linked to nature, or in which, at least, its relatedness to the earth and the universe is most comprehensible" (Lachapelle 1978, 73). But how is this psychic power released?
I noted the use of drumming, chanting, dancing, and repetitive action in the example of the "Breakthrough" ritual. To further explore how such a ritual works, I briefly describe the bonding effects of three of the methods or tools used in earth ritual's multi-method approach which act to enhance the effectiveness of the ritual process: chanting, drumming, and dancing. All of these are, of course, repetitive actions which over time (a few hours to many days although shorter periods can also be effective) combine to produce the "tuning" condition referred to above.

In her introduction to the use of chanting, LaChapelle comments that when a group experiences a ritual event together, more things happen than any one person can comprehend, much of it registered subliminally. Chanting together rhythmically can focus some of these happenings for the participants (LaChapelle 1987, 275). Chant, LaChapelle explains, is the mechanism which facilitates communication between our conscious brain and the older brains within us:

...when the group begins to chant together, much of the unconscious material can surface and become conscious and embedded in the chant. ... In chanting one can be totally oneself and yet totally with all the others ... If everyone is totally being oneself there results a mutual sense of worth that builds up in everyone concerned, which leads to the unexpected gift of joy that can happen in chanting ... the overflowing abundance of joy which continually happens in chanting. (LaChapelle 1988, 277-78)

LaChapelle emphasizes that, when performed for some time, the chanting "begins to dissolve the 'boundaries' we've artificially set up around our single individual person in this Euro-centric culture. The longer you chant the more the boundaries of the self extend. But, LaChapelle warns, this is not some airy, spacy abstract "spiritual" concept. This opening of the self occurs "only
because you are grounded in that particular place where you are circling around, circling around, chanting and chanting" (LaChapelle 1988, 280).

I think it's important in this context to reflect a moment on the much maligned concept of the "ecological self". For LaChapelle, the separate self of "Euro-centric culture" is an artificial creation; even more, it's a delusion. The "ecological" or "extended" self she is speaking of is not about the dissolution of the psyche, or the bland and vacuous unity of some abstract, disembodied, "universal" self. Rather, the "ecological self", for LaChapelle, is about relationship, relationship that is firmly grounded in place by the bonding experience of chanting and circling together in sacred ritual. The ecological self in this sense is about relationship between self and other. Through chanting, the chanters connect with their own deeper selves, with each other, and with the other non-human beings of place. In this understanding, "the sacred" is about relationship, not substance. LaChapelle contrasts this extended, relational self with the atrophied, ego-centered self of Euro-centric culture. In the same passage which deals with the "Euro-centric self" (a synonym for homo economicus?), LaChapelle specifically points out that what she calls "earth chanting" in the context of an earth ritual is a powerful means "to begin to move out of the narrow, meaningless life as mere 'economic man'" (LaChapelle 1988, 276-77).

Here we encounter another, rather subtle, bonding phenomenon produced by ritual practice, in this case, chanting. The concept of "economic man", as explicated in chapter one, is both narrow and abstract, a pretentiously universalized concept. In contrast, the concept of the human self discussed by LaChapelle is a relational one, dependent on the specificities of place, both human and non-human. There is a movement of the self from Euro-centric "economic man" to a relational bonding with one's own body and with the other
beings of place. In this process, we see the link between social and eco-social capital formation. This connection with our deeper selves and our relational selves, this "mutual sense of worth", can release an "abundance" of joyful energy that has enormous empowering potential for the psyche. Thus, another aspect of social and eco-social capital is revealed: the great potential for releasing psychic energy from the connection of self and other. This is experienced as a joyful spiritual empowering. I identify it as a component of eco-social capital formation. Moreover, this spiritually empowering energy of the eco-social can also be seen as a empowering resource for individuals, just as Coleman's social capital acts as a resource for individuals. Such empowering experiences hold huge potential for replacing the urge to consume, to continue to live as a utility maximizing, ego-centric individual, as the "Breaking Through" ritual illustrates.

The drum is perhaps the single most commonly used item in rituals (LaChapelle 1988, 271; Redmond 1997). Generally, in ritual the drum serves to mark and to change the rhythm. The drum also acts to produce the "tuning" condition referred to above. Lachapelle points out that drumming has the overall effect of connecting many different parts of the brain as well as preventing the rational "merely human" aspect of the brain from taking over. For LaChapelle, an important aspect of drumming is the fact that we live in a syncopated world from our earliest existence. In the womb, the fetus floats in amniotic fluid which carries sound far better than air and the baby's heartbeat is twice as fast as the mother's, so that the two heartbeats, superimposed on one another produce a syncopated rhythm that is the baby's entire world for many months (LaChapelle 1988, 284). Drum beats can "speak" to these patterns deep in our psyche/body.
In ritual, the lead drum sets the rhythm and acts to synchronize all the drummers and the dancers. The effect can be very powerful and when it continues for hours energy builds up, the rhythms surge up and down the spine, muscles become relaxed, and the entire body and nervous system is stimulated holistically by the pounding rhythms. In "ritual dance", LaChapelle concludes, "the drum is important to us because we are freed to move once again with the syncopated heartbeat of the world" (LaChapelle 1988, 284). The drumming embodies the dancers and the drummers in the rhythms. The rhythms join the ritual participants together in embodied resonant movement with "the syncopated heartbeat". This resonance is another bonding force or effect for participants. Eco-social capital, then, also has a sensuous, musical dimension. The ability of one rhythm to draw another into harmonic resonance is called "entrainment". The harmonic resonance of drumming has been traditionally used by shamans and oracular priestesses to move ritual participants toward a state of ecstatic union with the "divine rhythms of the earth" (Redmond 1997, 174).

Ritual dancing can take many forms, but often the circle or spiral sets the pattern. The dancing acts to enhance the effects of the chanting and drumming. When done over many hours muscles and joints of the body are loosened, the dancers bodies moving with the syncopated rhythms of the drums. In this "long dance" as LaChapelle calls it, "all aspects of the mind: conscious and unconscious, as well as the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are "tuned" together within the individual so that bonding occurs both throughout the group and with nature in that place" (LaChapelle 1988, 288). Dancing is movement. In earth ritual the movement is syncopated, repetitive, insistent, sensual, embodied. Interconnection is experienced viscerally as well as emotionally.
In LaChapelle's multi-method approach to earth ritual, all of the elements of sacred ritual when performed properly act together to produce the altered state of awareness called "tuning". The form of the circle (with or without a stone medicine wheel or henge), the creation of sacred space, the telling of story and its enactment in ritual, the chanting, drumming and dancing (sometimes accompanied by the shaking of rattles) all combine to "break through", to peel back the layers of what LaChapelle calls "Euro-centric delusion", and through the "tuning" effect, to connect with other participants and with the non-human beings of that place. In this bioregional understanding of ritual, the practice of ritual works to embody a people within the circle of their land community. The theoretical model is an embodied model.

Note that while this examination set out to explain the bonding action of ritual between humans and nature, the explanations also encompassed inter-human bonding. Bioregionalists who practice earth rituals emphasize the importance of both. For example, LaChapelle states that the purpose of earth ritual, as she describes and practices it, includes "putting all parts of the human together deep inside the individual, for putting humans together in society and for facilitating human interactions with nature" (LaChapelle 1988, 149).

I now turn to examine ritual as social bonding. Anthropologist Roy Rappaport, sympathetic to bioregionalism, comments on the importance of ritual for bonding and argues that ritual is a basic social act: "... that which can be expressed in ritual is not trivial. It is, I think, crucial, and because of it I take ritual to be the basic social act.... in fact, that social contract, morality, the concept of the sacred, the notion of the divine, and even a paradigm of creation are intrinsic to ritual's structure" (LaChapelle 1988, 147).

Starhawk, who has led rituals at two continental bioregional gatherings (and many other places as well, including anti-nuclear demonstrations, feminist
gatherings, etc.), and who has used the power of ritual to bring people together to effect grass-roots political actions in modern society, writes from her own experience about ritual as social bonding. She tells the story of the mass arrest of 600 women for non-violently blockading the Livermore Weapons Lab in California where nuclear weapons are designed. The women are held in a gymnasium which had been the site of experiments with radioactive substances for twenty years. They struggle with the guards who attack one of the women. Violence seems inevitable. One woman starts to chant. Starhawk describes what happens next:

> the chant is wordless, a low hum that swells and grows with open vowels as if we had become the collective voice of some ancient beast that growls and sings, the voice of something that knows nothing of guns, walls, nitesticks, mace, or barbed-wire fencing, yet gives protection, a voice outside surveillance or calculation but not outside knowledge, a voice that is recognized by our bodies if not our minds and is known also to the guards whose human bodies, like ours, have been animal for a million years before control was invented. The guards back away. 'Sit down', a woman whispers. We become a tableau, sitting and clasping the woman as if we are healing her with our voices and our magic. The confrontation has become a laying on of hands. The guards stand tall, isolated pillars. They look bewildered. Something they are unprepared for, unprepared even to name, has arisen in our moment of common action. They do not know what to do. And so, after a moment, they withdraw. The chant dies away. It is over. For a moment, mystery has bested authority. (Starhawk 1987, 5)

Starhawk then reflects on the meaning of this experience: "In that moment in the jail, the power of domination and control met something outside its comprehension, a power rooted in another source" (ibid). The source she is talking about is the bonding effect the chant evoked, the sacred connection with life. For Starhawk, this experience is a form of empowerment or "power-from-within" which also bonds the individual with their deeper selves and with other humans. But there is another aspect of power involved here too. Starhawk names it "power-with". She explains how power-with worked to unite the
women protesters: "We joined in the chanting begun by one woman in the jail because we respected her inspiration. Her idea felt right to us. She had no authority to command, but acted as a channel to focus and direct the will of the group" (1987, 10).

For LaChapelle, another way to look at ritual is as a means of communication. LaChapelle explains that the root meaning of communication, *communicare*, means to make common to many, to share, to participate. This interactive meaning of communication goes beyond giving a message from one individual to another and concerns an evocation of a shared or mutual experience of *communitas*. The knowledge coming from undergoing this direct experience LaChapelle calls "understanding". This knowledge must be evoked or called forth (LaChapelle, 1988, 298). Further, this form of knowledge must be called forth with the help of the body. This notion of "calling forth", implies, in one sense, that the knowledge obtained from the experience of *communitas* is already there buried under immense amounts of modern conditioning. What knowledge is called forth? Knowledge of a sacred ecology, of *communitas*. In other words, the knowledge that is evoked is knowledge of the "community of beings", the very concept that eco-centered social capital highlights. So, to reflect on the meaning of ritual for a moment, it now seems clear that the practice of earth ritual evokes - through the bonding experience generated by the action of ritual - a personal knowledge of eco-centric social capital. Moreover, the knowledge is acquired in an embodied process; the knowledge is an embodied knowledge. It is a "breaking through" from Western culture's encrusted mind/body, human/nature dualisms to the joyful, lived experience of spiritual awakening to the "community of all beings".

From the above discussion on earth ritual, including its constituent elements of chanting, drumming, and dancing, I can identify the use of ritual by
bioregionalists as another cultural tool for eco-social capital formation. Here we have seen the unity of social and eco-social capital formation experienced directly by participants as an intensely spiritual, motivating power.

Bioregionalists employ ritual in many different ways and situations. Bioregionalists have been creative in their innovative efforts at including newcomers in their rituals and at performing more accessible and more public forms of ritual than those discussed by LaChapelle. For example, bioregional activist Amy Hannon, philosopher, drummer, teacher, and organizer of community ritual events such as the Coastal Carolina All Species Project, has observed that an incremental approach to earth rituals may begin by something so simple as coming together on a regular basis at prescribed times corresponding with natural rhythms such as solstice, equinox, new or full moons, sunrise and sunset, planting and harvesting times, etc. For Hannon, it is of key importance to plan the ceremony in conjunction with earth's rhythms: "The physical changes that occur everywhere in the planet during these moments register in everything that lives, including the cells of our own bodies. By ritually acknowledging the power of these moments, we begin to deepen our awareness and to remember our connections" (Traina 1995, 141-150). Hannon points out that she has found it practical, in involving the broader community, to limit the ceremonies of simple solstice or equinox celebrations to about an hour, perhaps followed by a potluck supper and social. Whatever the actual arrangements, she recommends keeping the core ritual event within bounds determined by the energy of the community.

Hannon is also an adjunct faculty member at the Union Institute in Cincinnati and a staff member of the Genesis Farm Learning Center in New Jersey. She discusses bringing earth ritual incrementally into the broader community is a public education function of ritual (Traina 1995). Hannon points
out that such ceremonies require advanced planning in the preparation of stories, costumes, masks, chants, music, and the drama of festival celebration. I discuss one form of public earth festival often used by bioregionalists, All Species Days, in the next section since it has some particular characteristics of its own and will help to illustrate the use of ritual in more public ways in civil society.

All Species Days and Projects

"All Species Days" are collaborative community celebrations involving the use of street theater, parades, costume, masks, mime, puppetry, poetry, music, dance and public ceremony. They are held annually to celebrate the story of the places where they are performed. The first such event was held in San Francisco in 1978 where the parade proceeded to City Hall and the mayor proclaimed the first All Species Day. They have been celebrated in at least 35 communities in the United States and Canada (Kraft et al. 1993, 1; Traina 1995, 125-128).

The All Species Project was developed by bioregional activist and educator Chris Wells to celebrate and promote All Species Days. Wells was instrumental, along with teacher John Mcleod, in organizing the first annual All Species Day in Santa Fe in 1980. Often described by its creators as a process of "community pageantry", All Species Day activities began as a way to discover and celebrate human connection to all species and to the earth and to represent the needs of plants, animals, and the earth to the human community (Kraft et al. 1993, 1; Wells in Traina 1995, 125-128).

In 1987, Wells and Mcleod "planted the seeds" of the all species idea in Kansas City and the Heartland All Species Project grew into a separate
organization. Wells has "planted seeds" in many other cities that have also
grown into All Species Days (Kraft et al. 1993, 1). Wells also shared his vision,
music, mask-making, and stilt skills with teachers (and others) at the North
American Bioregional Congresses I, II, and III. Soon, as Hannon observed:
"different versions of All Species Day were being celebrated all over the
continent" (Traina 1995, 129).

Wells has described the purpose of All Species Projects in terms of the
bioregional value of interdependence:

All Species Projects are strides towards making us actively aware of our
interdependence with animals, plants, and elements. Our search is for
the creatively contagious collaborative projects which engage a
community in exploring its ecological connection. Once we feel this
connection, we can face the facts and figures with an understanding and
a new capacity to act in relation to the world on which we depend.
(Traina 1995, 125-128)

Here again we see a strong emphasis on the active participation of the
community in creating the event and the empowerment (the power-with of
Starhawk) that facilitates or enables action.

In fact, All Species Days do not happen without extensive preparation
and community involvement and collaboration. The idea behind the All
Species Project is to create a cultural arts/education program working with
schools, community centres, educators, artists and others over the year to plan
the all-species festival. While the avowed purpose of the All Species Project is
to understand and celebrate human interdependence with all species and the
earth, the reliance on and encouragement of community collaboration in the
events make all species processes a useful tool for bonding participants to each
other as well as to other species. Bonds of trust and solidarity build through
sharing the work and the celebration. In addition, organizational networks are
formed. As Wells expresses it, "We also create out of this a community troupe, a
familial network of skilled educators, artists, and concerned citizens who are recruited into teams of varying size depending on the nature and requirements of each project" (Traina 1995, 125-128).

In Santa Fe, for example, a report of the days events of May 20th, 1988 illustrates the public educational success that communities can achieve by fairly large-scale organizational networking among many small, diverse, autonomous groups each creating their particular project. The Day begins with multicultural opening ceremonies. First, the San Juan Tewa Buffalo Dancers perform an opening ceremonial dance. Then, the DeColores Singers honour the landscape of New Mexico in Spanish song to which the crowd joins in, singing the 18th century hymn, “For the Beauty of the Earth.” The parade starts up, led by rhythm sections with the “ecological” floats moving slowly among several thousand children, teens, parents, and contingents of “creatures.” The "creatures" are masked and costumed local species; roadrunners, rattlesnakes, pinion trees, coyotes, river otters, red-tailed hawks, western flickers, mosquitoes, and antelope. The parade of about 4,000 people arrives at a large park for the annual giant puppetry pageant theater, “Aldo and the Wolf”, dedicated to wildlife biologist and eco-centric thinker Aldo Leopold. A quartet plays Pachelbel from their wheelchairs. A group of teenagers from a local drug abuse program come in as stilt-dancing performers in a crane dance. The wolf study group from a local school club JADE (Juveniles Against the Destruction of the Earth) makes their choreographed stalking moves in masks made from recycled materials, as full-size buffalo puppets appear out of a cloud of smoke. The "pageant theater" has begun. Later, during sideshow time, three elementary schools present their plays on wilderness topics under the previously agreed on theme “Why Wild?” Mimes and musicians, puppeteers, dance groups and speakers each perform repeated shows on ecological
themes. Live bison, wolves, and raptors in the care of local ranchers and animal doctors arrive. Wells concludes his report on the day's events with the following observations: "Images of nature in its glory and balance, scenes of family and community overcome oppressive forces of ignorance and destruction. The world for a moment seems turned rightside up again. People are seen in the course of the day crying and laughing, thinking out loud with strangers, and in a few paved hearts seeds of appreciation are starting to germinate" (Traina 1995, 127)

Months of preparation collaborating in the species and ecological studies, the artistic work, the organizational work, and other preparations by teachers and students, church groups, clubs, scouts, artists, mimes, and musicians has produced as one outcome the social cohesion so important to the building of community. This is the social capital Coleman has theorized, but it is more than that. It is also eco-social capital. The public educational work under an earth-centered "all-species" theme has contributed in an incremental manner to the birth of a cultural shift, manifested in a budding emotional identification with other species and a bonding with the landscape and the "story" of Santa Fe and New Mexico. The long co-operation to produce the event, the music, the dancing and drumming, the all-species puppetry, mime, and street theatre have all combined to interconnect participants socially and eco-socially. All species work is an important attempt to help humans connect with other species, and to recognize and feel that connection. As this example illustrates, there is potential for earth ritual and ceremony to reach different publics and to involve new participants in its action.
Undoing "isms" Workshops and Talking Circles/Alliance Building

From its inception, the bioregional movement has been concerned with issues of racism, sexism and other forms of oppression; that is, issues of social justice. These issues have often been discussed in terms of building alliances among the bioregional movement and other social and cultural movements of oppressed peoples. This history, including controversies and problems, will be examined in the chapter on the continental gatherings. The immediate task now is to explore the tools bioregionalists have used to address these issues and problems.

Margo Adair has contributed to the bioregional movement (and, more generally to other movements and groups throughout the United States) by developing tools to approach issues of race, gender, class, and on building alliances across "cultural difference". Adair developed what she calls "tools for change"; including "undoing isms" workshops, "talking circles", and other means to address thorny issues of class, gender, race, and other "isms". She writes about these issues and about the pressing need to deal with them in social movements (1989; Adair and Howell 1997). At the fourth continental gathering in 1990, she and Roberto Mendoza led an all-day workshop on "undoing isms" (see chapter six).

Before looking at the tools themselves, I think it's necessary to examine some major reasons why such tools are seen by Adair (and more generally in the bioregional movement) as vitally necessary for bioregionalism to develop stronger community relationships. Adair's work has been influenced by her work and life in San Francisco where she has been part of efforts to bring together insights of Marxism, spirituality, personal relationships and institutional change. Adair is one of a number of individuals who entered the bioregional
movement out of previous experience in the National Organization for an American Revolution. Referring to the poisoning of the land, air, water, and people as well as pervasive social ills in the United States, Adair and her co-author Sharon Howell affirm that to survive Americans need to rebuild communities that are life-affirming. They argue that diversity is the essence of community and that without working across class, race, gender, and other differences that have divided people through unequal access to power and privilege, people will not be able to weave the community ties that are essential to building alliances toward a socially just as well as an ecologically sustainable society (Adair and Howell 1997).

Adair and Howell also argue that the prevailing modern middle-class model of the individual in the United States, particularly for those of European descent, has worked to strip away their cultural heritage. Adair and Howell, themselves of European descent, focus their attention on the racist character of the middle-class Euro-American individual in the United States. They argue that conformity to the model of the competitive individual has created a culture where individuals hide their inadequacies and idiosyncrasies for fear they will be used against them. In such a culture trust among people is very difficult to build. Moreover, Adair and Howell argue, there is a distinctly racist character to the model of the competitive individual. "White" has been the great melting pot for people of European descent:

People from distinct and separate cultures have all been poured into the pot, rising to the top of society through the process of having their heritage boiled away. All that is left is to identify how far up one has risen. People are judged by what they own; their character and wisdom are deemed irrelevant. Loyalty to social movements, to principles, people, place, and past have evaporated. Opportunism is rewarded while generosity is seen as sentimental. "White" is solely an identity of privilege. This is the 'wonderbreading of America'. (Adair and Howell 1994, 11)
In such a situation, race is a political category (Adair 1989). The creation of "white" meant giving privileges to some, while denying them to others with the justification of biological and social inferiority. The term "white", they argue, was established as a legal concept after Bacon's Rebellion in 1678 to separate the indentured servants of European and African heritage who had united against the colonial elite (1989, 17). The colonial elite, Adair and Howell conclude, created white as an identity of superiority for people of European descent along with a hierarchical order of success that denied European cultural heritage, family ties, loyalty to place, and rootedness in community. All of this is renounced for "consumerism", a rootless identity of self with what one owns (1989, 19).

Middle-class culture, Adair and Howell argue, is a constricted culture. Conformity to the model demands that people be calm, cool, collected, and in control of themselves, the situation, and the facts. People want to be sure they are not blamed when things go wrong. Any problems are interpreted as a threat to one's public image. This dynamic is especially strong when people think about interacting with those they perceive to be different. When faced with those they consider less advantaged, people often respond with blame or guilt. Dominant cultural concepts of individual achievements and failures encourage the belief that people must be poor because of their own limitations. The tendency under these conditions is to avoid questions of privilege and power. The emphasis on individual freedom hides the fact that the options available to some are only made possible at the expense of others and the earth. This is what Adair and Howell call "the power taboo" (1989, 5).

For Adair and Howell, the process of building relationships across our differences begins with our willingness to look at power. The structures of
power are maintained, they argue, not only through the functioning of institutions and instruments of force, but also through the patterns of thought and behaviour "that we all learn as we grow and live in a society dependent on divisions, especially of race, class, gender and age" (1989, 2). Because middle-class culture has been so dominant, all of us raised in modern society are affected by these ingrained patterns of behaviour, including those in social movements which oppose the dominant culture. This is why, conclude Adair and Howell, those in social movements must place great importance and effort at "breaking the old patterns" unlearning sexism, racism, and other "isms", and "weaving new ties" by building alliances among different social movements.

While Adair and Howell do not actually use the term *homo economicus*, their analysis of middle-class culture, based on essentially the same social construct, "economic man", contributes to it an understanding of the racist dimensions of the competitive and acquisitive middle-class, individualistic, utility maximizer. This analysis, developed out of their work in the National Organization for an American Revolution, calls for extensive work amongst oppositional social and cultural movements to recognize and address issues of power and privilege as essential to rebuilding communities that are life-affirming and alliances that are built both on respect for our differences and on new horizontal ties of mutual support. By openly grappling with the many questions which arise from living with difference, Adair and Howell argue that people can gain strength and in the process, change. With lessons from Putnam's study comparing Northern and Southern Italy in mind, the importance placed on horizontal links in building civil society-based alternatives to *homo economicus* may be crucial for building social and eco-social capital among oppositional social and cultural movements. The horizontal character of social capital draws attention to the importance of issues of power and privilege and
identifies their vertical character as a problem for further inquiry. How do social movements build trust in a context of vertical relationships created by power and privilege?

The "tools for change" that Adair and Howell work with have the goal of rebuilding trust. Trust, they argue, must be at the base of our relationships. Life-affirming communities and organizations can only be sustained when we trust and support one another. This can only be possible, they say, when we are mutually accountable. Yet, trust, they assert, has been "one of the greatest casualties of the movements of the 1960s" (1997, 13). There is therefore, they affirm, an urgent need to work to change old patterns of behaviour. Working against well entrenched stereotypes of race, gender, and class is not an easy history to overcome. Adair and Howell offer a variety of tools for both individual and group work. I discuss the group work tools first.

The "tool for change" advanced by Adair and Howell for different groups trying to work together is to "open the context" of issues that have been buried or obscured by recognizing and naming the ignored realities: "When these undercurrents are named - from interpretations of history, to ways of doing everyday things, to access to resources - what has previously been left unsaid becomes part of the reality with which everyone grapples. The narrow norms which suppress the complexity of varied lives are broken" (Adair and Howell, 1997, 16).

In the experience of Adair and Howell, this process works because, when the content of what has been silent or hidden is named, people, "more often than not", begin to share thoughts which they had previously censored. Moreover, in their experience, this works better when "naming" the ignored realities is done by someone with privilege, because it helps avoid the dynamics of guilt and blame. Again, social capital, especially with respect to
building trust, identifies the crucial importance of horizontal versus vertical issues in cross-cultural linkage efforts. Adair and Howell emphasize that the context that is opened depends on the particularity of oppression(s) among the participants; "Each oppression, whether it be based on a particular cultural heritage, sexual orientation, physical ability, appearance, age or --- has its own array of experiences which have been distorted or ignored" (1989, 8).

The experience of breaking the power taboo by naming different oppressions helps to create a new dynamic. The "power of naming" breaks the taboo. Experiences no longer invisible, become part of what everyone grapples with, not just "their problem". A vertical barrier has been crossed. Moreover, explain Adair and Howell, when experiences kept hidden are named and revealed, people are no longer forced to deny themselves. They no longer have to choose between self and other: "The boundaries of the situation expand, our humanity is enriched, and the basic assumptions of the power structure have to be reexamined. Naming power begins our process of reclaiming it" (1989, 8-9).

Another tool employed by Adair and Howell is "talking circles". I have already discussed the use of the circle form by bioregionalists. However, Adair and Howell make a particular use of talking circles as a tool to address alliance building. This special use merits a specific discussion. Talking circles are defined by Adair and Howell as a method for transforming the diverse dynamics of competition, domination, and submission in which some do all the talking while others fade into the background. Their purpose is to facilitate the creation of an atmosphere where all participants feel safe enough to be honest and share their experiences even though it may be painful to do so. Adair and Howell note that they were inspired to use this form by a ceremonial practice of some Native American peoples and by women's consciousness-raising groups
(1997, 26-27). Before beginning the talking circle, everyone must agree to strict confidentiality in order to help provide the sense of safety people need. People are encouraged to speak from the heart and from the spirit. In the circle, the person talking has the attention of the whole group, sharing whatever may move her or him. Everyone else gives the speaker her/his full attention, listening without judgment, without expending energy in deciding what it all means, but rather, just listening with their own heart and spirit. There is no discussion of peoples' remarks, and when each person's turn comes they strive to speak directly out of their own experience, rather than responding to or analyzing what anyone else has said. After everyone has had their turn in the circle, a theme that has emerged may be discussed if participants want to focus on it. Adair and Howell emphasize that this must be done with sensitivity, since "people have spoken with their hearts and no one likes their heart trampled on" (1997, 27). Adair and Howell also emphasize the importance of working to know each other as full human beings, building relationships with more than just ideas. Making the time and space to tell and share our stories and to really listen to one another, can begin the process of building new, more holistic relationships. Adair and Howell additionally stress the importance of enhancing this process and strengthening the connectedness that it generates by sharing in song, dance, silence, meditation, prayer, and various activities rooted in the participants' different histories:

When our work includes sharing our hearts, bodies, and spirits - we heal our fragmentation and experience our wholeness. It is good to mark the beginning and end of our meetings with these kinds of activities - even something as simple as a few moments of breathing together, listening to a poem, or lighting a candle. When we do, we cultivate a generosity of spirit toward each other and all life. An atmosphere of openness and appreciation for our shared humanity is created, in contrast to situations in which pettiness thrives. (1994, 28)
Here we see that alliance building efforts, while focused on inter-human bonding work, do so in a context of a "generosity of spirit" toward all life. Sharing stories, songs, poems, or simply sharing silence, encourages the sharing of broader, relational selves open to the "community of beings" ethic. Even here the link between social and eco-social capital is made.

Adair and Howell provide a list of several "focusing questions" which they have found useful in creating an open context for this sharing. Below are some representative examples:

- What did the people who raised you do to make a living? How did they feel about it and how did it affect you?
- Name one thing from your heritage that gives you strength.
- Name one thing from your heritage that gets in the way.
- Tell stories you remember about your grandparents.
- What do you never want to hear again from people different from yourself?
- What do you want from an ally?
- When do you feel a sense of community?
- Describe a victory.

Another tool to use in conjunction with talking circles is "constructive feedback". For Adair and Howell, constructive criticism or feedback is necessary to enable us to transform destructive attitudes and behaviour. Building trust requires honesty, courage, and caring in unlearning old patterns. However, they caution, constructive critical feedback should always be given in the context of common goals, not to point a finger at the "bad guy" which is merely blaming behaviour. Adair and Howell (1997, 26) provide a list of simple do's and don'ts for individuals wanting to engage in constructive feedback:

- Be concrete; avoid value judgments and name-calling. The purpose is change, not blame.
• Use "I" statements, not "you" statements.
• Don't assume you're right without collective investigation. Look at all sides; nothing is all bad.
• Look for the reasons behind actions - what conditions gave rise to them? This will help you understand the motives involved.
• Be self-critical; since you are in relationship with one another, be conscious of what you may be doing to contribute to the problem.
• Ask how you can support change.

A final caution given by Adair and Howell is that constructive feedback should "always be directed at the attitude and the act, while supporting the person receiving it" (1997, 26).

For Adair and Howell, given the hold the dominant culture has on us, it is crucial that alliance building work be informed by a politics based on principles of social and ecological justice. We can do this by evaluating our decisions on the basis of whose interests are being served, who benefits, what is gained and what is lost. Because our dominant culture obscures social relationships, Adair and Howell advance a framework for the critical examination of outcomes. They suggest a list of questions which must be asked to address the impact of our decisions on both people and the earth. Again, I provide a representative sample (1997, 17-18):

• What resources are used - whose labour and what raw materials make the situation possible? Are the exchanges fair - does everyone equally benefit? What is the impact on the earth?
• Who has the power? Ownership, decision-making, information, influence?
• Who establishes policy? Who is accountable to it?
• What decisions have been made? Who benefits? Who loses?
• Who/what is maintaining the status quo?
• Who are allies?
• What is the vision of what would be better? Does everyone share the same vision? If not, can the differences co-exist?

Adair and Howell recognize that when dealing with the subjective side of the political power question, group work needs to be complemented by individual work. As individuals we need, they argue, to also observe carefully our own process. We need to question ourselves. At their workshops, Adair and Howell provide two checklists of questions for individuals. One is focused on keeping competitive behaviour in check. It is designed to help the individual recognize where her/his own responses can shift to better contribute to maintaining a supportive atmosphere. The questions are quite straightforward, such as: “Do I compare myself with others; Am I able to be entirely honest; If not, what would it take; Do I interrupt” (1997, 19-20).

The other checklist is concerned with what Adair and Howell call “equalizing relations”. It is also designed to help individual group members reflect on their own behaviour, but with a particular focus on issues of difference. Some example questions include: “Do name dominating behaviour when you see it; do take responsibility to learn about the history, culture, conditions, and resistance to dehumanization of other groups as told by them; Do interrupt stereotyping; do express appreciation and acknowledgment; Don’t take responsibility for, think for, or speak for others; Don’t trivialize the experience of others; Don’t defend mistakes by focusing on good intentions; Don’t assume everyone has the same options as you do” (1997, 21-22).
Bioregional Mapping

Maps and mapping have been central to the development and activities of the bioregional movement since its inception. Mapping has fulfilled several different key purposes for bioregionalists. First, mapping has contributed to the very development of the concept of bioregions. The first bioregional maps were created by Raymond Dasmann and Miklos Udvardy in 1973 for a United Nations study of biotic provinces (Aberley 1993, 17). Berg and Dasmann were inspired by the maps to work together to develop and popularize the concept of bioregions (Carr 1990, 15-22). Bioregional poet and mapper Gary Snyder was also central in the genesis of the bioregion concept, linking First Nations cultural life patterns with biogeographical patterns (Carr 1990; Snyder 1980, 23-30).

Second, bioregional mapping is used for public education and inspiration. Bioregional maps were used in the mid-1970s by the Planet Drum Foundation to illustrate a reinhabitatory vision for California and are still used to illustrate the Planet Drum journal "Raise the Stakes" (Aberley 1993, 17). Bioregional poet and teacher David McCloskey has used a mapping process to call forth a vision of Cascadia and as a learning tool for "finding home" (Aberley 1993, 18; Carr 1990, 29-30). Freeman House and the Mattole Restoration Council use mapping to inform themselves of the history of the destruction of salmon habitat in the Mattole Valley, California. They also use maps as a watershed restoration educational tool for the residents of the valley and as a political tool to interact with and educate relevant government institutions (Andruss et al. 1990, 111-120; see also chapter five). In 1985, the first systematic method of describing the characteristics of a bioregion via a mapping process was created by Doug Aberley (Aberley 1985; 1993, 18).
The first bioregional mapping process applied to the concept of urban reinhabitation was outlined by bioregional thinkers John Todd, co-founder of the widely known New Alchemy Institute, and George Tukel, a bioregional planner, in "Reinhabiting Cities and Towns: Designing for Sustainability" (1981). They called the process "place patterning". By overlaying patterns of human settlement on patterns of natural succession, Todd and Tukel envisioned the possibility of planning urban settlements to adapt to and fit into changing patterns of ecological succession and disturbance in order to contribute to the maintenance of ecological stability of the bioregion. A key part of this mapping process was to develop a "solar income budget" for the bioregion to assess the potential for living within the solar energy supplied by the bioregion (1981). This form of mapping represented an early attempt by bioregionalists to conceptualize living within the carrying capacity of a bioregion.

In their approach to "place patterning", Todd and Tukel look specifically at ecological succession as a powerful conceptual tool for visioning the design and reshaping of urban human communities within the matrix of their bioregions. For these writers, seeing the city-in-the-bioregion as a whole is the first step in the evolution of bioregionally based design practices. They see "place patterning" as an exercise in town and neighborhood planning that can be applied at the neighborhood scale and/or the much broader scale of the entire urban region.

The first step in "place patterning" (apart from physically exploring the bioregion which is itself an essential prerequisite) is to overlay the "artificial terrain onto the natural one using maps to see where tensions or compatibility exist" (1981, 20). This is done through compiling a series of overlay maps delineating:
1. All of the natural water flows, including streams and lakes.
2. Water-related functions, like harbours, docks, and marine terminals.
3. Railroad lines sketched onto the map that contains the water courses.
4. Major road traffic arteries.
5. Airports.
6. Electrical power stations or major transmission and distribution sub-stations.
7. Waste treatment facilities.
8. Areas which are zoned for residential, commercial, industrial, and governmental purposes.
9. Agricultural activities.

Then, a "biological map" is prepared indicating waterflows, landforms, soil characteristics, wildlife habitats, and native vegetation. All urban "green zones." are also plotted including parks, open spaces, treed avenues, wooded ravines, wetlands, etc. Finally, by overlaying these maps, an overview of urban patterns and biogeographical patterns can be compared with points of tension and compatibility being specifically located. This overview can also be seen over time by comparing the present mosaic with past ones through maps of the natural and social geography, old drawings, histories, photos and stories of place from older residents. This exercise can also lead to identifying special places of local spiritual significance. Indeed, the vision of a "sacred ecology" noted above is the framework that informs all the work of the Todds, including the most "pragmatic" work of recycling and growing food (1984, 92).

With an overview of both patterns of natural succession and patterns of human settlement within the bioregion, one can begin to see, Todd and Tukel argue, how settlement patterns could be planned, or rather re-planned, to adapt to and allow for the changing patterns of ecological succession and disturbance to maintain the ecological sustainability of the bioregion. A key point made by
Todd and Tukel is that the overlay method allows the conceptual connection of the biological components which they argue "should be almost continuous" (1981, 23). Interestingly enough, this concern for biological connectivity foreshadows the rise of the new science of conservation biology in the mid 1980s.

Another bioregionalist who has written about mapping is Gene Marshall. As noted earlier in this chapter, Marshall named "geography and mapping" as his first principle for local bioregional organizing. For Marshall, mapping work reveals what is to be organized, who is included in our immediate regions, who are our neighbouring regions, and ultimately, the character of our relations to our entire planet. Marshall has suggested that bioregional mapping is more than a narrowly rational or merely logistical task, that mapping one's bioregion can evoke powerful images and emotive symbols of home that "catch the spirit like a sail catches the wind" (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 11).

Doug Aberley, is perhaps the most systematic, detailed, and comprehensive of all bioregional mappers. He has been developing his own mapping method for 16 years. Aberley recently published a collection of bioregional mapping stories, thought, and practice from the movement, including a detailed primer on how to map a bioregion entitled, Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment (1993). Interest in mapping workshops has grown steadily at the continental congresses. Aberley played an important role in stimulating this interest, leading mapping workshops at the gatherings. Mapping is now seen by many bioregionalists as one essential tool for bioregional reinhabitation in city or country.

Aberley describes several purposes of bioregional mapping: displaying graphically the destruction of land and culture caused by big business and centralized government, showing a vision for a sustainable future more clearly
than thousands of words; depicting strategies of resistance to aid in blocking unwise development and helping to focus anger against such development; and charting patterns of complexity weaving together urban restoration of streams, open space, and ecologically integrated human settlement (1993, 4-5).

Ultimately, Aberley argues, bioregional mapping is about processes and relationships rather than disembodied facts. For Aberley, what matters in bioregional mapping is not how good your cartography is, but developing your ability to fill the world "with personal and communal descriptions of time and space" (1993, 5-6). That is, his approach focuses most essentially on rediscovering one’s relationships of place and bioregion by "tracing the aspirations that define self, family, and community" in both an historical and actual context (1993, 6).

The purpose of bioregional mapping, for Aberley, is primarily about community building, not about becoming an expert cartographer (1995, 6). In fact, Aberley recommends the use of existing topographic, local government, or other maps of one’s home bioregion as aids for map-making (1993, 6). To illustrate his vision of bioregional mapping as a tool to aid in the building of bioregional community, I will cite at length Aberley’s vision for what he has called an “evolving atlas” of home:

Imagine this. In the town hall of your community a large atlas that describes ‘home’ in a great variety of ways is prominently displayed. It has several hundred pages that depict layers of biophysical and cultural knowledge: climate, soils, flora and fauna, historic places, wind patterns, how much food was harvested by place and year, plus a summary of a host of related community experience. It is a well-worn tome, referred to continuously by local citizens. In the margins are penciled notes, adding new information to that which is already shown. Every year or so, your community updates the atlas, growing another layer to the collective understanding of the potentials and limits of place. On the evening that each new edition of the atlas is unveiled, Elders are invited to ‘speak’ each map, adding stories to further animate the wisdom that the flat pages tell. These are songs, dances, and ribald stories, all relating to the
occupation of a well-loved territory. It is entertainment and celebration on one level; on another, it is an absolutely critical validation of larger community potential and purpose. This is the role mapping plays in the bioregional vision. (1993, 16)

While the above examples describe the potential and purposes of bioregional mapping, some examples of actual uses of bioregional maps serve to provide a real-life context. One important observation here is that the bioregional tools I have been describing often work in combination. Story, song, dance, and celebration - in conjunction with mapping - have been used together in a variety of ways in diverse settings.

In Boundaries of Home, Aberley presents a range of stories of bioregional mappers that illustrate some local uses of the mapping process. The following examples of bioregional mapping illustrate two urban experiences. Chicago bioregionalist Beatrice Briggs describes the organizing breakthrough brought about by the creation of a map for their "wild onion" bioregion. The "Wild Onion Alliance" was born at a conference, "Re-inhabiting Chicago: A Bioregional Perspective", in 1989. For the first 4 years after forming, they developed an evolving description of their bioregion, but without a map they could not define the watershed context for where they lived. Then, they developed a base map which served several purposes. It provided a base for a series of overlay thematic maps to show the surficial geology, the glacial moraines, the forest cover, wetlands, primary Indian settlements before the arrival of the Europeans, and the history of population growth and development since 1832. Moreover, by showing the entire watershed context of the Upper Illinois Valley, Briggs notes that the mapping process allowed people to identify how the "Wild Onion Bioregion" fit into that context and taught their group "some important lessons about the place we call home" (Aberley 1993, 19-21).
Toronto writer and bioregionalist Whitney Smith writes about the need for residents of that megalopolis to visualize their bioregion. Map images, Smith explains, can really help to "focus the urban sprawling mind" so we can begin to get a contextualized vision of where we live. For Smith, each place requires pivot points or "coordinates" that define it in the minds of its citizens - the images, myths, songs, and stories that make up a "living culture ---that anchors commonality" (Aberley 1993, 21-24). A bioregional mapping process of an urban region can help reveal those coordinates. A bioregional map - in Smith's view - should help "seed" the bioregional idea by producing a picture that evokes images of and identity with "home". Smith reports that before his group was able to produce a map of the "Oak Ridges Bioregion", an "enlightened federal commission" (The Crombie Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront) produced a map of the "Greater Toronto Bioregion", a map with the same boundaries as the "Oak Ridges Bioregion". This region is bounded by the Oak Ridges Moraine on the North, the Niagara Escarpment on the West, the Trent River system on the East and Lake Ontario on the South. This map included greenlands, aboriginal sites, wildlife features, etc. Smith reported that the map was published in a local magazine and produced a "significant effect" on public awareness: "People began to understand that they didn't just live in a city. They realized that a bioregion was a place where many things were considered" (Aberley 1993, 21-24).

Several bioregional mapping projects have been started in British Columbia. The Southern Gulf Islands Bioregional Project produced a manual on bioregional mapping, "Giving the Land a Voice", out of a workshop with Aberley, Malcolm and Briony Penn, Kathy Reimer and Michael Dunn (Aberley et al 1995). They also sponsored an art exhibition, "Mapping Cherished Island Places". Twenty artists submitted pieces, some of which were reproduced in
the manual (see appendix A-2). Another is the Haida Nation's mapping project on Haida-Gwaii off the coast of British Columbia. Also, Aberley works for the Tsleil-Waututh Nation within the Salmonopolis bioregion (the lower Fraser basin, British Columbia), mapping sacred and traditional use sites to support their land rights in the provincial government treaty settlement process.

Aberley speaks of "implicit" and "explicit" uses of bioregional mapping. Explicit bioregional mapping is when mappers explicitly use the term "bioregional" to apply to their mapping. Aberley reports that, in addition to North America, there is explicit bioregional mapping now being done is many places in Britain. Explicit bioregional mapping is also being done in the Po River valley in Italy, in South Slovenia, by the Karen people in North Western Thailand and by tribal people in Burma. For Aberley, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation's mapping is: "The purest example of a First Nation melding its aspirations with this bioregional tool" (personal interview 1999). The Tsleil-Waututh are using bioregional maps to:

tell the story of the past, present, and future of what they want for their traditional territory. They start with hand-drawn maps and, over time, those maps become very sophisticated digital images. The whole process of making these bioregional maps takes place within their community (1999).

Implicit bioregional mapping is mapping that is bioregional, but where the term "bioregional" is not used. For Aberley, the greatest implicit use of bioregional mapping is by tribal people doing land-use and occupancy studies. Examples reported by Aberley include: the Nisga'a, the Gitxsan and the Inuit First Nations. Gitxsan mappers have borrowed Herb Hammond's community forest use and planning model (1991), adapting it to traditional Gitxsan socio-cultural organization and resource values in a new, holistic Gitxsan model
rooted in Gitxsan Traditional Ecological Knowledge and world-view whose "central understanding" is about the "need to respect and acknowledge the spirit within all things and people" (Pinkerton 1998, 363-389). In this model, traditional kin groupings called Wilps (Houses) are considered to own and be responsible for managing resources in their local geographic territories (ibid). See appendix A-3 for examples of Gitxsan maps.

There is a third category of mapping reported by Aberley that borrows from bioregional mapping, sometimes explicitly using the term "bioregion". It is done by some government agencies. However, Aberley comments that these "mainstream" uses appropriate a biogeographical definition of bioregion without any of the values of bioregionalism: "It is just natural resource management with no socio-cultural dimension" (1999). Two examples are cited by Aberley: 1) the California Resources Agency's 1991 Memorandum of Understanding, a protocol for a number of federal and state agencies for resource management of the "bioregions" of California, and 2) the Canadian Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront final report "Regeneration" (1992) which published maps of "the Greater Toronto Bioregion" (see appendix A-4).

In the bioregional movement, bioregional mapping has no single "correct" approach. On the contrary, visions of bioregional mapping include: McCloskey's "learning tool for finding home"; Marshall's "key" for focusing local seed groups on the process of evoking emotional/spiritual connections to place and bioregion; Todd and Tukel's "place patterning" for reinhabiting towns and cities; and Aberley's "rediscovering personal and communal connections with place". As noted, these practitioners see bioregional mapping processes as tools for evoking our deepest human roots in ecologies of kinship and reciprocity with "home".
The above visions of bioregional mapping hold out the promise of becoming an important social learning tool for a broad diversity of purposes: the popularization of the bioregional vision of home, kinship, and reciprocity; the shifting of popular consciousness from individualistic commodity consumption to community cooperation at living-in-place; and the visualization in popular consciousness of the long-term, intergenerational, bioregional strategy of cultural, social, and economic transformation.

Bioregional maps of urban regions may assist in better communicating bioregional strategy to a broader public, even assisting in generating strategy in actual places with particular histories and specific constraints and opportunities. However, bioregional mapping of large urban areas is only just beginning. It is too early in its gestation to make anything like a realistic assessment of the uses of urban bioregional mapping, but one other example illustrates some possibilities.

There is a bioregional map group working in the City of Vancouver in southern British Columbia which may provide a new iteration of urban-region "reinhabitory" mapping. This group, called the "Barefoot Cartographers", was formed out of a meeting of the Eco-City Network which itself was organized at the Greening Our Cities Conference held in Vancouver in May of 1994. The group began with discussions on the power of bioregional mapping to inspire a vision of an urban region society that undertakes the project of living in place in ecological (or bioregional) communities. The group project is thus very ambitious. To begin the work the Barefoot Cartographers have created a map of the "greater" lower Fraser basin, including the Burrard Inlet and Nooksack River watersheds. This map is the base map for a series of thematic maps planned for a bioregional atlas of the area. Their approach to mapping follows the methods developed by Aberley, who is working with the group. This
approach is based on an enhancement of the regional survey technique
developed by Patrick Geddes early in this century, later adapted by Ian McHarg
to a contemporary graphic format, and then further developed by Aberley (see
appendices A-10, A-12). The immediate goal of the group is to use the atlas
and a combination of maps, photographs, tables, and charts in a slide-show
presentation format as an educational tool for classrooms, conferences, and
workshops. Both the atlas and the slide presentation are envisioned as
inspirational learning tools for schools, libraries, community centres, and other
institutions in civil society toward individual and community reinhabitation in the
Salmonopolis bioregion. To assess mapping's role in building communities
and networks among them, chapter five includes a more detailed look at the
origins and work of the Barefoot Cartographers.

Ecological Restoration

The "Restoring the Earth" conference held at the University of California,
Berkeley in 1988 marked the surfacing of a movement for ecological restoration
with both scientific and popular components. Over 1,000 people, including
scientists, consultants, students, environmentalists, youth groups, corporate
officials, and "ordinary citizens" participated (Berger 1990). Topics included
restoration of agricultural, forest, desert, and mined lands, aquatic systems, and
strategic planning and land acquisition for restoration. Hundreds, perhaps
thousands, of grass-roots citizens groups engaged in a wide variety of projects
to restore waterways. By 1989, there were almost 300 such projects in
California alone. An "Adopt-A-Stream" model launched in Snohomish County,
Washington became a model for citizens in other states (Pollack 1989). That
was 10 years ago.
To-day, in many cities across North America thousands of citizens groups are involved in restoration activities and projects. Ecological restoration has also become a scientific discipline. Shortly after the "Restoring the Earth" conference, a new professional association, the "Society for Ecological Restoration", was founded (Berger 1990, xix). Many government agencies in both the U.S. and Canada now engage in numerous kinds of restoration work.

At the "Restoring the Earth" conference, ecological restoration was defined as an interdisciplinary approach to the benign or altruistic human intervention into biological processes toward restorative ends (Berger 1990, 329). However, others have objected to this definition on the basis that humans do not know enough about ecosystems or ecological processes or disturbance regimes to "fix nature". Chris Maser, a research scientist in natural history and ecology with over 20 years experience, observes that "there is no such thing as reforestation---We can't fix nature---We can only put back pieces and allow nature to heal herself" (Andruss et al 1990, 121). For Maser, management-oriented restoration is a mechanical concept dependent on knowledge we don't have. Ecological sustainability is primarily an issue of managing ourselves (Maser 1992, 214). For Maser, restoration ecology is the process of restoring the land to health which is also "the process through which we become attuned with Nature, and through Nature, with ourselves. Restoration ecology, therefore, is both the means and the end, for as we learn how to restore the land, we heal the ecosystem, and as we heal the ecosystem, we heal ourselves" (Maser 1988, 186). William Jordan III, editor of "Restoration & Management Notes" and a founding member of the Society for Ecological Restoration, holds a similar view that places priority on the process of restoration and its ability to transform the human beings who inhabit and shape
the landscape (Nilsen 1991, 4-5). American writer Barry Lopez links ecological restoration's science dimension with physical labour and spiritual renewal:

It is no accident that restoration work, with its themes of scientific research and spiritual renewal, suits a Western temperament so well. It offers the promise, moreover, of returning to us what we so persistently admire in indigenous cultures - a full physical, spiritual, and intellectual involvement with the Earth, and an emphasis on the primacy of human relationships over the accumulation of personal wealth. (Nilsen 1991, v)

Such views of restoration ecology are quite similar to a bioregional view of ecological restoration in which "restoration is, ultimately, a process of cultural change" (Daigle & Havinga 1996, 8). For bioregionalists, restoration work is an embodied spiritual and intellectual engagement with the "community of beings". Thus, the task of this section is to examine, not the technical side of ecological restoration, but the ways in which ecological restoration is seen by bioregionalists as a tool for culture change, specifically for building communities of place.

Freeman House, one of the original bioregional reinhabitants, has 20 years of practice in ecological restoration on a local watershed scale as an essential part of his practice of reinhabitation in his own watershed, the Mattole River Valley on California's North Coast. In 1995, at a conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration in Seattle, House proposed a merger between bioregional reinhabitation and ecological restoration. He called it a proposal of marriage: "The aspirations of reinhabitation and environmental restoration are entirely complementary and promise a synergistic adventure the particulars of which we can only begin to imagine" (House 1995). House argued that restoration projects that arise out of communities with reinhabitatory goals provide the stimuli for reciprocal relationships which endure. Furthermore, the lessons learned from restoration projects - successes and
failures - can provide "inhabitory peoples with the skills they need to pursue their cultural integration with local natural processes" (1995). Without the marriage, House added, any lessons learned often lie in government basements and with small numbers of restoration professionals. If the goal is cultural transformation, as it is for House, the most important work of ecological restoration lies always "in the vernacular life of local cultures" (1995). Vernacular behaviour, House affirmed, is the only mechanism through which we might hope to attain self-regulation among groups of citizens who have extended their identity to include the surrounding life-systems. The need for constant monitoring of ecological systems commonly stressed by professional restorationists can only be fulfilled by local residents: "Where else", House asked, "can we hope to find the systematic and enduring quality of attentiveness which this sort of observation requires, but through the informed eyes of residents of particular places who have learned that their daily lives are lived in the vastly dynamic and infinitely slow progressions of natural succession?" (1995). Moreover, House reminded the assembly that some citizens' restoration groups are playing a role as important practitioners of the emerging sciences of restoration ecology and conservation biology as well as contributing to defining the goals of these new disciplines.

House, as a citizen practitioner and thinker, has become recognized in certain mainstream circles, often getting invitations to speak in academic and government venues. Speaking at the Presidents Council for Sustainable Development at Lake Tahoe in 1994, he argued that the initiative for restoration must come from citizens grassroots work in their local watersheds. First, on the principle that, since human economic behaviour is the primary element in the destruction of biodiversity, "any picture of the future of ecological systems necessarily includes a scenario for how humans will act within any given
landscape" (House 1994). Moreover, House argued, local allegiances and the unique character of local watershed ecological processes help explain the fact that innovative leadership is already coming from grassroots groups since they are really the only people who can do the job on the ground. For House, "no amount of statistical analysis can replace daily observation and years of experience as a source of the detail necessary for site-specific sensitivity" (1994). On this view, ecological restoration is a tool for primary use in civil society.

House further argues that ecological restoration projects can be a vehicle to foster community building. His argument is based on a phenomenological understanding of direct, cooperative experience. For House, the community building effect of ecological restoration projects is grounded in a shared visceral and direct experience: "Shared visceral experience in projects like these can cut through the oversimplified ideological positions which had divided neighbors previously" (1994). Shared embodied experiences of ecological restoration are seen to be effective in overcoming ideology to build community. Social and eco-social capital are linked by ecological restoration work.

In a recent talk at the Fifth Shasta Bioregional Gathering in California, "Restoring Our Watersheds, Our Communities and Ourselves", House expanded on the theme of community building through "hands-on" watershed restoration. House locates the power of ecological restoration in what he calls the particulars of place:

The beauty of 'hands-on' watershed restoration is that it allows the place itself to become our teacher. As we engage in the particulars of our places, we begin to relearn how to live in a context that has always been there but in modern times become all but invisible. For myself, and I suspect it's true for a lot of you, I learned the importance of watersheds not from bureaucracies of scientists, but directly from salmon. Because watersheds were the life-places of salmon, because salmon were
important to us, watersheds became important as a unit of perception (House 1997).

House views the dominant U.S. culture where there has been a lack of encouragement to learn either the skills or the benefits of community and mutual aid as the great barrier to cooperation and community building. He locates this failing in the modern priority placed on skills of commerce and trade. House refers to the growth of the culture of *homo economicus* reflected in the changing meaning of the term "consumer" which eighty years ago had negative connotations of selfishness and wantonness (1996). For House, it is "The Economy" and its "built-in strategy to create a global monoculture of consumers" that is a direct challenge to the survival and regeneration of local culture.

House locates his response in what I call a "phenomenology of communication and cooperation". I cite it at length because it captures how restoration can act as a tool for bioregional community:

But any serious move toward re inhabitation demands that we be inclusive, which means each of us talking to people we don't necessarily like or who don't like us. Those of us who are workers in the woods, fishers, school teachers, shopkeepers, or ranchers need to be talking to each other. It is one of the primary values of community-based watershed work that it provides the occasion for this kind of communication to happen. As we work side by side with people different than ourselves, we find a common teacher in the place itself, in the particulars of our home landscape. And we discover that this new context is much more conducive to the building of functional community than the political processes that had previously separated us. We find strength in that -- sometimes enough strength to change the political processes we can now set in a larger common reality. And in this way, we learn things about ourselves and about our home watersheds that no expert can teach. (House, 1997)
House's view of restoration has had much influence within the bioregional movement. In this view of restoration, we see certain themes of eco-social capital illustrated: embodied learning direct from the salmon and from the watershed; the change in perception from that of an individual human being to the watershed as a "unit of perception"; and the overcoming of barriers to communication and "functional community" between isolated segments of society through working together to discover "a common teacher in the place itself". Many bioregionalists share this view of place.

House concluded his talk at the Shasta Bioregional Gathering by affirming that its theme of "restoring our watersheds, our communities and our selves" is the spirit of restoration that we need to maintain as our ultimate goal and to embody that spirit in our selves. In chapter five I explore the effort of House and his co-workers in the Mattole Valley to build reinhabitory community through ecological restoration.

**Permaculture**

Permaculture is a design philosophy and a "sister" movement of bioregionalism. Permaculture, an amalgam of "permanent" and "agriculture", is a word coined by Bill Mollison to refer to the development of what Mollison calls an interdisciplinary earth science that he and David Holmgren created in the early 1970's. Mollison defines permaculture as "the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems" (1990, ix). His definition includes the "harmonious integration of landscape and people" to provide food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way" (ibid). For Mollison, without permanent agriculture there is no possibility of a stable
social order. As a design system, permaculture is a “system of assembling conceptual, material, and strategic components in a pattern which functions to benefit life in all its forms” (ibid). Permaculture, then, is a holistic design approach to sustainable human land-use that is earth-centered.

For its originator and its growing numbers of practitioners, permaculture is as much about values and ethics as it is about design. Permaculture was founded upon “a philosophy of working with rather than against nature, of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless action; of looking at systems and people in all their functions, rather than asking only one yield of them; and of allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions” (Mollison 1990, 3). The ethical basis of permaculture is:
1. Care of the Earth: Provision for all life systems to continue and multiply.
2. Care of People: Provision for people to access those resources necessary to their existence.
3. Setting Limits to Population and Consumption: By governing our own needs, we can set resources aside to further the above principles (Mollison 1990, 2).

Mollison believes that an ethic of caring for people complements and forms an integral part of an overall earth care ethic. For Mollison, cooperative species and associations of self-supporting species such as mycorrhizal fungi on tree roots (and other mutualisms in natural ecosystems) make healthy communities that humans can learn from to foster “an interdependence which values the individual’s contributions rather than forms of opposition or competition” (1990, 3). In this way, he explains, “we may evolve the mature ethic that sees all humankind as family, and all life as allied associations” (ibid). Here we see the same fundamental ethic of interdependence and kinship espoused by bioregionalists as discussed in chapter two. This ethic is also central to permaculture. Indeed, some permaculturalists have begun to refer to
permaculture gardens as "co-evolutionary kinship gardens" (Brentamar 1997). What this means is that with permaculture there is as great an effort to "grow" community as there is to grow food.

There is also a profound connection between the ethics of permaculture and a bioregional ecological restoration ethic. While permaculture focuses on already settled areas and agricultural lands, Mollison clearly affirms the interest of permaculture in conserving and maintaining natural systems for other species by taking a broader, landscape approach:

One certain result of using our skills to integrate food supply and settlement, to catch water from our roof areas, and to place nearby a zone of fuel forest which receives wastes and supplies energy, will be to free most of the area of the globe for the rehabilitation of natural systems. These need never be looked upon as 'of use to people', except in the very broad sense of global health. (1990, 6-7)

Thus, permaculture implicitly fits well with the broader bioregional strategy of urban land-use restoration and transformation described at the outset of this chapter. Mollison explicitly recognizes that in order to supply our needs from existing settlements without the continued drawdown of immense quantities of natural capital resources from hinterlands far and near, we will have to govern our greed. This implies (for those in a high consumption society) that a cultural transformation away from consumerism is integral to the vision and practice of permaculture, as it is for bioregional praxis.

Mollison has outlined a set of ethics on natural systems as follows:
1. Implacable and uncompromising opposition to further disturbance of any remaining natural forests, where most species are still in balance;
2. Vigorous rehabilitation of degraded and damaged natural systems to stable states;
3. Establishment of plant systems for our own use on the least amount of land we can use for our existence; and
4. Establishment of plant and animal refuges for rare or threatened species (1990, 7).

Permaculture design focuses primarily on point number three above. As such, it is a fitting complement to a "hands-on" civil society or grassroots approach to both ecological restoration and conservation biology projects. Permaculture design was developed in great part on Mollison’s own extensive theoretical and experiential knowledge of ecosystems. In addition, 20 years of developing as a "hands-on" civil society movement in both Australia and North America have added to the dimension of knowledge gained through permaculture praxis. While no understanding of bioregionalism is complete without some knowledge of what permaculture is, permaculture is far too comprehensive and voluminous a subject to be fully explored here.

In one sense, permaculture is the practical design tool kit for bioregional reinhabitation on an individual site, in a small watershed, or on a neighbourhood scale. On the question of scale, Mollison has pointed out that permaculture is an attempt to return to systems of small gardens in order to produce food for humans. Large-scale chemical-based agriculture, he argues, actually produces far less human food than we are led to believe and it does so in an ecologically destructive manner. In some countries such as Russia, Mollison claims, gardens already produce 90% of the food. Permaculture Design was originally conceived by Mollison as a response to the mess created by industrial agriculture which Mollison believes is “the most destructive activity on the face of the earth” (Sixth International Permaculture Conference Proceedings 1996).
At the fifth continental bioregional gathering participants described permaculture as a "shed of tools" to assist communities to reinhabit their bioregions (TIBG V Proceedings 1992, 28-30). To give a more rounded picture of the "permaculture toolshed", I will briefly describe Mollison's overview of it's design approach and then give one illustrative example from the "toolshed".

The elements of permaculture design encompass a total approach. Mollison outlines four major components; site components such as plants, soil, landscape, water, and climate; social components, including people, culture, and legal/financial structures; energy components, including sources, linkages, technologies, and structures; and "abstract" components such as time, ethics, and information (1990, 37). See appendix A-5.1.

One good example of permaculture design strategy takes advantage of what Mollison has called an "entropy strategy". Entropy is dissipated energy. As we know from the Second Law of Thermodynamics, the total entropy of the universe is increasing. However, life systems constantly organize and create complex storages from diffuse energy and materials, accumulating, decomposing, building, and transforming them for further use. As open systems, life systems make use of energy in many ways before it dissipates, building neg-entropy or essergy. Mollison's "entropy strategy" in his permaculture design process emulates life systems' strategies for dealing with entropy "by finding pathways or routes by which life systems convert diffuse materials into those of most use" (1990, 13).

For example, instead of just leaving manure on a field to compost, we can first ferment it, distill out the alcohol, and then route the waste through a biogas digester where anaerobic organisms convert it to methane (useful for a cooking or heating gas, or as vehicle fuel). Third, the liquid effluent can be sent to fields for fertilizer and the solid sludge fed to worms which convert it to rich
horticultural soil. Fourth, the worms themselves can be used to feed fish or poultry. This is just one of many examples supplied by Mollison.

Permaculture design principles can be used at several scales from the home garden to entire cities. Currently, cities are open systems that contribute to increased entropy by dissipating energy and material brought in from elsewhere. A permaculture design strategy for a city would emulate open living systems' strategies for building essergy, by catching and storing energy in multiple ways before it dissipates to an unusable entropic level.

Nutrient cycling provides another lesson. For Mollison, a "cycle" is an interruption or eddy in the straight-line progression towards entropy. In a tropical forest, for example, almost all material nutrients are in cycle in life-forms (1990, 23). Mollison regards cycles as niches in time, analogous to ecological niches in space: "If niches are opportunities in space, cycles are opportunities in time (a time-slot) and both together give harbour to many events and species" (ibid). So, in permaculture, unlike agriculture, the concept of yield is not limited to one crop, but to the system as a whole. For Mollison, every cyclic event increases the opportunity for yield, to increase cycling is to increase yield: "Cycles in nature are diversion routes away from entropic ends - life itself cycles nutrients - giving opportunities for yield, and thus opportunities for species to occupy time niches" (ibid). See Appendix 5.3 for a diagram.

The permacultural movement and the bioregional movement have developed as parallel streams over a similar time period. However, from the first continental bioregional congress in North America, permaculture has also been a part of the bioregional movement, changing from the "Agriculture and Permaculture Committee" at NABC I to the "Permaculture Committee" at NABC III. Since then, the interest in permaculture and the integration of the two movements has continued. At NABC III Michael Pilarski, a prominent
permaculturalist, proposed a "marriage" between the two movements. A course on permaculture was organized by Pilarski and Bruce Bebe to immediately follow the bioregional congress to encourage congress participants to get involved in permaculture. A similar arrangement was made for NABC IV. Also at NABC IV, the permaculture committee recommended that at the next continental gathering the principles and spirit of permaculture design be integrated into the process of planning and organizing the actual gathering site.

This recommendation was implemented at TIBC V in Texas in 1992. The chosen site was a boy scout campground. Under the guidance of permaculture designers on the Site Committee, and with the support of the camp managers and counselors, a "Permaculture Design For Social Change" was applied to the site. This included plantings of native species and an arrangement to retain a permaculture designer to install four permaculture gardens for the camp with follow-up workdays and inspections. An important goal here was to ensure that the effect of this and future continental gatherings on the local culture, economy, and on the health of local ecosystems was beneficial and culturally appropriate.

It was also recommended that the next continental gathering incorporate a prior Permaculture Design Course. In fact, the proposed design course did not take place in conjunction with the sixth continental gathering. However, at the following continental gathering in Mexico in 1996, permaculture was a key part of north/south linkages of networking and solidarity that emerged from the gathering. A volunteer work crew of gathering participants spent one day contributing to a permaculture garden at a local alternative ecological school in Tepoztlan, the town where the gathering was held. Also, a permaculture institute was established in the Cuauhnahuac Bioregion - the host bioregion of the gathering (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 73). In addition, a number of permaculture teachers stayed in Mexico to teach
permaculture design to the local people. Others stayed to volunteer for permaculture work in Mexico. Conversely, some Mexicans came to the U.S. to do independent studies with permaculture design instructors. In San Miguel de Allende, as Permaculture Design instructor Patricia Dubose reports, 35 people now meet weekly to discuss permaculture in Mexico (Dubose, March, 1998, personal communication).

Permaculture then, like ecological restoration, is another tool for building communities of place. Bioregionalists view permaculture as a method or set of tools to connect a human kinship ethic with an ecological kinship ethic in "co-evolutionary kinship gardens". Social capital and eco-social capital formation are linked in permacultural approaches to land-use design. Like ecological restoration, embodied "learn-by-doing" permaculture methods, used in the practice of reinhabitation, are seen as an effective way of acquiring knowledge of the integration of social and ecological kinship. Moreover, with permaculture design, growing food becomes another method of growing a "community of beings" while reducing human energy and material throughput. Using permaculture design, then, eco-social capital grows while human use of natural capital decreases. Thus, in permaculture design we see revealed a real potential for the replacement of some natural capital throughput with eco-social capital.

Bioregional Education and Community

Bioregional education is a huge topic. Here, I examine bioregional education specifically as a tool for building community, rather than the general discussion of bioregional education values in chapter three. We have seen that the process of bioregional education is understood by bioregional educators
(and bioregionalists generally) as one of direct, experiential learning through active participation and sharing within the human community as an integral part of the earth community (bioregional education value number three, chapter three). In one important sense then, education, from a bioregional perspective, is viewed as a process of sharing.

All bioregional education is founded on learning directly from and about local ecologies: the climate, geology, landforms, watersheds, soils, native plants and animals, as well as local cultures, history and current affairs. This is the core, embodied learning in place from the phenomena. But also, bioregional education is founded in a broad earth-centered ethic and a "vision of long term sustainability of the Earth community" (bioregional education value number six, chapter three). Bioregional education is thus both rooted in place and in planetary ethical concerns. One curriculum outcome of this broader ethic, as bioregional educator Sharilyn Calliou has expressed it, is that bioregional education should create and promote "curriculum theory and materials grounded in a responsible land ethic which motivates social and political transformations" (Traina and Darley-Hill 1995, 67-75). Such a sweeping ethic demands enormous commitment. What then are the methods of bioregional education to address this ambitious curriculum?

There are two major forms that bioregional education promotes: one is the use (or development) of schools and learning centres as community institutions, embedded in their local communities through outreach programs into their local neighbourhoods; the other is educational projects which take place outside the formal school system altogether.

One goal of bioregional education with respect to human community, Calliou argues, is to address the "deep human yearning we have to live in community in socially and ecologically healthy ways" (ibid). In bioregional
education, the method of learning about both our human community and our ecological community is a process of "learning by doing". The focus for this process is everyday life and place. For bioregionalists there is "no separation of learning from life" (bioregional value number two, chapter three). Whether carried on within formal school institutions or outside them, the method of bioregional education with respect to community building is to learn about community - together - through the experience of living and working in a community. Schools and learning are thus seen by bioregional educators as an integral part of the experience of building community.

In bioregional education, another essential method is to encourage the student to experience personally the energy of the interconnected web of life that is the "earth community" and to experience a direct sense of kinship with it. Bioregional educator Frank Traina has written that in bioregional education "a personal relationship with nature is of primary importance especially as it includes a sense of caring" (Traina and Darley-Hill 1995, 93). For Traina, the fundamental problem of education with respect to the natural world is the lack of respectful feelings and values about nature. The method of bioregional education, then, is "to bring back romance into our relationship with nature" (1995, 95). This is an open recognition of the strength of romanticism, the reintegration of bodily senses, emotions and intellect; but, Traina insists, this experience must occur with real plants and animals in real time in real places (1995, 100).

Perhaps the best example of bioregional education outside the formal school system is At Sunrock Farm outside of Cincinnati. Here, Traina has established a program of bioregional education for schoolchildren which deals with connecting with the natural world through a combination of farm, native peoples, artistic, and wilderness experiences. The totality of the experiences in
the program is designed to encourage the child's knowledge and feeling of being connected to, interdependent with, and having affinity for the natural world (1995, 92). At Sunrock Farm the method is to allow the child to personally experience this flow of materials and flow of energy. Traina calls this method "the art of enfolding". This means "nature" is both without us and within us. Traina explains that when we "enfold" the things of nature within us we expand our egos and grow outward. The "art" of enfolding, then, is knowing how to introduce the child to the wonders of nature and how to let Nature speak to the child in a beneficial way: Things which we take in: water, air, carrots, eggs, milk, sun energy, earth minerals, ideas, memories, beautiful scenery can be said to be enfolded within us. Helping the child to enfold the things and the actions of Nature is an art. It cannot be done by only talking to the child. It certainly cannot be done if the child relates only to people. The child needs to be receptive to 'listening' to the air, to water, to soil, to chickens, to broccoli, to sun, to rain, to the heat. (1995, 92)

The concept of "enfolding", then, is another way to express what I have been calling "bonding" with the natural world, the sense of ecological kinship. Such personal experience of ecological kinship is the beginning of eco-social capital formation.

In bioregional education, the "bonding" must be personalized. For Traina, "bonding" refers to the building of a personal relationship and "in any personal relationship there must be feelings of connectedness and emotions" (1995, 94). The following passage from the "Guide for Teaching at Sunrock" explains how this works:

At Sunrock Farm children personally meet a few of their Earth-family members, and they do things with them. The farm is rich in sensory and emotional contact. They milk a goat, bottle feed kids, touch the pigs, feed goats and cattle, gather eggs, handle chicks, plant seeds, eat and smell plants, and so on. This is done safely and with joy. While it may look like
we are merely entertaining the children, we are actually introducing them to other members of the Earth community. For most of our visitors this may be the first time they have ever met a real pig, cow, chicken, goose, sheep, goat, turkey, and our friends the (living) vegetables. And unlike in a visit to the Zoo, they can get to know the animals in a more personal way. The farmers (staff) need to keep up the interest of the children, but they should not get in the way of the communication between the children and the animals or plants. ... A farm tour helps to develop what Thomas Berry calls 'inter-species bonding'. (1995, 99-100)

The personal experience of "inter-species bonding" is essentially direct, embodied, emotional experience of the "community of beings". With respect to eco-social capital, such embodied, emotional experience is the initiation of its formation for the children.

The Sunrock Farm program has also had considerable influence on the teachers. Traina reports that once a teacher brings her students to the farm, she will keep coming back with more students for many years (Traina 1994).

In chapter five, I discuss other examples of bioregional education projects in the Mattole River Valley in California and in the San Francisco Bay Area. The former is another example of bioregional education outside the formal system, while the latter is an example of bioregional education in the schools.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the bioregional strategy for socio-cultural and political-economic transformation to sustainable society. This strategy is based on building local communities of place, communities that are networked into larger bioregional and continental configurations. It is evident that the strong emphasis of bioregionalism on culturally-based change and transformation is essential to this strategy. I also explored a range of tools bioregionalists use to
build place-grounded human community and for broader networking. These tools have been examined specifically in their capacity as culture-changing tools used in community building. Bioregionalists use these tools in various contexts and combinations to aid in building the local seed groups, the watershed councils, the bioregional and continental congresses and networks that, together, comprise the bioregional strategy for transformation to sustainable society. It is important to caution that there is no formula or set of instructions for their implementation in any given setting. However, the contextualized examples of the tools show that the existence and intent of the community building tools described in this chapter place cultural change at the centre of a bioregional strategy of transformation. As well, bioregionalists' self-understanding of their strategy and the use of the "tool kit" (consensus, story, ritual, mapping, etc.) for building community, as reported in this chapter, reflect a deep commitment to integrating cultural transformation into the centre of their efforts at social change in civil society. Clearly, if there are lessons for the Cohen and Arato theory of societal transformation, they are to be found in this culturally-oriented bioregional praxis.

Using eco-social capital as a sensitizing concept has helped to focus the discussion of bioregional praxis as a whole on the community building aspect of the movement. Moreover, eco-social capital has also been used to analytically probe the character of these bioregional tools. So far, I have examined bioregional praxis through the literature in order to explore and describe bioregionalists' self-understanding of both strategy and tools. This broad exploration has set a context for the rest of the empirical inquiry and the subsequent theoretical work.

Some initial/preliminary findings can now be noted. First, eco-social capital in its "community of beings" aspect is a central spiritual resource for
bioregionalists. Such ecological kinship is experienced viscerally and emotionally as well as intellectually and that is the point about these tools. It is one thing to examine the "community of beings" as a bioregional ethic, but the tools are designed to stimulate and facilitate a holistic lived experience of the "community of beings". Their use is intended for just this purpose, whether it be consensus process, ecological restoration, permaculture design, earth ritual and ceremony, etc. Even undoing "isms" workshops and alliance building methods (with more strictly "social" goals) include something of this aspect of eco-social capital. The abundance of joy and well-being from their lived experiences of the "community of beings" evidenced by bioregionalists through their literature is a great resource for these individuals. Such intense experience is a potentially great source or well-spring of motivation for eco-social capital formation that merits further exploration. In this light, the "breakthrough" potential from "economic man" to the eco-social being of the "community of beings" holds promise for helping individuals re-think their lives based on the growth of commodity consumption.

Second, my analytical probes into consensus process, re-evaluation counseling, and undoing "isms" workshops (tools that focus on inter-human problems), as used and understood by bioregionalists, revealed the centrality of trust as a factor in social capital formation and linked this with the horizontal character of social capital bonds. This is important because it supports the findings of Putnam et al on the horizontal nature of social capital which has been criticized by a World Bank study that argues in defense of vertical bonds for social capital (Grootaert 1996, 75-90). Indeed, it appears that vertical relationships characterized by hierarchy and dependency prevent or undermine experiences of trust and mutual cooperation that work to build social capital. Moreover, my exploration revealed that, in bioregionalist's use of consensus,
trust is sometimes associated with feelings of love. In my analytic probes of bioregional discourse on consensus (in chapters three and four), both trust and love are repeatedly identified as potentially powerful horizontal bonding agents in social capital formation. Trust, especially when accompanied by feelings of love, is thus identified as a potentially powerful motivation for the formation of social and eco-social capital.

Third, as the example of the "breaking through" ritual illustrates, the lived experience of ecological kinship can transcend the narrowly conceived "Eurocentric self", in the process connecting not only with other phenomena, but also with the relational "ecological self". As noted, this experience releases an abundance of energy, joyful energy, that I identified as an important source of empowerment for the individual psyche (just as Coleman's social capital acts as a resource for individuals). Here is great potential for replacing the experience of materialistic commodity consumption with the profoundly spiritual (and embodied) experience of the "community of beings".

Fourth, I discussed permaculture design as an experiential land-use tool for learning to connect human kinship with ecological kinship while replacing excessive natural capital throughput consumption with eco-social capital. More generally, eco-social capital includes and integrates social capital when permaculture, ecological restoration, story, earth ritual, or bioregional education are practiced in groups as my analytic probes of the contextualized examples have indicated. This too requires further exploration and analysis.

Finally, there is the question of the tools themselves. Do the tools work? Do they help form social and eco-social capital? From the examples discussed in this chapter, it is clear that, for the bioregional actors involved, these tools do work to facilitate certain lived experiences of synergistic spiritual resources - joy, trust, and love - as motivating energies. Moreover, the examples are
compelling in that they illustrate emergent, but deeply held beliefs on the part of
the bioregional actors. However, as we have seen, bioregionalism is a diverse
movement with many different lived experiences. Therefore to better establish
the case across the movement, the following two chapters report on more
examples in a variety of contexts.

Related to the question "do the tools work" is the question of how they
work. The contextualized examples in this chapter have illustrated some
dynamics of community building power for bioregional actors. A picture of how
these tools work is emerging, a picture that includes embodied psychic
energies as resources for the individuals involved. Again, more examples in
the narrative accounts to follow provide additional evidence in a variety of
contexts.
Ch. 5: Narrative Accounts of Reinhabitation in Rural and Urban Settings

Introduction

This Chapter has several purposes. First, I continue my inquiry into the formation of eco-social capital as noted at the end of chapter four. However, in chapter four I focused on the role of trust and some associated emotional and spiritual resources in the formation of social and eco-social capital. In this chapter I focus on the establishment of some networks and certain norms associated with social capital; cooperation, mutual aid, and civic solidarity. If such networks and norms are emerging, then the lived experiments being examined in these accounts suggest some measure of success in social and eco-social capital formation. Finally, my inquiry into the possibility of replacing natural capital with social and eco-social capital is continued in this chapter through an examination of the long-term vision and strategy of restructuring urban regions toward ecological cities.

My inquiry into both the long-term strategy and the tools used for community building associated with the strategy is pursued through an exploration of bioregional praxis in three rural and two urban settings. Each of these settings is, of course, unique. Each has its own local set of natural and cultural contexts and particular history. The ways and means bioregionalists have adopted and adapted to their special circumstances is also unique. As noted, the tools discussed in chapter four can be employed in many ways, in different circumstances, and in different combinations with each other. Moreover, not all of the tools will necessarily be employed by each group or
each community of bioregional reinhabitants. Thus, the reader should not expect to find each of the tools illustrated in each narrative account.

Since these tools are employed together in different ways in specific situations, I have not tried to describe each use singly, as I believe such a discussion would be too artificial and would distort the story of their integrated use in real places. Rather, I have adopted a narrative style which lends itself better to my phenomenological approach. In these narrative-style accounts, which explore the application of bioregional community building tools in diverse lived contexts, I again use eco-social capital as a sensitizing concept for further analytical probes into both the strategy and the tools. The effectiveness of the tools is examined within the context of the strategy as a whole. That is, I adopt a holistic inquiry into the five lived contexts to assess the overall effect of the strategy of bioregional actors in each community.

Rural Community Building

Much of bioregional literature depicts stories of intentional community and many of these are rural intentional communities (Aberley 1993; Andruss et al. 1990; Forsey 1993; Meyer and Moosang 1992; Plant and Plant 1992). Often, bioregional thought regarding "home" and "community" has been based in and developed from the experiences of rural reinhabitants. A great many of these experiences are the stories of people who have left the cities to join the back-to-the-land movement of the late sixties and seventies. These rural stories are about people with urban backgrounds and broader planetary concerns that have not been forgotten in returning to the land. Bioregionalists have spent considerable time and effort locating their reinhabitory experiences in a broader social and geographical context. Two of the three narrative accounts of rural
cases in this chapter illustrate the local to regional and regional to continental linkages being developed. In short, these narratives of local, rural reinhabitation are also about organizing for broader, socio-cultural transformation.

Because of their concern for broader social transformation, some bioregional reinhabitants have worked to publish and disseminate the stories and the lessons learned from over two decades of attempts at building communities that strive to live "in place". Two examples of such publications are "Putting Power in its Place" and "Circles of Strength: Community Alternatives to Alienation" (Plant and Plant 1992; Forsey 1993). Others publish in a range of bioregional and popular journals.

As Forsey, the Plants and others have pointed out, actually implementing bioregional communities is not easy to do. In the preface to one of the story collections, Judith Plant remarks that the stories of community building are not "polyanna" tales promising utopia, but rather substantive information on a variety of lived experiments in building local community, including the struggle against personal alienation and emotional damage from a patriarchal system of "power-over" (Forsey 1993, xii). Building community and a networked movement of communities in modern, industrial societies - particularly in North America - where alienation, fragmentation, and depletion of healthy community life has been taking place for generations (see chapter one), is acknowledged by bioregionalists as a very difficult process. From their direct experience, bioregional reinhabitants recognize that reciprocity and kinship, horizontal relations of information, trust, solidarity, mutual aid, and mutual empowerment do not come easily to peoples who have never known them, or who have only experienced them in very weak, fragmented, and occasional ways. Forsey, who lives in a small intentional community, recognizes such challenges to
community: however, she locates their cause not in some ahistorically
universalized "human nature", but in distorted attitudes and alienated behaviour
cultivated by an "unnatural and oppressive " society (Forsey 1993, 6-7).

In spite of the difficulties, a diverse store of experience with building
small, face-to-face, bioregional communities has been gained over the past
twenty-five years. The three rural stories I explore illustrate the use of
consensus process, circles, story, bioregional mapping, ecological
restoration, bioregional education, and/or ritual and ceremony. The use of the
tools is reported in the context of the implementation of bioregional strategy. In
addition, all three stories illustrate the central role of cultural transformation in
bioregional praxis. The first narrative account from California depicts an attempt
to build community at a county and local watershed level in California. The two
following stories, one from Mexico, the other from Canada, illustrate two
bioregional approaches to intentional reinhabitory community, approaches that
reach out not only to the strictly local community, but beyond it to the broader
society at the (bio) regional and even continental scales.

The Mattole Restoration Council

The Mattole River valley in Northern California is an incredibly beautiful
place. The watershed, in the Klamath - Siskiyou bioregion covers an area of
more than 300 square miles. The river, 64 miles long, flows roughly parallel to
the coast never more than 20 miles from it, until it bends and empties into the
Pacific at Cape Mendocino (see map appendix A-6). As you approach the
valley from the north along the only highway into it, the fog which inundates
most of Northern California lifts to reveal rolling hills of coastal prairie. The high
dramatic rocks of Cape Mendocino block the fog leaving the lower few miles of
the Mattole bathed in California sunshine. It is just south of this point that the river meets the sea. The cape rocks, the golden undulating hills, the wide long gently sweeping beach, and the pounding white surf rolling across the black sands present a powerful and stark beauty. The watershed itself receives 80 to 200 inches of rainfall per annum, while Arcata not far to the north receives only 30.

Perhaps because of its beauty and remoteness, the Mattole watershed received a large influx of counter-cultural back-to-the-landers starting about 1968, thereby tripling the population to around 2000 people. David Simpson, formerly of the San Francisco Mime Troupe was among those coming to the Mattole to homestead. He arrived just in time for the last of the rich Salmon runs. After that the fish runs dwindled to the point where the salmon population of the Mattole was endangered due to erosion caused by logging, over-grazing, and too many poorly built roads. When I visited Simpson and his partner Jane Lapiner, he told me the story of the valley that led to the silting which changed the ecology of the watershed (Carr 1989).

In 1948, improved technology from second world war tanks adapted to forestry resulted in a rush for Mattole timber which formerly had been too remote and too difficult to log commercially. It was not till 1948 as well that electricity came to the Mattole. Then, in a 40 year period, 91% of the old growth coniferous forest was removed. A lot of the original logging was done by "wildcatters" from Oregon, but some valley people also participated. Heavy winter rains, steep terrain, and the logging led to very heavy erosion and flooding. In 1955, a flood washed away the riparian forest. Again in 1964 and 1965 floods and continued logging caused more soil erosion. The silting of the river filled up the pools and spawning areas. Simpson and I discussed the role civilization played in wasting soils, in particular the work of Edward Hyams on
the role of several civilizations in the Mediterranean in wasting soil and thereby undermining their basis of existence (see Hyams, 1976). As we spoke, Simpson remarked that, in the Mattole Valley, the process was much quicker: "In the Mattole, they rewrote the history of civilization in 40 years" (Carr 1989).

It was not until 1975, that the logging industry was required to replant. Early efforts to restore a silver Salmon run in Mill Creek were begun in 1975 by Simpson and a few others. They began to see Salmon as an indicator species for a healthy watershed. In 1979, a friend of Simpson's, Freeman House, moved into the valley to homestead. House had worked with the Planet Drum group and had known Peter Berg since 1967 in San Francisco. Simpson and House are now next-door neighbours in the Mattole valley. I spoke at length with House about his experience.

In the late sixties, House came to understand that - in Western culture - a whole range of experiences "had been removed from us"; basic life experiences such as childbirth, death, and food (Carr 1989). This realization led him to, as House put it, an attempt to experience "real food". He acquired a fishing boat in San Francisco to provide primary production for the "free food" systems of the diggers. He became a fisherman for many years working in Puget Sound and Alaska.

In 1973, he read Michael Perlman's energetics analysis of U.S. agriculture and then applied Perlman's methods to analyze his fishing operation. He was able to determine that in chasing salmon around the ocean he was using more energy measured in calories than was coming out of the catch. Moreover, House adds, the salmon return from the ocean to congregate at their home river's mouths when they are at the height of their strength and are most nutritious for eating. As a fisherman, House was easily able to relate these ecological considerations with an understanding that in the market system, the
fishermen were under the control of the canners who financed their boats and were therefore able to dictate prices to them. Huge commercial hatcheries had taken control of the industry with "little or no provision" made for the wild salmon populations or their spawning grounds and habitat. House was frustrated by this situation. As he saw it: "Efforts to assist the wild salmon population by improving natural spawning grounds are resisted by interests connected with construction contracts for new and enormously expensive hatcheries" (Carr 1989). All these considerations, and the emergence of bioregional ideas from the Planet Drum group, eventually moved House to change his life-plans. He gave up fishing and moved to the Mattole valley to engage in salmon enhancement and habitat restoration.

In 1979, the year House moved to the Mattole, Simpson, House and a small group of others began an effort, on a small "backyard" scale, to propagate salmon. They eventually formed the Mattole Salmon Group. After a year and a half of negotiations with the Department of Fish and Game, they received a permit to trap small numbers of Mattole salmon. The technology they used was extremely simple hatchbox systems which are "backyard incubators" always located near someone's home so they can be checked daily. The incubators run on gravity-fed creek water, involving no electricity. Later, the young Salmon fry are released into the wild after they've been given a chance to grow to the point where they are able to survive.

It was not long before the small group realized that to save the salmon run, they would have to restore the entire watershed. House reflects on the group's early experience:

---as soon as you get into salmonid enhancement, you recognize in a real concrete way the indicator species nature of the beast. And you realize that you can't restore natural systems by putting fish back into
water. All you're doing is building yourself into a permanent interfering
sort of relationship with natural systems. (Plant and Plant 1990, 103-112)

For the salmon trappers, restoring the watershed also meant recognizing
the need for a structure to hold themselves accountable to the whole
community. House comments that this is an example of how salmon inform and thereby help to organize human activity (Carr 1989).

For Simpson too, salmon restoration "prepared the way" for watershed
restoration. Simpson explained that within the human community in the Mattole valley it worked because everybody loved the salmon; ranchers, loggers, and homesteaders. And, as more women got involved with the "business" of salmon enhancement, Simpson recalled that the process became more celebrative and "suddenly you were dealing in culture, in how to live" (Carr 1989).

The small group of salmon enhancers grew and in 1983 they and a
number of local watershed groups formed the Mattole Restoration Council
(MRC). At the outset, the goals of the council were:

1) to improve the inhabitants knowledge of the watershed
2) to identify the most important restoration projects
3) to build a community of self-conscious restorationists (Sayen 1989).

The MRC is composed of several member groups including: the Mattole
Salmon Group, the Mattole Valley Community Center, Petrolia High School, the Sanctuary Forest, the Soil Bankers, several creek watershed associations, and a range of individual members. The MRC engages in salmon enhancement and monitoring, reforestation, inventory mapping, stream bank restoration, road removal and restoration, monitoring all timber harvest plans, interfacing with
government agencies and bureaus, and organizing cultural, educational, and social activities in the valley.

Here we see an example of one type of organization for community used by bioregionalists, the neighbourhood or village level where people already living in close proximity with each other are questioning their own existence and looking to build a basis of unity. In this case the "neighbourhood" (or district) scale is the local watershed of the Mattole River. A number of local "seed groups", the Mattole Salmon Group, the Soil Bankers, and the Sanctuary Forest group joined with other local organizations to form a watershed-wide council with an initial basis of unity. The small seed group of salmon enhancers had networked with others to further the interests of the watershed as a whole. Note that from the outset one key goal of the MRC was to "build a community of restorationists". From the outset then, this effort was not to be a merely functionalist approach to repairing a watershed, but rather a social experiment in cultural change. By one important measure (the network itself) social capital was in formation.

The M.R.C.'s first project was an inventory of salmonid habitat throughout the entire watershed. With the help of a local fisheries biologist, 20 valley people walked 260 miles of the Mattole and its tributaries to map salmon habitat. They were able to: locate impediments to salmon migration upstream, to determine the extent and condition of spawning habitat, and to begin addressing these problems. Anti-siltation efforts were launched; building log weirs, gravel beds, planting eroded shorelines, and landslides, stabilizing stream banks with small rocks and mortar, etc. The M.R.C. also began to take annual surveys of stream cross sections at numerous points on the Mattole and inventoried the main sources of sedimentation. The council sees their watershed as a geographical unit all residents can easily identify with, and take
responsibility for. They sought and received funding from both government and private sources. Soon, they were able to afford to pay some of their workers. They envisioned that restoration work could become a significant part of the local economy, especially in light of Humbolt county's then 25% unemployment rate. Note the potential in this situation for embedding economic activity within the work of community building and ecological restoration. This is an important strategic consideration for civil society theory.

Bioregional education is used in the Mattole to complement the work of restoration. Petrolia High School was founded in 1984 as an alternative school run by the valley people themselves. For ten years it was the only high school in the watershed. David Simpson served on the board. The students studied earth and life science and hands-on restoration work was a central part of their program. The staff were both teachers and activists. They led children on backpacking trips exploring the watershed. They also started a theatre group which toured other regional high schools, helping to educate those students about ecological restoration issues. In addition, they founded a dance group, the "Feet First Dancers" which engaged in cultural, educational performances. For Simpson, "the restoration of culture must go hand in hand with the restoration of natural systems" (Carr 1989). In this example too, cultural transformation is seen to be vitally necessary to the work of ecological restoration.

Today, Petrolia High no longer operates. However, the new high school run by the state has adopted many of the innovative programs launched by Petrolia High. The elementary school in the valley, a state run school, has also involved children in the salmon enhancement program.

Bioregional mapping is another tool used in the Mattole in conjunction with restoration and education. In 1988, the M.R.C. undertook an extensive
mapping project of the entire watershed to determine the exact locations of
remnant old growth stands. Using a combination of aerial photographs and the
efforts of some two hundred volunteers they completed the project and
produced a map which they then compared with a U.S. Forest Service map,
based on 1947 aerial photographs. They published both maps side by side.
They revealed the huge loss in old growth forest between 1947 and 1988 in
dramatic graphic form (see appendix 6). The maps were part of a broad public
education project in the Mattole valley aimed at watershed restoration. The two
Mattole maps were sent to all 2000 residents of the watershed. Since the maps
were published, a lot more valley people became involved in restoration work
and in the battle for the preservation of the remaining old-growth. Hundreds of
local people got into the work of restoration. Residents began to get to know
their own watershed more intimately through a "learn-by-doing" approach to
ecological restoration.

The project also provided local people with a political tool to face
decision-makers and a collective sense of empowerment. House comments on
this dynamic:

---politically, the watershed information gives you real ammunition to
deal with political entities: federal, state, and county. Often its simply a
matter of embarrassment - that you know more than they do. Sometimes
its more a technical matter of having reorganized the information into a
format that makes managerial sense. And none of the official entities
have yet bothered to do that. An awful lot of this information is emerging
through the grass-roots. There's an awful lot of old-growth mapping, like
we did, being done in various places. (Plant and Plant 1990, 104-112)

Putnam was able to show that greater levels of social capital facilitate
action. In the Mattole, as more people worked together on restoration their
power to achieve results grew, as the discussion in the following pages shows.
The campaign achieved an important victory, a manifestation of local empowerment. Illegal logging in the "Sanctuary Forest", 900 acres of unlogged Coast Redwood and Douglas-fir at the headwaters of the Mattole, was halted by a blockade of 150 local residents, including some from the M.R.C. The maps also enabled the M.R.C. to provide clear evidence, for loggers especially, why there was not much work left in the woods (Recall that no one was required to replant until 1975).

The MRC updated its old-growth map in 1997 from records of timber harvest plans since 1988. The map depicts which tracts of old-growth have been cut since 1988, which have been protected, and which are the subject of pending plans. One considerable success in this respect is the protection of old-growth forests since the first mapping project in 1988. The new mapping process helped the MRC to show that of the 9% of old-growth habitat identified in 1988, none of which was in protected status, 2/3 was now fully protected as a ecological reserve (House 1997b). The 1997 mapping project also helps to clarify current MRC strategic restoration goals which focus on identifying areas for priority protection based on: their condition as high quality habitat, or refugia; the presence or absence of salmon and steelhead; water quality; and, special features residents and landowners believe to be high priority areas for protection (Zuckerman 1997). In all, 3,700 acres of temperate rainforest habitat in the Mattole headwaters now have protected status. This includes seven salmon and steelhead tributary streams and all the old-growth forest in the headwaters (Freeman House, 6 Oct., 1998, telephone conversation). The "Sanctuary Forest" in the headwaters is home to the mountain lion, the black bear, and is a refugia for the endangered tailed frog, the northern goshawk, the torrent salamander and coho salmon.
Sanctuary Forest, a non-profit member group of the MRC, has steered the process of protecting the headwaters. Sanctuary Forest acts as a land trust, negotiating land purchases, sales, and trades, helping to establish conservation easements, and the acquisition of core area old-growth, wildlife corridors, and riparian habitat. They also engage in trail building to allow human participation in the reserve without compromising habitat. They run educational and recreational hiking programs, led by guides trained by Sanctuary Forest, in forest ecology, Mattole history, and tour guiding (Snodgrass 1996; Snodgrass and Morehead 1997).

The "Soil Bankers" (a.k.a. the Mattole Forest and Rangeland Cooperative), another member association of the MRC, planted 300,000 seedlings on contracts with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management since 1986 on the 60,000 acre King Range National Conservation Area that comprises 10% of the Mattole valley. They also planted thousands more with the MRC Reforestation Program and engaged in erosion control projects in the Mattole watersheds. Overall, the M.R.C. has been a valuable resource for the valley people, supplying information on gully-repair, re-vegetation, road-problems, and road building, and general advice on erosion problems. Several tributary groups of residents also formed in the creek watersheds to handle problems specific to their creeks. With hundreds now participating in the restoration work and new creek groups starting up, social capital was building up in the Mattole.

The M.R.C. envisions a practice whereby small forest enterprises produce soft and hardwood products while improving timber stands. This practice is integrated with the preservation of all remaining old growth stands, the provision of water quality as well as fish and wildlife habitat. Many residents there have come to see the crucial connection between preserving old growth and restoring salmon runs. House comments that restoration activity in the
Mattole taught participants the necessity for what he calls "preventative restoration" (House 1997b).

While much of the work of the MRC has been carried out by volunteers, the paid work of the council has also grown over the past 15 years. By 1995, the annual budget of the council was close to $350,000. Well over 90% of income was generated by contracts while less than 6% came from grants and donations (Dulas 1996). This suggests some potential for economic as well as ecological sustainability. Again, the economic activity is embedded in ecological and cultural restoration work.

We have seen that, for Simpson, restoration and preservation of natural systems cannot be achieved without deep cultural changes. House too has long regarded cultural change as a fundamental issue: "The most valuable thing we are doing is influencing a shift in cultural values" (Sayen, 1989). The work of the Mattole Salmon Group and the Mattole Watershed Council has had a definite effect on the valley's culture. House observes that, in the Mattole watershed, a certain cultural shift had already begun by the end of the 1980's. By then, many people in the valley had become familiar with the new language of restoration and had come to expect to hear it spoken. It was becoming part of their language (Carr 1989). Public education projects contributed to the shift in values: public education work with the valley's schools through ongoing theatre performances; the "Adopt-A-Watershed" program involving students in the work of salmon enhancement; and a video about restoration work in the Mattole. As well, the Mattole Salmon group began setting up hatchboxes in several local classrooms, for hands-on experience with salmon eggs and fingerlings (Dulas 1996).

The Mattole Valley Community Center, founded in 1976, is another part of the MRC. It holds many community events such as fund-raising cabarets,
activities for preschoolers, and is available to valley residents for very low rental rates. In addition to being rehabitants, Simpson and his spouse Jane Lapiner are experienced theatre people. They have collaborated in Mattole valley stage productions and a traveling theatre company that occasionally tours the west coast. They have produced theatre pieces such as "Queen Salmon" and "The Wolf at the Door", a musical comedy written by Simpson about the reintroduction of wolves into the wilds and poor disenfranchised people in the "wild" urban landscape (Dulas 1996).

The Mattole Salmon Group understood from the beginning that making a difference in a watershed as heavily impacted as the Mattole was going to be a project of decades, if not generations. Thus, they persisted with their efforts even when stocks of chinook and coho continued to decline for ten years after initiating their hatchbox program. Since the low ebb in 1990, however, stocks have started a slow comeback. The program of the Salmon Group and the entire MRC has since become a model for the Pacific Northwest for how to undertake restoration and management of resources of an entire watershed and how local residents can themselves run a multi-disciplinary, complex, and effective restoration program (Simpson 1994-5).

House sees restoration as a key means of communication and bonding through the common experience of sharing the work in the watershed:

One of the beauties of trying to develop a restoration ethic through a workforce is that working together provides people with a common experience and a lot of common experiential information. That allows a level of communication that I don't know how to get by any other means--I've found no more effective way of seeing these ideas arise in the hearts of more individuals than by this kind of shared work. (Plant and Plant 1990)
Working together in creek restoration groups provides "common experiential information". The watershed itself provides some of this common information. As well, working together, people get to know each other better. Such shared information is a key ingredient in building levels of trust. Common experiential information about each other and about the watershed - acquired while working together - enhances this effect. Information and trust levels build up. Moreover, working together over time provides other key ingredients of social capital; norms of cooperation and civic solidarity are developed. If this continues over time as it has in the Mattole, then the norms become established. A cultural shift is underway. Individuals can feel more empowered politically by an emerging cooperative culture. Consider the following.

In speaking about the relationship of cultural transformation to political transformation, House pointed out that centralized political structures today represent at least the past four to five hundred years of industrialism and its constructs, constructs which have come to live in us as individuals. This is to say, we have become dis-empowered to the extent that those internalized constructs control our thought and behaviour. Political power, House explained, sustains itself by being internalized deep in each person. Bioregionalism, he affirmed, gave him the tool to replace those structures, to chip away at his own conditioning (Carr 1989). The cultural shift to norms of cooperation and civic (or watershed) solidarity feeds the political empowerment of the emergent culture.

Discussing broad cultural and political change led to a consideration of cross-cultural political work and alliance building. House sees alliance-building as first and foremost the necessity to do "cross-cultural" work at home in the Mattole watershed. From his perspective, communicating with local ranchers, loggers, and farmers is a cross-cultural endeavour. For this reason, although
House himself is one of the earliest adherents of bioregionalism, he hasn't placed much emphasis on using the word "bioregionalism" in Mattole valley society: "'isms' just aren't useful. People can understand restoration work pretty readily - but, if you have to stop and explain bioregionalism, it can get in the way" (Zuckerman 1987). In 1991, the theme of cross-cultural alliance building (between the "counter-cultural" restorationists and the ranching community) in the Mattole took a more concrete form with the birth of the Mattole Watershed Alliance.

The Mattole Watershed Alliance brought together a valley-wide spectrum of the watershed's residents including; ranchers, timber interests, restorationists, large and small landowners, and the Bureau of Land Management, a major land manager in the watershed (House 1997b). Its broad interests coalesced around support for a variety of land uses, including healthy agriculture, livestock, forest, and fishery production, ranches, timberlands, and other large holdings, small homesteads, and the maintenance of open spaces, wildlife populations, and recreational opportunities. They agreed on a broad, loosely defined program of improving the overall natural health of the Mattole watershed including; salmon, timber regrowth, clean air and water, and minimizing controllable soil erosion (Stemler 1991).

The advent of this "cross-cultural" alliance, House recalled, brought the realization to MRC stalwarts how purely "counter-cultural" (i.e.; isolationist) their efforts had been up to that point. House explained this belated realization by the fact that, in the Mattole, the "counter-culture" made up a large majority of the total population. The founding meetings of the agenda committee were difficult with much "social venting" by ranchers, timber producers and others that the MRC had not yet communicated well with. These groups frankly let the restorationists know what they thought of the MRC "counter-cultural" agenda.
This negative example shows the importance of communication and information sharing in building trust. The venting process also gave House and the other restorationists the opportunity to convince others on the agenda committee that their MRC agenda was much more benign than some suspected. But also, ecological restoration in the context of the entire watershed had taught the restoration groups in the Mattole the necessity for sensitive land management as "preventative restoration" and that land management issues were at least as important as "technical restoration" (House 1997b). Finally, the different interests came together on the basis that working together to cooperatively plan land use was the only defense they had against being overrun by centralized regulation.

The alliance met monthly and was run by consensus process. At first, consensus process was so variously understood that they had to bring in consensus trainers from the outside. Yet, enough people from all sectors of the economic and social spectrum were willing to attend consensus workshops that, over a period of a year or two, consensus began to function. This meant that enough trust, information, and cooperative behaviour norms had built up within the alliance that people could begin to work together effectively. Social capital was being formed beyond the "counter-culture" in the Mattole. Increased levels of action became possible.

The alliance was then able to implement some unprecedented accomplishments. A recommendation to entirely close salmon sports fishing on the Mattole for a period of 5 years was made to the California Board of Forestry. Because the alliance was both broadly-based and united around the issue, the recommendation prevailed and a moratorium was implemented. For the first time, the Board made special rules for an individual watershed in California (House 1997b).
Commercial fishing was the next issue to be addressed by the alliance. A committee of the alliance negotiated with the commercial fishers (the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations) to lay off fishing during the critical month of October when the salmon congregated at the mouth of the Mattole. For House, this was a striking example of what could be accomplished by even a limited "sense of place", with alliance concerns being organized entirely around salmon. In House's view, it was "the salmon" that brought the old and new guard together in the Mattole (House 1997b).

At the same time, the MRC assisted the watershed alliance by supplying maps, mailing lists, and other information. Then, when the state of California cut funding for the Mattole Salmon Group (MSG) hatchbox program, the alliance successfully intervened to help restore the funding (Stemler 1991).

With respect to the effectiveness of the hatchbox program, the results are encouraging, but will require a longer trial for a full evaluation. In 1980, MSG fish counts indicated that 1000 King (or Chinook) salmon returned to the Mattole. However, the 1980s saw a seven year drought in the valley. Fish runs declined to a low of 200 in 1990. From 1991 to the winter of 1997-8, small yearly increases brought the count back up to 1000 (Freeman House 6 Oct., 1998, telephone conversation).

The Mattole Watershed Alliance functioned for a few years, but when the group tired to address much more contentious timber management issues, the bonds they had built were not enough to hold the alliance together in any real way. Two years were spent attempting to define what "old-growth forest" was. The alliance was unable to reach a consensus even on a definition. They did not share a large enough common information base, they did not trust each other enough. To-day the alliance no longer functions.
The failure of the MWA over timber management shows the limits of consensus process. Consensus decision-making process, in the sense used in this inquiry, requires a certain level of shared meaning, intent, and trust. In the MWA, consensus worked well as long as the deeply divisive issue of timber management was not on the table. Consensus does not work when peoples' true positions are quite opposed to each other.

However, the work of the MRC continues. The work of both the Mattole Salmon Group and the MRC has expanded considerably over the past 18 years. From a handful of dedicated restorationists in the late seventies to an active core of twenty or more with hundreds taking part in the work at various times, watershed consciousness has grown to the point where the language of restoration is becoming a new norm in the valley. Here, in the work and lives of a significant number of active participants is an example of watershed restoration wherein building a community of self-conscious restorationists is as important as restoring habitat. As noted by House and Simpson (above), cultural change toward stronger community bonds is underway in the Mattole. Moreover, for House, this shift in culture is informed by the "place", by the salmon and by the watershed. Or, in other words, this local restoration experience in the Mattole led by the MRC is an example of the generation and use of social capital informed by place (that is, eco-social capital). Moreover, among a significant percentage of the valley's residents, strong levels of common information and levels of trust through shared work and experience in ecological restoration, combined with emergent norms of cooperation and civic solidarity, provide evidence of the successful formation of social and eco-social capital in the Mattole.

A variety of tools have been used to assist this process. The actual shared work of watershed restoration was an important contributor to eco-social
capital formation in the Mattole. Another key tool used was bioregional mapping. Maps have been crucial in the effort to inspire an understanding of the Mattole watershed as a whole. Maps were also crucial in the work of public bioregional education, in shifting consciousness about salmon and other watershed issues in the Mattole. Bioregional education (in the form of: public theatre in the valley; local fund-raising cabarets; watershed tours; and the Mattole Restoration Newsletter) was another important tool for shifting consciousness. Sometimes these tools were used in combination such as the use of maps as a form of bioregional education about the watershed as a whole or the use of consensus process in alliance building work.

At a broader level, in Mattole valley civil society a small number of people have initiated changes which are affecting everyone in the valley. The attempts of these few initiators over two decades ago now has hundreds of participants involved in culture-shifting activities. A definite shift in perception has been effected in Mattole civil society more generally. Much of the population of the valley is at least discussing restoration in the context of the entire watershed. House reports that by 1990 there was a more or less universal understanding of "the watershed concept" on the part of the people who lived in the watershed as well as at the regulatory agency level (House 1997b).

At this broad civil society level within the Mattole, though, severe disagreements remain with respect to timber and land-use. However, even here some limited victories were achieved as we saw. Perhaps, the most important was the attempt by MRC activists to break out of their countercultural isolation by working in the broader, Mattole Watershed Alliance. For House, the experience of the watershed alliance was educational with respect to developing thought and strategies for "taking bioregionalism beyond the 'counter-culture'" by breaking out of the isolation from other sectors of civil
society (House 1997b). Even though this alliance was not successful enough
to weather the storm of timber management issues, it was an important attempt
at building horizontal bridges in civil society. From this example, an important
issue for strategic analysis can be drawn out for further reflection and theoretical
analysis. Over the time period of two decades, the use of consensus decision-
making proved effective in shifting the culture toward a greater degree of
horizontal cooperation and civic solidarity in Mattole civil society. Indeed, in
many aspects of watershed restoration, cooperation and civic solidarity are
becoming established as norms for a majority of people in the Mattole. While
the broad, valley-wide consensus sought was not achieved, the experience with
consensus process was instructive for restoration activists. I explore House's
strategic considerations about broader alliance building in chapter six for they
bear on what he and some other veteran bioregionalists consider to be the
central challenge of bioregionalism (House 1997b).

**Huehuecoyotl**

Huehuecoyotl, a community of Mexican bioregionalists, is located in a
part of Mexico rich in both biodiversity and indigenous and peasant cultural
traditions. This is a story of people who came together to form an intentional
community on a piece of land outside the small village of Amatlan. Amatlan is
one of seven outlying villages of the Municipality of Tepoztlan, a town of about
28,000 people, located 1 1/2 hours by car south of Mexico City. Tepoztlan and
its surrounding area are in the State of Morelos, one of 29 states of the United
States of Mexico (See map in Appendix A-7). Mexican bioregionalists call the
surrounding bioregion "Cuauhnahuac", which means close to the forest in
Nahuatl, one of the local indigenous languages (Kuri 1996).
Cuauhnahuac, for the most part, is a broad river valley of the Amacuzac River which flows between the Ajusco Mountains and the Sierra Madre Del Sur, the mountainous spine of the Mexican isthmus. Two types of forest are found in the bioregion, upland temperate coniferous forest and lowland tropical brush of the valley. Ecologically, the region is the critical meeting place of the biological zones of North and South America according to Salvador Aguilar, a geographer with Mexico's National Autonomous University (Weinberg 1996). It is a region of rich bio-diversity, with 90 mammal, 350 bird, 79 reptile, and 30 amphibian species. The bioregion of Cuauhnahuac, roughly co-terminus with the Amacuzac River watershed, is also co-terminus with the State of Morelos, a correspondence that some Mexican bioregionalists think makes it significantly easier for its inhabitants to accept the concept of bioregionalism wherein human boundaries and natural watershed boundaries coincide as being quite clear (Kuri 1996).

As noted, Cuauhnahuac in Nahuatl, the still extant language of the Tlahuicas and the Nahua peoples, means "close to the forest" (ibid). This refers to the fact that, in former times, much of the land was forested. Even to-day some forests remain in the Yautepec watershed, the local tributary of the Amacuzac River. Upland pine-oak woods still survive below the craggy, steep, sandstone foothills of the Ajuscos which divide this bioregion from Mexico City and the Federal District to the immediate north. Water is a problem here. It is in short supply. This is due, in part, to centuries of deforestation for the sugar plantations of the post-Spanish Conquest oligarchy which dominated Mexico before the revolution in 1910. It is also due to the contemporary deforestation carried on by the new oligarchy in Mexico City, who want luxury homes, corporate complexes, and golf courses outside the urbanized and heavily polluted Federal District (Weinberg 1996).
The Village of Amatlan is regarded by local people and more broadly in Mexico as the birthplace of "Quetzalcoatl" the feathered serpent god who "established" the Toltec empire (Weinberg, 1996). The region is rich in still extant local traditions. In Amatlan and Tepoztlan today, homeopathic medicine and traditional indigenous religion are practiced alongside Western therapies (Kuri 1996). Above the town of Tepoztlan atop one of the sandstone peaks a pyramid temple to "Tepozteco", god of the wind, overlooks the blueish hills of the valley. At times, the polluted air from Mexico City spills over the Ajuscos into the valley.

In addition to being the heartland of Quetzalcoatl, the State of Morelos was a heartland of the Mexican revolution of 1910. This is the region where Emiliano Zapata organized a peasant rebellion and army. The city of Cuernavaca, only 21 kilometres from Tepoztlan, was Zapata's center of operations. In this region, the spirit of Zapata still lives. Currently, wall posters of Zapata are widely scattered in Tepoztlan and Cuernavaca (personal observations, Nov. 17, 18, 24, 1996).

The spirit of defending the land against outside forces goes back well before the times of Zapata to at least the 16th century. The entire municipality of Tepoztlan is still comprised of communally owned lands which the Tepozteco Indians have defended for centuries. In the 16th century, King Philip II of Spain recognized these communal land rights dating back to the Aztec empire (Weinberg 1996). Encroachment of ranches and plantations onto Tepoztlan's legally recognized communal lands was met with rebel activity in the Liberal Revolution against Santa Ana in the 1850's and again in the Zapata peasant insurrection of 1910. In 1929, Tepoztlan's communal lands were officially recognized in the new post-revolution constitution. In 1937 President Lazaro Cardenas declared "Tepozteco National Park", an area which included the
Tepozteco pyramid and its environs. In 1988, El Tepozteco and Lagunas de Zempoala National Parks were linked by the "Ajusco-Chichinautzin Ecological Corridor", transversing the Ajusco range connecting South to North and affording another layer of protection to many of Tepoztlan's forested communal lands (Weinberg 1996). Here in this heartland of Zapata and of Quetzalcoatl, a community of wandering, free-spirited Mexican cultural workers decided to go back to the land to live in an intentional community.

A brief discussion of social capital in Mexico is necessary here before proceeding with the narrative on Huehuecoyotl. Mexico's indigenous population is the largest in the hemisphere. It includes over 10 million people in officially-recognized ethno-linguistic groups (Fox 1996). Moreover, in much of indigenous Mexico, levels of social capital are reported to be very high:

When ones looks closely at the village level --- social capital is widespread. In much of indigenous Mexico, communities have reproduced long-standing traditions of horizontal cooperation, reciprocity, and self-help. Thousands of villages make community decisions about resource allocation and justice by consensus, and they maintain powerful norms of accountability between leaders and community members. There are increasing religious and class cleavages within many communities, but the overall degree of horizontal organization and norms of reciprocity in indigenous Mexico is quite remarkable. (Fox 1996)

With its strong horizontal traditions of communal land ownership, village cooperation, its extant indigenous languages, and its peasant revolutions, the Cuauhnahuac bioregion is no exception. In contrast to the other narratives in this chapter, the story of Huehuecoyotl takes place in the context of a society with relatively high levels of social capital.

The story of how the Huehuecoyotl bioregional community came to be formed has its immediate roots in the late 1960's in Mexico. The story, which begins with a group of people that eventually settled down in intentional
community in the Tepozteco hills of the Cuauhnahuac bioregion of Mexico, is perhaps best illustrated through Alberto Ruz Buenfil's story. He has been a key figure in Mexican bioregionalism. Ruz was involved with a group of his friends in the 1968 university student movement in Mexico City. Ruz was the son of a well respected archaeologist who supported Castro's overthrow of Batista. As an archaeologist, the elder Ruz had excavated the pyramid-tomb of the ancient Mayan City of Palenque in the state of Chiapas.

The younger Ruz and his "companeros" were part of the libertarian movement of the sixties that was already searching for a different way of life. On October the second 1968, a student revolt at the Plaza de Las Tres Culturas of Tlateloco was put down by armed might and a massacre ensued. This massacre contributed to an awakening of Mexicans to state brutality on the one hand, and to an increased awareness of the need for peoples power on the other (Sanchez Navarro 1989).

As a result of these struggles and the search for an alternative, Ruz joined an intentional community, his first attempt to actually live in an alternative way. Too often, as a student and "left" activist he had observed people espousing different political and social goals without trying to bring these ideals into daily life (Ruz 1988). He lived in this community for one year before getting together with some others in a group which began to travel around the world, visiting many different countries and cultures. At first, they named their group "Cows". Later, after spending one year in India, they renamed themselves "The Illuminated Elephants Traveling Theatre Ashram". In effect, the group was a traveling intentional community of self-proclaimed gypsy artists from eight different nationalities (Ciarlo 1998). They performed traditional songs of many different cultures. Drama, myth, music, ritual, and ceremony were combined in their wandering theatre performances. The community also engaged in
investigating local traditional musical instruments, playing these instruments and showing local people how to make them and play them. For ten years they traveled the world with these performances (Alberto Ruz, 26 August, 1990, personal communication; Lloyd 1989).

In 1981, they decided to settle down in Mexico dreaming of "creating a village". At this time, the group met with another group, some Italian "revolutionary youth" of the 1970s who had formed "a lose form of community and a strong sense of bonding" among their members (Ciarlo 1998). The two groups became friendly and then united to "create a village that would apply the principles of art, ecology, spirituality and social justice" in an common effort to live sustainably (1998).

They chose a canyon in the Ajusco Mountains, about 1 1/2 hours drive from Mexico City, up against the mountains of Tepozteco National Park in the heart of Nahuatl speaking peoples traditional territory. The parcel of land they chose was small, less than 10 acres. It was owned in common by a traditional indigenous village. However, deeds with rights to use the land could be held and sold by individuals. The newly formed group bought the deed in the name of one of their Mexican members. It was at this time too that they changed their name from "The Illuminated Elephants" to "Huehucoyotl", after the Nahuatl name for the place. Huehucoyotl means old, old coyote (1998).

For three years they lived in the canyon without any external power or energy supply, burning oil lamps for light. They built themselves a road in from the highway, and over time they constructed a comfortable place in which to live. At the bottom of the canyon the land spreads out in front of their place. Here, at first, they attempted to grow much of their own food. The climate in the Anahauac bioregion has an extended eight month dry season, so they built a small dam and cisterns underneath all the houses, as a water catchment
system. Initially, their storage capacity was not enough to furnish water over the entire eight months, so they had to import water by truck when their local water ran out (Lloyd 1989).

Designing and building their village was implemented through a "learn-by-doing" approach. One of the community members was also an architecture student at the Mexican National University. He involved some of his classmates and professors, as well as other members of Huehuecoyotl, in a project for the collective design of an "ecologically centered" village community on their land. They selected spaces for cisterns, houses, workshops, a theatre, a community kitchen, and a large open space which they lined with fruit trees and gardens. With minimum resources they built their village. In the process, they learned about adobe making and building, ferro-cement construction, water capturing and filter systems, organic gardening, road construction, and roofing with various materials (Ciarlo 1998).

The community operated by consensus and by dividing into several affinity groups. In all there were about 25 people in the community. In addition to growing food, affinity groups began a beekeeping operation, a pasta-making business, and a carpentry shop. The beekeeping operation functioned for about 5 years when the group lost their bees to a wild African variety. Also, the pasta business did not do well. Eventually, it was sold to someone outside the community (Andres King Cobos 25 August 1998, personal communication).

Soon they found they were much better at cultural healing and performance, the work they'd been doing together for ten years, than they were at beekeeping or gardening so they began to barter their skills with local villagers, exchanging their skills at performance, communications, and instrument making with the skills of local people at growing food and constructing houses from local materials. In this way, they learned new skills
and, at least as importantly, they became more involved in local community projects. Huehuecoyotl people helped set up a woman's clothing co-operative in the village, bringing together and utilizing the skills of women from villages around the region (ibid). This was the beginning of building ongoing communications, economic, and cultural linkages with local people. This work was then extended to the two nearest villages and the town of Tepoztlan, building familiarity, trust, economic exchange, and norms of cooperation with local people and organizations. Here we see an intentional land-based community with many years of common experience living cooperatively and consensually together now reaching out to build horizontal linkages of familiarity, trust, and cooperation with other people in local civil society.

One affinity group of four, two couples, continued the performance work of the "Illuminated Elephants", traveling around Mexico, Central America, and the United States. Another affinity group founded an elementary ecological school in Tepoztlan. Within a relatively short space of time a location was found, the school was built, and community people began to teach there. From the beginning the curriculum combined learning to grow their own food with learning a diversity of spiritual understandings and practices. The school itself also engaged in outreach work to other schools. In 1989, the children at the ecological school went to all the other schools in Tepoztlan and invited them to go on a march "for the animals". Over four hundred children participated in the march all over town in support of the animals and the environment. This was apparently the first such children's demonstration ever held in Mexico (Lloyd 1989). It is another example of success at building horizontal linkages in civil society, this time undertaken by the children themselves. It also illustrates the potential for work by a small group of individuals (the affinity group) to be effectively leveraged in the context of relatively high levels of social capital.
Another group began building a cultural centre/theatre at Huehuecoyotl. A stage was built first and then pillars erected for the roof, but the project stalled for lack of money. Eventually, after several years, the centre was built. It is now used as a site of cultural work. Artistic events, theatre, dance, music, and plastic arts workshops are held at the centre. It is also available for other groups to hold conferences, workshops, and retreats. In addition, a carpentry shop produces musical instruments which are marketed in several places in Mexico and the United States at fairs, shops, and by mail. This business remains small scale and controlled by the instrument-makers (Andres King Cobos, 15 Oct., 1998, personal communication).

Several members are also busy writing books on the connections of spirituality to bioregionalism. Ruz has translated some of the works of Bill Devall, Peter Berg, and David Haenke into Spanish and these have been circulated in the Mexican ecology movement. In 1989, Ruz edited and published a book entitled "Rainbow: A Nation without Borders", a collection from different authors around the world with personal stories and tales of their own "rainbow" organizations, of which more later. In addition to this, Huehuecoyotl has also produced a sporadic journal, "El Viejo Coyote", which "has drawn on everything from 1960's LSD-guru Timothy Leary to the philosophy of the French Situationists" (Weinberg 1989). Ruz and Huehuecoyotl have also had their input into the "left" in Mexico, in part through producing several editions of "El Gallo Illustrado", a weekly insert of the left-leaning daily El Dia, exploring ecology and alternative community. In 1985, Huehuecoyotl was among the groups participating in publishing a monthly called "Arcoredes", or Rainbow Network, an ecology oriented journal (Weinberg 1989).

Though they are involved in print and electronic forms of communication and networking, Ruz and the Huehuecoyotl community place more emphasis
on direct face to face communication. They visit other places often, experience
other people in their places and, in turn, encourage others to visit their
community at Huehuecoyotl. This, they have emphasized, is the way to build
both personal and group commitment, interlinking different communities
through more intense levels of mutual commitment (Alberto Ruz, August 26,
1990, personal communication). Recently, Ruz and some others have been
involved with several more ambitious itinerant projects, or "caravans" traveling
to Central and South America for face-to-face networking and solidarity-building
with indigenous, ecological, and political groups. This direct "face-to face"
networking has been an important part of his community's strategy to spread
bioregional ideas and build the bioregional movement in Mexico.

In the period after Huehuecoyotl established itself in the Morelos
Mountains, the ecological movement has burgeoned in Mexico. In 1984, there
were some fifteen to twenty groups and associations working independently.
By 1988, those numbers had grown rapidly to between two hundred to three
hundred throughout the country. The earthquake in Mexico City in 1985
actually contributed to the growth of local citizens efforts and organizations. The
ecological crisis, especially in Mexico City, had grown to such proportions that
the government and state organizations were incapable of helping people at
the local level, devastated by the earthquake’s damage. The people began to
realize that only they themselves could really do anything to address the crisis.
Ruz observed that this situation spurred an awakening of ecological and social
consciousness (Ruz 1988).

In 1987, three organizations; Huehuecoyotl, Sobrevivencia, and Grupo
de Estudios Ambientales (Environmental Study Group), organized a seminar on
deep ecology, inviting John Milton, Bill Devall, Peter Berg, and David Haenke to
speak. Two to three hundred people from the ecology movement in Mexico
participated in conference workshops and seminars. It was out of the work of this conference that Ruz translated bioregional and deep ecology works into Spanish. In 1988, three groups from Mexico were represented at the third North American Bioregional Congress: "Sobrevivencia", "Huehuecoyotl", and "Red Alternativa de Ecomunicacion". People at Huehuecoyotl have also worked with Charlene Spretnak, Arne Naess and Murray Bookchin (Alberto Ruz, 26 August, 1990, personal communication).

The spiritual understanding of the Huehuecoyotl community is the root of their activity. One illustration of this is their energy and commitment to help reclaim and/or strengthen indigenous Mexican spiritual traditions. Several members of Huehuecoyotl took part in a journey to a southern bioregion of Mexico in March of 1989. The purpose of the journey was to reopen several Mayan ceremonial centres. The Mexican government, while trying to preserve them as tourist attractions, had forbidden their use as ceremonial centres. The journey began in Palenque on the 12th of March, with about 200 people, proceeded to the sacred centre of Chichen Itza for the spring equinox, where over 40,000 people from all over the planet participated (Lloyd 1989). This strong emphasis on working with various indigenous groups and traditions has marked Mexican bioregionalism (see below and also chapter six).

For Ruz and for Huehuecoyotl, the effort to reclaim and revive older traditional ways of life is complemented by the search to birth new spiritual practices and understanding. In his message of greetings from the Anahuac Bioregion in Mexico to the continental bioregional gathering in 1988, Ruz spoke of the currently awakened consciousness of Mexican people manifesting itself through "a movement that is ecological and bioregional, spiritual and political" (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 46-47). Ruz emphasized the re-emergence of traditional indigenous consciousness such as the Mayans, the Aztecs, the
Toltecs, and the Olmecs in new forms within the alternative movement in Mexico (ibid). For Ruz, both the re-birth of the old and the birth of the new are one and the same, a phenomenon of a "new age" that is rooted in the past. Quetzalcoatl, the "Feathered Serpent of the Rainbow", symbolizes the voice of the emerging age, a rainbow of diversity, many colours, one symbol. Ruz points out that this symbolism is simultaneously spiritual and political, recognizing unity and diversity, the old and the new, all in one. It can be viewed both cosmologically and ecologically. When I spoke to Ruz at NABC III, he emphasized the main reason he was at the congress was to search for and learn ways to deal with our differences so we can all work for a society that is a society of equals in which we learn also to respect the differences. This, he affirms, is "the spirit of the rainbow", each colour band is entirely unique, yet all colours are part of an integrated whole (Ruz 1988).

Diversity in cultural tradition and spiritual belief for the community at Huehuecoyotl is unified and grounded by their connection to the bioregion through their work with local traditions, their networking with other local groups and their popular educational work on local ecological and cultural issues. The ecological school noted above is just one example. Other examples follow.

In the nineties, working with other local groups and individuals, people from Huehuecoyotl built a local and regional network of groups that work together in their local communities in various ways. Laura Kuri and Fabio Manzini have worked closely with people from Huehuecoyotl and with other local groups. Kuri became acquainted with bioregional thought and practice in 1988 when she attended the third North American continental congress that year. Kuri began local cultural, educational and networking activity in the Cuauhnahuac bioregion in 1990. She describes their work in the nineties:
...I started really doing it since 1990 with one group, the most 'activist' group of the bioregion, "Espacio Verde" [Green Space] ... we know and we've been working not only with ecological groups, we've been working with social groups, with women, with political parties, with other political groups, with the schools, with the university [of Cuernavaca]. ... So, for the last 6 years, we've been making a very big network with all these organizations that work here. (Kuri 1996)

For Kuri, one of the most important projects they worked on was with was a group of poor women who were able to start a local recycling centre:

...one of the most important groups, the most important work that we've been doing is that we support this group of women that are very poor. Some of them don't know how to write or read, but they have a lot of heart and they have a lot of sensibility, so we've been working with them. They became a very strong group and they have already started a recycling centre ... and they go to schools to work on recycling. (1996)

Another locally important group they worked with was "Luna Nueva" (New Moon). This is a women's group in Tepoztlan. Luna Nueva works on issues of health, nutrition, community development, and environmental education. In their education workshops, Kuri works with them to host workshop series about bioregionalism, using maps of the bioregion as a way to learn about their local ecological and human community. Kuri and her co-networkers also work with and support local traditional medicine and healing groups (1996).

Kuri puts a lot of emphasis on the strength of local traditions in the region:

The people that live in this area are native people, but also people from everywhere else that have come here. So, its another 'border' [in the ecological sense of species-rich edge communities] and its very rich in tradition. Still very rich in tradition, in this area we haven't lost tradition. So that's something that we have that's very beautiful, no? And its very close to bioregionalismo. (1996)
This is an important observation of Kuri because it makes the connection between bioregional philosophy and older, indigenous Mexican traditions of living with the land. As discussed above, this region has long traditions of indigenous communal use of the land, and even the current political borders correspond to the biogeographical borders of the Cuauhnahuac bioregion. In such a context, the vision of bioregionalism is merely commonsensical for local people.

The intense bioregional education work with local groups integrates health, environmental, and community development issues with local traditional knowledge and modern ecological knowledge. From a social capital perspective, this outreach practice builds stronger social relations with local people, building trust, norms of cooperation and civic solidarity, as well as actual horizontal networks between the diverse groups. This "grass-roots" community involvement provides the space for Mexican bioregionalists to educate the community in Tepoztlan and its region about bioregional ideas. In this education process, knowledge flows both ways. For example, others from Huehuecoyotl, such as Andres King Cobos, are also working closely with local traditional healers, learning medicinal herbs, healing techniques, and traditional ceremonial and ritual practice from local elders (Andres King Cobos, 25 August, 1998, personal communication). This close two-way education process is illustrative of Mexican bioregionalism which has included and integrated traditional indigenous groups and knowledge from its inception in 1990 (see chapter six for a description and discussion of the Mexican bioregional network). Again, the hands-on bioregional approach to education through common experiential learning facilitates the building of trust, and norms of cooperation and solidarity, key ingredients of social capital.
One important form of public education work Kuri speaks about is the "Fiestas" (parties) they periodically help to organize in the "barrios" (neighbourhood districts). These "fiestas" employ street theatre, mime, clown shows, music and drumming to illustrate ecological themes in popular form. For example, they work with "another movement called 'la Fiesta de la Planta Medicinale'. This means Earth Medicine Party. This is another fiesta we have every year, and its for healing mostly, but now its ecology and healing" (Kuri 1996). Other local organizations they have worked with include organic growers and alternative energy-use and solar power groups.

Finally, Kuri spoke about the importance of the socio-political support work:

We work with all the social movements that we have here in this bioregion. We do a lot of political work. Support for social problems, no? and we also work in supporting political problems, such as the problem that Tepoztlan has now. "Espacio Verde", the group in which I work, was one of the principle groups supporting that movement. So, that's when we mixed up [integrated] the ecology and the social movement work. (1996)

The "political problem" Kuri refers to is the struggle of the people of Tepoztlan against a giant golf course-entertainment development complex planned for the municipality which was defeated when the townspeople rejected it overwhelmingly. In the process of the struggle against the golf course, the town's citizens occupied the town hall. The mayor, a supporter of the federal ruling party and the golf course, fled to Cuernavaca and the citizens began to govern themselves, declaring their town a "Municipio Libre Constitutional" or Constitutional Free Municipality (which they have a right to do under the constitution of the United States of Mexico). The townspeople immediately set up committees of citizens to implement their political action in
the barrios and the political, municipality-wide Tepoztlan Committee of Unity (Wienberg 1996). For this dramatic act of civic solidarity to be possible, previously high levels of social capital were a pre-requisite. From the perspective of social capital, it is clear that the local bioregional back-to-the-land community was working in a much more favourable environment than their counterparts in the Mattole.

The educational, cultural, social, and political support demonstrated by the local network of bioregional and alternative groups for the political struggles of the townspeople against unjust and environmentally destructive development was returned when over 40 local leaders and elders of the Tepoztlan Committee of Unity, plus more than 150 local schoolchildren from 15 schools in the municipal district attended the week-long continental bioregional gathering held in Tepoztlan in 1996. The elders and town leaders took full part in the weeks deliberations (see chapter six).

While the local bioregionalists and other alternative network groups in the region cannot claim credit for an important historical development such as the liberation of Tepoztlan, it is clear that their work in support of local and democratic civil society, and in building horizontal networks and norms of cooperation and civic solidarity with local peoples has contributed to advancing local understanding of the concept and practice of bioregionalism. For a relatively small number of people they have done a lot of work in the neighbourhoods, the "barrios", and among the townspeople and local villagers to raise local consciousness about ecology and Mexican bioregionalism. And, at least as importantly, they have created strong bonds of mutual respect, trust, and helped to strengthen already strong norms of horizontal cooperation in a region with a long history of autonomous cooperative action and social revolution. In such contexts, as Putnam has shown, efforts at effective local and
regional action are leveraged by the relatively high extant levels of social capital, themselves a heritage of historical levels of social capital.

The intentional community at Huehuecoyotl, in spite of these intense horizontal outreach efforts in their own local Tepoztlan context, in their Mexico-wide face-to-face networking campaign, etc., have kept developing their own intentional "village" community on their small piece of land. Ciarlo reports that after sixteen years most of their original members remain. This is testimony to the existence of strong bonds of community developed over time. In addition, there are several children born on the land and a handful of new members have joined. Members of Huehuecoyotl have once again re-named their community. It is now the "Ecoaldea Huehuecoyotl" or Huehuecoyotl Eco-Village. With their hard-won experience at building their own intentional community of place, they now host permaculture workshops, earth festivals, ecotours, and bioregional gatherings at their eco-village to share their experience with a broader circle of people. In addition, Huehuecoyotl members played a key role on the steering council and site committee that organized the continental bioregional gathering in Tepoztlan in 1996. Huehuecoyotl has also joined another new network, the Ecovillage Network of the Americas, where Ciarlo works as a member of the Steering Committee (Ciarlo 1998).

The Yalakom River Community

The story of the Yalakom River community in Southwestern British Columbia, Canada is one with which I have been personally involved for 18 years. Over much of this period, I have visited and/or lived for short stays with several different households among them and in the nearby town of Lillooet. For several years, I was also a member of a co-operative house in Vancouver
which served as an urban base for "Camelsfoot", an intentional community within the larger Yalakom River community that took on an instrumental role in spreading bioregional ideas in the valley and beyond. This house, which we called the "Clark House", was also for several years the Vancouver base for the larger community of back-to-the-landers in the Yalakom watershed. During the years I lived at Clark House from 1981 to 1985, individuals or groups from Camelsfoot and the larger Yalakom community would suddenly show up at Clark House for a city visit, or en route to visit relatives elsewhere in the world, and later, to attend green, or bioregional gatherings in far-off places. Each visit, whether it was people coming from the valley or me going to the Yalakom, was usually an occasion for general philosophical discussion about the political or ecological state of the world, the back-to-the-land movement, culture and place, local gossip and, in the case of the people from Camelsfoot, a certain method of inquiry they were developing based, in part, on the work of John Dewey. Whenever, they came, some of the country came with them. One summer we even had goats from the valley boarding at Clark House and a small home salmon canning operation.

Philosophy, for the people from Camelsfoot, was not a casual activity. It was a daily practice; one which they said must grow out of the issues of everyday life and return to these issues to test and validate the concepts they were developing as part of a transactional philosophy of continual "inquiry", inquiry into our habits, our customs, and our lived experience. I partook in many of these discussions over a 4-5 year period. I came to understand that this method of "inquiry" was being developed by the people at Camelsfoot so that individuals from our fragmented, "free enterprise", monocultural society, broken off from communal ways of living in extended families, could actually learn to function again as co-operative members of a community, could begin to practice
truly thinking together and living in what Camelsfoot people often referred to as "adaptive groups". In fact, in the Camelsfoot community there was an ongoing discussion about culture as adaptive behaviour and a general understanding, well grounded in anthropological readings, that humans have lived this way for most of our time on the planet.

A good part of these ongoing discussions was focused on the importance of developing a "common story" together. There was a growing understanding that, if people could learn to think together and to live cooperatively together in community, then weaving a common story out of the separate threads of individual lives was essential. Story was seen as a common thread that was actually lived out or enacted together as a community. In this way, stories were not only tales that were told, but more importantly, stories were tales that were lived. Camelsfoot people often spoke of "having the story together". For them, this was key to the initiation of a process of building a new, cooperative culture. If people could have their story together through a process of inquiry that included learning-by-doing, old individualistic habits could be transformed into new norms of cooperation, mutual aid, and communal living. Camelsfoot members recognized this would not be easy. They believed that it would take a minimum of three generations to truly establish cooperative cultural norms in an intentional community or a society.

The intentional community at Camelsfoot began in the mid-seventies out of a discussion group, originally a circle of friends in North Vancouver. Some of these people were students of Fred Brown, Communications Department chair and professor for a short while at Simon Fraser University. Philosophically, Brown had been strongly influenced by the thought of George Mead and John Dewey with its emphasis on inquiry as "learning by doing". Fred took Dewey's concept of social inquiry and gave it a context. For Brown, social inquiry was
best carried on by an inquiry group, one that lived and inquired together in a
domestic setting. In this, Brown placed a central importance on the concept of
"home". Before teaching at S.F.U., Brown had been head of the Philosophy
Department at the University of Havana, in the mid-sixties. During this time,
Brown had come to know Fidel Castro personally and on occasion carried on
philosophical and political discussions with the Cuban leader. Earlier, Brown
had been, among other things, a night watchman at a nuclear reactor at the
University of Chicago, a cowboy, a mountain guide, and a teacher in a Native
village in northern British Columbia. He was perhaps an ideal person to lead a
group of people into the mountains of southern British Columbia to build an
intentional community.

Glen Makepeace, another member of the Camelsfoot community, has
written that it was Brown's philosophy of community that drew people to him. In
a memorium for Fred, Glen recalled that Fred used to say that the central
question in philosophy was "how shall we live"? (NABC III Proceedings 1989,
22-23). For Makepeace the essence of Brown's philosophy was "We once lived
in communities. We lost them. And now we need to rebuild them if we're going
to survive" (ibid). Brown also believed that in order to regenerate sustainable,
locally adapted communities we need to look at the original sustainable
communities "not because we're trying to rebuild past cultures and communites,
but because we can learn from them" (ibid).

In the mid 1970's, after a considerable time spent discussing culture,
community, philosophy and a method of inquiry while still at Simon Fraser, the
group moved out of the university, out of the city, and became the catalyst of the
back to the land, intentional community movement in the Yalakom valley.

The Yalakom River flows out of the coastal mountains east into the
Bridge River which flows into the Fraser River just north of the town of Lillooet.
The Yalakom is also known as the north fork of the Bridge River (see map in appendix A-8). It's a rugged, mountainous terrain with a dry interior climate, cold in winter, and hot, sometimes very hot in summer. It is ponderosa pine and big sagebrush country in the lower elevations, with interior Douglas Fir, Montane Spruce, and Engleman Spruce-subalpine Fir and Alpine Tundra biogeoclimatic zones at higher elevations. The terrain is inhabited by mountain goats, bighorn sheep, beaver, deer, moose, grizzly bears, and cougars. It is wild country. In 1977, a few groups and some individuals scattered among the mountains began the work of community building in the Yalakom River valley "with little more in common than a love of good food and a love of the land" (The Catalyst 1983).

In those early days, food was a force for community. The people in the valley bulk ordered whatever food they were unable to grow through Fed-Up Co-operative Wholesalers in East-end Vancouver. The semi-annual load from the co-op was always the occasion for a social and musical get together of the people. Over the years, a lasting interest developed in making music together. Music nights thus developed into a custom among the valley people. Making music together, combining bulk food orders, social gatherings and celebration, construction bees, along with lots of gossip and philosophy all contributed to the creation of a strong sense of community and an emerging new identity as the Yalakom community, but it was only the beginning of a process that was envisioned to require generations to establish as a social norm.

In addition to building their own housing and independent energy systems, various groups and individuals in the valley grew vegetables, raised chickens and goats, pigs, horses, or cows. Some began cultivating fruit and nut trees. Susan Brown, wife of Fred Brown, and others began to develop a permaculture garden and to spread ideas about permaculture in the valley.
Some picked wild berries in season as well as apricots in the town of Lillooet with a little co-operation from property-owners uninterested in the harvest. Another form of income came from knapweed picking. This work was paid by the provincial Ministry of Forests in an agreement reached with the community as an alternative to the Ministry plan of spraying the knapweed with Tordon. Trade, mostly in the form of barter, and friendships developed with some local Native people. An ideal, simple, and relatively peaceful life in the mountains seemed assured.

Then in 1981, B.C. Hydro, a provincial public utility, announced plans to develop yet another megaproject to produce power. The project was to be a $2.5 Billion coal-fired thermo-electric power plant, a smoke-belching behemoth at Hat Creek, just over the hill from the Yalakom River valley. Initially, it was the food co-op organization which enabled people in the Yalakom to arouse the collective consciousness to attempt "to block Bonner's death wish for the earth", as a mimeoed leaflet of the time referred to the project. Robert Bonner was then chairman of B.C. Hydro, a public power utility. Bonner was also an executive member of the powerful Rockerfeller organized Trilateral Commission, whose activities have contributed so much to build the new global economic order through, among other things, many megaprojects designed to fuel "free" trade and the global corporate economy (Sklar 1980).

This unpopular B.C. Hydro megaproject was the immediate, potentially catastrophic threat to the region that stimulated the first "Hat Creek Survival Gathering". The threat went far beyond the Yalakom and the local community there. Salmon runs in the much larger Thompson-Fraser watershed would also be threatened. Some Yalakom people constructed a B.C. Hydro float that satirized the megaproject, BC Hydro, and its Trilateral commission connections. The float traveled to parades and marches around the province with the
message "Stop Hat Creek." Support groups sprang up, including a committee in Vancouver, the Hat Creek Action Committee, in which I participated. I still have an old, tattered "Stop Hat Creek" T-shirt from those days made by two members of the Action Committee. The following year a professional theatre company, the Caravan Stage Company, put on a road show that toured the province with a very entertaining, cuttingly satirical play that exposed the social and ecological problems the megaproject would give rise to as well as B.C. Hydro's Trilateral Commission connections. The play thus became a very powerful symbolic representation of the globalization of Western monoculture and its political economic system. This traveling road show acted to catalyze local opposition to the Hat Creek megaproject throughout southern BC.

The Yalakom opposition, in the meantime, were developing some theatre of their own. A papier-mache three-headed "Hydra", representing acid rain, massive public debt, and a destructive BC Hydro bureaucracy helped focus more parades and demonstrations on the effects of the megaproject. Opposition to Hydro's plan grew more widespread and the focus broadened. It included opposition to all of Hydros' megaprojects and to the policy of unsustainable growth manifested in the megaprojects. Even as early as the 1982 Survival Gathering, the call went out from the gathering for "the creation of a cohesive alternative --- the power of a new vision --- the change from a technological society to an ecological society", as a leaflet for the gathering expressed it. Not long after this gathering, B.C. Hydro put their plan for the Hat Creek megaproject on the shelf. However, by this time the character of the opposition to BC Hydro at the Survival Gatherings had begun to take on a much larger critique, refocussing on the unsustainable Western model of civilization itself.
Also by 1983, bioregional literature had begun to influence the people at the Camelsfoot community. Peter Berg visited Clark House that year, meeting with people from "the Foot", as we fondly called it. An extended exchange of views took place with Berg around key issues such as the nature and meaning of human community and the question of how to go about building community, and how to develop the kinds of extended community bonding that seem so peripheral to modern society. I remember the high spirit of that discussion which I believe helped very much to enrich the thinking of those of us involved in this encounter which went on for many hours. It was the beginning of a process in which Camelsfoot thought on community and social inquiry encountered bioregional thought about place and community.

That year too, the first of three issues of a self-published journal, "The Catalyst", about the philosophy of the Yalakom community came out. Reflecting the influence of bioregional thought in the valley, it was entitled "Reinhabiting B.C." (The Catalyst 1983). This publication, originally the newspaper for the food co-op distributor, also became for three of its issues, the vehicle for the people of the Yalakom community to disseminate their philosophy, their politics, and their poetry along with their regular food co-op business and catalogues. These issues contained poetry, book reviews (one of which was on Mumford's "The Pentagon of Power"), a column called "Land Based Struggles", articles on reinhabiting and two articles on, as Yalakom people would call it, "our story".

The Catalyst was the beginning of bioregional publishing in the Yalakom watershed and British Columbia (and even Canada for that matter).

In 1986 a publishing group, formed out of the Catalyst experience, founded "The New Catalyst", also a bioregional publication. The New Catalyst, much broader in scope, addressed issues all across the province and beyond. At first the New Catalyst, like the old, was produced by community members in
the Yalakom valley. This continued for four years until production of the New Catalyst moved to Gabriola Island with Chris and Judy Plant. Some valley people, missing the truly local character of the old Catalyst, began, in 1988, to publish "The Yalakom Review". The Yalakom Review retained the local character of the old Catalyst.

In 1984, a number of people in the Yalakom watershed became involved in the B.C. Green Party which itself had formed in 1983. Not surprisingly, given their emphasis on philosophy, they became involved in party philosophy and policy deliberations and in the party education policy committee. They played a strong role in helping to formulate early B.C. Green Party policy, philosophy, and values. They began from the bioregional premise that, as The Catalyst put it, "an ecological society is impossible without starting with a responsibility to one's own community and place, and a respect for the community and place of others" (The Catalyst 1985, 19).

In education, flowing from the understanding evolved at Camelsfoot that the communal experience must encompass at least three generations to constitute a truly transformed society with norms of mutual aid, they put forward a philosophy of education in the following terms as:

an evolutionary process which allows humans to modify behaviours and adapt to ongoing changes in the environment, both biological and social --- To accomplish an ongoing education we need --- a sharing of experience between people of many ages. This sharing and integrating of experience is how intelligence is created and passed on --- Education as a continuous inquiry exposes us to established ways of doing things and mediates the changes from old ways to new ways peacefully. (The Catalyst 1985, 20)

To facilitate this community educational process, they proposed:

1) The creation of small community, neighbourhood, or home based learning centres run by local residents.
2) Opening all existing school facilities to all community members.

They felt it was fundamentally important to bridge the gap between teacher and student, school life and real life, and between work and play. Therefore, they recommended a more holistic approach to community education including: the encouragement of community participation in both academic and non-academic activities; the sharing of knowledge, information, and skills with each other and with the children; the development of learning networks and exchanges both inside and outside the community; mixed-age groupings; and the encouragement of learning as part of the daily functioning of a community, with everyone taking the roles of both teacher and student. While these recommendations to the Green Party were advanced as policy guidelines for the party, the Yalakom River people involved also began to organize more systematically to achieve these goals in their own community. With a long-term perspective on creation of a cooperative culture over a minimum of three generations, the first generation realized that it was essential to involve the second generation as much as possible in the work of evolving norms of mutual aid through lived experience. However, there was an awareness that for the emergent valley-wide community to be sustainable over the long-term would also require broader societal change.

At that time, Green Party activity was seen by some Yalakom River people as a way to begin to address the question of broader political, social, and cultural transformation. Reinhabitory practices and community building were viewed as a base out of which to work toward broader change through philosophical dialogue, communication, and networking via Green Party activity. As one philosopher from the valley who wanted to remain anonymous put it: "If you come from one of these communities and you come out to oppose something, you're better suited to survive if you can return to your community or
work out of it, so the community in the bioregion is also a strategic unit for participation in the world at large. As can readily be seen, this model of cultural, social, and political transformation is based on the concept of a network or confederation of diverse, local, autonomous, place appropriate communities, not only as the goal or end-product of ecological society, but as the very means to achieve it. In the Yalakom, people were coming to understand that local place-based communities were the basis of such a strategy.

In the Yalakom River community, there was also a rejection of history as "his-story", the story of patriarchal civilization, of what some people called (after Mumford) the "power complex" and the "megamachine", also known as industrial growth society. There was a growing feeling that the patriarchy had gone berserk, but in the Yalakom this understanding of patriarchy did not lead to the development of an exclusive "her-story" as it did within a separatist feminism, but to the creation of "our-story", the story of an inclusive culture in embryo, the story of an emerging people. Nevertheless feminism, an inclusive feminism, did begin to develop in the Yalakom River as elsewhere in the movement. Perhaps this was because, without an understanding of the patriarchy, without a critique of sexism and a practice or a process to deal with deeply ingrained habits, Yalakom community, like any other, could not begin to move beyond dualistic, patriarchal culture. Initially, perhaps because the growing community at that time was relatively isolated from the influence of feminism in the wider movement for social change, there was resistance to feminist ideas and a fear among some men and women in the valley that feminism could lead to separatism. These fears were not totally unfounded since, in the more urban areas and particularly in Vancouver's east-end alternative community of the early 1980's, cultural feminism had a strong separatist tendency.
At the Hat Creek Survival Gatherings of 1982 and 1983, certain feminists from Vancouver perceived and began to critique surviving patriarchal and sexist relationships among the valley's people. This, in part at least, was one source of feminist activity within the Yalakom community itself. Involvement in the broader green movement in BC in the following years contributed to strengthening feminist activity. Having started later than in some urban communities, the growth of feminist consciousness proceeded very rapidly, thanks in great measure to the work of Judith Plant and a number of other women in the valley. Due to the strength of community and ecological consciousness among the people, feminism did not take a separatist direction and soon developed into a form of ecological feminism. By 1989, the Bridge River people had hosted a labour day gathering on ecofeminism in conjunction with the B.C. Green Ecofeminist Caucus.

The people in the Yalakom community have been engaged over the past twenty years in various ways with the wider society in the region, helping to initiate and build cultural, political, economic, and social relations and networks in civil society. For example, community members from the Yalakom have initiated the Lillooet Peace and Ecology Group, helped to start the Lillooet Farmer's Market where they promote organic produce and farming, founded the local International Women's Day annual gathering, helped organize talent shows for all ages, and joined baseball and volleyball teams, reaching out for new friendships in the "wider community" (Eleanor Wright 1 August, 1997, personal communication). These efforts at creating horizontal relationships with others in civil society included building links with native peoples.

The Yalakom community is adjacent to the Bridge River (Xwisten) Reserve. The entire Yalakom watershed is on Xwisten territory. The Yalakom community has worked with First Nations at the political level, supporting Native
struggles for the Stein and the Lil'wat Peoples Struggle in Mt. Currie. They also are partners with the Lillooet Tribal Council of the St'at'imc Nation in a Forest Renewal of British Columbia grant application for restoration projects in the Yalakom. More fundamental for the Yalakom community, they interact with native people culturally at feasts, pow-wows, sports, music, gatherings, Lillooet Friendship Centre events, International Women's Day, and also with personal friendships (ibid).

Far from remaining an isolated enclave in the Yalakom, the emergent valley community spent a good deal of its time and energy pursuing horizontal linkages with other groups in civil society. This is reflected in the diversity of networks created, from those with First Nations to peace, labour, ecofeminist, and farmers groups, including the ongoing sports teams and cultural activities. These new networks are evidence of increased social capital in the region. Like the bioregional rehabitants in the Mattole and Tepoztlan, the valley community in the Yalakom understands the necessity of such horizontal bridge-building as an essential part of rehabititation. Note, however, that the creation of these social, cultural, and political linkages as well as the ecological work demanded by living-in-place set the framework for economic activity. The economic activity itself is primarily subsistence activity or as Sahlins would say, it is an economics for livelihood. In other words, the economic sphere of activity - the permaculture gardens, the independent energy systems, the self-made housing, barter, berry picking, and raising and educating children - is all embedded in a cultural, political and ecological praxis. I note this now for later theoretical reflection.

The central organizing body of the Yalakom community is the Yalakom Community Council (YCC) which has been meeting monthly since 1987. The YCC is held as a council circle to discuss community concerns. Consensus
process is used in the planning and strategizing that takes place around community business. Full discussion is held around questions such as land trusts, forestry and land-use issues, how to better organize the informal economy in the valley, and when the next meeting of the food coop, or the "ecological society", or the men's and women's circles will take place. The "ecological society" refers to the Yalakom Ecological Society (YES), formed in 1985. The YCC and YES are used as the community's interface with other groups in civil society, with local Ministry of Forestry and Environment personnel, and with the public (Eleanor Wright, 1 August 1997, personal communication).

The community has also had to learn to defend the watershed against clearcutting in the forests of the Yalakom. In the seventies, they fought to prevent large clearcuts and road building in the Yalakom watershed planned by Evans Forest Products, a local mill. In 1982, a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) was set up in Lillooet. After one year of frustration at the "inability" of the government-run body to address substantive issues or produce a management plan, they dropped out of the process, as did some other local members of the public. CRMP eventually disappeared. However, it had provided the Yalakom community with the opportunity to get to know local Forestry and Environment personnel, develop relationships with some of the forest workers in the Timber Supply Area, as well as networking with the BC Watershed Alliance (Eleanor Wright, June 19, 1997, personal correspondence). Here we have an example of horizontal networking in civil society and an example of vertical bridge building with personnel in the political sphere, the state.

In the eighties, the Yalakom community was also very active in the successful fight to save the nearby Stein watershed. However, in 1989 the local
mill (now Ainsworth Forest Products), in its five year logging plan, proposed to log over half the Yalakom watershed without adequate investigation into landscape scale issues, with no forest cover information, and with no long-term plan. The Yalakom community held a series of special meetings and councils and consensed that maintaining biotic diversity and ecosystem integrity would be a "bottom-line goal" for the watershed (ibid). This was the beginning of a struggle for a long-term, ecosystem-based plan for the watershed which has not yet been resolved.

In the struggle to defend their watershed, various Yalakom community members have been sent at the community's expense to Ministry of Forests/Ministry of Environment courses on "forest ecosystem networks" and "biogeoclimatic zones" as well as courses on and Ecological Economics for Practical Planning and Landscape Analysis given by the Silva Forest Foundation. They have also learned to map ecosystem types in their own watershed, identify rare and special ecosystems, and carry out on-the-ground observations of the watershed about wildlife habitat. They have used air photos, topographic maps, biogeoclimatic maps, ecosystem-classification data and forest cover maps to create a map of the distribution and abundance of factors important to ecosystem function, such as plant community types, winter ranges, and other habitat features, and the location of rare species (ibid).

Yalakom members also organized two public educational presentations by ecoforester Herb Hammond (1991) as well as one on the proposals for protected areas in the Timber Supply Area. They have also made presentations to all the forest land base commissions that have passed through the region and attended most of the conferences on forestry-related issues in the lower and central part of British Columbia (Eleanor Wright 1 August, 1997, personal communication). Since 1996, three members of the community have
participated on the Lilooet District Community Resources Board (CRB), part of the Lilooet Land Resource Management Plan. The Yalakom community views the CRB as a forum for local people to use consensus process to work out an acceptable land-use plan that represents local interests, respects ecosystem integrity, and maintains biotic diversity (ibid).

Far from remaining an isolated, parochial group, the Yalakom community has built an impressive network of horizontal relationships in local and regional civil society. They have also developed extensive vertical "bridging" linkages with local and regional government agencies and personnel. They are additionally networked horizontally on a wider scale with other province wide networks such as the British Columbia Environmental Network. They participate in continental bioregional gatherings and were the main organizers of the third North American Bioregional Congress in Squamish. All of these broader linkages are based on the strength of their local community relationships. The Yalakom community has worked hard to build strong ties among themselves. Many years of living, working, struggling, cooperating, consensing, and celebrating together have indeed produced strong bonds of friendship, mutual support, trust, and solidarity among the community members. This bonding work has not always been easy. The Yalakom community is no utopia, but it has established a real presence in the region.

Inevitably problems and conflicts have arisen between people in the community. The community has had to learn to deal with them. Like Forsey, these community members recognize barriers to cooperation. For example, Andruess and Wright describe some obstacles:

Of course, the way to tribal unity is hard, and difficulties persistently arise. We are in a period when North American consumer society seems to be reaching its highest peak. Many people have been hurt by the system; they feel bruised all over, and trust is not easy to come by. The
acquisition of private property accentuates tendencies toward individualism. Titles of land ownership isolate us. Money, sex and male dominance are other possible stumbling blocks to genuine community. (Forsey 1993, 108-109)

In the nineties, the community has acted to deal with conflicts and tensions. Some community members have attended courses in conflict resolution methods, non-violence training, mediation, facilitation, and re-evaluation and co-counseling methods to help individuals and the community as a whole to better develop their consensus process and to think, work, live, and build their "tribal unity". Despite their conflicts and tensions, people in the community have learned that they can settle disputes and cooperate to organize themselves. They have learned to value "compassion, flexibility, and a sense of humour" while building the trust in each other necessary for community: "Most of our life in common is founded on trust, goodwill, generosity and patience. The love underneath is what has held our little world together, and still does" (ibid).

The Yalakom community is learning to ground itself in place, in the rhythms of the land and the yearly cycle of the seasons. The circle, which is the organized form of their community council, is also the form used to ceremonially celebrate their connection to place and to the earth, their ecological kinship with the land community. In order to capture this embodied understanding of the use of ritual ceremony, I cite Andruss and Wright at length:

Tomorrow night is full moon and Winter Solstice both. The old year is ending and the new year just beginning. Yes, there will be celebrations. The people of this valley will get together; there will be music, dancing, feasting - and beautiful desserts! At some point in the evening, we will form a circle and speak to each other, all of us together. We'll acknowledge the presence of elders and special guests. We'll remember friends who could not be present; we'll honour the household hosting the occasion. We'll mention the
value of the food and the preparers of the food, and we'll thank the Earth that produced it.

Gifts will be exchanged. These are not Christmas presents, they are Solstice presents, intended to celebrate the rhythms of our fruitful planet and our good friendships with each other.

Ours is a community of place. It is composed not only of human partners, but of ponderosas and firs, bunchgrasses, birds and cold-running creeks. Within this web of beings we are attempting to make ourselves a home. We are being shaped in our character, diet, occupations and physical person by these crazy slopes and the weather and winds that blow overhead on their journey to the Interior. Every day we are being taught the conditions to be met.

For thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans, native peoples lived in this region. They returned seasonally to this valley for its excellent hunting, for furs and berries. Some of the grandchildren of these ancestors have befriended us, and what remains of their ancient culture continues to inspire.

It is fair to say that, in a sense, we want to become native too; that is definitely the direction of our hundred year plan. We mean to stick together, to stay here, and in the manner of community close the gap between ourselves and the land. ... How vast and beautiful it all is, containing every sort of wisdom if only we can learn to receive it. Our familiarity with the rocks, the animals, the plants is deepening. Our children can recite the names of the wildflowers and the uses of some of the medicinal herbs. Little by little we become indigenous. Certainly it must take generations to ripen as a culture and take root in a new world. (ibid, 105-106)

From the above passage, it is clear that the use of ritual in seasonal celebrations for the Yalakom community is simple, uses the circle form, celebrates the rhythms of the earth, the other non-human beings of their community of place, and the bonds between people they have created in their effort to become indigenous to the place. Given the self-admitted long-term generational character of their effort, there is great importance in such ceremonies which, in marking the incremental character of their reinhabitation as a community, give a sense of shared meaning to the participants. This shared meaning is a celebration of ecological kinship with the "community of beings" as it is a celebration of humans becoming a community of place.
In the context of the Yalakom community's story, we have seen illustrations of a range of bioregional tools for community building in use including: consensus decision-making process, use of the circle, story, bioregional education, mapping, and ceremony and earth ritual. We have seen that the use of these tools takes place within a strategy of reinhabitation that builds a local valley-wide community of place while networking horizontally with other groups in civil society. We have seen that this strategy produced a certain amount of success in terms of creating lasting bonds between community members (an increase in trust and love), and a number of new networks both within and without the community. This is evidence of the formation of social capital. We have also seen evidence of the formation of eco-social capital. Norms of cooperation, mutual aid, civic solidarity, and ecological kinship are being formed incrementally through daily practice, but from the evidence, they are emergent norms. They have not been consolidated or yet as established social norms, even within the Yalakom community. Clearly, building reinhabitory community is a slow process.

Reinhabiting Cities and Towns

Not surprisingly, the approach taken to bioregional community building in the city has been quite different than that of rural community building. This chapter shows that, in urban areas, there has been much less emphasis on attempting to build intentional community on a piece of land and more on developing wider community linkages at neighborhood, district, and broader networks at city-wide and bioregional levels. In order to understand the context of the urban narrative accounts to be examined, an introductory history of the concept of reinhabiting cities and towns and the related green city concept is
necessary. This history shows the central importance of culture for any bioregional transformation. Also illustrated is the recognition by bioregionalists that urban areas present bioregionalism with one of its greatest challenges.

As can be readily appreciated, "reinhabitation" for urban regions presents a different dimension to efforts at living-in-place than we have seen with the back-to-the-land movement. When Berg spoke on green city issues at NABC II in 1986, he emphasized the necessity for what he called "large-scale reinhabitory activity" in urban regions. With respect to cities, reinhabitation introduces the challenge of changes in consciousness and behaviour of large numbers of urban residents as well as questions of institutional/structural change and the physical transformation of built environments. Generally, bioregionalists understand that green or ecological cities cannot be achieved without broad political and social as well as cultural transformation. For example, anthropologist Roy Rappaport has influenced bioregional thought regarding the problem of reinhabiting cities. Almost thirty years ago, Rappaport called for restructuring the ecology of cities, but at the same time pointed out that this "restructuring" presented a problem not confined to the cities themselves: "It is, perhaps, a problem of restructuring the society, its organizations, its general governance, and its values" (Rappaport 1986, 4).

For many in the bioregional movement, reinhabiting cities presented three other problems as well, according to Berg. First, Berg reports that from the point of view of many back-to-the-landers in the seventies and early eighties, a certain attitude of "why bother with cities anyway" existed. These people had abandoned them because they realized they were not healthy environments and because they wanted to try really different experiments of what truly cooperative community could be, but outside the city. In this period, some bioregionalists often dismissed cities as hopeless relics of a corrupt and dying
civilization. I encountered such attitudes myself at the Hat Creek gatherings in the 1980s. Second, active bioregionalists who went back to the land became so involved with the many aspects of building reinhabitatory experiments in the country, including tending gardens and animals, that they had little energy or time left to deal with reinhabiting cities. Third, as Berg also pointed out at the green cities panel in 1986 at NABC II, "Cities are the hardest obstacle for the bioregional idea to crack". Modern cities have been so badly designed, Berg explains, that attempts to deal with them run into "so many built-in structural conditions that you think working with them would just be cosmetic - just putting pan-cake make-up on Detroit" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 72-75).

However, Berg and other bioregionalists realized that, unless urban reinhabitation was seriously addressed, the bioregional movement would remain marginal to society. As Berg argued at the 1986 congress, if it did not integrate a green city orientation into its vision and work, the bioregional movement was in danger of remaining "a rural, sparsely populated, land-based phenomenon" which "could be destroyed by not being able to relate to urban populations" (ibid). To avoid this unwelcome outcome Berg and others were already making efforts to give green city organizing a greater priority in the bioregional movement and in society more generally.

The green city idea within bioregionalism has an immediate precursor in the concept of "reinhabiting cities and towns". The concept of reinhabiting urban environments was developed in the early 1980's. The booklet, "Reinhabiting Cities and Towns: Designing for Sustainability", represents one of the first important expressions of reinhabitation applied to cities. In this piece, Todd and Tukel (1981) discuss patterns and processes in nature and their relationship to urban and regional design. For them, biogeography, history, and community structures are understood as intertwined phenomena. They argue
that knowing a place is the first step in the evolution of bioregionally-based design practices. At this local scale, Todd and Tukel envision an approach to urban neighbourhood and district scale design based on: forms of solar energy and community energy systems, a soil re-building program, solar aquaculture and stream daylighting, various forms of urban site and neighbourhood/district scale agriculture, passive and active solar building design, a diversity of forms of private and public transportation, and the use of a form of bioregional mapping which they called "place patterning" (see chapter four).

In the early 1980's as well, John Todd's work and that of his wife Nancy played a strong role in contributing to bioregional thought and experiment in urban reinhabitation. John and Nancy went on to develop the ideas and the models which they wrote up in a widely-read work, "Bioshelters, Ocean Arks, City Farming: Ecology as the Basis of Design" (1984).

In "Toward a Bioregional Model", published in 1982 by Planet Drum, Tukel discusses a bioregional approach to planning. Tukel cautions that a bioregional model is not a blueprint. Rather, what is essential for a bioregional model of planning is maintaining (or restoring) the health and diversity of the life-place. Such an approach, Tukel argues, requires a cultural identity that locates humans within the membership of the "wider life-community" (Tukel 1982, 4). Tukel views a bioregional culture-nature relationship as symbiotic:

...as the knowledge base of a bioregional model increasingly draws its content from the surrounding ecology, the accompanying cultural habits will grow adaptive in equal proportion. No longer an invention by the heirs to and practitioners of the scientific revolution (engineering, design, communications), cultural behaviour comes to support and is supported by its native terrain. (Tukel 1982, 5)

Tukel argues that in an adaptive, bioregional planning process we should understand "permanence" as a pattern of change "whereby specialized
roles are interchangeable by design" (Tukel 1982, 12). In Tukel's view, this principle can be applied at both the level of site planning and for broader settlement patterns at an urban region scale. At a site planning and neighborhood scale, urban built environments and open spaces can be designed (or re-designed) to be multi-functional and renewable over the course of time. At the scale of the city and bioregion, by taking their cue from shifting local successional patterns, design and planning can strive to accomplish discrete goals (within the overall transition to sustainability) and thereby maintain flexibility. Tukel's approach would allow for incremental change as part of a long-term comprehensive vision and process of transformation in accord with the natural patterns and processes of the bioregion. Furthermore, in "place patterning" the synoptic vision achieved via mapping the long-term structural portrayal of the watershed and the bioregion, can be keyed directly to the material, energetic, and informational elements that make up the region. This enables one to picture, through multiple overlays, the aggregated effects of human activities within the bioregion. For Tukel, what is important is to reveal the "recognizable pattern that inheres in the watershed and connects human movements, ecological stress and functional degradation or possible disintegration" (Tukel 1982, 13).

When working toward a bioregional model based on patterns in nature, Tukel emphasizes that it is crucial to base the model on the fact that natural succession is driven by solar energy. Conversion to the use of solar forms of power is not exclusively a bioregional idea, but it was seen as essential to a bioregional model by its founders. The early work of Berg, Tukel, and John and Nancy Todd on reinhabiting cities and towns points to the crucial link between renewable forms of solar energy and bioregional processes and patterns.
This means the city is viewed in its bioregional context as one element within a bioregion. In this model, the life and health of the bioregion must come first. This is a key principle of the model. For Tukel, the design implications of a symbiotic model are that, over time, design requirements become part of the vernacular, part of the very memory of the human community:

The understandings essential for provision of human necessities in accord with the surrounding ecology inevitably would become part of the communal perceptual character and 'memory'. At this point, 'formal' approaches to analysis and direction, and the late Industrial institutions which assure longevity, become less necessary. (Tukel 1982, 5)

The development of such an ecological view of human settlement as part of the "communal perceptual character" and vernacular "memory" implies a profound cultural shift in values and norms. This view recognizes culture as a central factor in societal transformation and thus raises the problem of long-term generational change. This theme, the centrality of cultural transformation for bioregionalism and its long-term generational character, is discussed in the following pages.

These early bioregional urban reinhabitory ideas were born out of the richness of interdisciplinary thought and experiment taking place in California in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For example, one of the key events that contributed to early ecological city/green city thinking was held in 1980. Two architects and teachers from Sausalito, California, Sim Van der Ryn and Peter Calthorpe, organized a week-long intensive "Solar Cities Design Workshop" at the Westerbeke Ranch near Sonoma, California. This was an interdisciplinary group of 45 leading innovators in ecology and community design, including architects, community organizers, transportation specialists, ecologists, biologists, agriculturists, planners, public officials, entrepreneurs and others. The organizers of the workshop, including Van der Ryn and Calthorpe, were
hoping to develop a holistic perspective of sustainable cities. They called the approach that emerged from this early charette a "new design synthesis" in their book, "Sustainable Communities: A New Design Synthesis for Cities, Suburbs and Towns" (Van der Ryn and Calthorpe, 1986). Peter Berg participated in the week-long workshop. Later, Van der Ryn and Calthorpe participated, in turn, in the "Celebrate the Longest Night" conference in 1985 organized by Planet Drum that launched green city organizing in the Bay Area.

The goal of the Van der Ryn/Calthorpe charette was to design ways in which three prototype urban communities - an older, inner-city Eastern neighbourhood, a postwar Western suburb, and a piece of raw land within a growing metropolitan area - could be revisioned into places that, over a twenty year period, reduced their dependence on fossil fuel and increased community self-reliance and livability. The design synthesis that emerged from these case studies includes: more compact mixed-use communities, more efficient buildings, diverse transit systems, an ecologically sound agriculture based on diverse crops, water and waste conservation, diversity in transportation over "auto monoculture" consistent with mixed-use zoning, solar passive architecture, and community controlled energy and waste systems. A strong bioregional influence was evident in the importance given to design that amplifies the unique qualities of each place as well as a call to respect the uniqueness and integrity of each region. Also, of key importance for bioregional rehabititory urban design was the idea that the modern geographical separation of production and consumption could be re-integrated through a transformed "homeplace" which "rather than being merely the site of consumption, might, through its very design produce some of its own food and energy, as well as become the locus of work for its residents" (Van der Ryn and Calthorpe 1986, xiii).
Calthorpe and Van Der Ryn cite the designs of the New Alchemy Ark in Massachusetts and the Farallones Institute Integral Urban House in Berkeley as examples of early experiments toward creating sustainable "homeplaces" that actually integrate food and energy production. However, in this context they caution that urban self-reliance cannot be an individual affair, since in the city survival is a collective enterprise and constructive action must necessarily be cooperative. Van der Ryn and Calthorpe, influenced by bioregional thought, also point out that while such proposals (higher density, mixed-use, passive solar, urban agriculture, etc.) are becoming commonplace, what needs to become a priority - beyond material efficiencies and simple conservation - is a sense of reverence for the nature of a place which "bespeaks a greater everyday understanding of our region, its watershed, climate, geology, plants, animals, and most importantly, its activities - its life" (Van der Ryn and Calthorpe 1986, xvi). Again, we see the influence of bioregional thinking about the central importance of culture, place, and region in early sustainable urban communities concepts.

Perhaps equally importantly, from the point of view of cultural shift and community building, Van der Ryn and Calthorpe argue that the imperative for compact urban design, energy efficiency through community energy and waste systems, etc. reintroduces the notion of "the commons". They point out that the old English commons not only gave village people access to productive land, but also underlay "their common identity and therefore their power" (Van der Ryn and Calthorpe 1986, xv). Van der Ryn and Calthorpe call for a new recognition of place and commons in the transition to sustainable cities:

We need to move towards a sense that our place is a habitat within, rather than a settlement beyond, the ecosystem. The other aspect missing is the notion of the commons, that the public domain must become richer as the private domain becomes more frugal; that success
and well-being must be a shared, rather than a private affair. It is the missing sense of ecology and the commons that makes places real, turns 'housing' into dwelling, 'zones' into neighborhoods, 'municipalities' into communities, and ultimately, our natural environment into a home. (Van der Ryn and Calthorpe 1986, xvi-xvii)

Here, place and commons are brought together, the former a cultural concept, the latter political. In this view, a common identity with "place" through sharing the same lands, "the commons", is empowering. Moreover, it is a common empowerment in that the power is "their power", not merely empowerment for individuals. I suggest that this common empowerment is identifiable as a benefit of eco-social capital when "place" and "commons" coincide. This may be a lesson of bioregionalism for civil society theory. Further inquiry is called for.

Clearly though, sustainable city concepts that emerged from the Solar Cities Design Workshop bore great resemblance to the bioregional concept of urban reinhabitation. In particular, bioregional ideas on cultural change and the relationship of the human community to place and ecology were encountering fertile ground in the creative interchanges taking place. Planet Drum and its work, while "officially" bioregional, was only one of several important creative efforts at early experimentation in this direction.

Another key contribution to the emergence of urban reinhabitation and ecological or sustainable city thought and experiment in the Bay Area, was the group in Berkeley which called itself "Urban Ecology" Urban Ecology was founded in 1975 by Richard Register and others. Register recalls that a number of people interested in the ideas of Paolo Soleri on cities and what Soleri called "arcology" (architecture plus ecology), wanted to test out some of his concepts (Canfield 1990, 98-100). "Arcology" envisions building cities as single composite structures that integrate density through vertical rather than
horizontal growth. Such "arcologies" would, by design, virtually eliminate the automobile. The city, designed as a vast single structure linked by walkways and elevators, would allow people to walk and/or ride elevators to any location within the city in a few minutes. A model arcology called "Arcosanti", designed to accommodate 5,000 people, is now being built in the Arizona high desert on the top of a basalt mesa near Phoenix. Soleri argues that:

Arcology is in clear opposition to suburban sprawl because it advocates a lean (frugal) but intense mode of life, the only one realistically implementable on planet Earth already host to 5 billion people on top of the vegetable and animal kingdoms. (Canfield 1990, 103-104)

Though admiring Soleri's visionary ideas, Register and the others in the fledgling urban ecology group soon turned to exploring the transformation of existing cities rather than as Register put it; "building new towns from scratch" (Canfield 1990, 98-100). However, how to achieve "integrated density" remained a cardinal issue for Urban Ecology. In their view of "integrated density", density (or proximity) and diversity are linked:

The most basic of the timeless principles of ecologically healthy human organization we could notice was that diversity at close proximity meant ... just about everything beneficial! Land conservation, pollution reduction, energy conservation, greater social vitality, cultural potential, and physical access of the city's benefits to a much wider range of people. (Canfield 1990, 98-100)

Thus, in the work of Urban Ecology, like that of Soleri, a strong link is made between integrated density and greater social vitality and cultural potential. For Soleri, as for the Urban Ecology group, the compression of many minds in cities, libraries, theatres, universities, forums for research, debate, and communication are all essential parts of the intense exchanges at many levels made possible by the proximity supplied by cities. That is, well designed
integrated density encourages social interaction, and thus the likelihood of increased associational life, a key ingredient of social capital. Moreover, as Register also points out in the above citation, integrated density also means land conservation, pollution reduction, and energy conservation. Thus, integrated density is a promising strategy for implementing ecological cities because it links reduced aggregate consumption with increased opportunities for greater and richer social and community interchange and bonding. In other words, integrated density holds a huge potential for reducing aggregate natural capital throughput consumption, while encouraging the formation of social capital. Such a strategy is deserving of more investigation.

The people at Urban Ecology quickly realized that transforming existing cities would be enormously difficult and in opposition to the cultural and institutional barriers of property ownership and established land-use patterns. As Register expressed it, putting a few more people on bicycles, increasing recycling efficiency, adding solar collectors, and planting a few trees on every block would be far from enough to end the tyranny of the automobile. The Urban Ecology group realized that working on very local, often site-based, incremental reforms needed to be carried forward as partial steps while complemented by direct political work on "the more basic strategies of changing land uses, urban design and architecture toward far more diversity at close proximity" (Canfield 1990, 98-100). Moreover, those at Urban Ecology saw that the complex and huge task of such an enormous change in established patterns would require a phased set of changes over many decades to shift people and built environments out of urban sprawl into "urban, neighbourhood and small town centers" (ibid). Given this understanding, a long-term vision of strategic and cultural change was needed to inspire and guide the transition to sustainable urban settlement.
Register describes the vision and strategy worked out by Urban Ecology, along with a 140 year transitional policy plan for the city of Berkeley in "Ecocity Berkeley: Building Cities for a Healthy Future" (1987). In this visionary transitional plan, Register defines an ecocity as, simply, an ecologically healthy city. He points out the obvious, that no such city now exists, while also pointing to forerunners of the ecocity in some Medieval European cities and in the solar pueblos of the Indians of the American Southwest. Register also promotes solar, wind, and recycling technologies, creek restoration projects, urban gardening and fruit tree planting, foot, bike, and public modes of transportation in preference to the automobile as projects that reveal glimpses of and movement toward ecocities (1987).

While advancing some key principles for ecocity building, long-term proximity policies, pro-active short-term proposals and designs, as well as concrete examples of changes in planning, architecture, policy, and citizen action projects, Register agrees very much with Berg about the difficulties of moving toward ecological cities. For example, Register strongly emphasizes the need to involve large numbers of people in a cultural/political process of transformation:

[Ecocity projects] will have to begin happening simultaneously and in much larger numbers if ecocities are to be built. Most important, the concept must be firmly established and broadly understood and supported. Then, not only will we create the 'sustainable' city that coexists peacefully with nature, but we will also discover a new creative adventure accessible to everyone, and, ultimately nothing less than a new mode of existence and creative fulfillment on this planet. (1987, 5)

Bioregional thinking, especially with regard to cultural change and the relationship of humans to place, has strongly informed the vision and work of Urban Ecology. Both emphasize the key importance of a long-term cultural transformation, the need for ecological city concepts to be firmly established,
and broadly understood and supported. These are key ingredients of a
democratic transformation of and by civil society. Register gives full credit to
activists in the bioregional movement for their influence on the thought of Urban
Ecology, especially with respect to motivating people to get involved
emotionally with their place:

In the last decade, the practitioners of bioregionalism have pointed out
the value of learning about the place in which you live: the geology,
climate, weather, soils, animal and plant populations, and the full history
of human interrelations with them. Bioregional thinking has rekindled the
sense of place and has alerted people to the extent of their impacts on
nature. You can't miss what you never knew. But by teaching us about
the full richness of our biological environments, bioregionalists make it
possible for people to know what they have had the misfortune never to
have experienced personally, to miss it, want it back, and to become
empowered to get it back. (1987, 7)

More specifically, in Register's view, bioregional thinking about urban
reinhabitation has contributed the fundamental "green city" concept of viewing
the city as potentially able to contribute to the regeneration of its bioregion:

Cities, we learn from ecocity studies, could be rebuilt to fit gracefully, non-
destructively, even regeneratively into their bioregions. They could
become instruments accomplishing two priceless goals: 1) fuller creative
evolution of society and the individual, and 2) healthy co-evolution and
mutual support with nature. (ibid)

With respect to the problem of working toward developing a critical mass
of actively involved people, Register admits that late twentieth-century city-
dwellers are more familiar with our technologies and cities than with natural
elements of our bioregion and biosphere. In large measure, he points out, a
cities' built environments often stand between city dwellers and nature.
Consequently, he asserts, it is especially urgent for late twentieth-century city-
dwellers to experience and learn as much as we can directly from nature:
We need to touch nature more intimately, let our children grow up knowing that vegetables don't just appear in the supermarket by magic, knowing instead the magic of sun, wind, rain, creeks, bees, butterflies, flowers, gardens, farms.... This biological aspect of the ecocity is what some have called the 'Green City'. Fundamental biological principles apply to the greening of cities. (1987, 16)

The following are the principles Register listed in 1987 which apply to the greening of cities:

1) Diversity is healthy
2) Fairly large areas are required for natural species to develop diversity of population.
3) Land has a limit to the quantity of biological material it can naturally support in a particular climate, called its carrying capacity.
4) There is a green hierarchy in ecocity planning. Native and useful (food, medicinal, wood-providing) plants are more important for ecological and social health than ornamentals, though this principle is softened by that of diversity.
5) Make wastes into new resources: compost and recycle.
6) When it comes to extinction and diminution of species, urbanites, suburbanites, and rural people all conspire.

In discussing point six on extinction (above), Register cautions that ecocity planning and design must also take into account the extra-urban activities that are related to conventional urban forms; range and forest management, replacement of natural species with domestic ones, deforestation for agriculture, flooding of entire valleys for electricity and water for city and farm alike, and long-distance commuting, all contributing to the diminution and extinction of species (1987, 17-18). That is, Register firmly locates urban issues in the context of the bioregion where urban, suburban and rural dwellers are all responsible for the bioregion as a whole. This strategy is compatible with that of
Planet Drum. Both recognize the necessity of a societal transformation that will take generations to accomplish. Thus, both place cultural change at the centre of any transformation strategy.

For Register and Urban Ecology, these principles suggest many ways to help build ecocities; from restoring creeks, rivers, shorefronts and marshes right in the city, to narrowing sidewalks and streets, reducing the number of cars, acreage of parking lots, new and used car lots, etc., and making serious food-raising a conscious part of every urban person’s experience by bringing agricultural areas into places where large numbers of people live and work.

Another concept Urban Ecology has developed is the use of proximity policies and proximity planning such as zoning regulations and tax incentives to "open up the city to nature while shifting urban activity to other, more focused and diverse areas" (Register 1987, 18). Proximity policies and planning mean that, if human development is concentrated in small areas of great diversity, public transportation will work best when moving people from one dense centre of activity to another. This dramatic change in land-use releases extensive areas for habitat restoration within and around the city. In advancing this model, Register argues that through the application of urban ecology concepts and design processes, diversity, both natural habitat diversity and human cultural diversity, can be respected and integrated into a long-term design and planning approach that is community-based and democratic (again this is a call for culturally-based change to be integral to societal transformation). Through proximity planning, compact mixed-use urban areas (including horticulture and agriculture) would leave enough land-area for humans and domestic species while allowing other lands to be restored or preserved for wildlife habitat, lands that are both large enough and interconnected via ecological corridors to support a diversity of wild populations. Register comments that this would be
"the highest goal possible for long-range health of the biosphere: human and natural coevolutionary diversity" (1987, 15).

The work of Urban Ecology has not been restricted to developing abstract conceptions of the ecocity. Register and his co-workers have grounded their work in their own city of Berkeley, developing a transitional concept plan for Berkeley to be implemented in stages over the next 150 years. Moreover, the development of the plan was not merely dreamed up by the urban ecology group, but rather, the plan was informed by actual urban restoration work of several citizens groups in projects such as the restoration of Strawberry Creek, or local efforts to prevent development on a waterfront marsh. Some of the citizens of Berkeley took an early lead in what Register and his co-thinkers would eventually theorize as "urban ecology". For example, in Berkeley there were groups working on introducing a "slow streets" (road narrowing) concept to curb auto traffic in the early 1980's, and the initiation of a bicycle plan as early as the first half of the 1970s (Register 1987, 99).

The Ecocity Berkeley concept plan developed by Urban Ecology considers several areas in Berkeley; the Waterfront, the Flats and the Hills, the neighbourhoods, the university, and the downtown. Specific strategies are developed for each area. Then, a long-term concept plan for the entire city is developed and presented through a series of maps that depict Berkeley before Europeans arrived, in the present era, and in a series of four time periods or "stages" into the future. The plan is based on such strategies as: gradually withdrawing from thinly-populated auto-dependent areas, incrementally building up dense, mixed-use centers of activity, bringing agricultural areas into places where large numbers of people live and work, making food-raising a serious part of every urban person's experience, opening up and restoring
Berkeley's nine creeks, and bringing ecological corridors into suburbia and sizable areas of restored habitat right into the city.

The thinking of Urban Ecology with respect to integrated density and proximity policies and planning is related to the work of Jane Jacobs. Jacobs uses the concepts of "diversity" and "intensity" in her discussion of urban form and design in The Death and Life of Great American Cities first published in 1961 (Jacobs 1992). In it, Jacobs wrote: "A city's very structure consists of a mixture of uses, and we get closer to its structural secrets when we deal with the conditions that generate diversity" (1992, 376). For Jacobs there were four basic conditions that were generators of diversity:

1. The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function: preferably more than two. These must insure the presence of people who go outdoors on different schedules and are in the place for different purposes, but who are able to use many facilities in common.
2. Most blocks must be short; that is, streets and opportunities to turn corners must be frequent.
3. The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones so that they vary in the economic yield they must produce. This mingling must be fairly close grained.
4. There must be a sufficiently dense concentration of people, for whatever purposes they may be there. This includes dense concentration in the case of people who are there because of residence" (1992, 150-151).

When these four conditions were met, then a city could manifest its true function as a favourable environment for the rich socio-cultural-economic interaction of people. These multiple interactions illustrated the kind of vitality Jacobs believed was the very definition of urban life. Indeed, for Jacobs, it was the intensity of mixed uses and the dense concentration of people that supplied
the necessary conditions for this especially urban form of vitality. Streets, 
neighbourhoods, and districts "where diverse city uses and users give each 
other close-grained and lively support" were the various scales at which Jacobs 
identified the four generators of urban vitality (1992, 377). Thus, Jacobs found 
that places where diversity and intensity could be observed were areas of 
vitality and rich interaction. Jacobs' discussion of the conditions for vitality of 
urban neighbourhoods and districts and her concerns for the loss of community 
through what she called the "erosion" of the city by the automobile provided 
éarly groundwork for the later analysis of Urban Ecology. Jacobs' concerns 
regarding the relationship of urban form and design to urban vitality were 
primarily socio-cultural and economic concerns, not ecologically based. 
Nevertheless, without losing these social concerns of diversity and intensity, 
Urban Ecology brought an ecological dimension to the older discourse on 
diversity and density. Integrated density is one important key, then, to 
encouraging the build up of a richer urban associational life, a greater density of 
networks of citizen involvement which favour the establishment of norms of trust 
and civic solidarity identified as key ingredients of social capital.

Indeed, Jacobs' special sense of urban vitality and community life is akin 
to the notion of social capital. This suggests a relationship between urban form, 
as it has been theorized by Jacobs, and social capital. Moreover, the integrated 
density concept of Urban Ecology, by opening up cities to urban ecological 
corridors, by daylighting and restoring urban creeks and streams would 
encourage the generation of eco-social capital. Ecocities, designed at the site, 
street, neighbourhood, district, and city-wide levels for intensity and diversity of 
uses and interactions in dense mixed-use areas, could arguably encourage 
and facilitate the building of communities where social capital and eco-social 
capital flourish. But the question remains, how would all this begin? How
would sufficient social and eco-social capital to begin the envisioned 140 year transformation emerge?

As the work and long-term concept plan of Urban Ecology has illustrated, the effort to build ecocities may take several generations to implement. This implies that social capital will be a necessary ingredient in the long and difficult transformation to eco-cities. If high levels of social capital are one important goal of eco-city design, social capital may be an equally important means to the bringing-into-being of eco-cities. This bears upon the issue of restructuring cities and urban regions and, as noted, all of civilization. If restructuring is to be achieved democratically, high levels of social capital will be necessary to the achievement of the strategy.

The following two urban narrative accounts illustrate some ways and forms in which bioregionalists have attempted to address the challenge of restructuring in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Vancouver, British Columbia. In both cases, bioregionalists adopt a strategy of building local community action groups (the "seed" groups) complemented by horizontal community linkages and networks in civil society as a way to begin the long, difficult path to restructuring currently unsustainable cities. This is the horizontal dimension of the strategy upon which is based various forms of public communication and vertical "bridging" with state & corporate sectors. I must caution that the contextualized examples of bioregional strategy in these accounts are only in the most emergent forms of an admittedly long-term strategy.
San Francisco

San Francisco Bay is the largest estuarine system on the west coast of North America with the largest complex of coastal marshes. The bay and estuary is composed of 34 distinct watersheds. The estuary is the place where fresh water and salt water meet, a dynamic zone of overlapping ecosystems. Because of the estuary, the Bay Area has two to three times the biodiversity of any single terrestrial or aquatic system (Urban Ecology 1996). Combined with fertile soils, the region has a mild climate that allows year round food production. The mild climate also means less energy for heating and cooling. The Bay Area from Sonoma County in the north to Santa Clara County in the south is over 100 miles long (see map in appendix A-9). It includes the Silicon Valley. The Bay Area has 100 cities and nine counties with a total population of over six million people. The bay itself and the hills surrounding it do not provide a lot of room for urban sprawl, but sprawl has occurred nevertheless. Sprawl and pollution threaten the area's greenbelt (1996).

The region's economy is very diversified. Major industries in addition to agriculture include; the high-tech industry in the Silicon Valley, a wine industry in the Napa Valley, several military bases, and a secondary materials industry. San Francisco Bay is degraded by pollution from long-time sewage and industrial discharges. The largest remaining tidal wet land in California is threatened by water diversion to quench the growing thirst of urban California and large-scale agriculture (1996).

It was in the Bay Area where the "green city" concept was conceived in the early nineteen eighties. It began quite naively, according to Berg, out of a "brain-storming" session at a rock concert in Golden Gate Park when Berg captured the crowd's attention by involving everyone in a participatory green
city visioning session (NABC III Proceedings 1989). Berg's point about this
beginning is that it was first and foremost a participatory activity involving lots of
people. This initial act was both real and symbolic. Real in that the burst of
group chanting and energy at the rock concert eventually helped to move Berg
and the Planet Drum people to more thought and action around green city
initiatives. Symbolic in the sense that a transformation to green city policies and
programs required consciousness change and involvement of large numbers of
people, a transformation that would require urban restructuring and involve
more than one generation to accomplish.

The next part of the San Francisco story illustrates a different and
complementary lesson; how to begin the transformation. Berg argues that a
green city project does not have to begin by tackling the entire city. Small
victories can be won incrementally. Actions that authenticate, illustrate, and
model more general propositions, can be carried out at a very local
neighborhood scale. As an example, Berg recounts the story of the battle for
the right to planting space on the sidewalk adjacent to Peter and Judy
Goldhaft's home at Planet Drum. This story began when Berg was issued a
ticket for having a sidewalk in ill repair. Planet Drum had deliberately left it in
disrepair to allow the grass to grow up through it. After months of haggling with
city hall they finally won the right to rip up half their sidewalk to plant a garden
with native plant species. The neighbours liked the garden and the plants. The
story hit the newspapers and became a local cause celebre (NABC II
Proceedings 1987, 72-75).

The next phase of the story pointed once more to a broader scale of
action, involving more people. Planet Drum wanted to know how to fund an
entire green city program. The effort to plan and organize this again involved a
good number of people, this time in a variety of more active roles. Planet Drum
organized a winter solstice celebration to spread the idea of green city far and wide and to involve more people in conceptualizing a green city vision. A major fund-raising event, "Celebrate the Longest Night", took place in December of 1985 on the winter solstice. Nearly a thousand people attended the celebratory event, including poets, musicians, and theatre people. The celebration raised energy and money. About $7,500 was raised to fund meetings toward developing a green city plan for the entire San Francisco Bay Area.

Planer Drum was able to implement the next phase. Nine community meetings, entitled "Symposia on Urban Sustainability", were organized and held through the spring and summer of 1986. They addressed a range of topic areas on urban reinhabitation, based on the following themes: renewable energy, urban planting, urban wild habitat, transportation, recycling, co-operatives and collectives, sustainable planning, neighborhood empowerment, and arts and communication. There was a broad range of participants at the nine meetings. For example, at the Recycling and Re-use meeting there were representatives of some city and county recycling agencies, a range of private re-use businesses, citizens groups opposed to waste, youth employment agencies, and professional scavenger companies. At the Urban Wild Habitat meeting there were: urban gardeners, defenders of open space, native plant experts, animal tenders, teachers, environmental writers, the founder of a citizens group that helped secure Golden Gate National recreation Area, and the director of Golden Gate Park. Although there were neighbourhood representatives at these meetings, it is obvious that the primary appeal of the series was to communities of interest based on the nine themes. Clearly, the strategic thinking included a recognition that, for an effective city-wide strategy, it was necessary to combine communities of both place and interest.
Each session began with a description of the current situation from each participants point of view. For example, renewable energy advocates complained of no significant gains in using alternatives to fossil fuels since oil resumed a low price in the late 70's. Neighbourhood representatives told how high-rise apartments and chain stores were crowding out the last remnants of unique small businesses and block-scaled social and family life. Sustainable planning proponents described the failure of residents' influence on growth-dominated municipal planning processes. Transportation analysts forecast a doubling of the capacity of existing freeways and the addition of another deck to the Golden Gate Bridge unless people began using alternatives to automobiles (Berg et al. 1989, ix-xvii).

Then, participants were asked to envision alternatives. The broad range of suggestions and proposals were eventually condensed into a nine part book: "A Green City Program for San Francisco Bay Area Cities and Towns" published by Planet Drum (Berg et al. 1989). The program is a full account of all the areas of sustainability that were covered in the community meetings. Berg, in his introduction to the Green City Program, frankly discusses some formidable barriers to such a shift, including a reference to the erosion of local community in the megalopolis of the Bay Area as well as to the vast scale of the ecological damage directly attributable to the ways cities presently function.

Below is an abbreviated version of nine part program. I include it in the text because it is a key document of the urban bioregional movement which has emerged directly from the experience of an interactive community networking process. In short, this document attempts to reflect not only the views of Planet Drum members, but of the hundreds of people who participated in the nine community meetings, representing a broad range of civil society:
1) Urban Planting
By urban planting, we mean the restoration, creation and maintenance of plant-life in and around cities. This includes parks, median strips, sidewalk and rooftop planters, community and private gardens and vacant lots. It includes shade and fruit trees, vegetable patches, grassland and scrub or chaparral.

2) Smart Transportation
Smart transportation means seeking appropriate, ecologically sound solutions to people's transportation needs, instead of trying to solve them all with more asphalt and single-occupancy vehicles. It means using a combination of techniques -- such as self-propelled transit, buses, ride-sharing and proximity -- to complement the role of the automobile.

3) Sustainable Planning
Sustainable planning refers both to the process of planning and its focus. Good planning examines the overall, cumulative effects of proposed changes in land use, and judges them in the context of the region's natural features...it is developed at the grassroots level with active citizen participation.

4) Renewable Energy
Fossil fuels such as oil and gas come from finite reserves which cannot be regenerated on a human time-scale. In contrast, renewable energy sources come from natural flows in the environment, such as sunlight and falling water...Coupled with improvements in the efficiency of all energy use, renewable sources can supply all of a city's needs.

5) Neighbourhood Character & Empowerment
Neighbourhood character is the flavor of the place, including such diverse elements as architecture, topography, the language on commercial signs, the forms of religious worship, the family structure -- in short, the culture of the place. Neighbourhood empowerment is the process by which people who live in a neighbourhood gain and exercise the right to make informed decisions about the issues that affect the place in which they live, such as the types of new development that will be permitted, traffic and parking arrangements, and so on.

6) Recycling and Reuse
Recycling and reuse mean salvaging discarded materials rather than burying or burning them. They may be used again in their original form...reused for different purposes...decomposed organically...or reprocessed. Good discard practice calls for making the best and highest use of what is discarded.

7) Celebrating Life-Place Vitality
Celebrating life-place vitality means recognizing and expressing regard for the unique natural features--native plants and animals, climate, seasonal variations, and others -- that mark the places where we live.

8) Urban Wild Habitat
Urban wild habitat is a place for untamed animals to live within and around the metropolis. It includes parks, marshes, lagoons, estuaries and creeks and can also include less obvious homes such as nests on the ledges of high-rise buildings. It requires not only physical room for
animals but freedom from harassment and enough territory to support the rest of the food chain that the animals depend on.

9) Socially Responsible Small Business & Cooperatives

Small businesses are firms small enough that all the employees know each other by name. Co-ops are businesses in which the workers themselves control their work democratically and have an equal voice in the major decisions which affect their jobs. These companies are locally owned and operated, so most of the profits and wages are spent or reinvested in that local city or region. (1989)

The program then describes a list of benefits to be gained by cities with the implementation of the each of the nine programs, along with both short-term and longer-term strategies for municipal action, using the Bay Area as a model. For example, the report suggests that municipalities could establish zoning policies that favour neighbourhood retailers over large shopping centres, establish small business incubators where new businesses would pay low rent and share services and office equipment, and make significant improvements in public transit, public libraries, and low-income housing favouring operators of socially responsible small businesses.

The report adopts a cumulative, holistic approach to the aggregation of many incremental changes across all nine areas of policy. For example, there are short sections linking each of the nine programs to other directly related program areas, carefully illustrating the interconnection of issues and weaving the overall program together. It was understood that while single proposals may be modest, the cumulative effect of the implementation of all the proposals across all nine fronts would engender the beginning of a protracted transformation of urban areas into sustainable cities grounded in their bioregions.

The strategy holds out the promise that accumulated incremental reforms, guided by an overall program which sets a clear green city direction, would work to collectively shift our unsustainable urban patterns to more
sustainable ones. That is, this strategy strongly implies the need for a shift in culture as well as a series of political reforms. Moreover, Berg specifically points out that the heart of the program lies in the sections headed "What can cities do to promote...?" The key is that these sections link cultural change with political change. Cultural change is the basis, but political change is also necessary to consolidate the shift in belief. As Berg expressed it, the values and practices of "a new kind of urban resident are matched with the needed alterations in municipal policies" to begin to implement the program (1989, ix-xvii). Berg explains that green city programs can act as a catalyst to generate the popular will necessary to move governments and social institutions toward sustainable cities. Such programs, developed locally by green city activists for their particular city or town can have a two-fold effect. They can provide a "green city umbrella", under which individuals, neighborhood organizations, labor groups, small businesses, and others, each involved with some aspects of urban sustainability, can begin to care about all of them. As well, once such a program is made public and developed into a "platform for change", Berg argues it can become "a powerful tool for influencing boards of supervisors, town councils, elected officials and candidates for office"(Berg et al. 1989, xvi).

Note also that small scale economic activity is integrated, or embedded, into this holistic, incremental strategy. In the Planet Drum green city strategy, local small businesses are recognized as essential to an incremental strategy of cultural and political transformation. They keep money circulating in the neighbourhood, district and local city. Locally owned businesses are concerned about the quality of their places and the local impacts of their decisions: "Local control [of business] offers a sound grounding for the city" (1989, 54).
Lastly, the Planet Drum Green City Program sketches out a vision of a green city which can be both an inspiration for transformation and a model against which to measure progress toward the green city. In this context, Berg spoke at NABC II in the summer of 1986 about the potential for a federation of green city constituencies in the Bay Area to become the urban component of a bioregional council:

That's my hidden agenda. I don't expect the people coming to these meetings to be bioregionalists, but, if we keep the framework bioregional, eventually they could see the validity of a federation of the nine Bay Area counties. Local governments could come together, sending representatives as the green city plank, or program, to a bioregional council/congress/federation/whatever for northern Shasta/Alta California. (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 75)

The green city vision, for bioregionalists, contains several concepts that, taken together, offer a very different understanding of what an urban dweller, as opposed to an urban consumer, could be. This vision represents a definite cultural shift from the dominant *homo economicus* in what it means to be a human being, a cultural shift central to the bioregional strategy. However, it is not a shift to some abstract or unfounded notion of a human that has never existed. Rather, the notion of a "bioregional urbanite" contains a very familiar sense of the human being. For example, Berg compares this new urban dweller with the way farmers used to live, knowing and practicing many different skills, as a kind of multi-purpose handyman. He also speaks about the pride associated with such self-reliance:

The bioregional urbanite is somebody that knows where they live, does things that reciprocate with the place where they live, and develops their own neighborhood culture— urban dwelling is pride in what you're able to develop within 25 blocks of where you live (Berg 1988).
Similarly, Todd and Tukel compare urban reinhabitation with "bricolage", or enlightened tinkering with what is at hand:

Designers like clean slates. The bricoleur is different. There is an assumption that the true potential of a house, a block, or a whole town has scarcely been tapped. The most humble objects, like a hundred feet of sidewalk can be transformed. There is a human dimension to bricolage. The bricoleur tries to listen to the voice of a place as expressed through the history and inhabitants. There is a responsibility to maintain continuity. To transform is not to inoculate with misplaced status. If restoration leads to displacement it is failure. The benefits of restoration must accrue to residents and subsequently to others who are affected by the change. (1981)

The notion of a bioregional urban dweller as a "bricoleur" who, using a mixed kit of tools, cobbles together bits and pieces from her/his immediate surroundings to help redesign the neighbourhood supplies an apt metaphor to capture the sense of initial strategy involved in generating incremental cultural changes toward more general long-range urban reinhabitation.

Moreover, in the green city program, cultural transformation for individuals and neighbourhoods is integrally linked to broader social and political change. For example, neighborhood character and empowerment (point #5 in the Green City Program above) while it may be initiated through small, local "do-able" projects, simply cannot be fully implemented without broader political change. Neighbourhood empowerment is intricately linked to point #3, sustainable planning, which must involve larger numbers of people in the choices and policy shifts that could determine the ecological functioning of their urban bioregion. Sustainable planning, in turn, is related to all the other dimensions of green city; transportation, urban planting, renewable energy, etc. In this approach, addressing transportation in a comprehensive green city program also means addressing land-use and energy issues. Conserving energy and land-use, as well as promoting the use of renewable energy, may
mean great restrictions in the use of the private automobile. However, adopting energy efficient forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and public transit is linked to proximity policies in land-use planning toward integrated patterns of denser settlements whereby people live, work, shop, and play mostly in the same neighborhood. In such an integrated context of change, local business too can thrive, by supplying the needed goods and services at the smaller scales required for efficiency in dense mixed-use districts. This of course, brings us back, in a second iteration, to neighbourhood character, empowerment, and cultural change.

Planet Drum's "Green City Program", then, is based on and promotes a holistic and comprehensive understanding of visionary long-term societal transformation rooted in incremental cultural, political, and economic change. It suggests (implicitly) a general transformation not only of cities, but of all social, cultural, political, economic, and ecological relationships. This recalls Rappaport's observation that to transform the structure of cities must mean a transformation in the structure of civilization itself.

The San Francisco Bay Area has been a laboratory for urban ecological thought and experiment. Planet Drum and Urban Ecology are just two of many different organizations in civil society working on melding issues of reform and transformation in the Bay Area. By the end of the 1980's, there were 35 citizens' groups working on restoration of the Bay's wetlands with names such as Save San Francisco Bay, San Francisco Bay Keepers, and the Bay Organization for Aquatic Transit. The Save San Francisco Bay Association was founded in 1960 when the Bay was being used as a garbage dump. The Baykeepers use 40 private boats, 3 airplanes, and as many as 250 volunteers to teach people about the ecology of the bay, how to collect evidence of pollution and water quality, and what they can do. Other urban activist groups in the Bay Area of the
1980's included several organizations for stream restoration, the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (founded in 1983 to protect community gardens jeopardized by the loss of government funding), Friends of the Urban Forest, Friends of the River, the Ecology Center, Econet, the Global Cities Project, the Wild in the City Project, the Greenbelt Alliance, People for a Future, the San Francisco Conservation Corps, the California Coastal Conservancy, Youth in Action, social justice groups such as the Community Transformation Forum working on environmental justice issues (to be discussed shortly), the Integral Urban House of the Farallones Institute, and the Earth Island Institute.

Various government agencies and small business groups in the Bay Area bioregion were also involved with projects and new products to meet the growing demand for ecologically sustainable goods and services. It was these groups and many others that came together to share experiences and ideas, to network, and to develop creative solutions toward ecologically healthy cities for four days in the spring of 1990 in the Bay Area at the first "International Ecocity Conference" (Canfield 1990).

By 1990, the San Francisco Bay Area had been a cauldron for ecological thinking and socio-cultural experiment for at least two decades. The accumulation of these local, citizen-initiated efforts has produced a climate for political change. The City of Berkeley had taken the lead in many of these efforts. Berkeley was an appropriate venue for such an international eco-city gathering. The conference was organized by Urban Ecology. Conference co-planning sponsors included; the City of Berkeley, the Cerro Gordo Community, Planet Drum Foundation, and the Elmwood Institute (with which Fritjof Capra was associated). In all, over 750 people from around the world attended the conference, although most (about 700) were from the United States.
proceedings were published by Urban Ecology and the Cerro Gordo Town Forum.

In his report on the conference evaluation by participants, Register noted that many people appreciated the networking opportunities of having 130 speakers and some of the most important innovators in their field in the world. One participant dubbed it a "networking feast" (Canfield 1990, 111-112).

Moreover, summing up the contribution of the conference, Register remarked that the process of the conference:

gave a sense of the whole, a sense that cities can be whole, vital, healthy creations in which architecture, transportation, land use, food-growing, natural restoration, social and political arrangements can play their role connected in meaningful ways to all the other systems and subsystems of the city. And the city itself, seen in the context of its bioregion and planet, was portrayed as it should be understood: as a potentially responsible citizen of our Earth, a friend to all people and all other species. (1990, 5)

On the final day of the conference, subcommittees formed representing women's interests, transportation issues, and issues of social justice, joining their various interests together with those who undertook to draft a conference summary statement. One of the most interesting proposals with respect to building community came from the women's group which proposed that future ecocity conferences be structured to model the way participants would like to live in an actual ecocity. Their suggestions for this restructuring included having fewer speakers, more interaction, more time for discussion and networking, and under the specific topic of "community building", the women proposed a place to breath, sing, and be quiet together as well as more time for festivity and celebration. This approach to organizing major international networking gatherings was closer to the way continental bioregional gatherings have been held where the creation of community has been central (see chapter six).
A summary statement delivered by Afro-American architect Carl Anthony, a board member of both Urban Ecology and the Earth Island Institute, reported that Ecocity participants embraced the interconnection between environmental justice and urban ecology and affirmed "a systems view of life which embraces the interconnectedness of everything on Earth" (Canfield 1990, 113). This linkage of social justice with urban ecology concerns provided a more holistic model of social change than had heretofore been the case in the environmental movement of the 70's and 80's. It reflected the strong participation of some people from the environmental justice movement in the U.S. A short digression is necessary here to identify and describe the environmental justice movement.

The environmental justice movement began in the early 1980's (Bullard and Wright 1990). The movement emerged out of a situation whereby polluting industries had been exploiting the pro-growth and pro-jobs sentiments among poor, working-class and minority communities. However, blacks and other minorities began to challenge the justice of the environment-jobs trade-off. The not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) syndrome which originated in affluent neighborhoods, had finally "trickled down" to nearly all communities, even poor black communities. The environmental justice movement emerged in the deep Southern U.S. where marked ecological disparities exist between black and white communities. In fact, it has taken root in the segregated south just as the civil rights movement of the 1960's did a generation ago. Environmental groups in the black community often emerged out of established social action organizations, including the black church and other voluntary organizations which led the crusade against social injustice and racial discrimination in the earlier civil rights movement (Bullard and Wright 1990). In poor communities, especially poor minority communities on the front lines of toxic waste, disposal dumps, and concentrated petrochemical production facilities, it is not surprising
that residents began to make the connection between racial discrimination, social justice, and habitat destruction. In some cases, the same civil rights leaders and activists have provided leadership for this "new" form of environmentalism. Not surprisingly moreover, the environmental justice movement is employing the tactics of the older civil rights movement; protest, political pressure, lobbying, grassroots organizing, and litigation to address issues of environmental injustice. Black church leaders, community improvement workers and civil rights activists planned and initiated local opposition strategies, helping to mobilize opposition to industrial polluters such as Union Carbide, and hazardous waste dump operators such as Chemical Waste Management which sited their operations in black neighbourhoods (Bullard and Wright 1990).

In San Francisco, Carl Anthony helped to found and co-edit "Race, Poverty and the Environment", a newsletter launched as a project of the Earth Island Institute in April of 1990 as a networking tool for the growing environmental equity movement. Analyzing the situation of the U.S. inner city after the International Ecocity Conference, Anthony drew some connections between suburban sprawl, destruction of forests, and the abandonment of the inner city:

> We chop down the trees to build suburban sprawl. Suburban sprawl eats up farmland on the metropolitan fringe, requires more freeways with attendant congestion, pollution and waste of fossil fuels. In order to pay for this new development ... whole neighborhoods, factory buildings, schools, stores and people must be abandoned. These abandoned neighborhoods become the waste dumps of industrial society, places where poor people and people of colour live. (Linn 1990).
With such strong participation, the International Ecocity Conference in Berkeley seemed to mark a turning point toward a more inclusive and holistic movement for sustainable cities and environmental justice.

In addition to networking, sharing experiences and ideas, and forging a common sensibility among many different groups, another goal of the conference was to communicate their experiences and help bring the ecocity message to a larger audience. The conference received good media coverage and presenters were generally benefited by public communication of their information and imagery. The conference was timed to take place just weeks before the globally successful "Earth Day 1990", promoted by Denis Hayes of the Earth Day Foundation-1990 and the Global Cities Project in San Francisco and organized locally in 134 countries around the globe in the latter part of April. This example shows another key aspect of a societal change strategy; initiating forms of public communication with the political and economic spheres based on the strength of horizontal networks in civil society.

Hayes, who was also instrumental in organizing the first Earth Day in 1970, gave a keynote address to the Ecocity Conference. Hayes spoke about the strength of the environmental movement in the early 1970's in the U.S., reflected in legislative successes after Earth Day 1970 such as: the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Health And Safety Act, and the banning of DDT and lead in gasoline. He noted the large numbers of people and organizations taking part in Earth Day 1990 preparations, but also noted that, in spite of the victories won, the problems we now face are greater. He called for building a stronger movement that had the necessary vision to work toward ecological cities. Moreover, the organizers of the conference were not naive about the extent of the ecological crisis, nor the
need to work even harder to promote the ideas emerging from the convergence of so many different groups and interests.

Constantly throughout the four day event, speakers pointed to the increasing list of global trends that had gotten worse over two decades even as the ecology movement has grown. By building a conference around a networking strategy embracing; environmental justice issues, the importance of inner city community development, and a more vigorous recruitment of minorities, participants helped to advance the vision of the emergent ecological city movement beyond mere environmentalism. Urban ecology - combined with social justice - began to resemble a broader conceptual framework for full socio-cultural and political economic transformation in order to effectively address the global restructuring problem that cities present. This direction was reflected in the conference summary statement delivered by Anthony:

We affirm the interconnection between social institutions and the ecological environment, and embrace the concept of environmental justice as central to urban ecology through sustainable economic development. We seek to protect all non-human species, while recognizing the essential need to protect and empower vulnerable human populations in the very heart of our urban communities. We affirm the systems view of life which embraces the interconnectedness of everything on Earth. We must work to solve the entire spectrum of problems that challenge mankind. (Canfield 1990, 113)

From all of the above examples it is clear that the strategy of structural change envisioned for urban regions is both incremental & visionary, short-term and long-term, cultural & political, economic and social, and relies on the cumulative effect of many different local projects networked laterally across civil society, linking communities of place and communities of interest. Additionally, based on this strategy are forms of public communication and vertical "bridging" with political and economic spheres.
Back at Planet Drum, a continuing determination to advance the Green City Program for the Bay Area was marked by the initiation of a range of projects and actions. In 1990, Planet Drum began fundraising and organizing to build a Green City Centre. They envisioned a centre that would serve the city by highlighting existing green city events and activities and acting as a catalyst for green city work by promoting and coordinating the efforts of individuals, non-profit organizations, municipal government agencies, and businesses. Green City Project coordinator Steven Lewis outlined a series of projects in the planning stages in 1990:

1) Developing a curriculum about native wildlife in San Francisco utilizing restoration projects as a teaching tool.

2) Awarding Green City Seals of Approval to individuals, cooperatives, and local businesses.

3) Helping to publish a monthly newsletter and connecting participant groups via an electronic network.

4) Conducting a series of symposia entitled "Resettling the Urban Environment" to put the current interest in urban sustainability in a broad historical context, and to provide a forum for future recommendations (Lewis 1990, 13).

The Green City Centre would provide space to local groups for workshops, meetings, and talks, as well as volunteers and staff support for cooperative projects. The goal of the centre, as Steven Lewis put it, was to "anticipate the extreme public interest and municipal need for a workable vision of urban transformation based on ecology and sustainability" (ibid). At this time, Planet Drum's "Raise the Stakes" journal began to publish a regular Green City Report based on their activities in the Bay Area. However, due to Planet Drum's inability to raise enough money for the Green City Center, the Green City
Project began to shift focus from physically building the centre to implementing the projects which the centre was intended to house.

The first major project was to create a network for volunteers which they called the "Green City Volunteer Network". Although many participating groups are involved in activities such as habitat restoration, urban gardening, or green city policy initiatives, the network is not restricted to ecological/environmental organizations. Rather, the idea behind this network is that the green city concept is by definition about broad, interconnected realities, so horizontal networking on a very broad basis makes good, strategic sense. One long-term possibility of networking is that the relationships developed eventually form the basis for a broad coalition of communities of place and interest in the city with the political clout to promote policy change at the municipal level in a green city direction.

In the short term, the volunteer network met two important immediate needs: providing extra recruiting assistance for organizations that rely on volunteer support, but do not have the time or resources to recruit them; and "producing incipient bioregionalists" (Gregory 1992). This practical approach informs people who have begun to care for their home place/city and want to help protect and restore it, but do not know what opportunities exist for doing so; the volunteer network informs people about what they can do and where they can go to do it. For example, in the Bay Area many habitat restoration projects already existed, but could never find enough volunteers. A volunteer network addresses this problem.

The Green City Volunteer Network was launched in July, 1991. In a few months, the network made referrals for 38 volunteers to 27 ecological organizations. One year later, the Volunteer Network was referring volunteers to over 110 ecological and environmental organizations in the Bay Area. The
network continued to grow. By 1996, the network was referring more than 200 persons per month to over 400 ecological and urban sustainability groups (Planet Drum Staff 1996). By 1998, the network served some 455 organizations in the Bay Area.

Soon after the network was up and running, Planet Drum's Green City Project launched a quarterly "Green City Calendar" to aid in the networking effort by highlighting volunteer opportunities around the Bay Area through publishing a volunteer directory for the volunteer network organizing effort. Funding was obtained from a private foundation to include a newsletter as a part of the calendar. Activities of local groups could now be reported on. The calendar was becoming an especially valuable tool for youth and school groups. Publication of the calendar by the Volunteer Network helped to increase membership in the Network. Production of the calendar increased to 5,000 copies per issue. The calendar became a bi-monthly publication. Distribution was increased as well to health food stores, outdoor supply stores, cafes, community centres, libraries, barber shops, schools, and bookstores throughout the Bay Area. Membership in the Green City Project increased from 5 people to 174 in the space of one year (Planet Drum Staff 1995). Volunteer network directories, such as the one in the Bay Area, are one tool to facilitate the involvement of new people in the movement and in the formation of social and eco-social capital. Given the huge size of the volunteer sector (see chapter two), this tool holds potential as an important key for social capital formation.

A third dimension of the Green City Project - to hold regular "workshop workdays" - was launched in 1993. At workshop workdays (or "Green City Work Parties"), volunteers receive both educational talks and hands-on training while enjoying great food and fun. Each work party has at least two sponsoring organizations to encourage cooperation and communication between groups.
At one of the early workshops, Planet Drum and the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners joined with the Community Housing Partnership, a nonprofit low-income housing developer, to finish the construction and planting of a rooftop garden at the Senator Hotel, a federally-funded low-income housing project. Other workshop workdays have included: helping daylight and restore Cordonicls Creek in Berkeley, installing a large terraced garden at a San Francisco high school, launching a storm-drain stenciling (Save the Bay - Don't Dump) campaign, coordinating the participation of ecological organizations in the San Francisco Carnival (the largest multi-cultural celebration on the west coast), building a community garden in San Francisco's Mission District, and restoring a Native American village site in Marin County. Workshop workdays increased to one per month (Planet Drum Staff 1993, 1996). All of these projects in ecological and cultural restoration contribute to the development of bonds of common experiential information, as well as norms of cooperation and civic solidarity through shared work on the projects.

In 1994, a fourth program was initiated, entitled "Education Plus Action". This program coordinates hands-on bioregional education for Bay Area educators from Volunteer Network groups to Bay Area classrooms. Topics include: urban forestry, endangered species, urban planting, gardening and composting, green consumerism, air pollution, alternative energy, recycling, habitat restoration, creek restoration, environmental justice, alternative transportation, and bioregionalism. The program coordinator organizes both a classroom lesson and a hands-on activity for the day. Programs can be tailored to student and classroom needs. This program has grown in tandem with the Volunteer Network.

Taken as a whole, the Green City Project is viewed by its proponents as a long-term practical implementation of Planet Drum's Green City Program for
San Francisco Bay Area Cities and Towns. Its success to date is reflected in the continued growth of the program over the eight years since its inception, reflected in part by the growth of organizations using the network from 27 in 1991 to 455 in 1998 (see above). An example of how this program works to build local community capacity through a combined application of bioregional tools (discussed in chapter four) is provided by a look at one East Oakland high school's Environmental Justice Project. This example, published in the "Green City Calendar" (Lanza 1998), also shows how a city-wide network can act to serve a neighbourhood community, strengthening both in the process. The social capital created acts as a resource for all groups in the network as well as for the network organizing group.

The biology teacher at Castelmont High School, Marc Borbley, wanted to plan an environmental justice project for 150 of his students. He began by assigning his students to collect articles from the daily papers related to human health and the environment. He also encouraged his students to share their own stories of environmental health and social justice with the rest of the class. Meanwhile, he researched local environmental justice groups through Green City's Education Plus Action program as well as other neighbourhood organizations. He also met with community organizers from the Women's Cancer Resource Centre, Chester Street Block Club, and the EPA's Environmental Justice Team.

Then, Borbley began a community mapping program with his students. He had the students work in small groups to map their neighbourhoods, including every detail of where they live: homes, recreation areas and parks, community centers, factories, businesses, drug alleys and "crack" houses, polluted places, scary places, places they liked to hang out, and places they weren't allowed to go. The students mapped all this and more, including
dangerous intersections where drivers sped through stop signs. Next, the maps were consolidated into a larger illustration of the district. Borbley and the community organizers then explained to the students the importance of understanding one's place in order to facilitate sufficient local empowerment to establish and protect health and safety.

The next step in the coming school year will be for the students to learn to collect data from the community by interviewing friends, family, and neighbours about their personal health, including a history of respiratory diseases, chronic colds and flu, and cancer. Then, the students will map the proximity of sick people to industrial areas and probably learn that there are more factories in communities of colour than in Euro-American or higher income neighbourhoods. The final step planned in the mapping process will be to re-create the community map in an idealized green version, pointing to empty lots that could be greened as recreation spaces, where more business is needed, where a stop light is needed to slow down traffic, which factories should be reported for air pollution, etc. Eventually, Borbley's classes hope to paint a mural of their maps at the entrance to the school. In the meantime, they are learning how to work cooperatively together as they educate themselves and their community. Finally, the students will give their findings to community organizations to assist in furthering the Environmental Justice movement.

This project illustrates the use of a community mapping and learning process that draws together a base of common experiential knowledge about the place they live in. Through their shared work, the students learn about their place, they learn how to map, and they begin to develop norms of cooperation and civic solidarity. Through sharing their findings with other community organizations for environmental justice, they will begin to learn about networking and networks as resources for community groups and individuals.
In this account of the Bay Area, we have seen contextualized examples of the development and initial implementation of an envisioned long-term bioregional strategy for the social, political, and economic restructuring of an urban area through the incremental and cumulative building of a movement for democratic societal transformation. As the examples show, it is a strategy that promotes cultural change in civil society through the cumulative effect of many small do-able projects that foster norms of cooperation, civic solidarity, and mutual aid. Tools used in the strategy, include cultural and ecological restoration, bioregional education, mapping, and a volunteer network directory/green city calendar tool for networking and movement building. This strategy relies on creating small activist "seed" groups and horizontal networks in civil society, combined with building public communication and "bridging" links to political and economic spheres.

Together, the use of the tools and the strategy have been successful in connecting and building a large network of organizations in Bay Area civil society. Also, the strategy of the "Green City Program" for the Bay Area has been communicated to many individuals and organizations. Planet Drum has distributed 18,000 copies of their Green City Program for San Francisco Bay Area Cities and Towns (Judy Goldhaft 11 February, 1999, personal communication).

Vancouver

The City of Vancouver is located, along with a number of smaller cities, in the lower Fraser River basin on British Columbia's southwest coast (see map in appendix A-10). Two mountain ranges, the Northern Cascades and the Canadian Coastal Range meet to form the eastern end of the lower Fraser
valley. Together with the other natural boundary, the salt waters of the Strait of Georgia, the mountains form a triangular shaped delta and valley which stretches inland for 160 Kms. to where the two ranges meet. The valley was sculpted out by glaciers and contains rich glacial and fluvial tills. The climate is characterized by cool, wet, long winters and fairly short, dry summers. The soils and the climate support a favourable growing season for agriculture and there is an extensive agricultural land reserve in the valley (Wynn and Oke 1992).

The total population of the region is over 1.8 million people (Healey 1997, 16). Most of the region is mountainous. Nearly all human settlement is in the valley bottom below the 200 metre level putting pressure on space for agriculture as the human population continues to grow, especially in several suburban areas where the growth rate is very high and the agricultural land reserve is primarily located. Most of the original forest cover has been stripped away for human settlement, agriculture, and industry. The net primary productivity of this landscape is now only just over 40% of that of the original ecosystem (Healey 1997, 15-16, 21-25). Concentrations of air pollutants can be as high as in Los Angeles (City of Vancouver 1990, 17). Air pollution which gets trapped in the airshed between the two mountain ranges (particularly in the narrower eastern portions of the valley when there is a temperature inversion) has become a growing threat to the health of the region's population. The primary source of the air pollution is the one million motor vehicles in the valley (City of Vancouver 1990, 17; GVRD 1994, 5). Land-use, transportation, and health are thus major issues in the valley.

Vancouver is Canada's largest sea-port. Trade, financial services, communications, banking, tourism, and the export of raw materials particularly pulp, paper, and timber from the hinterlands of British Columbia are the generators of the city's success. The economy is well diversified with a
substantial regional market and an educated workforce. Access to relatively cheap hydroelectric power, natural gas, and coal in the province's hinterlands have given the city a competitive edge compared to Toronto, Montreal, or Los Angeles (GVRD 1994).

While an ecological or green city vision for Vancouver and its region did not emerge until the mid 1990's, the city and the region have a relatively rich history of civic action as well as a relatively strong awareness of environmental issues. In the early 1970's, a citizens' movement prevented the construction of an expressway into the heart of the city. At that time too, the international Habitat Conference held in Vancouver's Jerico Park helped inform and fuel environmental concerns among the residents. Traditionally, there has also been a relatively strong labour movement in Vancouver. Also, as Barton Reid pointed out at the "Democracy and Regional Governance" conference in April 1995, Vancouver's clearly defined valley topography and its more limited land base have contributed to making the conservation and protection of land and air resources more compelling concerns to decision makers in Vancouver compared to Seattle or Portland. These same concerns have helped to fuel citizens' involvement and mobilization in the planning process. Beginning with the Livable Region Planning Process initiated by Harry Lash in the early seventies, the idea that citizens should be intimately involved in the planning process has become part of the accepted discourse about planning in this region (Reid 1994).

The end of the nineteen eighties marked a near global upswing in public concern over environmental issues. In Vancouver, the increase in awareness about environmental issues was accompanied by increased citizen involvement in planning processes and in self-organized activity. For example, the Forum for Planning Action, formed in 1989, sought increased citizen participation in
planning for livable communities and sustainable resource management. In 1992, neighbourhood organizations all over the city were beginning to form coalitions concerned with having more effective input on decision-making at City Council and to take the necessary steps "to bring about better neighbourhood governance" (Lehan 1994). Eventually they formed a broad city-wide coalition called "Neighbour to Neighbour". Another group, "Community Steps to Regional Governance", formed in 1992 out of concern that proposed restructuring of the Greater Vancouver Regional District might render this regional body less accountable and less democratic. Also in 1992, a number of organizations formed the Lower Mainland Drinking Water Coalition over the issue of logging in the watersheds used for the city's water supply. In 1993, the Vancouver Permaculture Network was formed to provide a forum for discussion and to coordinate permaculture training workshops. Also, many citizen's circles formed as part of the Vancouver City Plan process in which about 20,000 people actively took part by making submissions and attending events (City of Vancouver 1992). However, in spite of this burgeoning civic activity there was no organization around a bioregional green city vision.

A comprehensive, explicitly green or ecological city vision and activity to promote it did not emerge in Vancouver until the "Greening Our Cities" conference in May of 1994. The Greening Our Cities Conference and the EcoCity Network which was conceived during the conference advanced an overall vision of ecological cities in the lower Fraser River valley for the first time. Since the conference, the EcoCity Network has begun to organize a number of activities in civil society to work toward raising awareness about and working to implement eco-city principles and values in the region. This is the story of how that work began and its relation to bioregional community building and networking in civil society.
The conference was organized over a one year period by a small, self-appointed steering committee of social ecologists, ecofeminists, bioregionalists, and First Nations people, including this writer. Some came from organizations such as the Social Planning and Research Council of BC, the VanCity Savings Credit Union, the United Native Nations, and the Musqueam First Nation. The combined experience of this group in social movement organizing was quite extensive (observation as a participant). Their long-term goal was to bring a broad spectrum of people together to build a "green cities" movement in the Vancouver region. Conference planning took over one year. They hoped the conference would act as a catalyst to enable the groups and individuals working in related areas to begin effective networking and coordination of already ongoing local activities in order to have a bigger impact on public awareness and on local and regional governmental decision-making (Van City Savings Credit Union 1994). In the handout distributed to the press and public, the aim of the conference was "to start building on and developing a green city vision that promotes both ecological and social well-being in the Vancouver region" (ibid).

Over 250 people attended the week-end conference at the Maritime Labour Centre. The conference included keynote speakers David Suzuki, Chief Leonard George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Peter Berg of Planet Drum Foundation in San Francisco, Nancy Skinner (municipal counselor and green city activist from Berkeley), Marcia Nozick (editor of City Magazine), and politicians Libby Davies, Jenny Kwan, and BC Minister of Municipal Affairs, Darlene Marzari. Panel discussions focused on three major topics: "Visions of Living With the Land in the City" (transportation, land-use, and urban ecology); "Visions of Community Well-Being"; and "Acting on Green City Visions" (Litke et al. 1994). Twenty-two media representatives also attended the conference.
which received a good deal of press coverage from small independent publications.

Speakers on the panels represented a mix of environmental, social justice, and First Nations interests. The conference Steering Committee (which operated by consensus process) had ensured such a mix during the planning stage. The group was united on the necessity of integrating environmental and social justice issues in any green city vision that might emerge. The conference itself became a venue for networking across these two sets of issues. The second day of the conference was designed to encourage acting on the vision. Panelists Skinner, Berg, Nozick, and Davies spoke about successful examples of local actions toward ecological cities in Berkeley, San Francisco, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. Berg, an effective public speaker, also presented a bioregional context for green city visioning which inspired conference participants. Berg frankly acknowledged the obstacle of "trying to create a constituency for the alien concept that cities can be sustainable", but he argued that our strategic task was precisely to "create a constituency for change at the grassroots level" (Litke et al. 1994, 26).

Small group discussions all focused on the overall theme of acting locally in the Vancouver region, while each dealt with a particular theme, including: land use and housing, green spaces and restoration, transportation, food in the city, community economic development, decision-making processes, green city neighbourhood discussion circles, First Nations/Green City issues, fair trade, spirituality, and the important question of the creation of a green city network (Litke et al. 1994, 29-38)). In addition to including the creation of a green city network topic in the discussion groups, there were long "networking" coffee and lunch breaks for informal get-togethers and a Saturday evening
cabaret which provided another occasion for informal networking and socializing.

While the Steering Committee members did not use the term "social capital", it is clear that they were attempting to encourage the participants to network horizontally both formally and informally in several settings. The small groups were viewed as an important part of this strategy. At the conference, the small group discussions were a key to the success of the conference in planning ongoing actions and networking. A high amount of energy and enthusiasm was produced out of the small group work which was evident in the energetic final plenary and spirited closing circle of participants (observation and conversations with several participants).

In the small workshop groups it was recognized that, in attempting to "green" built environments in the city, a framework that enables society to work with the physical flows of the city such as energy use, water use, waste management, food production, and land-use was needed. Small groups recommended: acting on the potential food production of the bioregion for "bioregional food production"; an interconnected green spaces and restoration strategy for biodiversity protection based on a specific knowledge of this bioregion; and, urban planning and development that adopted an integrated, multiple-use approach to resources and the environment "with a bioregional focus" (1994, 31-33). It was also recognized that for the protection and restoration of "green spaces" a greater public understanding of and familiarity with the bioregion was fundamental.

In addition to this bioregional focus, the conference produced a range of ecological or green city ideas similar to those already reviewed including: mixed-use urban densification, a strong policy on developing an urban forest, community economic development, the use of more equitable and inclusive
decision-making processes such as consensus, and an additional idea, the use of the "ecological footprint tool" to assist in evaluating land-use design and strategy (1994, 31-34).

In their evaluations of the conference, both participants and organizers recognized successes in terms of real networking among a diversity of people, the sharing of experiences and stories and practical examples, and the action orientation of the conference. Indeed, the two major goals of the steering committee; the emergence of an initial green city vision for the Vancouver region by a broad diversity of interests and the creation of an intention and a momentum to form some kind of ongoing organization had been achieved. First, the Conference Declaration agreed by consensus decision process (1994, 1) to seek a green Vancouver region through linking ecological sustainability with social justice. The conference also declared a united commitment to create a more powerful sustainability movement to influence decision-making in the region and to "promote an approach to community sustainability which links urban ecology, social justice, and healthy community-based economic development". Given the diversity of people and interests represented at the conference, the declaration marked an advance in consciousness away from mere environmentalism toward a more comprehensive understanding of the crisis of civilization. Indeed, the Conference Declaration recognized a "direct connection" between the health of the planet and the greening of our cities and noted "the urgency and depth of change that is necessary" (1994,1). In this sense, the conference more than met the hopes of its steering committee. Not only had the conference participants linked urban ecology to social justice, but they had also grounded these broader concerns in their commitment to pursue a long-term community-focused strategy in the lower Fraser valley with a bioregional focus for urban restructuring. They had also openly recognized the
global character of the problem and the consequent depth of change necessary to implement ecological cities. In the final afternoon of the conference, the Conference Declaration was endorsed unanimously and quickly by consensus, giving a palpable energy rush, a sense of accomplishment, and some forward momentum for the commitment to build a stronger movement in the region.

The second major goal achieved was the initiation of a process to create an eco-city network. Again, consensus process was used effectively in the small group of about 20 people that in two hours brainstormed and agreed on a common understanding of the goal of such a network (personal observation). The network was seen as a means to continue the momentum of the conference. Six important functions of the network were identified including information, communication, education, advocacy, outreach/building constituency, and social interaction and fun. The network was viewed as a structure to help develop and support grassroots actions. Key to this role was the provision of a communication system to help "mobilize groups and projects beyond merely responding to government and business initiatives" (Litke et al. 1994, 29). Participatory process was seen as essential to bringing people together through "an inclusive process that enables maximum participation from agenda setting to carrying out actions" (ibid). Other ideas discussed included a network/directory linking volunteers with groups (similar to that run by Planet Drum in San Francisco suggested by Berg at the conference), a demonstration "eco-village", building networking into our various existing organizations, and ultimately, building a green city coalition strong enough to affect decision-making in the region. The ongoing story of the network will be explored shortly.

Spirituality is often a controversial topic and usually avoided at explicitly "political" conferences in civil society. This was not the case with the Greening Our Cities conference. Spirituality was acknowledged as a deep human need
in the closing circle as well as in the small group that explicitly addressed spiritual concerns. In the small group that met specifically on the topic of spirituality, spirituality was linked to both the acknowledgment of interconnection with all living beings and to a sense of "wholeness, unity, a sense of meaning and purpose in our lives" (Litke et al. 1994, 37). It was recognized as well that spirituality, in the sense of regaining a sacred connection with the land, is not so much something new as it is a rediscovery. The group acknowledged that Western culture can learn vital lessons from the continuing spiritual connection and understanding of the natural world of "many traditional and contemporary First Nations communitites" and the acknowledgment and respect of "elders" and their experience and wisdom (Litke et al. 1994, 38). Finally, there was also an understanding that rituals, cultural celebrations, and seasonal rites of passage can help both in recognizing the sacredness of life and as a tool to assist in building community. This understanding was reported in the conference proceedings:

Community-based rituals or gatherings can help us to come together more as a community. A 'council of all beings' is such a ritual or gathering with the purpose of experiencing and/or representing the interests of other life forms and species. Other suggestions for action included planting rituals and/or guerrilla gardening, setting up a garden site (on roadides, neighbourhoods, etc.). The suggestion was also made to advocate that a spiritual element (opening ceremony, circle, holding hands) be included in various meetings, conferences, workshops, and other gatherings working towards the goal of sustainable and livable communities. (Litke et al. 1994, 38).

With such positive sentiments among its participants, it is not surprising that the last suggestion (to include a spiritual element in their own meetings) was immediately implemented in the closing ceremony of the conference. With spirits already high from the energy of the small groups, all the participants joined hands in a huge circle to celebrate the achievements of the conference,
to commune together, and to lift spirits in mutual song. The song chosen was a chant, one often sung at earth-gatherings and bioregional gatherings:

We are the dance of the moon and sun,
We are the power in everyone,
We are the hope that will never die,
We are the turning of the tide. (Litke et al. 1994, 37)

In the proceedings this song was reprinted, accompanied by one of the graffiti posters done as part of the days activities. In the poster, a child-like drawing depicts everyone standing in a circle holding hands. In the circle there is a large, very rooted tree, a big heart, two people connected by heart and mind, a flower mandala, and a yin-yang symbol. Both the song and the drawing reflected in some measure the bonding feelings that were experienced by participants in the final circle. There were many hugs after the final circle. (personal observation and conversations with participants after the circle was over).

This circle ceremony done in the light ritual style noted above marked an active, spiritual beginning to eco-city network building in the Vancouver region. The use of consensus, small group circles, ceremony, sharing experiences and stories, brainstorming, visioning, singing and holding hands together in a circle facilitated the bonding of participants to each other. In one sense, the bonding was an initial, embodied experience of the benefits of networking among the participants themselves. Here again, we see another example of the initial formation of social and eco-social capital through the combined effect of several community building tools that facilitate spiritual intellectual, emotional and visceral dimensions of directly experienced bonds of community.

The first meeting of the EcoCity Network took place about six weeks later at the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) building. This
and subsequent gatherings of the network were planned to encourage a community feeling/atmosphere for participants rather than the conventional "business" environment of many social movement meetings. All the network gatherings have integrated a social and/or cultural component, usually a potluck supper and informal time for chatting and meeting other people. The first four gatherings continued the consensus process initiated at the Greening Our Cities Conference. Participants felt strongly that all who came to these gatherings should be fully included in the decision-making process. Moreover, every network meeting included a brief history of what had occurred to date in order to bring newcomers into the process. This allowed new people to join in the discussions intelligently from the beginning. In this way, the group as a whole was able to more quickly consolidate past progress and make newcomers feel more a part of the process from the start. The first gathering at SPEC informed everyone on what had transpired at the Green City Conference and began exploring and deliberating the six functions identified at the conference. By the fourth gathering, consensus had been reached on the six functions of the network and three models had emerged as alternatives to begin implementing.

The first model was geographically based. In it, the network would focus on a single geographic community, perhaps to work on creating or enhancing a "model community." The second model was issue-based. Here the network would focus on a single issue throughout a number of geographic communities. The third model was to become a forum for ideas and action. In this model, the network would provide venues for networking, information exchange and a starting base for action. A decision was taken to try the forum model with the understanding that nothing was written in stone and if it did not work the network could try something else.
For the next 1 1/2 years, the EcoCity Network (the name adopted for the organization) held a series of four public forums, each beginning with a potluck dinner and social, on a variety of topics from "What's Stopping Sustainability? Barriers to Change" to "Restoring the Urban Landscape in Greater Vancouver: Hands-on Restoration Ecology, Social Justice & Community Development". Each forum was planned to explore the connections among issues and to bring together different interest groups working on the issues. Attendance at the fora varied from about 50 to 70 participants. However, by the end of this period many of the eco-city activists became increasingly critical of the forum format. True, the fora had worked to assist face to face networking and many new connections were being made. On the other hand, the circle of face to face networkers was no longer growing and the fora were not getting very much media coverage. Also, many of the activists involved as participants in the network wanted more direct action. Through another consensus process participants decided to adopt a very loose structure of more or less autonomous committees.

One important point of discussion on which consensus could not be reached was whether to focus on issue-based or geographically-based work. The committee structure that emerged reflected this ongoing tension. One committee took on a geographic focus, volunteering to work on creating and promoting a vision of sustainable development on the largely municipally owned industrial lands of Southeast False Creek. By contrast, another committee coalesced around the issue of transportation. A third committee became centered on the importance of networking and soon focused on the project of creating an EcoCity volunteer directory and newsletter for the Vancouver region. A fourth committee was organized initially around housing and community planning issues in the Downtown Eastside, a low-income
district in the central city. It was also agreed that the EcoCity Network would continue to meet once or twice per year to socialize, share experiences of the various committees, and assess the progress of their work. Since that time the committees have operated autonomously. The network has met annually to evaluate and celebrate the work. Two EcoCity "cabarets" have also been held featuring poetry, stories, songs, and - at one of the cabarets - a report and slide show of the seventh continental bioregional gathering.

In addition to the creation of a real network of people connected through the public fora and network meetings, the EcoCity Network has - through the work of some of the committees - spawned several ongoing projects. One of these is the EcoCity "ActLocally Calendar", inspired by the volunteer directory and Green City Calendar concept of Planet Drum presented by Berg at the Greening Our Cities Conference. This project was put together by the newsletter/volunteer directory committee on which this writer sat. The newsletter idea quickly metamorphosed into a "calendar", designed as a free community service, which lists events and projects for any groups under the broad Eco-City headings of ecological sustainability, social justice, and community economic development. The bi-monthly calendar includes a volunteer directory that assists active groups and would be volunteers to connect. Through their work together the calendar group members slowly formed themselves into an editorial collective, as they referred to it. Of course, all tasks fell to the group, including fundraising, policy setting, and calendar production.

The volunteer coordinator of the Suzuki Foundation, Caterina Geuer, was recruited to the group. She, in turn, recruited three more including two design and production people and a journalism school graduate. Shortly after, the woman who had organized the press outreach at the Greening Our Cities
conference, Tonya Rehder, also joined the group. In a short space of time, a volunteer team had formed that had all the professional experience, training, and political savvy needed to produce a small, social movement calendar/newspaper, and to make serious funding proposals. With some financial support from VanCity, matched by the Suzuki Foundation along with some other private sector small local business donations, the group was ready to put out the calendar. The first two issues were published bi-monthly in Common Ground magazine, with a circulation of 65,000 in the Lower Mainland. Another 25,000 of the first issue also went out in the Vancouver Echo. The calendar and volunteer directory portion of ActLocally made up only one half of the entire calendar, the centrespread. There were also short articles featuring local groups and issues, a bioregional almanac, and a map of the bioregion of the lower Fraser basin named Salmonopolis by another group that had formed out of an Eco-City networking meeting, the Barefoot Cartographers (to be discussed shortly).

The calendar group soon gelled into a solid editorial collective partly through using consensus well, partly through socializing together before meetings, partly through using lots of humour during meetings, and partly because the spread of skills among the collective was so well mixed for producing and promoting this type of publication. The group also began to have some social gatherings apart from "meeting times", forming strong collegial bonds and soon thereafter some real friendships. Individuals from a range of civic groups in Vancouver congratulated the group for the obvious success of the calendar in supplying this public service for environmental and social justice groups in civil society. Comments of support from groups in civil society from the files of the calendar include:
It is a terrific tool for encouraging community participation and I thank you and your colleagues for all your hard work on this project. - Moira Teevan, Community & Environment Specialist, VanCity.

The Calendar lets us see at a glance what is going on, informs us that we are not alone, and tells us where we can meet others of like mind. This is the beginning of rediscovering a community and a vision of what we can work towards. - David Suzuki, Founder and Chair, David Suzuki Foundation.

I feel that the Calendar is a great service for community organizations. My experience is that it's reached a wide and varied audience and has been passed among friends. We're getting calls three months after our notice for volunteers first appeared - from as far away as Quebec. - Leslie Stern, Project Coordinator, B.C. Women's Housing Coalition.

The ActLocally Calendar is vital to our volunteer recruitment. We receive quite a number of calls about our volunteer positions after each issue is published. We're really pleased with the response! - Tammy Keatch, Regional Manager, The Evergreen Foundation.

I really enjoy getting my hands on your calendar ... it's contents have been regurgitated on the Wednesday Rational at Coop Radio! - Dave Olsen, Ethical Environmental Consultants.

ActLocally is wonderful. NWPS has received many calls through the calendar and many of my "less eco" friends have been stimulated by what they have read! We continue to get calls for programs and volunteers from the calendar - so it's working great. Thanks so much! - Andrea Stevens, Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society.

The ActLocally Calendar is wonderful - An important resource for the community. The bi-monthly calendar looks great to us and we're honoured to be included in the "Ongoing" part of the calendar. - Pru Moore, 20/20 Vision.

The calendar is an effective form of publicity for us - Ian Marcuse, The Down to Earth Building Bee.

Thank you for printing our information. The previous ActLocally Calendars have been very interesting, visually appealing and relevant and I look forward to seeing the next issue. - Joy Schellenberg, Oxfam Canada.

With such enthusiastic responses, the calendar group grew stronger together, and more ambitious.
A sense had developed among the members that the calendar networking service and the EcoCity message should reach out more to the mainstream, the general public. They struck a sub-committee to begin negotiating with the "Georgia Straight", a weekly newspaper with a news and entertainment format, a circulation of 110,000 and more mainstream demographics than "Common Ground" (the magazine with which they first published) which remained an alternative, somewhat new age publication. In addition, Lawrence Buser, the managing editor of Common Ground had developed a strong interest in the calendar from working with the calendar design and production crew to produce the first two issues in Common Ground. Then, he was suddenly fired from Common Ground after which he joined the calendar team as a volunteer. This gave the team the technical ability to provide camera ready copy to any publisher, using the most up to date programming available. The calendar left Common Ground.

After publishing and distributing a couple of issues independently, an arrangement was worked out with the Georgia Straight for a bi-monthly centrespread with the help of Liane Ross, one of the organizers of Earth Day/98 Vancouver who had also joined the calendar collective. The first issue in the Straight appeared in February, 1998. Ross brought experience in event management and fundraising to the calendar group. Advertising in the form of small business sponsorships began to be more consistently sought and delivered. Currently, the calendar group is initiating a campaign to raise enough funds to be able to publish on a monthly basis so that the service to local groups and individuals is expanded. Here is an example of the effective emergence of social capital among a small, well-organized consensus group consciously building norms of cooperation, mutual aid, and civic solidarity.
among themselves while promoting these norms as widely as possible in civil society through public communication.

Another project that emerged from the Eco-City Network process was a bioregional mapping group. This group began when I called for some volunteers who wanted to help me begin a bioregional mapping group after I had given a short presentation on bioregional mapping at an Eco-City meeting in October of 1994. Six to seven people volunteered immediately. I also asked Doug Aberley to join us and he agreed. At the first meeting on Oct. 20 Don Alexander, one of the people who had been on the steering committee of the Greening Our Cities Conference, presented a map of the Pudget Sound-Georgia Strait basin made specially for the conference to the budding cartographers. This symbolic gift marked the beginning of the bioregional mapping group. After an introduction to bioregionalism and bioregional mapping by Aberley, the group began to discuss what scale and area we wanted to map and decided as a first approximation to consider the lower Fraser basin. We brainstormed a preliminary list of themes we wanted to map.

The map group has operated since the beginning with a rough and ready style of very informal consensus. After several more meetings, the group had still not decided precisely what area to map. There was much discussion about boundaries both cultural and natural. In the meantime, people chose themes to map and began to gather information for their respective thematic maps. In those early meetings we also decided that, while our ultimate purpose was public education and consciousness raising, our first audience was ourselves. We all wanted to learn more about our home region and saw this project as the best way to do it. Finally, in January of 1995 after much discussion about a nested series of maps from the huge scale of Cascadia to the Georgia Strait/Pudget Sound Basin to another base map created by Aberley of the
Sunshine Coast, Squamish, Lillooet, Lower Fraser and Nooksack River watersheds (appendix A-11), the group agreed to focus their data collecting efforts on the Lower Fraser and the Nooksack River watersheds (appendix A-10). Liz Groggan, a woman who had married into the Mount Currie First Nation band and was visiting the map group that evening, was already beginning to map the Lillooet watershed herself. There was also a possibility that a watershed group in Squamish would map their watershed (adjacent to the lower Fraser/Burrard Inlet). So the Lower Fraser was a logical choice. More importantly though, the map group members felt the strongest identity with the Lower Fraser. Bounded on the north by the Coastal Mountains, on the east and south by the Cascades, and on the west by the river mouth and Strait of Georgia, this region formed an easily identifiable river delta and valley section framed by these two mountain ranges. At that same meeting David McClosky, another experienced bioregional mapper and writer visiting from Seattle, spoke about bioregional mapping as a culture creating process. Indeed, the bioregion boundary was becoming more clear to the participants through comparing existing maps of the area and through intensive discussion. A base map team formed to work on the first base map, but the initial format proved to be too large. A second base map was then produced by the base map team. The group spent most of one evening brainstorming and discussing names for the bioregion. Finally, we chose "Salmonopolis", since all five species of salmon still spawn in the Fraser River system and the salmon is an indicator species for the health of the watershed. Salmonopolis was also the historical name for Steveston, originally a fishing village on the main arm of the Fraser. At the same time the group began planning field trips to explore first hand the boundaries of the bioregion as a way to "ground truth" our initial, tentative boundary decision.
The practice of going to a nearby pub after the meeting soon developed. People socialized, got to know each other better, and began to form stronger bonds. At first, map (and pub) meetings took place every two weeks. The first field trip took place on a Sunday. The group met for pancake breakfast, then took off for the southwest corner of the bioregion, the Lummi Nation reserve near Bellingham, Washington. We also went up the Nooksack watershed to Mount Baker, or Koma Kulshan (the great white watcher), as the Nooksack people call it. The field trip did indeed help a lot with our ground-truthing process. Equally important, the day trip also helped to strengthen the growing bonds among the participants. A series of longer map meetings took place which also helped form bonds among the mappers.

We managed to raise some expense money to cover the cost of materials through Van City Credit Union. This required us to name our group. We chose the name "Barefoot Cartographers" as a play on China's barefoot doctors and, by using grizzly bear footprints as a logo, we also gave a nod to the grizzly, the "classic umbrella species of conservation biology" and "pre-eminent indicator of wildness" (Grumbine 1992, 66). Then, Aberley was asked if we could produce some maps for Clean Air Day. Aberley and myself volunteered to produce four thematic maps of air quality issues which were displayed at the downtown art gallery on Clean Air Day, our first public map display.

However, over the next few months the initial momentum of the group diminished. Through their own life circumstances several members left the group, some to go to other cities. One woman returned to school in September and could no longer volunteer the time needed to participate in the map group. The time needed for thematic research of a major urban region proved to be far beyond our expectations. Everyone in the group had other major commitments, including Aberley and myself. Meetings were rescheduled to every three weeks,
then to once per month. The work slowed down considerably. Nevertheless, the remaining core of five or six mappers struggled on, slowly gathering information on a number of themes for another 2 years.

Finally, Aberley - with the agreement of the mappers - worked out an arrangement for his bioregional map class at the School of Community and Regional Planning to produce 51 thematic maps using the base map created by the Barefoot Cartographers (see maps in appendix A-12). Map group participants met with Aberley's class three times over the course of the winter semester of 1998 to: discuss the vision of Salmonopolis motivating the cartographers; to view, discuss and give feedback on the progress of the maps; and to attend the final presentation at the end of term. Soon after the students finished the maps, through an arrangement between the Barefoot Cartographers and the people organizing Earth Day, the completed maps went on display for Earth Day at the Vancouver Public Library downtown. As part of the day’s activities, Aberley’s students presented and explained their maps in a workshop. The cartographers now intend to use the 2’ by 3’ maps for more public workshops and as the basis, along with photos of the bioregion and some historical maps, for slide and slide-tape shows to help raise public awareness about the bioregion through workshops and seminars. An informal 11’ by 17” atlas is also envisioned. As noted, several of the bioregion maps have been published in the EcoCity ActLocally Calendar to help raise public consciousness about the bioregion.

A third autonomous sub-committee of the EcoCity Network formed around the geographically-based issue of promoting the creation of an eco-city village (or model) in the downtown core on the city-owned former industrial lands of South East False Creek, a salt water inlet. Peoples' hopes for implementing a model eco-village rose significantly when Vancouver City
Counsel decided to explore the possibility of using the 50 acre South East False Creek site as a model for sustainable development at the end of 1994. At that time several local groups became motivated to promote the idea and mobilize to ensure that the city live up to its decision. Students at Virtual High School, an alternative educational institution, developed a proposal for a model sustainable community with the encouragement and guidance of the head of the school, Brent Cameron. They garnered some media attention for the idea with a multi-media presentation of their model. Both the Environmental Youth Alliance and Designers for Social Responsibility began to lobby the city to maintain its commitment to sustainable development in the area. Some geography students at Simon Fraser University developed a comprehensive and detailed vision statement called Sustainable Options for the South East False Creek Site. Interest in the possibilities of an alternative sustainable development model project on the site grew. Activists began to believe they could have some timely and effective influence on city hall. It was in this environment that the sub-committee of the EcoCity Network began to meet.

This group of about 12 activists met for the first time in March of 1996. They spoke mostly about outreach, networking, and the situation of South East False Creek. They decided to use consensus process in their meetings. After the first meeting, the outreach work began. They contacted a range of local groups and invited them to a second meeting at the Native Education Centre. Groups represented included: the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Association, the Mount Pleasant Healthy Community Committee, the Brewery Creek Historical Society, the Environmental Youth Alliance, Virtual High, Farm Folk/City Folk, Lower Mainland Network For Affordable Housing, Downtown Eastside Residents' Association, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, Designers for Social Responsibility, and Tenants' Rights Action Coalition. This
was a larger meeting (40-50 people) at the Carnegie Community Centre in the downtown eastside. At that meeting a decision was taken to form the South East False Creek Working Group. The Environmental Youth Alliance offered to contribute one half-time campaign coordinator from their paid staff time. This assistance promised to strengthen the volunteers work. From this point on, the activists from the EcoCity Network interested in the geographically-based struggle to implement an eco-village model joined in the work of the South East False Creek Working Group. The responsibility for coordination of the work shifted from the EcoCity Network to the Environmental Youth Alliance (Don Alexander, Kathryn Cholette, John Irwin, 15, 22, 27 October, 1998, personal communications).

The interests of the working group were quite diverse. Nevertheless, using consensus process they came to an agreed upon vision statement and a joint strategy for action. However, few in the group trusted City Council to live up to their promise of a model sustainable development project for the site. Council had hired Stanley Kwok, the architect responsible for the Concord Pacific expensive, high density housing project on the north shore of False Creek. This project contravened existing City policy documents such as City Plan which called for the development of communities built around neighbourhood centres, not the automobile. The 20% affordable housing component of the Concord Pacific project was never built (Kong 1997). It soon became clear to the activists involved with South East False Creek that Kwok had no understanding of sustainable development, nor any sympathy for affordable housing. Yet, he was the architect responsible for developing a concept plan for the site. Kwok held a one day workshop to discuss the concept of urban sustainability, but no knowledgeable people in the field or in related disciplines were invited (Blore, 1998). Furthermore, Kwok refused to meet with
the working group or any of its member groups. Kwok claimed he had no time to consult with people (Timmer 1997). This meant that there was to be no public input into the crucial early stage of the planning process. Kwok’s only “bottom line” was the financial feasibility of the project, the only response homo economicus would approve. A public outreach campaign was seen by the working group as imperative.

The working group’s vision statement addressed eight major aspects of a sustainable development model project for the site: affordable housing; mixed use development to include neighbourhood centres, social services, retail, etc.; safety; greenspace and shoreline restoration; alternative transportation; energy efficiency; water and waste; and social justice issues (Kong 1997). The statement emphasized the importance of an open public planning processes and the need for social justice and affordable housing, given that the site was located in the midst of low-income, ethnically diverse districts. Having agreed on a joint strategy, the working group began to organize.

Much effort and time on the part of many volunteers resulted in a successful public event called “Springfest”, held in March of 1997 at Creekside Park next to the South East False Creek site. Springfest included educational workshops and panels on the issues, site tours, public art displays, a giant puppet-making workshop, storytelling, a lantern-making workshop and lantern parade, and a chance to have public opinions recorded and sent to city hall. The event was well organized and received sympathetic media coverage. Pressure mounted on city hall to act.

At a meeting of City Council in March filled with activists from many of the above mentioned groups and others, the pressure was on for Council to live up to its promise of having an open, public process. About 35 people made informed critiques of Kwok’s concept plan which lacked any definition of
sustainable development (Blore 1998). To its credit council listened to the presenters who asked that council consider sustainability more seriously. Later, at another council meeting packed with activists, Councilor Price frankly admitted that what the City got for its $300,000 consultant fee for Kwok was "a lot of waste". Price added that Kwok may have to be reigned in from time to time (Carr 1997).

Previously, the working group had been building bridges to city hall. This practice had also been an important part of the work of the EcoCity Network. Councilor Sullivan had attended one or two EcoCity events and at the May meeting Councilor Chiavario spoke strongly on behalf of moving beyond merely looking at dollars when it came to environmental issues such as South East False Creek. Sustainability seemed to be on council's agenda once again when they subsequently hired another consultant, Sheltair Scientific, to provide a definition of urban sustainable development.

The EcoCity Network had clearly played a catalytic role in the formation of the South East False Creek Working Group. Moreover, individuals from the Network continued to participate in the working group after its formation, but the style of the work was different from the other examples discussed above. In this case, there was no effort to build social bonds at the planning meetings such as had occurred in other EcoCity activities. Two of the original members of the sub-committee out of which the working group had formed confided that they observed that working group meetings were strictly about business (Don Alexander, John Irwin 15, 27 Oct., 1998, personal communications).

Nevertheless, the work of the committee was effective in raising the profile of the issues. Moreover, the Springfest event had included public celebratory, cultural and artistic dimensions even though the working group itself did not include these aspects in their group's own internal dynamics.
Clearly, the strategy of the EcoCity Network in Vancouver is similar to that in the San Francisco Bay Area. Both are based on the creation of small, local action groups (rather than the intentional communities in two of the rural examples) which promote the formation of broader city-wide networks in civil society. The strategy is based on creating horizontal linkages among as large a number of groups as possible. It is a strategy that places cultural change at the centre of a long-term cumulative, incremental effort at societal transformation. In the case of Vancouver, community building tools used were: consensus process, small groups or affinity circles, bioregional mapping, story, and ceremony. Norms of cooperation, civic solidarity, and mutual aid are beginning to emerge. However, in Vancouver as in San Francisco, this strategy is merely at the most initial stages of an envisioned process of transformation and restructuring that bioregionalist green city activists believe may take several generations to accomplish.

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the formation of social and eco-social capital by bioregionalists in five different settings. In particular, I have focused on certain norms associated with their formation: cooperation, mutual aid, and civic solidarity as well as the establishment of networks of local associations. This inquiry has shown some success in the formation of norms of social and eco-social capital and in the creation of various networks. There is evidence of the formation of social and eco-social capital by bioregionalists in each of the narratives.

The narrative from Mexico illustrated that, in the case where levels of social capital are already relatively high, the efforts of small groups to network
and build horizontal bridges in civil society are apparently more effective than in other settings where initially low levels of social capital predominate.

The bioregional strategy of urban reinhabitation and restructuring examined in this chapter - with its focus on integrated density - would open land in cities to urban agriculture and permaculture, urban ecological corridors, and urban forests. This strategy was found to hold promise for reducing aggregate consumption and increasing associational life in cities, in effect replacing natural capital consumption with increased social and eco-social capital.

My inquiry has also revealed how bioregionalists build social and eco-social capital using bioregional strategy and tools in five locations. Each of the narratives has illustrated the central importance of culture change to bioregional strategies of community building, networking, and socio-political change. We have also seen that while each account occurs in different historical and geographical settings, engages in different (and sometimes similar) projects, places different emphasis in the particular combination of tools used, yet each is similar in the form of their strategy: building horizontal relations in civil society while building bridges to the economic and political spheres. It is also clear from the evidence reported in this chapter that the strategy is based on the creation of small action groups in some cases, while in other cases it may be small intentional communities. These core or "seed" groups work to form or strengthen broader horizontal networks in civil society at the local watershed and bioregional scales. Moreover, this strategy uses various community building tools or processes for the formation of the "seed" groups including consensus decision-making process, small circles, story, mapping, ecological restoration, ritual and ceremony, etc. The seed groups also use community building tools such as consensus, mapping, and bioregional education to assist in the building of broader networks.
In the two urban narratives, a new tool not illustrated in chapter four, the green or eco-city calendar and volunteer directory, has been used effectively for networking among organizations and for bringing in new volunteers to the groups in the networks. However, the urban narratives also show that the long-term strategy of societal transformation and restructuring over several generations is merely in its most initial stage. While norms of cooperation, mutual aid, and civic solidarity have been established among the seed groups and intentional communities, these norms have not been established in the broader society within which the groups operate.
Introduction

The story of the continental gatherings of the bioregional movement originates in 1976 with Berg's call for a continental congress. The continent "gatherings", as they are now called, began as an event called the "North American Bioregional Congress" (NABC). One central dimension of the history of these events is their evolution from a congress format to a ceremonial village format.

The purpose of this chapter is to present a narrative account of this evolution. Specifically, what does this story reveal about bioregionalists' efforts to organize and network beyond the local and bioregional scales at these continental events? How have bioregionalists attempted to build horizontal linkages and alliances with others in civil society at the continental level? What role have bioregional community-building tools played in this endeavour?

In order to tell this story, it is necessary to briefly describe the program of a typical continental event. This is difficult to do since each continental event has been quite unique in character, reflecting differences in regional customs and idiosyncrasies as well as different combinations of participants as the event has moved around the continent. Moreover, during the period of its gestation from congress to village, my narrative account of bioregionalists' lived experience at the continental gatherings has revealed two different models; the congress model and the ceremonial village model. While the two models are different, each retains aspects of the other model. I begin chronologically with the congress model.
The first continental gathering took place in the U.S. mid-west outside of Kansas City in 1984. Since then, gatherings have been held every two years: 1986 in northwest Michigan; 1988 outside of Squamish, British Columbia; 1990 in Maine; 1992 in Kerrville, Texas; 1994 outside of Louisville, Kentucky, and; 1996 in the municipality of Tepoztlan in the State of Morelos, Mexico. Each of these events is about six days long. Attendance has ranged from just over 200 participants to an estimated 800-1000 people in Mexico in 1996 (Proceedings for all events).

While, as noted, Berg first issued a call for "continental congress" (bioregionalists often say "congress" is a verb), the congress model began as a model for bioregionalism in the late nineteen seventies when David Haenke and others issued a call for a congress in the Ozarks. The event, called the "Ozark Area Community Congress" (OACC), attracted 150 people from 15 U. S. states (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 6). The historical roots of the continental congress model can be found in the U. S. revolutionary congressional tradition against British Colonialism in the eighteenth century. American bioregionalists were initially inspired by but also critical of historical U.S. revolutionary congressionalism. For example, Berg's 1976 pamphlet, Amble Toward Continent Congress, was originally written to protest the U. S. bicentennial Declaration of Independence (Berg, 1976). Berg's piece is a political pamphlet which denounces the Europeans who came as "invaders clearing terrain for an occupation civilization" (1976). The pamphlet empathetically describes American indigenous peoples as "inhabitory peoples" who were ravaged by the European colonists:

The new continental immigrants had been hardened by years of ruthless absolutist national and religious wars. They came armed with a technology of conquest (ships, horses, steel, cannon) which totally baffled their initial opposition. Inhabitory populations were displaced and
annihilated with a ferocity beyond any previous merely imperial intention. (1976)

The birth of the U.S. A. is thus denounced by Berg as heralding a "global monocultural legacy with its birth-cry" and condemned, not as a "statement about inhabiting North America as a unique part of the planet", but rather as a "document addressed to Europe concerning the take-over of British possessions by their colonists" (1976).

By calling for a break with the U.S. tradition of colonialist conquest in the name of the continent itself and its inhabitory peoples, Berg proclaims the need for a cultural and political transformation of his own culture from a culture of occupation to a culture of inhabitation:

there needs to be a Continent Congress so that occupants of North America can finally become inhabitants and find out where they are. This time congress is a verb. Congress, come together. Come together with the continent. Continent congress isn't a simple exercise. It's an enormous effort to overcome the politics of extinction, the Earth-colonist globalism which exhausts whole continents, their peoples, and moves now to devastate deep floors of our planetary oceans. Continent congress is a life-long exploration. (1976)

While Berg is obviously deeply critical of the U.S. tradition of "colonist conquest", he is also calling for the bioregional movement to locate itself in the struggle against imperialism and for a genuinely democratic politics. In this sense, he is associating the bioregional movement with the democratic aspects of the first U.S. revolutionary tradition; in particular, with the participatory character of the congress tradition of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. At the end of the twentieth century, however, the struggle is no longer against old-style colonialism, but rather, against globalism, or as Berg terms it "Earth-colonist globalism".
Berg's call for a bioregional continental congress first found fertile ground not in San Francisco, but in the Ozarks. The model of congress that was emerging from the Ozarks in the early 1980's was adopted by the first North American Bioregional Congress in 1984. Its outline as a model can be found in the proceedings of the 1984 continental congress. The core of the model is based on forming "congressional committees" which meet for a week to discuss and eventually consense on resolutions, mission statements, and action plans to be adopted (or not) by the plenary. In addition, committee meeting time is viewed as a space for networking, resource sharing, strategizing, and "just getting to know and learning to work with the other members" (1984, 7). At NABC I, committees included: energy, agriculture/permaculture, water, health, education, economics, political action, eco-defense, culture and arts, communities, eco-feminism, Native Peoples, and spirituality.

The intent of this active "congressing" concept is to make the democratic process as participatory as possible, to avoid conference-style sessions, panel discussions, and workshops where people "sit around and listen to keynote speakers, workshop leaders, and other entertainers" (1984, 61). In the congress model, over-scheduling is discouraged in favour of leaving "plenty of open time for free-form networking and caucusing" (ibid). Self-entertainment is encouraged (indeed, there are plenty of experienced poets, singers, theatre people, dancers, drummers, and musicians among the participants at these events). Time is also left open in the evenings for culture-sharing programs. The "Ozarks Model" also discourages loading itself and its committees with all kinds of demands, goals, and objectives to be accomplished in a few months. On the contrary, a more relaxed, less workaholic style is encouraged: "Emphasize sustained effort over a lifetime or more. Though its deep and vital work, it has to be fun and nonstressful or it won't work" (ibid, 62).
We have seen several examples in previous chapters of the long-term character of the bioregional project of societal transformation. Here an important consideration for long-term transformational strategy is indicated; namely, that for sustained lifetime efforts at social change, workaholic, stress-filled activity is not adequate. It is not sustainable. Also, an associated point arises with respect to social capital formation. Stressed out, over-worked, frenetic individuals may not easily build trust among themselves, trust essential to social capital formation. In examining societies where high levels of social capital was the norm in chapter two, we saw that there was ample time for a more relaxed social and working life.

Two key goals of the Ozark area model congress process are: one, to be a fully participatory event; and two, to be an exercise in the creation of a "non-confrontive type shadow government", a "new kind of totality, run on ecological principles" which "represents all the necessary sectors of a functioning ecological society" (Haenke 1988). This then, is the core of the bioregional congress model.

The ceremonial village model, which evolved out of the congress model over several continental gatherings, is rooted in much older traditions than revolutionary U.S. congressionalism. The idea for the village model comes directly from indigenous traditions of First Nations peoples in both North And South America, as well as various other indigenous cultures (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 4). This model is described fully in the proceedings of the seventh continental gathering, the first to be held in Mexico.

As bioregionalists understand the concept, traditional "ceremonial villages" were not meant to be lived in permanently. Rather, they were set up temporarily for "nurture, educational, and motivational purposes" (1997, 85). In
this view, such villages were a gathering of tribes and clans with multiple purposes: sharing ceremonies and celebrations, trading goods and knowledge, continuing ancient relations, settling disputes, meeting in council, engaging in friendly competition, finding partners, mating, and planning for the future (ibid).

Taking its inspiration from these ancient traditions, the ceremonial village in the contemporary bioregional model is designed as an event "that comprises all the aspects of human life, including cultural and natural components, an event that takes charge of all our requirements - food, shelter, health, trade, ceremony, social and information sharing" (1997, 8). In this model, the ceremonial village is itself the educational event and curriculum, comprising various kinds of educational activities from formal workshops to impromptu "jamming", to large consensus decision-making plenaries. Informal discourse is given as much priority and regarded as an equally important part of the learning experience as any formal meetings. Proponents of this model admit that the process can often be chaotic, but they view such chaos as part of the experience of learning. They argue further that "however chaotic it appears, it works in various ways to broaden our lives. The chaos of the ceremonial village is our constant reinvention of order. It is our richness. Those who experience it experience their own health, consciousness, and freedom to create ceremonial villages wherever they go" (1997, 8-9).

In the bioregional ceremonial village model, the committees are replaced by "councils". The councils function much as the committees did, operating by consensus process. However, there is less time and emphasis devoted to putting forward resolutions and statements for consideration by the plenary. This leaves more time for workshops (formal and informal), ceremonial and ritual activity, and a whole day devoted to support work in the local community.
where the gathering is held. As well, each day begins with a sunrise ceremony and ends with a sunset ceremony.

Both models place priority on participatory democracy, consensus decision-making, and unscheduled time for informal networking, caucusing, and socializing. Both models encourage and include cultural sharing programs in the evenings. Both models employ the tools discussed in chapter four. In both models, participants share as fully as possible in the work of making a week-long event work well without exhausting a small number of participants (often women) while most others participate only in the "important political work". Food preparation and cooking, cleaning up, recycling, child care, latrines, etc. are all shared in an organized manner which involves everyone. In both models, the numbers of participants (200-300) falls within estimates of appropriate scale for a small "village" or neighbourhood community to work well (see chapter two). Indeed, in both models the development of communal bonds is strongly encouraged, as we shall see.

The Evolution of the North American Bioregional Congress

By the time of the first NABC in May of 1984, bioregionalists in the Ozarks had held four annual Ozark Area Community Congresses (OACC). In addition, OACC has inspired the birth of other congresses. In the early 1980's, OACC's energy drew people from 25 states to participate in its process. Haenke notes that in May of 1982, the first Kansas Area Community Congress (KAW) was held, the first of about 15 bioregional congresses and councils to be inspired by OACC" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 38-41).

The idea of a community congress was hatched in a series of meetings lasting through 1979, meetings which included "deep discussions about
possibilities along spiritual, metaphysical, and economic lines", discussions which "sparked serious talk for a first OACC" (ibid). This was the spark, but it had been preceded by other discussions and a concern of Ozark area back-to-the-landers in the early and mid-seventies that the Ozarks "were being trashed and polluted just like everywhere else" (ibid). In the fall of 1976, as Haenke paced his cabin thinking about proposed Ozark area nuclear plants, forest killing, and "a dozen other eco-cidal depredations", he struck upon the idea of an "Ozark Free State", the idea of creating "an unofficial, undeclared, parallel, ecological Ozark nation" (ibid). In February of 1977, the first Ozark "ecopolitics meeting" - attended by 10 people - was held to discuss environmental defense, communications, and other problems. Two weeks later at New Life Farm, the idea for a congress of communities was born. It is important to note that these early beginnings sprung, in part, from concerns for both "eco-political" action and spiritual opposition to global monoculture. We see again that, from its inception, bioregionalism is anything but a parochial philosophy. Indeed, here we see that Haenke and the other founders of the movement in the Ozarks are concerned about global issues, but the inspiration is sparked by the effort to address global issues on the ground in one's home territory or region.

NABC I

The first NABC was attended by 217 people from ten nations (including several First Nations) and thirty-nine states and provinces. Moreover, congress participants represented 130 organizations from the "bioregions of North America" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 53). The 5 day event was held at a rural camp/meeting place in Excelsior Springs, north of Kansas City, Mo. Most participants camped in tents for the week. Childcare and children's programs
were provided by the organizers and volunteers from among the participants. In fact, the entire congress was run on volunteer energy, including a daily in-congress newsletter, called "The Voice of the Turtle".

NABC I was convened by the OACC, the Bioregional Project of New Life Farm, the Planet Drum Foundation, the Kansas Area Watershed Council (KAW), the NABC Coordinating Council, and several co-sponsors. NABC I drew heavily on the experiences of OACC and KAW. The work was coordinated by New Life Farm's Bioregional Project set up by Haenke and the others. The major purposes of NABC I stated in pre-congress mail out brochures were to:

1. bring continental bioregionalists together along with those working in political ecology, sustainability, and the broadscale green movement;
2. share the culture and history of the bioregions represented;
3. help unify the bioregional movement;
4. explore the great common ground between bioregionalists and native/indigenous peoples;
5. seed new bioregional congresses and organizations;
6. help focus green movement energies toward new coalitions and impact on existing political/electoral systems;
7. determine whether NABC can be an ongoing event and continuing organization;
8. celebrate North America, Turtle Island. (A Continental Congress is Forming: NABC 1984)

These goals reflect an intent not only to begin networking continentally among local bioregional reinhabitants and organizations in a direct face-to-face manner, but to also network more broadly with other social movements. Here we see another example of the bioregional strategy to connect local struggles to broader geographically dispersed networks as well as to other social sectors. As we saw in chapters four and five, this is a strategy which builds on local "place" community by horizontal bridge-building and alliance-making efforts in civil society.

In addition to the above goals, the congress brochure included a stated intention that the congress be a cooperative, participatory event, a "five day community, the nature of which we will create for ourselves. NABC will not be
put on for you, but by all of us together ... We believe that an essential part of a strong Congress is that we become a cooperative community in the five days we are together" (1984). Thus, the ambitious intent of the first congress was to help unify the bioregional movement and to build links to other movements while carrying out an experiment in living as an intentional community by people who were, for the most part., strangers to each other. The bioregional strategy of community building and networking was to be subjected to a trial by fire.

Indeed, few outside movement circles could have appreciated just how diverse a collection of individuals had gathered at this event. The event's facilitator, Carolyn Estes, notes the "high degree of skepticism when we began as to whether such a widely diverse group of people could work in that degree of harmony and unity" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 9). Haenke described participants as "strong-minded, strong-willed, unshy, highly self-motivated people" (ibid). Aberley described them as "libertarians, 1930's decentralists, space colony prophets, and utopian dreamers of many descriptions", all "happy to have an audience for their particular brand of snake oil" (Aberley 1992, 3). Forging unity among such a collection of individuals seemed a daunting task.

The congress opened its first plenary session with a simple ritual, prayers and a sweetgrass ceremony by Native Dineh (Navaho) elders from Big Mountain in the Four Corners area of the Western U.S. Two hundred people formed a circle in the dining hall for the opening. A round of introductions followed with each participant giving their name, bioregion, and their passion in life. The opening was reported in the Voice of the Turtle, the daily "newspaper" of the congress, the following morning as an empowering experience:

Perhaps Lynn Stone from New York City, spoke for us all when she said, "We are here because we believe, and because we believe, we dare to
offer an alternative vision for our nation, a new spirit among our leaders, and a true leadership for our global world.' We have taken our first steps toward empowerment. As David Hunt said at the end, 'Everyone has spoken before the group, everyone has participated. What a powerful way to start the Congress!' And if the truly astounding depth and breadth of our combined concerns, experiences, and expertise are an indication, we can hope to succeed! (Voice of the Turtle, Excelsior Springs, Mo. May 22, 1984)

As noted, alliance building was one key goal of the congress. How would this goal be pursued? The congress chose two initial paths. The first was to build bridges with indigenous peoples. The first resolution passed at the congress was to recognize and support First Nations' treaty rights, land claims, and inherited rights. This resolution originated in the Native and Land-based Peoples Committee. At least as importantly, the congress plenary also committed to developing and strengthening networks with indigenous and traditional peoples and encouraged NABC participants to do so in their own bioregions (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 25). As well, the congress adopted and published the statement of philosophy of the Native Peoples Committee. This statement reflects the strong spiritual and political character of the congress' commitment to support indigenous peoples. It recognizes and values native spirituality as a source of healing for all peoples and links support for indigenous rights with support for all human rights and freedom:

Spirituality is the foundation for our way of life. We affirm that our spiritual roots are the source of strength, endurance and wisdom necessary for our struggle to transform our culture. Indigenous Indian spiritual traditions and those of other Indigenous People of the world provide essential support for a way of life which respects connectedness within all creation. Humans are a species dependent upon, not more important than the universe, the plants, and the animals. The spirituality of Native Indigenous People is a healing source common to all people, all issues, and essential to the survival of everything. The wealth of industrial consumer-based culture is directly related to the impoverishment of Native People in the U.S. and around the world. What happens to Indigenous People and their land reflects the treatment of all life forms
everywhere. The commitment of Traditional Native People to honour and protect the sacredness of all creation through their way of life, ceremonies, and resistance, is one of the most powerful and serious efforts toward planetary survival in the world today. Support for indigenous rights is support for the right of life and freedom for all. (1984, 25)

The committee set up an information board at the congress using a bioregional map to depict native peoples' ongoing land-based struggles. A workshop on the struggle of the Navaho and Hopi peoples for their lands was held at the congress and discussed in plenary. Additionally, a letter writing campaign was launched in support of native peoples' struggles. These political solidarity actions, the involvement of indigenous people at the congress, combined with the spiritual strength and shared meaning of the above philosophical affirmation for congress participants, helped launch the bioregional movement's work toward building alliances with First Nations. It was an important first step for the congress strategy of building horizontal alliances in civil society.

The second route to building horizontal linkages with other movements at NABC I, was participants' work with the U.S. green movement. NABC I made a strong start toward its stated goal of helping to focus green movement political energies toward new coalitions. It was at this first congress that the Green Movement Committee, as Haenke observed, "sets the stage for the founding of the U.S. green politics movement" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 38). In fact, four of the five convenors of the founding "Committees of Correspondence" meeting of the green politics movement in St. Paul three months later were NABC I Green Movement Committee members. The entire statement of the Green Movement Committee was dedicated to the formation of a green political organization in the U.S. Moreover, the statement recognized "the need for bioregional principles and practices to be secured and protected, cooperatively
and in a decentralized manner, through a green political organization" and called for such an organization to "focus on open, democratic planning and political action supportive of local and regional autonomy and interdependence as reflected in the bioregional model" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 24). Clearly, the need for horizontal alliances was recognized and acted upon at NABC I, in this instance through strong, supportive resolutions and a large assist by bioregionalists in founding the U.S. green movement.

These were solid achievements for the founding congress of the bioregionalists, but there remained the difficult task of building unity among the widely diverse assembly at the congress itself. How would this be achieved? In great part, unity would have to be built through the active congressing of participants. As noted, central to the congress model is the passing of resolutions with the goal of forming a unified mission statement, a set of policy statements and prescriptions, and agreed upon action plans. At the first congress, the participants agreed by consensus process on an overall mission statement (Welcome Home! in chapter three), several reports and statements of principle, and over 60 resolutions on a wide variety of cultural, political, social, and economic issues including: agriculture/permaculture, education, culture and arts, eco-defense, economics, forests, water, health, indigenous peoples and visible minorities, sovereignty and land rights, and public policy. These resolutions were initially formulated in 14 different committees before being presented to the congress plenary. Together, the resolutions and statements formed the initial basis for a potential "green platform" of the congress, a fledgling program for Hank's "shadow government". In consensing upon a set of broadly conceived resolutions addressing a sizable spectrum of life issues, the diverse assembly began a process of working toward unity in diversity.

A crucial part of the difficult process of building unity in diversity was the
intention of creating a five day intentional community among its participants. We have seen the central importance of community building for bioregionalism reported in this thesis. The first continental congress was no exception. As a concept, "community" was recognized by the congress plenary as the "basic unit of human habitation", the level of human interaction at which "we can reach our fullest potential and best affect social change" (1984, 16). At the same time, it was also recognized that human communities are "integral parts of the larger bioregional and planetary life communities" (ibid).

In the Community Empowerment Committee, participants discussed the idea that "the basic reason for the global crisis is that common people have no control over what is going on" (Voice of the Turtle, Excelsior Springs, Mo. May 23, 1984, 5). The mass society of our dominant system was seen as the cause of the decline of community life, since it makes personal relationships the least important factor. The committee discussed and identified important factors in community empowerment such as cultivating personal relationships and setting examples by personal lifestyle changes. In committee deliberations, Tom Berry pointed to the importance of "community story" as a unifying force and the involvement of native inhabitants/elders as essential to the continuity of local communities (ibid). The committee then put together a community empowerment "Action list" which was endorsed by the congress (see Appendix 13). The action list was considered by the committee to be merely an incomplete list, but was offered as a first step toward developing a general strategy for community empowerment.

On the evening of the last day, participants gathered in a silent circle outside the building where the last plenary had just dissolved. For the official close of the congress, South African Robert Mazibuko, founder of the African Tree Center, and Ron Rabin of Children of the Green Earth led the children of
the congress in a tree-planting ceremony. Surrounded by congress participants in the final circle, the children planted a tree and sang: "From our hearts, with our hands, for the Earth, all the world together" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 51). At the end of the ceremony, everyone was given a tree seedling to take and plant at their homes across the continent. Photos of the final circle in the Proceedings were accompanied by the following note: "Holding their seedlings high, those in the closing circle expressed their joy" (1984, 42).

A strong sense of unity of purpose and bonds of solidarity, trust, and love had evidently been forged among congress participants. What had been a scattering of individuals and groups in far-flung places across the continent now began to take more definite shape as a social movement with a specific mission and program. By the end of the congress, participants experienced a real sense of togetherness and accomplishment in forging their common program. Strangers got to know each other, exchange experiences, and build the necessary horizontal bonds among themselves. After the gathering, facilitator Estes observed that "the level of love and trust amongst participants was tangible", and to the surprise of "nearly everyone, we came away with a sense of unity and forward motion that was near miraculous, but believable" (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 10).

Estes attributed this success to an excellent process of consensus decision-making. Aberley, the self-admitted skeptic, also recognized that consensus had worked to bring people together in democratic process: "At the end of the day, we all felt a well-earned sense of accomplishment, content that there was no more that could be done in the time allotted. For a brief time, I experienced the exhilaration of participation in a real democracy" (1992, 6). Many other similar comments were recorded in the proceedings' evaluations section: "Excellent organization and fabulous people; best gathering I've
attended in a long, long time. ...Wonderful exercise of head and heart - I'm sorry to see it end. ... It was a truly joyful experience to sit in the plenary on the last day and feel the strength of our mutual commitment. ... The congress allowed a deep dialogue to take place. Community was built, clarity was achieved. ... The facilitation and use of consensus was excellent! ... A sincere effort was made to move away from hierarchical structures, to incorporate feminine principles and to accommodate each individual. ... Elements that were effective were the opening and closing of plenary with song, poetry, and silence, the quality of food, the Voice of the Turtle, and the use of consensus" (1984, 59-60).

While consensus process was clearly a central factor in building trust, love, and unity in diversity, other factors were also at work. One important factor was the openness to exchanging views among participants themselves. Aberley notes the spirit of "a healthy anarchism" at the gathering which encouraged the sharing of viewpoints among participants (Field Notes 1992, 5). Some felt strongly that bioregional philosophy helped bring people together. For example, Kirk Sale comments that: "What I and those I talked to felt was that the philosophy gave people a new way of seeing their lives, of involving friends and neighbours in the paramount task of rescuing the earth's communities - and our own" (in NABC I Proceedings 1984, 1). Others felt that it was the process of sharing ideas and experiences that helped to unite the diverse assembly. For example, Emily Stetson comments that the diverse "conglomeration of individuals" became united by discovering their interconnectedness: "Through our sharing of ideas and learning about each other's efforts, we became aware of the interconnectedness of our purposes. Green politics, antinuclear efforts, and organic methods of agriculture, for example, all have a place within the larger picture of the bioregional movement" (1984, 2). Clearly, for congress participants, the use of consensus, the sharing of ideas and experience, the
bioregional philosophy as a key for a new way of understanding and living their lives, and an "anarchist" spirit of sharing diverse viewpoints, all contributed to building bonds of trust and love among participants.

In addition to consensus process, specific tools such as story telling and sharing, the use of ceremony, cultural exchange and performance, song, and celebration were used by bioregionalists in various situations during the time of the congress. For example, the use of song and simple forms of ritual at NABC I in the plenary circle were effective in helping to create bonds of solidarity among participants. Here is another example to illustrate this point. At the opening circle of NABC I, as noted, some 200 individuals introduced themselves as part of the exercise to get to know each other. Aberley, initially skeptical about the strangely diverse "crowd" of participants, comments on what happened at the circle's closing:

After several hours of these introductions, an obvious spaceman suggested that we all join hands and hum together. My initial skepticism evaporated as a truly inspiring Tibetan harmony filled the hall. It was a long moment of unity born from diversity that I will never forget. (1992, 3)

A simple form of ritual such as singing together in circle can have a powerful bonding effect, as it did at NABC I on several occasions. Thus, from the very first NABC elements of the ceremonial village model (including elements of ritual) were present in the congress model too.

Music (apart from ritual) was also used with great effect to help bond people. For some participants, one of the highlights of the first congress was the music of flutist Paul Winter and John Stokes played from a canoe on Lake Doniphan. Their music reverberated off the surrounding slopes of the lake for many participants to hear. Winter observed that:
Making music brings all parts of the being together and reawakens a sense of connectedness to nature and to each other. Music-making will come to be seen as one of the great untapped sources of energy. What happens when it is tapped? You become fully alive. When your song is alive, your spirit is alive, and that enables you to be more effective in the world. When we greet the world with music-making, as do the birds and the wolves, we're creating a ritual which can bring us whole again, and ground us for the entire day. (NABC I Proceedings 1984, 50)

When individuals feel fully alive and joyfully centered in their spirit, their energy is released and they can also work more cooperatively together. The ego-politics (the opposite of eco-politics?), the alienated psychic space that many in our society all too often operate from, dissipates making cooperation much easier. In other words, music-making can contribute significantly to the building of bonds of trust and love essential to social capital.

Another exercise that contributed to building unity was the making of a quilt. This project was started by one woman, Ella McDonald, in the hope that the quilt would provide a tangible, physical manifestation of NABC and help to transform "some of the verbal energy into peaceful, productive handwork" (1984, 47). The quilt project was initiated well before the congress began. One hundred bioregions and organizations were invited to participate. Seventeen squares were sent in. Another woman pieced them together so they became the "plates" in a turtle shell. She embroidered the name and bioregion of each person beside the piece they contributed. During the week of NABC I, people were invited and encouraged to participate by adding stitches to complete the quilt. Many did so, contributing new designs and patches. The process was discussed in the proceedings as follows:

For some, the quilt offered 'soft edges' after the hard, intense issues they had been focused on ... for others, it was a visible way of 'weaving' the various threads of the NABC community together. For many, especially
the men, it was their first opportunity to experience the craft, skill and camaraderie of working around a quilting frame. (1984, 47)

The quilt thus became symbolic of the unity in diversity created at the first congress through the shared work and pleasure of expressing one's social being. More importantly, by providing a 'hands-on' opportunity for a direct, embodied and shared experience of community, the quilting process actually contributed to the formation of social capital and bioregional unity in diversity at the event itself. The quilt would be displayed in a prominent place at future continental events as a symbol of unity in diversity.

Judged by the accomplishments of the first congress in relation to its own goals, the congress was, in the view of musician Paul Winter, "an enormous networking success" (1984, 49). Indeed, the movement had succeeded in: coming together to constitute itself as a movement beyond the level of the bioregion, creating the beginnings of a common vision for sustainable, bioregional society. NABC I produced a set of resolutions participants had forged together in consensus process, resolutions which began the work of addressing as many different aspects and areas of life as an informal congress could produce in one week. Congressing, culture-sharing, networking, working together, socializing, and getting to know one another all contributed to the bioregional community bonding process which established the NABC as an ongoing event. Moreover, NABC I helped to launch the green movement in the United States, and began the exploration of common ground between native peoples and bioregionalists, initiating a strategy of horizontal alliance building in civil society at a continental scale. By sharing cultural experiences from around the continent, NABC I participants had also initiated a shared process of learning how to celebrate Turtle Island's continental linkages, both human and
non-human. Continental networking has indeed been given flesh and bones. What NABC I did not do, of course, was to have much impact on existing political/electoral systems as the convenors had intended. In the nineteen eighties, bioregionalism was very little known outside of a small circle of practitioners and a few people in the green movement.

The fact that NABC I participants themselves rated this experiment in continental face-to-face networking and community building so highly suggests that during the first continental congress a good deal of social capital was generated successfully. Congress participants felt good about their effort to stage a 5 day intentional community. Certainly, as we have seen, much information was shared among participants, much trust and love was built through cultural sharing and working together. Cooperative work sharing was used to: stage the event; to participate in the work of creating a vision statement and developing common principles and a shared program; and in carrying out whatever work was necessary to keep a developing community of 217 individuals functioning well for a week. Together, these activities represent the kind of day-to-day mutuality - small incremental acts of cooperation across many different activities - that builds high levels of social capital. The experience of NABC I showed that, in such a closely shared cooperative context, levels of information and trust can build up quickly. Cooperation in daily activities of living also builds up norms of mutual aid. During the committee and plenary work, the new continental network was built with high levels of participation and cooperation. This too helps create feelings of being included in the whole. Moreover, each participant can feel ownership of the process. As well, participants can feel positively about and take pride in their own contributions to the whole, to their new congress and network. Others who normally live far away are no longer disembodied telephone voices or e-mail
data. On the contrary, participants bond with others on many different levels; intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and viscerally; the network created is an embodied network. NABC I showed that intentional community as short as a single week's duration can generate social capital surprisingly rapidly.

One problem pointed out in the evaluations was that there was not enough participation from "minority groups" (1984, 59). This refers to the fact that in the U.S. and Canada, the bioregional movement was underrepresented by members with other than European heritage. This failure to attract representative numbers of people of colour to the congresses would play a role in future gatherings.

**NABC II**

The second continental congress took place at the end of August of 1986 at Camp Innisfree on the shores of Lake Michigan in northwest Michigan State near Traverse City. Unlike NABC I, it was held mostly outdoors. Residents of 32 U.S. states, two Canadian provinces, and three other countries attended. However, there was no representation from Alaska, the Deep South, the Great Basin, or the Dakotas. Most of Canada and all of Mexico were still not represented. With just 200 participants, attendance was down slightly from NABC I. Again, as at NABC I, consensus process facilitated the cooperation of a highly diverse collection of people, many of them new to NABC. The overall goal of this congress was to continue to engage in the process of networking and movement building, including building alliances across race and gender. More people of colour attended than at NABC I.

For this second continental gathering, the congress model was followed and participants continued to develop it. The number of committees increased
from 14 to 18. New committees were: Green Cities, an ad hoc 'Mexico' Committee, Evolving Leadership, and the Mischief, Animism, Geomancy, & Interspecies Communication Committee (MAGIC). A series of panels were organized to accommodate the number of people who wanted to make presentations. The panels included: Race and Gender, Community Education, Organizing Communities for Political Action, Forestry, Economics, Spirituality, Urban Issues, and Home Ecology. These panels were used partly to introduce new people to bioregionalism and to assist participants in integrating into the congress process, as well as to address some potentially contentious issues such as race and gender.

Again, the congress began with the use of ritual. At the opening ceremony, Lewis Johnson, an Odawan elder from the host bioregion, led the assembled participants in the "Erecting the Center of the Earth" ceremony. In this ceremony, an implanted cedar pole is erected to represent the "Center of the Earth". This act also represents the joining of the spirit with the material, the joining of "Father Sky with Mother Earth" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 11). The ritual included tobacco offerings, prayers, and the sharing of the pipe. Hanging from the branches of the tree were brightly coloured banners and bundles symbolic of the four directions, as well as of Mother Earth and Father Sky. According to this tradition, all places on the earth are center, but for any activity, it is necessary to set the center in balance, to give the center form. The cedar pole was implanted to act as a centering and grounding force for the gathering (Voice of the Turtle, Traverse City, Mich. 26 August, 1986, 1).

The ceremony was charged with spiritual meaning for gathering participants. The editor of the proceedings, Alexandra Hart, observed that, for many participants, the cedar pole became "the center of our earth and our hearts for the week" (1987, 11). For Haenke, exhausted after working long and
hard to bring the event together, the opening prayer and assembly revived his spirit: "When NABC II finally comes to life, when we all assemble and pray together at Innisfree, the spirit comes pouring back in. I feel a torrent of it, like pure life water for parched bodies and souls" (1987, 40). Here again we see evidence of the strong motivational and even healing power of eco-centric social capital in the lived experience of bioregionalists, in this case an experience stimulated by a simple, but spiritually meaningful ritual.

The format of the congress was similar to NABC I. After the opening ceremony, the congress began with a round of introductions. A history of the movement to help new and old participants integrate was presented by Haenke after the opening circle. The congress once again chose to use full consensus process and Estes again served as facilitator. Heated discussions over the distinction between bioregionalism and green politics continued, this time in a more cooperative spirit. It was eventually agreed that "bioregionalism springs from local soils, while green politics is a synthesis of social movements, and that the two movements might be regarded as complimentary (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 8).

As noted, movement building was an important goal of this gathering. The Bioregional Movement Committee is specifically charged with thinking about, developing, and presenting proposals to the congress to build the movement across the continent. At NABC II, the Bioregional Movement Committee asked to be given authority to identify bioregional organizations to carry out the following movement tasks and to monitor the success of these local groups to fulfill them: 1) Develop a directory of bioregional organizations in North America, 2) Initiate an information clearing house, 3) Start a skills exchange service, 4) Develop a bioregional literature list, and 5) Establish a book selling service/mail order operation to offer a comprehensive list of
bioregional titles. In addition, the Movement Committee recommended that any bioregional group should include the following in response to inquiries: A) A statement that the movement does not have a national office and has consciously chosen a de-centralized structure, B) Acknowledgment that each bioregion speaks with its own voice and should be contacted with its own region-specific information, C) A statement that NABC is a bi-annual ongoing event and acts as a continent-wide voice for the bioregional movement, and D) A list of contact centres for additional information. Local bioregional groups were also "strongly encouraged" to organize gatherings in their own bioregions and/or among neighbouring bioregions. These resolutions were consensed on by the congress. Moreover, groups were identified to carry out these tasks. All but the skills exchange service were already underway and a list of these groups was sent out in the proceedings. The de-centralized organizational structure of the movement was confirmed and continued.

In addition, the Movement Committee recommended that the Steering Council identify bioregional groups from other continents and invite them to attend NABC III "as a first step in developing consciousness at a planetary level" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 15). This shows the movement was already concerned about international and global networking problems and attempting to address such issues. It was hardly an international strategy, but it was a small initial step toward planetary networking.

Alliance building across race and gender was addressed as a key issue for the bioregional movement at this gathering. Social justice was very much part of bioregionalists' concerns. Seventy to eighty people attended the Race and Gender Panel which opened the first workshop of NABC II. The increased presence of African-Americans and other people of colour at the gathering was viewed as "a vital core of the Congress, and an important beginning to healing
wounds between people" (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 46). James McFadden
and Nkenge Zola of the National Organization for an American Revolution
(NOAR) both spoke about the cultural legacy of African-Americans on the land
and their rhythmical and musical contributions to U.S. culture. McFadden urged
bioregionalists to reach out to African-Americans in their own bioregion, that
bioregionalists need their skills. He also stressed the importance of involving
African-Americans at the beginning of any movement for truly building unity and
a strong movement that could deal with internal contradictions (i.e., racism)
and thus avoid being divided from without. Another crucial point made at this
workshop was the need to develop a bioregional view of the cities, especially
devastated big cities, if bioregionalism was to be relevant for people of colour in
the inner-cities. In reaching out to people of colour, the importance of
communicating the bioregional vision in a language most people can
understand was articulated at this workshop and throughout the week (ibid).

In the evening after the race and gender panel, "You Got to Move", a film
produced by the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, chronicled the history of
the school's Civil Rights organizing in the 50s and 60s, as well as their then
current organizing against strip mining and toxic waste dumping in Appalachia.
The film echoed the political, cultural, and musical themes discussed at the race
and gender workshop. The film’s themes, the "power of transformation and
leadership that resides in all of us, and the interconnectedness of struggles for
peoples and for the earth", was inspiring for NABC II participants, according to
proceedings reporter Rick Waley (NABC I Proceedings 1987, 46). Here an
example where social justice concerns merge with concerns for the health of
the planet and where the realization of their interconnectedness provides
inspiration for people.
Later in the week, the Native Peoples and People of Colour Committee proposed that: 1) NABC commit itself, through its steering committee, to actively work to involve people of colour at the national, regional, and local levels in both membership and leadership, 2) NABC recruit, sponsor, and help in financial assistance, so that people of colour are able to participate in local, regional, and national meetings, including NABC III. The committee also proposed that "unlearning racism" workshops be initiated as a "stepping stone" to encourage more people of colour to participate in NABC events and bioregional activities. It was also proposed that NABC send a "racially, sexually, and bioregionally mixed delegation of representatives "willing to follow the guidance of Indian elders" to the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) in 1987 and committed to bringing the information back to NABC III and to their local bioregions (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 28). These resolutions were adopted by the plenary.

An ad hoc "Mexico Committee" was struck by several people concerned that there was no representation from Mexico at NABC II. They proposed that a concerted effort be made to network with "receptive and concerned people" to get involved with the congress movement (ibid). This was endorsed by the Native Peoples and People of Colour Committee. Efforts to contact and involve Mexican people in the movement were viewed as crucial to building a truly continental movement. Such efforts were soon to bear fruit.

Gender too was a key issue at NABC II. At the Race and Gender workshop Judith Plant described the links between ecofeminism and bioregionalism, including an ecofeminist view on "place" and "home" (see chapter three). The Eco-feminist Committee at NABC II (nine women and three men) proposed the following threefold resolution dealing with the process of self-government at the continental congresses:
1) **An appreciation of silence.** In order to learn and hear each other, we recommend that a frame of silence be observed after each speaker.

2) **Alternate women and men speaking.** This method will discourage competitive and manipulative styles of discourse, and encourage a cooperative, egalitarian decision-making process.

3) **Emotional Support.** Our work in dealing with the present planetary crisis involves potential for conflict, burnout and despair. Techniques exist to promote energy release, solidarity and empowerment to continue the work. We propose that we incorporate into our group work and meeting process, techniques such as conflict resolution, despair work and co-counseling. (NABC II Proceedings 1987, 19)

This process resolution was adopted by the plenary with the proviso that number two be reconsidered at NABC III. Conflict resolution and co-counseling are sometimes referred to in social movements as feminist processes or tools. These "feminist" tools, little used in the first two continental gatherings, were to become more prominently used in later gatherings. Here we see that eco-feminist thought and influence leads the move within the bioregional congress process to introduce additional community building tools for dealing with conflicts which consensus process may have pointed to, but not solved. The committee preamble to the resolution included a strong, principled strategic statement on community-building:

Moving from the age of domination to the age of caring, we see bioregionalism as community building. Community is the theatre of our human ecology. Women have always been involved in building and sustaining community, and it is important to realize that qualities traditionally associated with women reflect the values of bioregionalism. With this awareness we can insure that in creating new communities, we do not perpetuate oppressive social patterns. We affirm and support diverse forms of family life. Within bioregional community building, women and men can begin to articulate what it might mean to be females and males in the new society. The more we oppress each other and the planet, the less we are alive. As we learn to listen to the natural world and to each other, our perceptions are deepened, our intuition is reclaimed, our intelligence heightened, and all life is enhanced. (1987, 18)
This strong normative affirmation, used as a inspirational directive for action (Naess 1989, 68-71), is an illustration of the profound connection of ecofeminism and bioregionalism, particularly the move toward "thinking feelingly" that Plant spoke about at the Race and Gender panel. The newly proposed tools were then offered as away to advance the praxis of the movement - at the continental gatherings - with respect to community-building. Here we see that, although bioregional ecofeminists do not use the social capital concept, they understand the great need for "energy release, solidarity and empowerment" which tools that assist in dealing with rather than avoiding real conflicts within social movements might deliver. We also see an identification of community-building with diverse forms of family life.

At NABC II, "green cities" became an important dimension of the congress. Berg spoke at length about green cities and described its genesis in San Francisco (see chapter five). Berg is a former performer with the San Francisco Mime Theatre Company of the 1960's. He still uses his skills at performance to move people emotionally. The following is a description of the feeling and performance side of Berg's green city talk:

Peter is different. His 'talent' is reading a crowd, and getting an instant intuitive feeling for how far he can go. He really got it right today. We are an overly serious bunch, so serious that the humour of our cause is too often lost to us. Peter dragged examples of obvious irony from our common experiences and made us laugh - over and over. And woven throughout his monologue was a cogent explanation of San Francisco's Green City experiment. Serious effort described in a way that was fun. I think he is a trickster, with a rare ability to tickle and teach at the same time. (Aberley 1992, 10)

As Stephanie Mills commented, the city was given voice at NABC II (1987, 8). To reinforce its new support of green city work, the congress made the new Green City Committee a standing committee of the congress empowered to continue researching issues such as the role of cities in their bioregions, urban/non-urban distinctions and conflicts that have arisen from that
distinction. Along with this went a recognition, adopted by the plenary, that bioregionalism "must address cities with all their failings and potential, as capable of being transformed into sustainable, ecologically balanced, livable entities that do not overstress the carrying capacity of their bioregions in which they are located, and which rely primarily on the resources of their bioregions" (1987, 23; see also chapter five). However, in the next few years, a bioregional strategy for cities was not adopted by this gathering, nor by subsequent continental gatherings. There was no consensus at any of the congresses on this issue. Nevertheless, strategy was being conceived by bioregionalists out of a practice toward urban reinhabitation in specific cities such as San Francisco (see chapter five).

Another key addition to the congress process at NABC II was the MAQIC Committee. The birth of the MAQIC Committee brought all species issues and practice to the congress out into the open. Chris Wells, who had pioneered all-species festivals in Santa Fe (see chapter four), shared his vision, his mask-making, music, and stilt skills at NABC I (and again at NABC II), but now all-species work was taken up in committee. This new committee, with David Abrams (1997) as an important new participant at the congress, made a revolutionary proposal to the plenary which would help to transform the congress itself.

Wells, Abrams, Muller, Hannon, and five others proposed that NABC III recognize four participants "to represent the interests and perspectives of our non-human cousins: one for the four-legged and crawling cousins, one for those who swim in the waters, one for the winged beings, the birds of the air, and one very sensitive soul for all the plant people" (1987, 26). This motion was adopted by the plenary as worded. Again, in the statement accompanying the resolution, a strong normative affirmation was made that was also adopted in
We know that bioregionalism inevitably, unavoidably, is involved in magic processes. Many individuals in this time are beginning to feel strange sensations, sudden bursts of awareness, communication from other dimensions. Those of us who work, not with formal religion, but with magic, do not in general interpret these as out-of-the-body experiences, but as the body itself waking up to where it is; not as communications from other worlds outside of or beyond this material world, but rather as communications from other embodied forms of sensitivity and awareness too long ignored by human civilization.

The other animals, for instance, have given us a great deal, and they have been patient with us humans, as have the plants, the rivers and the land itself. Many creatures have donated their lives to our quest - many for instance are undergoing excruciating pain in our laboratories before being sacrificed - yet still they remain unaware of our purposes. The fish find it more and more difficult to swim in the stinging waters, while the passage upstream is blocked by freshly built dams; birds spin through the chemical breeze, hunting in circles for that patch of forest which had been their home. They are not alone in their dizziness, for things are quickly worsening throughout the biosphere.

Naturally, then, the mountains, the creatures, the entire non-human world is struggling to make contact with us. The plants we eat are trying to ask us what we are up to. The animals are signaling to us in our dreams or in forests. The whole earth is rumbling and straining to let us remember that we are not just in but of it: that this planet, this macrocosm is our own flesh - that the grass is our hair and the trees are our hands and the rivers are our blood - that the Earth is our real body and that it is alive ... It is now indeed time for magic, a magic time. But it is no supernatural thing, this magic. We are simply awakening to our own world for the first time, and hearing the myriad voices of Earth (1987, 26-27).

Here, indeed, was a strong assertion of animist philosophy, accompanied by a resolution to represent other species in human democratic parliament at the congress. The MAGIC Committee also suggested that the four individuals (self-selected) not participate in any other capacity during the time they function as representatives of other species. The committee also affirmed that the process of recognizing these special representatives was a "very delicate, mysterious process" and that therefore the process not be completely
codified, but that the hope was that these representatives be recognized by non-human as well as human consensus. This was also adopted by the plenary. Of course, no one knew how this step toward inter-species communication, ecological kinship, and all-species democracy might work at future gatherings. But one thing was clear, this ecocentric normative affirmation of animist philosophy was unanimously shared by the congress. From this point on, the continental congresses would include representation of other species. Unlike green city issues, there was full consensus on this turn toward a new fuller form of democracy which attempts to include other species' concerns and representation.

While there was consensus on all-species and animistic spirituality, the congress was unable to reach consensus on the statement about spirituality put forward by the Spirituality Committee. Although it was a non-theistic statement written in a similar animistic vein to the MAGIC Committee statement, it was blocked by a few votes. Some participants felt that bioregionalism should not demand religious expression or participation, as Mills phrased it in her summary report of the congress. Some, including Mills, felt that the "invocations, convocations and ritualization were contrived and subtly coercive of cynics, heretics, atheists and agnostics" (1987, 9). This was the beginning of an open controversy on ritual practice within the bioregional movement.

After the gathering, Haenke published a piece in the proceedings, a "deeply felt exhortation" to bioregionalists that linked spirituality to the congressing process itself. Haenke argued that: "I have always seen the congresses as religious bodies by themselves. In everything that is said and done, there is ritual and ceremony" (1987, 41). Haenke shared his frustration with certain criticisms he had heard since the first congresses in the Ozarks that the resolutions are just a lot of words and a waste of time. Haenke, by contrast,
argued that the resolutions "are a valuable set of principles backed up by our collective agreement to be presented to the world, but more important, the resolutions are our prayers!" (1987, 41). Haenke cautioned "those who want to lead rituals for the group" to recognize the responsibility they take on and to explain to the group what they are going to do, getting approval and allowing anyone who feels uncomfortable to step aside. He ended by appealing to bioregionalists to view consensing on resolutions "as our form of prayer for Earth, our training in eco-democracy, and our ongoing development of the bioregional program" (1987, 41).

Ritual and religion would again be controversial at future gatherings, but it is clear that the real controversy is not over animism as a belief system, but rather, over tools used to express and experience it, particularly over the use of ritual. Since these tools are also used to build community at the events themselves, this controversy opens up the question of what are legitimate tools for community-building from a bioregional perspective. It remains an unresolved question in the movement.

It is important to note that these discussions and resolutions passed at the continental events do not presume to impose any policy on local or regional groups. Indeed, none of the networking organizations set up at NABC II were empowered to speak for NABC II between congresses. Participants at both NABC I and II also consistently refused to endorse products, events, movements, candidates, activities or campaigns, but did not try to prohibit local bioregional groups from doing any or all of these actions. For NABC participants, it is important as Mills affirmed, that "NABC is strictly an event, a parliament of equals with no Kremlin lurking in the background" (1987, 9). For NABC participants, democracy evidently matters.
At NABC II, the bioregional strategy of continental movement building was continued and plans were made to broaden the nascent continental network to Mexico. Horizontal alliance building across race and gender were made key issues for the bioregional movement. Participants were inspired by learning about struggles of African-Americans for social justice, especially because these struggles were viewed as interconnected with all peoples' struggles for social justice and for "the earth". Eco-feminists supplied leadership in introducing additional tools for community-building into the congress process. All-species activists introduced a new tool to the congress, a method whereby other species could be represented in human parliament and congressing. Important new committees were added to the congress. Congressing to reach consensus on a range of issues continued to contribute to building unity among the wild diversity of bioregional participants in the form of a common program of principles. Thus, NABC II continued the direction set at NABC I of building a decentralized continental network of autonomous local and (bio) regional groups linked by a common set of principles and a long-term strategy for societal transformation.

NABC III

Katherine Adam observed that NABC III struck a new chord for many participants:

From the opening circle of 300 people on a field, surrounded by glacier-capped peaks, on the land route from Asia, NABC III was different. Something about that opening cry stirred my blood. Then came the drumming. (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 6)
NABC III was planned to be different from previous congresses. First, the event was held in Canada, at the North Vancouver Outdoor School, on the Cheakamus River, 67 kilometers north of the city of Vancouver in a place called "Paradise Valley". This had been decided in plenary at NABC II. Moreover, the Steering Council agreed on a number of goals for the third congress that would alter the character of the continental gatherings. NABC III would intentionally adopt a more cultural focus, encouraging bioregional groups to "express their unique identities as people and places" through: 1) telling their stories of place by making a presentation that expresses their bioregion to the rest of the congress, 2) providing bioregional displays (including mapping projects) at the congress, 3) and placing an accent on arts and culture (music, poetry, plays, ceremonies, etc.). While cultural performance was not new to the congress, the cultural sharing during the evenings was now to be more formalized with all participants encouraged to share their culture with those of other bioregions. In addition, the Steering Council recommended an overall cultural orientation, balancing each day between "cerebral" and "cultural" activities (NABC III Pre-Congress Brochure, 1988).

As well, the Council explicitly set out to "encourage strong participation by native communities" and "by sharing our cultural ways in this manner, bringing native peoples, Mexicans, Blacks, other minorities and Caucasians together, the promise of NABC III is to discover yet more appropriate skills for living sustainably on the Earth and with one another" (ibid).

NABC III attracted well over 300 participants, a larger number than either of the previous congresses. There was also more people of colour and more indigenous people. For the first time there were representatives from Mexico. The congress model was stronger than ever. With 17 working committees, there were more committees that at NABC I or II. The congressing dimension of
the event remained central to the gathering. The planned change to a cultural emphasis did not alter the basic structure of the event. However, there were participants that were beginning to ask more questions about it. Half way through the gathering, Chris Plant gave voice to these concerns in the "Voice of the Turtle", the daily congress newspaper. A growing number of people were asking how useful it was to continue refining resolutions that were already well thought-out and adopted by the plenary. Other questions surfaced around the theme of just how "representative" the congress could really be, questions such as:

What makes it truly a congress? Is it because it claims to be representative of bioregions across Turtle Island and, if so, should participation be more strictly along representative bioregional lines? And should participation be by bioregional groups rather than individuals? (Voice of the Turtle, Paradise Valley, B.C. 24 August, 1988, 1).

In spite of such questions, important new resolutions were still being put forward and adopted such as those on bioregional economics and bioregional education (see chapter four). The congress model was strong and most participants still supported it.

The congress opening circle on Monday morning was illustrative of an increased use of ritual and ceremony at continental gatherings, its importance and meaning for many NABC participants, and its potential for abuse or misuse. The morning circle began with the usual personal introductions, this time marked by the beat of a ceremonial "host" drum to affirm and seal the words of each person. A circle of drummers surrounded the large drum. Then, Starhawk (attending her first bioregional gathering) led participants in a Wiccan "spiral dance" to the beat of a song honouring the earth. Participants held hands and spiraled into and out of the centre, each passing by the other. After the dance
Eagle Star, a Cree singer and medicine man living in the Yalakom/Bridge River region and also one of the drummers, stepped into the centre of the circle to say that the traditional native friendship dance had not been carried out and that this insulted the drum and the dance. He explained that there is a great deal to learn from the rituals people of European descent borrow from. Moreover, he added that this oversight had caused him much pain. Several participants then immediately called for a traditional friendship dance. All readily agreed.

Starhawk stepped into the circle to express her pain at causing Eagle Star pain while leading a dance that was part of her tradition. Eagle Star then asked Starhawk to lead the friendship dance which was then danced enabling participants to shake hands and greet each other eye to eye. As reported in the congress newsletter, this painful conflict was resolved "with honesty and respect" (Voice of the Turtle, Paradise Valley, B.C. 23 August, 1988, 1).

However, the incident was symbolic of the potential for real difficulties to arise when attempting to build true "unity in diversity" across cultural borders and of the care and respect required in the process of working together toward that goal. Of course, it also illustrated the importance of respect, honesty, and care needed when using ritual. Although the incident ended positively, it showed clearly that, handled badly, ritual has potential for undermining trust essential to social capital formation.

On Monday afternoon, after an orientation for people new to bioregionalism, a special panel of Native people including representatives from Mexico, Argentina, the International Indian Treaty Council, the Haida Nation, and a Coast Salish woman addressed the gathering in the Squamish Longhouse on the grounds of the outdoor school. The smell of burning sage filled the Longhouse as participants entered, one by one through the low door. Once assembled, all spoke of their long traditions living with the land and of the
intense struggles to preserve their traditions in the face of European colonialism and encroachment. Nilo Cayugeno of Argentina stated that his people, the Mapuche, have been bioregionalists for thousands of years. Two speakers challenged Euro-bioregionalists to learn from their own traditions rather than emulating Native peoples' ways and stressed that it was only through respect that we can find a way to live together.

In the evening the Longhouse, which had been loaned to the bioregionalists by the Squamish Nation, was used for bioregional presentations and stories. The Longhouse, still used by the Squamish, was large, built around five fire circles. For four nights in this ancient setting, stories of bioregions from the Cascades to the Yucatan Peninsula, enacted in theatre skits, song, poetry, and performance art provided what one observer called "a cultural 'map' of the continent" for participants. In his view, and that of other veteran participants of previous congresses, this was an exciting advance in the practice of culture sharing through stories of place: "We came together from all across the continent, in most cases not knowing one another, and arrived at such a continuity of intent, such a commonality of spirit, that the sequence of evenings looked as though they had been planned that way" (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 8). In fact, while the sequence of evenings was planned, the bioregional skits had been prepared at the gathering with very little rehearsal.

In addition to the Longhouse performances, held early in the evening, there was late evening poetry reading, singing, music-making, stand-up comedy, light snacks and informal conversation at the "Turtle Island Coffee House" set up by the site committee. Still later, there was drumming and dancing back at the Longhouse fire circle till the wee hours of the morning.

During the days, there were workshops offered on drumming and dancing, miming and folk ritual, and a "song swap" circle was held. Mask-
making workshops were offered all week long by experienced people from the All-Species Project. A workshop on "non-hierarchical ritual was led by Starhawk. There was also a traditional First Nations' sweat lodge held each day. Such cultural variety indicates that the movement was becoming more diverse.

For the first time at NABC, all-species pageantry was integrated into the weeks activities and regular announcements of events were included in the Voice of the Turtle (this included an announcement of an upcoming all-species day in Vancouver). At the gathering, there was an ongoing Salmon-mask workshop, a giant puppet show on old-growth forest issues, an all-species workshop video presentation, all-species performances during dinner, and an "All-Species "Project Area" for participants to make masks and costumes in preparation for the All-Species Ball on the final evening. There was also a lot of involvement of all-species resource people with the children at the gathering. In addition, there was an all-species presentation and discussion at the panel on bioregional education. Finally, there was the representation of all-species - "the winged beings, the swimming beings, the plant beings, and the four-legged beings" - by four individuals during the congress plenary sessions as mandated by NABC II (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 38). At this gathering, then, bioregionalists were expanding their list of tools for community building to include the "community of all beings". Here is evidence that the ancient "community of beings" worldview was re-awakening within a population of humans raised in the modern era of Western civilization. Moreover, the awakening was being called forth with the aid of an ancient face-to-face tool of community-building and communication - earth ritual. At this congress, people were teaching and learning skills for earth ritual, including drums, song and chant, dance, story-telling, mime, mask, and costume.
Eagle Star organized and directed the building of the aforementioned traditional Sweat Lodge. During the week, he held daily sweats and, at the end of the gathering, announced that he had led a total of 175 individuals in the group sweats. For many, it was their first traditional First Nations sweat, and many spoke in glowing terms about the spiritual meaning of their experience (participant observation at a sweat).

Green City issues and challenges were given more attention than at NABC II. A panel of Kirk Sale, Berg, Debra Giannini (of Arcosanti - see chapter five), and John Papworth drew about 70 participants to a workshop with an intense and lively discussion of positions and issues. The Green Cities Committee took a new approach to cities from NABC II which had focused on technological issues. This time the committee adopted a more cultural focus and, in its report to the plenary, emphasized that substantial efforts "must be made to overcome barriers of race, class, gender and age" (1989, 71). Furthermore, the committee proposed that a "Green Cities" conference be convened in 1989, possibly in Chicago, to "help bring bioregional sensibilities to all urban dwellers of Turtle Island, to exchange skills and information serving to integrate cities with their bioregions, to strengthen minority and working class participation in the bioregional movement and to develop strategies for overcoming those unsound ecological practices which pollute our environment and poison our relationships with one another and with other species" (1989, 71). That conference was organized and held in Chicago in July of 1989 with multi-racial coalition building as a central focus (Black American activist James Boggs gave the Keynote speech. Berg spoke about Planet Drum's Green Cities Program as a model for the Bay Area. Other topics included city permaculture, ecology and progressive coalition building in cities, small group caucusing, etc.). In addition to the Chicago conference, the Green City Program (see
chapter five) of Planet Drum had been published, making their green city organizing experience and strategy available to bioregionalists elsewhere.

NABC III was different in another respect. As noted, more "people of colour" and more indigenous people attended than at the first two continental events. This was, in great part, due to the extra efforts of the Steering Council and the site committee members, many of whom were from the Yalakom River community. This effort was an attempt to carry out the mandate from NABC II to ensure significant participation by native people and people of colour. A panel discussion on "sexism, racism, and the land" held on the second day was attended by about 80 people. Margot Adair, Judith Plant, Gloria Yamato, Jacinta McCoy, and Dennis Jennings (of the International Indian Treaty Council) spoke. In the later part of the workshop, small talking circles of four people or less engaged in an "unlearning racism" exercise (see chapter four). Milo Guthrie's evaluation of these talking circles echoed that of some others who felt it was one of the most important workshops of NABC III: "This part of the workshop was very special to me and it was very important to hear people's personal stories and understand better who we are and how we see each other" (1989, 17). Another participant, Alice Kidd from the Yalakom community, also commented that the small group work of sharing experiences and stories was the most effective form for her for learning about racism as an obstacle to community and alliance building (personal conversation 1998). As Adair and Howell have argued, the small groups provide a safer space for many more individuals to share their pain (see chapter four). This is an important lesson for social capital formation in such difficult circumstances.

In addition to this and the major Longhouse session on Monday noted above, there were workshops on Native Land Rights and Multiracial Alliances, a workshop led by Kelly White on Native Peoples Issues, and another on Social
Ecology and Traditional Native Perspective. The mandate from NABC II to involve more native people, people of colour and Mexicans was being implemented. Nevertheless, for the first time at NABC, problems of alliance building and friction across cultural and racial boundaries surfaced. At least some of the "people of colour" did not feel comfortable at the gathering and they attributed their discomfort to ethnocentrism and/or racial bias. Some believed that Native people had been discouraged from attending the gathering (Voice of the Turtle, paradise Valley, B.C. 24 August, 1988, 3). One man linked the problem to the "anti-urban bias of the movement" which alienated "African-Americans" living in the inner cities and suggested bioregional gatherings be held in the cities "where the contradictions that we're working to change are most apparent" (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 27). They formed a "People of Colour" caucus which did not include whites, but they also participated in the Native Peoples and People of Colour Committee which, of course, did.

The Native People and People of Colour Committee, in its report to the plenary, stated:

We are concerned about the inability of NABC to fully involve people of colour. Also, there is a deeper concern about what we perceive as Racism/sexism/classism within the consciousness of NABC ... And further that unless the NABC makes a deeper commitment to strengthening and broadening its existing resolutions concerning Native Peoples and all People of Colour, and committing the resources to fulfill this, the NABC cannot grow and will not achieve the vision of its founding principles. (1989, 54)

The committee proposed that: a caucus for people of colour be established with an adequate share of the budgetary and organizational resources to meet its mandate and that a minimum of one-third of the Steering Council be people of colour; that this caucus be responsible for ensuring that people of colour be outreached; and that the Steering Council commit themselves to participating in
an "undoing racism" workshop in the next six months. The congress adopted these resolutions with only one person standing aside (but not blocking). The committee additionally recommended that: NABC IV adopt a multi-racial, cultural, alliance building theme; that a comprehensive sliding scale be adopted for NABC IV; and that one entire day at NABC IV be devoted to alliance-building, including work on undoing racism/sexism/classism.

The Ecofeminism Committee also dealt with issues of race, gender and class at NABC III. In their report, they stated:

Ecofeminism involves close examination of cultural symptoms of alienation from the Earth. Sexism, racism, classism, speciesism, militarism and exploitation of resources are examples of such alienation. As people of an alienated culture, we carry internalized systems of domination into our work as Bioregionalists. It is an ongoing and intense personal and interpersonal journey for us to rid ourselves of patterns that hurt us. We, as Ecofeminists, seek to understand the interconnected roots of all domination and to learn ways of changing our behaviour. This is a process by which we build community. (1989, 56)

Here is a frank recognition of barriers to overcome in building community and networking. These various "isms" can be identified as barriers or challenges to building social capital in civil society.

The Ecofeminism Committee then made several recommendations on process to address the problem of "isms". They proposed that: the congress strive for trained male and female facilitators for committees and plenary; that, as a guideline, the congress alternate female and male speakers in plenary and committee meetings; that on the first day of NABC a presentation be made to the entire congress on process and consensus with simple guidelines distributed to all participants; that the congress commit to uprooting "our own oppressive behaviour and confronting and supporting transformation of oppressive behaviour when we see it in others" (1989, 56). With respect to content, the
committee proposed that "experiential workshops" be held on sexism, racism, classism and ageism "and the interconnections between these attitudes and our relation with the Earth and all its species" (ibid). They also recommended that, since "suppression of our feelings has denied us a part of the truth", the congress "encourage people to speak from the heart and their personal experience". Finally, the Ecofeminism Committee resolved that while the congress does "wish to honour the North American native peoples without using their ceremonies and teachings inappropriately", the congress should "encourage people to ground themselves in the Earth from their own cultural heritage" (ibid). Both the resolutions and the report were adopted by the congress.

Ecofeminist concern for process and "ways of changing our behaviour" as means of community building was consistent with previous congresses. So was their announcement in Wednesday's "Voice of the Turtle" which asked: "that all persons be aware that there has been disrespect experienced by women and persons of colour at this congress" and "that if a woman or person of colour expresses dissatisfaction with your behaviour that you examine it before you begin to argue or dismiss it". The committee also announced that it had formed support groups and that people were welcome to join one or form one of their own (Voice of the Turtle, paradise Valley, B.C. 24 August, 1988, 4). By committing to Ecofeminist concerns for process, the congress was committing to looking at changing itself. Thus, the Ecofeminist Committee strongly supported the process concerns of people of colour, and so, ultimately, did the congress plenary. Nevertheless, bioregionalists were discovering through direct experience that organizing across race was a difficult issue reflecting deep divisions in modern Canadian and American civil society.
On Wednesday afternoon (day four of the congress), the men and women met in separate circles. This too was a new feature of the congress. The women met in a large field and the men met in the Longhouse. About eighty men sat inside the Longhouse in one large circle. Each explained why they were there. Many simply said, "I'm here to learn". A suggestion to break into small groups to discuss "what it's like to be a man" or "what hurts to be a man" was followed; that is, the men were encouraged to talk about their emotions and feelings. The small groups were confidential by agreement in order to encourage a safe space for the men to speak from the heart. The following is Glen Makepeace's evaluation of his experience:

For me, the small groups were the highlight of the time men spent together. For the rest of NABC, I felt a special bond with the men in my group. Our group used the power of the small circle - just going around the circle, each person speaking in turn as long as they felt moved to do so. It's not often in our society that a safe context exists in which we can speak about our deepest feelings. (1989, 32)

In the women's circle, the group of seventy women are brought together by the beat of Alison Lang's great drum from the Yalakom:

We gathered in the circle with the help of Ali's beautiful drum and set it with Starhawk and brought our selves together in that place and time. Then we sat there and looked at each other, which I liked a lot, even though it was a little fraught. Women are so beautiful in their variety. (1989, 33)

Then, two women from the Olympic Peninsula shared a song from the time of the religious persecutions of the Inquisition, a song sung by women in Italy when they heard the Inquisitors were coming to their village. After that, the women in the circle agreed to hold council. Constance Maytum led off by confessing that she had been the proposer to the Steering Council of this time of separation between women and men and spoke of her feelings leading up to
the congress when she observed "many male/female dominant culture behaviour patterns" (1989, 33). She also observed that:

most men in this community would be embarrassed to behave in the gratuitous ways of the cultural paradigm; most women would be embarrassed in the response behaviour. We are aware of the obvious gaffs, but the more subtle ones still entangle us and leave us uncomfortable. (1989, 33)

Gender was, in part at least, about issues of process. There was obviously a lot of work to do. The women then discussed how "left-brain" the event felt and what alternatives they would like to see/feel at these gatherings. After the council circle, the women joined in a "ritual/theatre piece of energy transformation", a discussion of social sewing projects, and watched a slide-show of women artists' work. Maytum offered this observation about differences between groups of women and mixed groups:

There is a difference between groups of women and mixed groups. I have talked to some of the men who were in the men's circle. We all have a lot of work to do. Women still get stuck and intellectualize when what we'd like to do is scream and pout to clarify our feelings, but we are looking to each other and setting different ways to behave. We are reclaiming ourselves. It will be a while before we are done. (1989, 33)

Here some horizontal bridge building seems to be necessary across the gender barrier. Gender is thus also identified as an important challenge for building social capital. When both women and men's groups were finished their separate activities, they reconvened as one group for the ceremony of re-integration of the two circles.

This congress was also the first to include Mexican participants who identified as bioregionalists. While there were only three Mexicans at this congress, their presence was well noted and celebrated. They brought
greetings from the three groups they represented and news of a dramatic awakening of ecological, spiritual and political consciousness in Mexico over the past five years. For Alberto Ruz from Huehuecoyotl, this awakening was reflected by the dramatic increase in numbers of "independent associations, civil associations working to bring ecological awareness about environmental issues" from 15-20 groups in 1984 to 200 to 300 organizations all over the country by NABC III (Ruz 1988). In 1987, Huehuecoyotl, Sobrevivencia, and Grupo de Estudios Ambientales invited Haenke, Berg, Bill Devall, and Milton to a seminar on deep ecology in Mexico attended by two to three hundred people. Ruz observed that, for the first time, issues of bioregionalism were discussed in Mexico. As noted in chapter five, Ruz himself translated pieces by Devall, Haenke, and Berg into Spanish which were published and circulated among a wide network of groups and individuals. The Mexican representatives at NABC III were mandated to bring back news of it to the groups and networks in Mexico. Bioregionalism was beginning to move beyond its Euro-American cultural ghetto.

At NABC III, the Bioregional Movement Committee continued its work of bioregional movement building. NABC II had agreed to find bioregional organizations to carry out the functions of movement building support. The committee resolved to: transfer the "bioregional bookstore" from Sunrock Farm in Ohio to Planet Drum; to set up the "Turtle Island Office" in Olympia, Washington as an information centre/clearing house for the movement; to initiate a newsletter to serve the movement between congresses entitled "Voice of the Turtle" (after the congress in-house newsletter); to establish a skills exchange network; and to authorize a Funds Committee to raise seed money for the various projects identified by the congress for support (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 58). These projects were the initial formal means of
continental networking between congresses. It was recognized that to be sustainable they would have to become self-supporting projects.

On Friday evening, the closing ceremony for NABC III culminated with the All-Species Costume Ball for which people had been mask-making and costume designing all week. Giant "bird-totem" puppets created by the All-Species Project 'flew' into the circle of humans gathered in the large field for the closing circle. Then, the band arrived for the costume ball. The band, "Mama Coyote and the Boys", was entirely local, composed of bioregionalist "ecomusicians" several of whom were also on the Site Committee. It was a full moon and a warm summer evening. The dancing went on for many hours, congress participants dressed in wild animal costumes gyrating enthusiastically to wild polyrythmic beats till after 2 A.M.

After the ball, about 70-80 people - still dressed in full all-species costumes - gathered on the field for a "Drawing Down the Moon" spiral dance ritual. Earlier in the week, Starhawk's afternoon workshop on "non-hierarchical ritual" introduced newcomers to her wiccan tradition and helped prepare participants for the spiral dance ritual. In the workshop she gave clear, simple explanations of the purpose of ritual. From her perspective, one key purpose of earth ritual was the bonding of human community within a larger earth community (see chapter four). This night, with the full moon now high in the sky, Starhawk, Eagle Star, Alberto Ruz, Arturo Pozo and others began the carefully prepared "ecumenical" ritual incorporating several traditions. The "sacred circle" was marked, the drumming began, and the chanting and dancing went on for about two hours, during which the moon underwent a partial eclipse. For participants, the "old ways", the ancient earth ways were recreated that night, recalled to the present moment and re-enacted by the participants themselves. One of the celebrants, Susan Meeker-Lowry gave her impressions of the night:
A long, long time ago we were also at a gathering. We had worked together then, too. This was our last night together, we knew, for many lifetimes. Then, as now, we were celebrating at a costume ball, under the full moon, preparing to dance with each other and all creatures of the Earth. It felt the same. It smelled the same. We are the same ones. Then as now. That last night we promised to work together, to love enough to come back together again, to join in celebration and once again to work with the power of life to bring Earth wisdom into focus. We knew that the time would come when we would be needed. We knew, even then, that it would be painful and seem to be impossible. Yet, still we committed to this work. We made a sacred promise to each other and to Earth. We are now beginning to fulfill that ancient promise. (1989, 43)

Who were these people a long time ago that were preparing to dance "with each other and all creatures of the earth"? I believe that Meeker-Lowry is referring to the experience of that primordial time at the dawn of humanity that Australian aboriginals call the Dreamtime. Here is how David Abram (also a participant at NABC III) describes the Dreamtime:

It is a kind of time out of time, a time hidden beyond or even within the evident, manifest presence of the land, a magical temporality wherein the powers of the surrounding world first took up their current orientation with regard to one another, and hence acquired the evident shapes and forms by which we now know them. It is that time before the world itself was entirely awake - that dawn when the totem Ancestors first emerged from their slumber beneath the ground and began to sing their way across the land in search of food, shelter, and companionship. ... The Dreamtime is not, like the Western biblical notion of Genesis, a finished event; it is not, like the common scientific interpretation of the 'Big Bang', an event that happened once and for all in the distant past. Rather, it is an ongoing process - the perpetual emerging of the world from an incipient, indeterminate state into full, waking reality, from invisibility to visibility, from the secret depths of silence into articulate speech and song. (1997, 164-169)

In other words, what Meeker-Lowry was describing was her experience of what Abram and others call "the Dreamtime" (after Australian aboriginal Traditional Ecological Knowledge), which rests just below the surface of being and is accessible in present time. By telling and re-enacting the ancient stories in
song and ritual, people can connect in some way not fully explicable to the linear rational mind to that "time out of time". Ritual re-enactment calls forth that time of origins and the ritual participant "in some sort becomes 'contemporary' with the events described" (Eliade 1968, 18).

What did other participants think of their experience? The morning following the All-Species Ball was reserved for clean-up and good-byes. I too had been one of the dancers in the spiral dance ritual and had experienced something very similar to "the Dreamtime", but at that time I had no name for it. However, I was in a state of elation, a joyful and peaceful energy centered in my chest, but distributed throughout my body. Moreover, the energy released or generated by the experience seemed boundless. I spoke with several other participants in the ritual dance who described similar experiences of this "time out of time". For me, this state of elation and the expansive feeling of joyful energy in my heart, lasted for several days after the event.

I also spoke with Glen Makepeace as some one who had attended all three continental congresses about his impressions. We spoke about the difference of NABC III, its cultural emphasis. He compared the event to Mayan ceremonial villages which he had read about; the "making of a village for-a-week". Makepeace spoke of the excitement of coming together with people from far away who are also doing the same sort of work and of the "empowerment to just meet other people and see what wonderful people there are doing the work elsewhere" (Makepeace 1988).

Doug Aberley, also at his third continental gathering, expressed his reflections after the congress in his field notes. On the inclusion of all-species into the congress plenary, he observed that:

At first blush this seems hilarious. But it became quickly clear, by constantly seeing these mute sentinels, that the direction of dialogue was
subtly shifted. To have an intellectual understanding that humans are only one species among several million is one thing, to have this understanding introduced into every minute of a meeting's events is another level of perception altogether. (1992)

However, for Aberley, the best innovation was the nightly cultural evenings:

The variety of expression was awesome. We have skits, slides, songs, tales and legends, chants, drums, and costumes. The emotion of these sessions was very strong. It was as if we were seeing for the first time the impact bioregionalism was having on the evolution of culture. (1992)

Don Alexander, attending his first bioregional event, had some criticisms of what he called "the tendency of some to impose pagan pomp and circumstance on gathering participants as a whole", but he also reflected on the strengths of the congress; the "rough -and-ready egalitarianism" with everyone chipping in to do support work, the consistency of practice and belief, and the integration of global and local, political and cultural:

At the congress, I felt that my whole being was involved" serving food, caring for children, barbecuing salmon, listening to presentations, partying, going for walks, speaking up at plenaries, intervening in conflicts, and facilitating workshops. I bonded with people on an emotional as well as intellectual level. My commitment to the movement stems as much from the people as from the ideas. (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 7)

Alberto Ruz was also attending the congress for the first time. I spoke with him during the congress. We spoke about the problems that surfaced with respect to race and cultural difference. He recognized that the path was not going to be easy. He acknowledged the difficulties of outreach and reaching groups of Native people. He spoke about the suspicion of any movement "that has been started by white people" on the part of native people and others who are just "tired of lip service, no?" But he also pointed out that "They are here
and they are learning just as we are learning, we are all learning from each other". He added that he had come to this gathering specifically to learn how to deal with difference:

I am trying to learn ways we can deal with differences, so we can all work for a society of equals, but we have to respect the differences and that's where I think we are all at this place, in this moment. (Ruz 1988)

Judith Plant, a participant in NABC II and III, commented on her experience of the third congress in the proceedings:

For me, NABC III was like a gathering of the clans - a gathering of people who are breaking away from the sinking ship of Western civilization. Sometimes in the years between these gatherings, while bioregional people do the work of creating communities and networks - the 'clans' - it really helps to stop and remember an event like NABC. What is remembered is not so much the words as the inspiration. (NABC III Proceedings 1989, 5)

Plant also dealt with problems of difference. She acknowledged that there were problems and a need to include "significant numbers of native people and people of colour to ensure that, in the future, such allies are no longer guests at someone else's party, that it is their party too" (1989, 6). She also expressed the challenge ahead:

If the movement can get beyond a fear of its differences and instead learn how to celebrate them, we will be leading the way, creating an example of how to live and love on this earth in the spirit of diversity. (ibid)

This was perhaps a fitting challenge for a movement attempting to build "unity in diversity".

If difference and diversity were at least an openly recognized problem within the movement, the problem of continuity at the congress events was not.
However, another key observation made by Makepeace was that, by NABC III, there was only 30 individuals who had attended all three events. This fact points to a real problem of continuity for the continental gatherings which the recording and distribution of the resolutions and other events of the congresses through the published proceedings attempts to address.

With respect to the formation of eco-social capital, NABC III introduced a process tool new to the congress movement (and perhaps unique to social movements), the representation of "all-species" in human decision-making process. Moreover, there was also full plenary recognition of an awakening of the "community of beings" ethic and an open acceptance and practice of earth ritual by an estimated one quarter to one third of the participants. However, the controversy over ritual use also revealed a potential for harm to the trust building essential to social capital formation, if ritual is not used with great care and respect.

More emphasis on cultural sharing through story-telling, poetry, music, drumming, singing together, and other forms of performance art moved the congress toward increased diversity among the humans (in spite of the problems of difference). Often, the cultural sharing also included all-species diversity issues.

With respect to social capital formation important barriers and challenges were recognized and attempts were made to deal with them in practice. In addition, eco-feminists introduced community-building tools new to the congress movement to assist in consensus process and in conflicts within communities and seed groups. With respect to overcoming "isms" and problems of difference, small discussion and story-sharing groups were identified as useful process tools.
NABC IV

NABC IV was held on the shore of Lake Cobbossecontee north of Portland, Maine at a YMCA camp from August 20 to 25, 1990. The event attracted more than 260 participants, somewhat less than NABC III. Participants came from North and South America and Japan. The Committee and plenary work central to the congress model remained an important dimension of the event. At the outset Susan Meeker-Lowry and Brian Tokar observed that the congress model continued to reveal deeper insights:

Many of us approached this Congress wondering if our committee work and resolutions had reached a culmination. Once again we were wrong. Committees continued to refine their efforts, reaching more specific conclusions and further-reaching proposals for action. (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 5)

In fact, there were 19 committees operating at this congress, more than at any previous continental event. At the same time, the congress continued to refine its own processes and tools as well as adding some new features such as a "children's congress" and "talking circles". As well, the new emphasis on cultural activities and sharing initiated at NABC III was continued and enhanced, in part, by the strong, experienced cultural participation of six representatives from Mexico.

Two primary themes established by the Steering Council for the fourth congress were: "Organizing Our Bioregions" and "Promoting Cultural Diversity - Building Alliances and Coalitions". The title - and over-arching theme - of the gathering was "Uniting to Heal All Our Relations: Home, Community, and the

The congress was planned for a full seven days. The extra time meant that the ambitious schedule could be reasonably implemented without burnout. The Site Committee included an encouragement to "everyone to name dominating behaviour when they see it" and to "bring with you to the Congress a commitment to helping make this an affirmative experience for all --- individually and collectively healing our relations with each other and the Earth" (Fourth North American Bioregional Congress Pre-Congress Brochure 1990).

The cultural diversity/alliance-building theme was, of course, mandated by the previous congress. The theme "organizing our bioregions" emerged from discussions within the Steering Council - and informally with various other individuals - on continental strategy. They considered that it was time to "take up the challenge of how we can go about putting [bioregional] perspectives into practice in our bioregions and possibly through a continent-wide strategy" (Minutes, NABC IV Steering Council, 17-18 February, 1990). As a result, the Steering Council decided to take "a leap in redesigning aspects of the congress' structure" (ibid).

The structural changes were then outlined by the Steering Council as follows:

- it is our hope that all workshops will come out of committees at the congress (we have also scheduled a two to three hour lunch/siesta where people will be able to present non-committee workshops). The committees themselves will be asked to pool their experience to be able to share in plenary session skills and perspectives which will empower people to better organize in their bioregions and build multi-cultural alliances. In order to make this happen effectively we ask that people choose a committee with which to work early in the congress and devote themselves to it. In summary, rather than furthering the refinement of perspective through specialization in committee resolutions at NABC IV, we hope, that we are ready to teach each other what we know best. (ibid)
Participants were encouraged become involved in committee work and a list of committees from NABC III was supplied in pre-conference mail-out material. One the one hand, by encouraging committee work the Council was emphasizing the congress model; one the other, it was creating space in the schedule for "non-committee workshops" and a push toward multi-cultural alliance building. Would the logistics of a longer congress have room for both?

Evening bioregional cultural sharing was organized in a similar manner to NABC III with the early part of the evening devoted to bioregional cultural story presentations while the later hours were reserved for an informal coffee house "open-mike" with drumming and dancing till the wee hours of the morning (Fourth North American Bioregional Congress Pre-Congress Brochure 1990).

An innovation at this gathering was the "Children's Congress", a program of games, crafts, music, dance, drama, and discussion to enable the children to "celebrate the cultural diversity of Turtle Island". All participants were "encouraged to bring bioregional activities to share with the children", recognizing that it is "our collective responsibility to nurture the next generation" (ibid). Janice Walrafen spoke about this with me later when I asked her about her work with children at the congress. She replied:

The reason I work with children is because they are our future and also, for me, they are the seeds of hope because they're not fixed in their behavioural patterns to the degree that they can't change and that new ideas don't affect them and I think that they're still in a forming stage and so when we get children and guide them through to a place that's more holistic and more integrated with the natural world, we've got a better chance for the future because they're going to be around when we're not and they've got to deal with the mess that we have - we and our parents, foreparents have, you know, dumped in our laps. So, I work with children because of that, because I feel that they're our hope and our future, and because I enjoy working with children. They are more open, you don't have the same kind of psychological head games that go on with adults.
They are just more alive and I enjoy that spirit in my life. So that's why I work with children and I work with them trying to help maintain that what's true to them is the truth and encouraging them not to conform to social pressure, but to truly stand strong on what they feel is true and also to help guide them through to that relationship with nature, which I think children innately have, see. So, I'm there to help them keep that thread through, especially through puberty and adolescence. It's easy to let go of that animistic kind of reality that the children live with. (Walrafen 1990).

The program of activity was divided into two parts: one for those aged 1 to 6 and one for those from 7 to teenagers. A parents co-op was organized to share the responsibility of "hanging out with the little ones" and a call was put out for volunteers to also help out. Two 45 minute workshops per day were organized for the younger children, an art project in the morning and storytelling, song, magic puppets after lunch. For the older children, two one and one-half hour workshops per day were organized which included: weaving, sculpture, dwellings, pottery, mask-making and theatre. The children were asked to explore the themes of NABC IV and put together a performance presentation to share with the entire congress on the final day.

The fourth congress opened on Sunday evening with supper and an introductory circle. Participants introduced themselves by their bioregional place and their purpose at the gathering. Then, the participants were led in a guided meditation designed to take them to the "source roots of the bioregional energies they call home", after which everyone was invited to use the week to nourish stronger roots. In the final part of the evening, Roberto Mendoza, a Native American bioregionalist working on the site committee, recounted an indigenous legend about huge monsters which once terrorized the land until they were reduced to a manageable human scale. When the white settlers arrived and butchered the forests, they were seen as the monsters of the legend. Today, Mendoza suggested, multi-national corporations are these
destructive giants, and that the bioregional challenge is to reduce these modern monsters down to human scale (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 2).

Mendoza's address was received enthusiastically by the assembly. This theme receives sympathetic hearing among bioregionalists generally. However, in focusing on the corporate monster, Mendoza was tackling an issue that is key to civil society theory - the control of the formal economic sphere by the global corporate and financial oligarchy now attempting to consolidate its rule over the earth (Korten 1995), an issue that has perhaps not been adequately addressed by the bioregional movement. This flags an issue of strategy for theoretical discussion in chapter seven.

Another innovation related to social capital formation was made at NABC IV. Every morning after breakfast one-half hour was reserved for "Talking Circles" of four to six people. These circles were "inspired by a ceremonial practice of Native Americans" (Healing All Our Relations 1990). During this time participants were encourage to share "from the heart and spirit whatever may move him or her". It was explained to participants that these circles were intended to be a "confidential, non-judgmental container for whole-hearted listening" (ibid). The participants in each talking circle stayed in the same group all week so that the circle might provide a support group for personal grounding. They also functioned as a way for new and old bioregionalists to share experiences and stories, and another forum for individuals to get to know new people. These circles were popular with participants and they became a permanent feature of the continental gatherings. Here was another important use of small groups as a tool for trust-building and informal networking among virtual strangers at continental gatherings.

The rest of the first day of the gathering, apart from the long "lunch and siesta" break, was devoted to introducing bioregionalism, the history of the
congress, and the use of consensus process for new and old participants in the morning and following up in the afternoon with a presentation of the story of the Upper Blackland Prairie group from Texas. The Texas presentation launches the theme of organizing our bioregions.

Monday evening was devoted to the opening panel on bioregional organizing. Six bioregional groups present oral histories of their bioregional organizing efforts: the Kansas Area Watershed, the Ozark Area Community Congress, the Yalakom River Community, the Mattole Restoration Council, the Cascadia Bioregional Congress, and the Anahuac Bioregion in Mexico (see chapter five). At this session, Freeman House (who had been one of the strongest proponents of strictly local organizing) probably best articulated the necessity of local groups to form broader networks. He recounted the story of "Redwood Summer" in the Mattole valley that very summer. Earth First! activists chose to focus on the Mattole that year in their campaign to save dwindling redwood forests. The attention of the U.S. state was also drawn to the valley when the federal government decided to focus its "War on Drugs" campaign in the Mattole valley, sending 600 troops to camp in the valley for six weeks. During this period constant overflights by army helicopters contributed to inducing fear into the valley's residents. This situation forced a re-evaluation by some of the Mattole restorationists of their past successes. Clearly, for truly sustainable local success, House argued, broader networks were needed to consolidate the gains. The question - and challenge - for the movement that House posed, given the shared understanding that "bioregions could only be experienced and invoked by their inhabitants", was what could NABC actually do to assist and accelerate the process of local organizing. House expressed both his fears and a possible way forward:
... because the invocative language of bioregionalism was not widespread I was beginning to fear that our gains would be homogenized and vitiated by absorption into an 'environmental' context and our best energies would be used up in playing to the media. To put our success in a bioregional context two things were needed that would not rise out of our own small area: 1) the widespread availability of a body of bioregional literature and a forum for extra-regional discourse, and 2) alliances and consolidations with like-minded communities in our own bioregion. In other words, the next largest scale of organization. From my perspective on the Mattole, it seemed possible to win many battles only to find yourself fighting the wrong war. (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 9)

The necessity for a widely available body of bioregional literature was evident to many bioregionalists at this gathering. The publication of a collection of bioregional essays (formerly available mostly in obscure regional journals) by New Society Publishers (Canada) provided the beginning of a solution. This book, entitled "Home! A Bioregional Reader" (Andruss et al. 1990), was now available "hot off the press" at the congress. Publishers Chris and Judith Plant brought multiple copies with them to the congress for sale and distribution. This was greeted with enthusiasm by many participants and there was much talk at this congress of the need to reach out to the mainstream (personal conversations with participants at the gathering). Home! was the first of a series of bioregional books that would begin to bring the heretofore unknown literature to a wider public. Also, Gene Marshall had prepared a list of principles for bioregional organizing, part of a planned handbook on bioregional organizing. This was also published in the proceedings to assist local organizers and activists. However, the second half of House's proposed solution, alliance building, would not be solved so easily.

Alliance building, and in particular, the tool that had been chosen to deal with it at this congress, "undoing racism workshops", was scheduled for both morning and afternoon the following day, Tuesday. On Tuesday morning a
large part of the congress assembled on a small grassy hill. The workshop was organized to address a plethora of "isms", including racism, sexism, ageism, and speciesism, all considered to be forms of oppressive behaviour. All NABC IV participants were encouraged to attend. The workshop was led by Margo Adair and Roberto Mendoza. Adair defined oppressive behaviour as "prejudice plus power" where prejudice is a combination of attitude and socialized behaviour (see chapter four). Adair stressed the importance of both confronting our internal oppressions and transforming the institutions that keep "isms" in place. Mendoza presented a historical analysis of the use of "colour" to define ethnicity. He argued that when European immigrants came to this continent they were promised socio-economic privilege in return for denying their individual cultural heritage of place, and being grouped under a broader category, "white". Colour thus became an effective tool for dividing people along racial lines. Mendoza also gave a demonstration of Re-Evaluation Counseling (see chapter four) as one tool to explore the roots of peoples individual heritage (Voice of the Turtle, Lake Cobbosseecontee, ME. 22 August, 1990, 5). Adair pointed to the importance of "naming" different oppressive behaviours and attitudes as an aid to revealing and then altering behaviour (see chapter four). The group then brainstormed a long list of oppressive behaviours.

In terms of the stated goal of "Healing All Our Relations", it was not clear whether this attempt at "undoing isms" was very successful. One woman, Juana Gonzalez Paz (attending her first congress), identified herself as a "lesbian feminist of colour" to the assembly. She was concerned that she was the only person she had heard who identified as lesbian or gay and that there was only "a handful of people of colour" at the gathering. Gonzalez Paz was also concerned that there was: "resistance, avoidance, denial, and blatant racism"
displayed by some participants at the undoing "isms" workshop. As an example, she referred to one white man who talked about feeling oppressed by the process and how the "man of colour" facilitator met with resistance when asking white people about their oppression. Gonzalez Paz also commented that it was "painful to behold" Jewish participants who resisted identifying as an oppressed group. On the other hand, she also recognized that, at NABC IV, the consensus process did work: "I blocked any use of 'the human race' that didn't acknowledge power differentials and that concern seemed to be well-received" (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 13).

This experience points to a number of problems with the process of the workshop itself and with the effort at alliance-building. As noted, NABC III mandated the Steering Council to include "people of colour", a minimum of one-third of its members, and to provide them with an adequate share of budgetary and organizational resources. This was done and Jacinta McKoy (an African-American), who was hired as staff-person for the new Turtle Island Office, also became coordinator of the People of Colour Committee. Slightly less than one-third of the Steering Council were now "people of colour". Their fares to Steering Council Meetings were paid (other's fares were not). However, when funds dwindled several of the "people of colour" representatives failed to attend the final Steering Committee meeting before NABC IV. Moreover, although their specific mandate was to involve more "people of colour", they did not manage to attract any new participants. As a result, there were not many "people of colour" at NABC IV from the U.S. or Canada. In fact, the "people of colour" caucus had fallen apart before the congress began (Minutes, NABC IV Steering Council, 17-18 February, 1990). It was recognized - after the fact - that serious alliance-building across race would not take place at the level of the Steering Council which, after all, was merely a coordinating committee
between gatherings with no power except that mandated by the congress itself. Alliance-building across the racial barrier would have to first take place "in place" in the bioregions, a surprisingly "bioregional" lesson! Difference, especially difference due to race, was proving to be a very serious challenge to alliance building and networking in civil society.

Second, there was the problem of continuity at continental congresses. By NABC IV, less than 30 people had attended all the congresses. The process of informing and involving new participants in the congressing process may not have been adequate to the task. For example, "people of colour" new to the congress seemed to be unaware of past efforts at dealing with issues of race and gender; although, as this account has already shown, considerable effort had been spent in this direction. This raises an interesting and important consideration about social capital formation. Can social capital be raised effectively across geographical space merely through electronic or print forms of communication as the organizers of both NABC III and IV tried to do? (I spoke to several organizers of NABC IV; extensive efforts were made by print mail, telephone, and e-mail to involve people of colour with little result). Or, can social capital best be built locally through direct, "embodied", face-to-face communication? How much trust can be built between strangers through the telephone lines or via e-mail or internet? These are crucial questions for those concerned with broad social mobilization.

The third problem revealed was with the particular application of the alliance-building tool, the "undoing isms" workshop at NABC IV. In her literature, Adair recommends that a "safe space" be created for the honest and often painful admissions that "speaking from the heart" demands (see chapter four). As we have seen, small group discussions proved useful in this respect for participants at NABC III. Yet, the "undoing isms" workshop was not broken
into small groups at NABC IV. The lesson here, then, is that small groups or "talking circles" may be essential to creating the safe space to build the quality of trust necessary for people to "come out" and speak frankly about their feelings regarding oppressions. And trust, as we have seen, is essential to the formation of social capital.

The lack of participation by "people of colour" from the U.S. and Canada was very disappointing for members of the steering committee (Minutes, NABC IV Steering Council, 17-18 February, 1990) and more generally by congress participants as a whole. However, a larger contingent of participants from Mexico supplied new energy to the People of Colour Committee and to the congress as a whole. During their cultural presentation Wednesday evening, the Mexican contingent included an update on Xochimilco's Bioregion, a slide presentation on the Cuauhnahuac Bioregion, and a multimedia ceremony of music, poetry and slides entitled "The Return of Quetzalcoatl". The finale was performed by some members of the group, "The Illuminated Elephants", from Huehuecoyotl who had many years of experience with cultural performance and ceremony (see chapter five). This ceremonial performance was, in fact, a participatory ritual which engaged everyone in the hall with warm southern energy and southern music, chant, drum, and dance. In this inclusive performance, sharing across cultures did work to generate good feelings and North-South bonds of solidarity (observation and conversations with participants).

In the Native People's and People of Colour Committee meetings, the Mexicans put forward the proposition that the committee change its name to the "Rainbow People's Committee". This was done and consensed on at the plenary, the rainbow being a symbol of all colours in their unity and difference. Other changes included: a resolution to form a standing committee on the "Five
Hundred Years of Resistance and Dignity", a campaign of indigenous groups and allies in the U.S., Mexico and Canada against the colonial celebration of "Columbus Day" for 1992; a resolution that the standing committee produce a resource packet on the "Five Hundred Years of Resistance and Dignity" and the funding to print and distribute it; a resolution that when a bioregional congress is held for the entire Western Hemisphere, that it be called the Ameriquan Bioregional Congress and bear the Ameriqua symbol which shows the two continents of the Western Hemisphere (Ameriqua is a Mayan word meaning "Land of the Winds"); a resolution that the congress change its name to the Turtle Island Bioregional Congress (TIBC), since to Central America and Mexico, North America means "Yankee" or "gringo"; and a resolution that Mexico and Central America no longer be referred to as "the tail of the turtle" in bioregional literature and language. Finally, the Rainbow People's Committee resolved that the Steering Council and Site Committee facilitate support for organizations composed of people of colour and poor people and make it a priority to facilitate their ability to attend meetings, recognizing that all bioregions need to develop alliances with such organizations (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 62-3). All these resolutions were adopted by the plenary.

So, while NABC IV failed to develop any new linkages with people of colour within the U.S. and Canada, the North-South linkage across culture and race was growing stronger. Also, prior to the fourth congress, the Steering Committee was already discussing the possibility of holding the next congress in Texas as a "bridge to bringing in our Mexican compadres" with the Mexican and Texas members of the Steering Council (Minutes, 17-18 February, 1990). For the NABC, "continental" networking was taking on larger geographical and cultural dimensions.
Other efforts to strengthen continental ties were also agreed at the plenary. One was to approve a trilingual brochure (English, Spanish, and French) to include: "a mission statement and concise statements of purpose, easily understood by anyone, augmented by the 'Welcome Home!' statement", and definitions of "bioregion" and "bioregionalism" (1991, 25). A three-fold mission statement was also adopted by NABC IV as follows:

Bioregional efforts are as varied and diverse as the people attempting them, and as the bioregions in which they occur. In general our mission can be stated as three-fold:

Cultural Efforts, which serve to create or regenerate sustainable, compassionate, Earth-centered lifestyles and cultures that will supplant exploitative practices;

Political Efforts, which serve as damage control to heal the wounds that exploitative practices continue to inflict on this planet, as well as to create the benign, nurturing institutions and associations that will foster an ecological partnership culture; and

Outreach Efforts, that serve to inspire as many people as soon as possible to recognize the importance of, and to live by, the guiding bioregional principles as stated above. (1991, 25)

These important efforts at continental networking and outreach were complimented by the already noted commitment to the coalition campaign of 1992 for "Five Hundred Years of Resistance and Dignity", the ongoing work of Planet Drum to update the bioregional directory, the Skills Exchange network being handled by David Levine, and the work of Juan-Thomas Rehbock on translating ideas and materials into Spanish.

As noted, "organizing our bioregions" was the second major theme of this congress. The Steering Council meeting, held during NABC IV, reviewed problems of bioregional organizing, education, and outreach since NABC III. They agreed that a lack of leadership and funds prohibited gains between congresses and contributed to a failure to follow through on the plans laid at NABC III with respect to the Turtle Island Office, the NABC newsletter, and fundraising. The steering council suggested that the "logistics" for these
projects be done through the bioregional movement committee as well as at Steering Council meetings which were happening daily at the congress with participants encouraged to attend (Voice of the Turtle, Lake Cobbosseecontee, ME. 21 August, 1990, 2).

The solution to the continental networking problem expected to be presented to NABC V by the Steering Council was a proposal for a form of congress and steering committee that is representative of the "locally organized bioregional congresses" (Voice of the Turtle, Lake Cobbosseecontee, 24 August, 1990, 2). The resolution adopted by plenary was that the process of selection of Steering Council members "be guided by the principle of representation that is truly reflective of the diversity of life on this continent" and that membership be approved by the plenary of NABC IV before it disbands (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 23). This move seemed to hark back to Haenke's "shadow government" congress of representatives.

The Steering Council, following the lead of the Rainbow Peoples Committee, also proposed that the name of the continental congress be changed to the Turtle Island Bioregional Congress. Other resolutions adopted by the plenary were that: the 9 Steering Council members' travel costs to attend meetings be paid, that a job description be approved by plenary, and that the goals of the council be: to hold the next congress, to insure that all work of the Steering Council be informed by the "need to make the movement diverse and inclusive of a rainbow of people on Turtle Island and all of the Americas" (1991, 23). NABC IV also consensed "to draw up the criteria and methodology to implement a "rainbow representational structure of the Steering Council" and to write job descriptions for Turtle Island Office staff. This obviously represents a move to continue the congress model.
So, on the one hand, the fourth congress continued to develop within the congress model. The Steering Council move to make the congress and its own structure "representative" of the diversity of cultures and bioregions on Turtle Island and the increased encouragement of committee and plenary work supported this direction. However, within the congress and also within the Steering Committee itself, increasing doubts about the wisdom of "resolutionary bioregionalism" continued to surface. Open comments from Steering Council members about passing more resolutions, comments such as "we cannot continue to build on fine statements alone" and "we have probably written as much as we need to write, and now we need to go into action" reflected these doubts.

Furthermore, a talking circle held within the Green Cities Committee revealed a high level of frustration with the resolutionary process. Concerns that: "we were going through the same motions as at the last two NABC's" and "some people were beginning to withdraw mentally" were named. Moreover, during the plenary discussion on green cities, the proposed resolutions of the Green Cities Committee focused on cities as "climax communities", ignoring questions of social hierarchy and justice. Discussion of the proposed resolutions could come to no consensus on a bioregional policy or strategy for cities. The Green Cities Committee decided to resign as a committee. Clearly, there were serious problems developing with the congress "resolutionary" model.

Yet, in some ways this congress seemed to be attempting to strengthen the congress model. As noted, there were more committees than at previous gatherings. Moreover, some committees added important new dimensions to their "resolutionary" work. For example, the economic committee (which was the largest one yet) completed its four-pronged conversion strategy (see
chapter four). The education committee, having already established principles (see chapter three), began to work on developing a set of criteria to help people evaluate new "environmental" teaching material coming out on the market and on developing support for "Pollen", the journal of bioregional education being published by Frank Traina at Sunrock Farm (1991, 41-43).

Another important example of ongoing committee work was that done by the Forest Committee which developed a proposal for a core-corridor system of biodiversity preservation two years before the ground-breaking core-corridor concept plan (for the U.S.) of Reed Noss and the Wildlands Project was published (Noss 1992). Moreover, the Forest Committee, in its preamble to the resolution, linked the question of preserving habitats for all species to the issues of undoing "isms" within the human species:

Learning to understand native habitats and live in balance with all life are key to achieving lasting solutions to human problems such as sexism, racism, violence, humanistic materialism and anthropocentrism. For example, in native ecosystems there is not the extent of power hierarchy - domination of the many by the few - which human cultures have created and are the basis of these 'isms'. (NABC IV Proceedings 1991, 45)

This resolution was adopted by the congress. The plenary also adopted the proposal of the committee to support the Redwood Summer Campaign to save existing remnants of native Shasta ecosystems and to support the development of sustainable regional systems of production and distribution which meet the needs of workers, their families, and their communities (1991, 48). These resolutions were founded out of typical "deep ecology" concerns around issues of speciesism, the "domination of the many by the few", yet they clearly integrated such concerns into an analysis which located them in a common underlying problematic of hierarchical rule, the "domination of the many by the
few" within human society. It was a step forward for deep ecology, a move in the direction of integrating deep ecology concerns with those of social ecology.

While the congress committee work remained strong, contributing important new resolutions to the developing set of principles and the strategic program of the movement, the congress format was undergoing other changes. Within the "congressing" activity at the plenary, innovations in the form of committee presentations were changing the form of the congress model. More "direct action" was the theme for the plenary. First, there was an intervention by "spider", one of the all-species representatives, during the presentation by the Education Committee. Spider objected to the proposal to have living creatures (spiders in particular) taken out of their natural habitats and brought into the classroom. Spider's discomfort was mimed (all-species have no voice at plenary). Then, spider's objection was voiced by Estes, the congress facilitator. The message was that humans have a "very real responsibility to take Spider's message into the 'real world' to share with children, teachers - anyone involved with the kind of work that seems to involve the disruption of others species' lives to benefit us" (1991, 3-4).

Another similar intervention in plenary format occurred. During the presentation of the Eco-Defense Committee, an automobile covered with images of destruction repeatedly honking its horn rolled into the plenary. A member of the Eco-Defense Committee demanded to know what the congress was going to do about it. The assembled participants literally rose up with all-species representatives in full costume leading the way and pushed the car away. Later, the Green Movement Committee, disturbed by some peoples' dismissal of political action and the confusion of all forms of politics with the dominant power-oriented variety, began their plenary presentation all grumbling and whining about "politics, politics, politics". Then, each committee
member recited their personal definition of what an earth-centered politics is about to a chorus of "politics!" which culminated in an "uncannily celebratory conclusion" (1991, 5). The Ecofeminism Committee presented a statement challenging congress participants to question personal behaviour, the role of gender in our myths, and the feminization of poverty. Then, they began chanting. Soon everyone joined in the chanting in what was described as "a powerful circle of affirmation and love" (1991, 5). These participatory forms of plenary presentation underlined congress participants' frustrations with "resolutionism". NABC IV was the last congress to retain the congress model.

**Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V**

The fifth congress was held in the Hill Country of Texas at Camp Stewart on the headwaters of the Guadalupe River in May of 1992. Attendance was down from NABC IV to about 220 participants. This time there were more Mexicans than at any previous continental gathering. It was at this congress that a marked turn away from the congress model was implemented. In this sense, the hesitation of NABC IV was resolved. The Steering Council planned the significant shift in the format and agenda of the event which was presented to the congress for discussion and adoption.

The traditional committee structure was the major focus of the shift. The new agenda proposed was that the committees meet at the beginning of the gathering "for a brief time" to study the work of the four previous congresses and decide on their own future and relevance. The time previously taken by week-long committee work would then be spent in "Circles of Change" (Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V Pre-Conference Brochure 1992). Circles of Change were offered by the Steering Council as a way to place the specific concerns of
the committees in a broader context and to "weave a strong fabric from the various committee threads" (TIBC V Proceedings 1992, 22).

The circles were focused specifically on bioregional practices or tools. The following five broad topic areas were suggested: 1) Mapping and Organizing, 2) Continental Links of Communication, 3) The Bioregional Story, 4) Living at Home, and 5) Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration. At the same time, the small "talking circles" established at NABC IV would be retained along with a number of other features including: the tradition of bioregional cultural presentations in the evenings initiated at NABC III; the plenary sessions; a time for separate men's and women's circles, also instituted at NABC III; and the traditional opening and closing ceremonial circles and daily morning circles common to both the congress and ceremonial village models. There was also ample space in the agenda for workshops offered by participants to share their special knowledge and skills, a feature established at NABC IV. Previously, such non-committee-based workshops had to compete for agenda space with committee and special panel times. Now workshops had become an important part of the continental event.

The opening circle of TIBC V began with drumming. The circle formed, then Glen Makepeace introduced the congress by reading the "Welcome Home" statement drafted at NABC I (see chapter three). Then participants joined hands, sang several songs and chants together, gave tribute to elders and children present, and introduced themselves to each other. Aberley reports that the introductions were brief and different from previous years, affirming bioregionalism as a force in peoples lives, rather than the selling of other causes (Aberley 1992, 36).

In the orientation session which followed, both Haenke And Mills gave presentations on the history of the bioregional movement. Then, the Steering
Council presented their agenda for the congress. Immediately, this was met with concern that the committee structure was abandoned for something that was unclear to participants. How could this "circle of change" structure, with many more people per group allow the same level of work to be completed? A long discussion ensued. It was resolved to try out the new structure, but there was still what Aberley describes as "an ominous disapproval" among a significant group of congress participants (1992, 37). Moreover, since the orientation session was pressed into the same morning as this important congress decision, this meant that the many new faces at the gathering did not get a very full historical introduction to either bioregionalism or to the congress. Bioregionalists were not consistently following their own prescriptions for involving people new to the movement by paying careful attention to the inclusion of newcomers (see chapter four). There was simply not enough emphasis on this crucial aspect of movement building, especially given the problem with continuity at the congresses.

In the afternoon, a "Council of All Beings" workshop was held for all congress participants. A Council of All Beings workshop is a ritual group process with the goal of assisting participants to move beyond their anthropocentrism and to enhance human commitment and resources in the defense of natural systems. The process is intended to allow people to personally feel the pain of human separation from nature and to heal that separation, to mourn the loss of species and feel the personal need to engage in working to stop it. The workshop offers a safe place where this pain can be acknowledged, felt in depth, and then released (Macy et al. 1988, 97-101). In this particular session, participants began by chanting and singing, leading into the group exercise of everyone milling about in an aimless, isolated fashion, alternated by connecting and holding the gaze of another for five minutes.
Then, all were sent out alone to the surrounding bush to gather impressions and feelings about/from other species before returning to share their stories. Perhaps because of its short duration (these workshops are designed for 2-4 day periods) the 3 hour workshop was a moderate success; according to one workshop participant, "It is fun and although not profound does allow us to feel more a part of our surroundings and each other" (Aberley 1992, 37).

The next day, after the morning small group "talking circles" (initiated at NABC IV), the committees meet. Spanish translation is added to the days events to accommodate the larger number of Mexican and other Spanish speaking participants. Only 13 committees actually assemble, fewer than at any previous congress. Moreover, several committees decide to dissolve, including; the Bioregional Movement Committee, the Green Movement Committee, the Health Committee, the Spirituality Committee and the Rainbow Committee.

There are some difficulties with the transition. On the one hand, the Bioregional Mapping Committee met and then moved easily into the Mapping Circle of Change. However, the Communities Committee, after unsuccessfully attempting to integrate into the "Living at Home" Circle of Change, continued to meet as a committee. The Ecofeminism Committee agreed to continue its work in the form of a committee, caucus, or affinity group. The Rainbow Peoples Committee was troubled by the fact that, of the six Circles of Change, none seemed set up to deal with issues of social justice and racism, nor "the wisdom, as well as the problems of indigenous peoples" (TIBC V Proceedings 1992, 16).

The MAGIC Committee simply chose to remain a working committee and to continue to represent other species at TIBC plenary meetings. They called upon all gathering participants to carry "a responsibility to be open to the 'voices' of the non-human world" (1992, 17). They recommended that: the MAGIC Committee share responsibility for opening circle rituals, that other
forms of MAGIC such as shamanic drumming (see chapter four) and sacred circle dances with all-species focus be utilized at the gatherings. Finally, the committee also recommended that the MAGIC Committee have an intermediary "protector", chosen from the MAGIC Committee, to act as a voice between the species representatives (who do not have voice) and the congress. This intermediary voice would communicate on behalf of the human participants at the plenary to the other species' representatives, and vice versa. This addition to the all-species communication process put the "protector" in a role similar to that of a shaman who travels back and forth between human and non-human worlds.

The spirituality committee disbanded as noted. But, before disbanding they pointed to and underlined the words of NABC V participant Luis Espinosa, a Bolivian shaman and spiritual leader of the "Movimiento Pachamama" (Mother Earth Movement), who pointed out in the opening plenary that "every part of our lives can be spiritual, including rational discussion of spirituality" (1992, 18). In the ensuing discussion, the Spirituality Committee was able to clarify "how embracing an Earthy form of spirituality means that every committee is a spiritual committee, that spirit is at the base of every effort to be and to build a sustainable society" (ibid). This was an echo of the position Haenke had taken at NABC II. Based on this logic, the spirituality committee disbanded, the members joining the various Circles of Change on an individual basis to "bring spirit to each circle of change" (ibid). However, in their report to the congress, they found that spiritual concerns were already present in the circles of change.

A Permaculture Circle was added to the 5 Circles of Change planned by the Steering Council. However, both this circle and the circle on Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration discussed permaculture. This meant that permaculture was well discussed, but ecological restoration per se was not.
On the positive side, a real move was made in the direction of integrating permaculture and bioregionalism. Another "proposal of marriage" between permaculture and bioregionalism was made by the permaculture Circle of Change. This time the marriage was to be embodied in action. A permaculture design was done for the Camp Stewart site with the prior support of the camp owners and counselors. A topographic map of the site was made, and hundreds of plants were brought to the site and seeds distributed for planting. Plans for follow-up workdays and inspections were made as a hands-on work project and gift to Camp Stewart. This contribution of the congress to the local site and community was carried out as a way to "embody the vision" of the congress and support the local community (TIBC Proceedings 1992, 28). A precedent of actual permaculture support for the local host community was now set for future continental events. Permaculture and bioregionalism had definitely moved closer together at this congress.

During the Mapping and Organizing Circle of Change, a major debate arose about the use of mapping. On one side, Gene Marshall of the host bioregion argued in the strongest terms for a mapping terminology that sets a series of scales of bioregional organization that must be universally adopted and that this schema should be adopted by the congress. Aberley, on the other hand, argued that bioregional mapping should be an accessible and flexible tool to assist people to map their own bioregions in order to "reinvent a sense of place" and that, because of this, the process of mapping is at least as important as the product (Aberley 1992, 39). After some tense moments, the question was resolved by agreeing to a hierarchy of scales that serves as a guide to bioregional mappers, not a prescription (1992, 42).

On the third full day of the congress, by which time participants had experienced one day of the old committee meetings and one day of the new
"circles of change", it became clear that some groups were wondering whether there should be any more continental gatherings. Some participants argued that these events were too time consuming, too expensive, too draining of the energy of the organizers. Perhaps, they argued, it would be better to put the effort into local gatherings in the bioregions. Many seemed to agree. Another idea surfaced that a middle path would be to have a continental gathering every four years (Aberley 1992, 40-41). The discussion on continuity was also taking place in the Continental Links of Communication Circle of Change.

This new debate underscored the magnitude of the continuity problem. Informal conversations at the congress revealed that at least 80% of participants were new to the congress process (Doug Aberley 15 Nov., 1998, personal communication). The reply to whether there should be a gathering or not came forcefully from the "old guard" of the movement, one of whom was Stephanie Mills. She argued in that morning's "Voice of the Turtle" that:

Continental Bioregional Gatherings have planetary significance; if we don't get a new way of life on Earth, we may wind up with no life at all. And bioregionalism sees things whole, so detailing our vision of sustainable futures in our life places is a critical task we perform. The congress is many things; party, reunion, week-long university of bioregionalism, healing community, summer camp. It is, perhaps most importantly, a council for considering and expressing bioregional values and strategies. During the previous four congresses, committees met to set a tremendous range of issues in bioregional perspective, and sometimes to have the entire congress pass resolutions, giving a sense of the movement's view on subjects ranging from indigenous peoples treaty rights to nuclear power. (Voice of the Turtle, Kerrville, Texas 20 May, 1992, 1)

Mill's arguments, while supplying logic for strong committee and plenary work (key elements of the congress model), also support an equally strong logic for a week-long healing community and a council for considering values (key elements of a ceremonial village model). In the end, the Continental Links of
Communication circle consisting of some of the old guard (Berg, Sale, Haenke, Goldhaft, and Adam), two key Mexican representatives (Ruz and Arturo Pozo), as well as some newcomers, consensed on continuing the congress every two years. So did the plenary.

The "Living at Home" Circle of Change discussed concepts and issues of home and community. They came up with a list of principles to "strengthen community and our sense of home" as follows: 1) By living our values we act as role models for living in place, 2) Valuing the efforts of community members to live sustainably through domestic enterprise, 3) Fostering self esteem allows us to teach and also to learn, 4) Emphasize that local efforts impact on the larger picture, 5) Actively organizing neighbourhoods around local issues mobilizes sufficient numbers to make positive change, 6) Communities can be brought together through ceremonies which tie people to place, and 7) Networks of exchange without money require trust and commitment. This Circle of Change recommended having two "tracks" or themes at the continental gatherings. One would be workshops "sharing bioregional skills such as consensus building" as well as hands-on workshops on alternative energy systems, composting, straw bale construction, etc. The other track would be congressing and decision-making. The two tracks would join for ceremonies "with some community-building and orientation at the beginning" (Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V Proceedings 1992, 27). This new model would include: continued recognition of cultural sharing as an integral part of the gatherings; time allotted for geographical (bioregional) caucuses; and field trips to ongoing local community projects. This model was similar to that proposed by the Continental Links of Communication circle except that this latter circle put a great deal of emphasis on orientation for newcomers, suggesting one to two days scheduled for it.
The Bioregional Story Circle of Change worked in smaller breakout groups. Their vision of future gatherings also put strong emphasis on "in-depth" introduction to bioregional work and aspects of bioregional culture. Celebration and ritual were also stressed by this circle as ways "to inspire, nurture and sustain us". They also favoured a congress of representatives from bioregions as well as the formation of organizations based on biomes. Finally, they proposed that the congress change its name to the Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering (TIBG). This recommendation was adopted by the plenary. Another step in the transformation of the continental gatherings was completed.

The increased prominence of workshops at this congress also marked the transformation away from the pure congress model. In fact, the workshops were as diverse as the participants who offered them. Many were the "hands-on" variety including: watershed planning, straw bale construction, architectural design and planning, simplified gardening, and Eco-Home Theatre. Others were more esoteric such as Earth Literacy, Bioregional Spirituality, and Self-Esteem for Everyone Using Your "True Colours". Others were about tools for community building used by bioregionalists, including Consensus and Facilitation, Conflict Resolution, Re-Evaluation Counseling, and an All-Species workshop (TIBC V Proceedings 1992). This last set of workshops also marked a turn in the congress toward an increased awareness of the need to develop processes and skills at interpersonal relations for improved community-building.

Over the course of the plenary meetings, four of the six circles of change made proposals for changes in the structure of the continental congresses. By the final plenary, it was clear that a change in the congress model was occurring. For future continental gatherings there would be more space in the agenda for ceremonial, spiritual, and cultural activities. There would also be more emphasis on north-south networking. The intent was also to put more
emphasis on opening the continental gatherings to newcomers as well as to children and elders. The children's and youth congresses were already a more integral part of the shifting congress model. As Aberley observed at the final plenary, "The goal here is for a holistic, not specialist, gathering where kids, elders, newcomers can feel welcome" (Aberley 1992, 45). The village dimension of the gathering was increasingly recognized by participants to be more important than the congressional aspects for creating a week-long community. However, the change was not totally acceptable to all gathering participants.

For some congress veterans, such as Kirk Sale and Doug Aberley, committees remained a useful way to focus the work of the gathering. Also, there was a deep concern that too much emphasis on process was sacrificing the work of developing strategies for organizing and networking, and for public education about the work and positions of the bioregional movement (Aberley 1992, 46-47). This key strategic question of continental networking would remain a challenge for the movement and give rise to further tensions as the shift to the ceremonial village model continued.

**Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering (TIBG) VI**

The sixth continental gathering, "Turtle Island Bioregional Gathering VI", was held on the bank of the Ohio River at the mouth of Otter Creek at a YMCA campsite, near Louisville, Kentucky called Otter Creek Park. There were 200 participants, down from the previous three gatherings. Certain elements of the event were carried forward as before. The small "talking circles" remained, but their name was changed to "family circles". Evening cultural presentations with bioregional story sharing remained as did opening and closing circles, and
morning circles. There were planned activities, a "childrens' congress" for children and youth as at the two previous gatherings. The intention of the gathering as expressed in the publicity brochure by the Steering Council and Site Committee was to create a self-organizing cooperative community for a week, in order to "experience a week of life lived as ecologically as we can", and to "share equally and voluntarily in the living basics of community life: food preparation, childcare and education, keeping our home place clean" (Turtle Island Bioregional Gatheing VI Per-Conference Brochure 1994).

For the first time at any continental gathering, however, only the first two days (apart from meals, a group dance, and a barter fair and marketplace) of the event were pre-planned by the Steering Council. On the first two days, the agenda included: a morning circle, small family circles, and "lodges". The "lodges" were similar in size to the "circles of change" from the previous event in Texas, except that there were four instead of six. It was intended that the "lodges" provide an orientation to bioregionalism and community building as well as to the history of the congress/gathering tradition. The lodges were named after the four directions.

In the opening circle of TIBG VI on Monday morning, after introductions, Haenke presented an overview of the history of the continental gatherings, outlining the diversity of movements that had informed and contributed energy and ideas to bioregionalism, including deep ecology, social ecology, eco-feminism, Creation Spirituality, alternative technology, etc (Voice of the Turtle, Otter Creek Park, KY 17 August, 1994, 1; see also chapter three).

On Monday afternoon, the lodges began. As noted, they were intended to provide more orientation to bioregionalism and to community building to address the need to include newcomers. What actually happened in the lodges was quite different. None of the lodges spent time on further orientation to
bioregionalism, nor to community building. Thus, the mandate from TIBC V to put more emphasis on integrating newcomers was not followed. Given that the lodges were now responsible for the rest of the agenda of TIBG VI however, it was not surprising that three of the four lodges chose to address the immediate need to plan the rest of the agenda. The fourth lodge, the South lodge, chose to begin the process of encouraging “communication, travel, and trade between bioregions in Mexico and the United States” with a view to building a travel corridor they called “The Funnel”. Its purpose was to help people from the U.S. and Canada attend the 1996 continental gathering proposed to take place in Mexico. This lodge reached no consensus on a structure for the rest of TIBC VI. Each of the other three lodges presented separate proposals for a structure to the plenary for consideration.

The following day, the plenary took two sessions (morning and afternoon) to come to consensus on the agenda for the rest of the gathering. The final proposal accepted was a compromise. The mornings would be used for opening circle, family circles, and the plenary. After lunch, a block of time would be reserved for workshops, lodges, committees, and special interest groups or caucuses. It was understood that the cultural sharing evenings would continue. This agenda appeared to give equal agenda weight to workshops, committees, and the lodges. However, the lodges didn’t really meet again. Instead workshops (some were called “learning cells”), certain committees, and interest groups (or circles) met. Since all were given the same time niche on the agenda, workshops now had at least equal priority with committee work, another significant change in the congress model.

In the end several committees did form; the Bioregional Education Committee, the Water Committee, the MAGIC Committee, a Continuity Committee, a Committee on Multi-cultural Representation, and an ad hoc
committee for the preservation of Otter Creek. As well, a women's caucus and a permaculture circle formed. However, committees such as the education and water committees agreed that the work of refining resolutions was done and needed to be complemented by implementation strategies. For example, the education committee began to work on developing a resource list for bioregional education. Sunrock Farm agreed to help with the distribution of the resource list and other bioregional educational materials.

The Committee on Multi-cultural Representation (formerly the Rainbow Peoples' Committee) recognized the lack of "cultural diversity" at TIBG VI. In view of the expectation that the next continental gathering would be held in Mexico, they recommended that efforts be made to work in local bioregions on outreach, developing on-going relationships with other cultural groups, and getting information to "other cultural groups and minority organizations well in advance of the 1996 gathering" (Voice of the Turtle, Otter Creek Park, KY 19 August, 1994, 7). In view of the great deal of effort (and similar resolutions) expended at previous gatherings and in between gatherings on multi-cultural representation at these events, this committee expressed its frustration at the possibility of going to Mexico without African-American, Native American, and other multi-cultural representation from the U.S. While well thought out and based on previous experience of the congresses, their recommendations for outreach strategies in local bioregions could only be carried out by local bioregionalists and others working in their own communities. How much effective work in this direction had been done? Some good work had been done in the San Francisco Bay Area, for example (see chapter five). However, this was not reflected in attendance at the continental gatherings. In spite of past experience, great effort, and previous resolutions at the continental events,
participation by African Americans and other minority peoples remained very low.

With the structure and agenda questions settled, the plenary was finally opened for the discussion of issues. Thursday's plenary began with the chant O-HI-O. This chant celebrating the Ohio River's continuing beauty (in spite of multiple environmental threats to its health) had been previously introduced to the gathering by the local site committee hosts in their opening cultural presentation at the beginning of the week. The major issues for the remainder of the plenary were: the request for help from local bioregionalists for support in the struggle to prevent development of a golf course in Otter Creek Park, the proposal of Mexican bioregionalists to host TIBG VII in 1996, and Planet Drum's proposal to establish a North American Bioregional Association. With respect to the golf course threat to Otter Creek, the decision of the plenary was to organize a letter writing campaign before the end of the gathering. This was done.

On behalf of the recently established Mexican bioregional network, "Vision Council Guardians of the Earth", Alberto Ruz officially extended an invitation to host the next continental gathering in 1996. This was greeted with great enthusiasm by plenary participants. Congress participants had been looking forward to a continental gathering in Mexico since NABC IV. After careful explanation of the responsibilities involved, about 15 persons stepped forward to the centre of the plenary circle to volunteer for the hard work of organizing a continental gathering (Despite previous resolutions for a "representative" Steering Council, there was no mention of "representation" of bioregions this time). These self-selected volunteers were accepted warmly by the plenary participants. The new Steering Council was now to be called the "Continuity Committee".
In the absence of Berg and Goldhaft, Planet Drum’s proposal for a North American Bioregional Association (BANA) was made by Debbie Hubsmith to the plenary. BANA was to be a membership organization with several purposes including: aid and assistance to bioregional member groups, a recognizable public presence and easily accessible source of information about the bioregional movement, an interface with the general public who want to be informed about local groups, and a forum for addressing issues and policies. It was also argued that BANA could provide a voice for bioregions against globalizing tendencies such as NAFTA and GATT and a first step toward creating planetary connections with similar organizations that Planet Drum thought likely to form on other continents.

The proposal was greeted with “grave concerns and reservations” by a significant group of participants (Voice of the Turtle, Otter Creek Park, KY 20 August, 1994, 2). The decentralist tendency in the bioregional movement, based on key bioregional values of “place”, “home”, and “community”, is very strong. Moreover, the de-centralized structure of the congresses was compatible with decentralist values. There was concern among some participants that an “official” permanent continental bioregional organization might be too susceptible to centralized control. For its part, Planet Drum viewed the establishment of such an association a change in strategy but not in values (ibid). The facilitator, Glen Makepeace, asked for consensus on the concept of a continental bioregional association and for the creation of some committees to help organize it. Five persons expressed an intention to “stand aside”. This meant the plenary was not in “comfortable agreement” before it adjourned (ibid). At the final plenary the next day, Planet Drum presented a revised proposal. Finally, TIBG V reached consensus on the creation of a group to “explore the potentiality” of forming a Bioregional Association (Voice of the
Turtle, Otter Creek Park, KY 20 August 1994, 4). Although BANA has been created, this issue - the concern over centralism - has still not been resolved within the bioregional movement (recall that there are some bioregionalists who do not even consider that bioregionalism is a social movement).

TIBG VI ended with much enthusiasm looking forward to the next gathering in Mexico. The Mexican contingent contributed an informative, dramatic, and inspiring political education theatre performance one evening at the Kentucky gathering about the movement for democratization in Mexico. Some of the Mexican participants had gone to the National Democratic Convention, "Aguascalientes II", held in Chiapas, Mexico only days before TIBG VI. The convention of 6,000 delegates of organizations of civil society from all over Mexico was hosted by the Zapatista Liberation Army in the jungle in the territory under their control. Using their well-worn street theatre skills, the Mexican participants re-created the convention in the jungle at TIBG VI, with the assembled bioregionalists as a participatory audience. Suddenly, TIBG VI bioregionalists were being addressed by a masked, pipe-smoking Subcomandante Marcos (played by Ruz) who welcomed the "delegates" to what some people described as "a pirate ship in the jungle". Using Marcos' words, Ruz addressed the gathering:

We welcome aboard this vessel all those that do not come here to impose, manipulate, or collect supposed debts that we should have with you. We welcome those that come from unorganized civil associations, more than those that come from either small, medium, or large political parties. We welcome transgressors of the unjust laws, the utopists, the poets, the visionaries, the pirates, those of you that come here to share, not to demand... (Voice of the Turtle, Otter Creek Park, KY 20 August, 1994, 7).

"Marcos" talked on until he was interrupted by a "peasant woman" in the assembly who demanded that in the honesty of real face-to-face dialogue, he
remove his mask and speak with the people directly. "Marcos" agreed gallantly to throw her question to the democratic decision of the people assembled, explaining that if he removed his mask, the Mexican security forces would be able to identify and kill him. The assembly cheered wildly for Marcos to keep his mask on. After the theatrical performance, the assembled participants at TIBG VI joined the performers in a chanting, dancing, celebration of "Pachamama" (Mother Earth) in Spanish.

This theatrical/ritual re-creation of one event at another succeeded in creating an embodied, emotional identification for bioregional participants with the indigenous and popular struggle for democracy in Mexico. It is an example of using ceremony and ritual as a means of bonding horizontally across cultures within civil society, weaving together both social and ecological kinship ties, the very essence of eco-social capital formation.

In addition to their dramatic "living theatre" performance, Mexican representatives at TIBG VI socialized and networked through many informal conversations and sing-songs with other bioregional participants throughout the week. They also informed gathering participants that they had made bioregional proposals in their presentation to the assembly of 6,000 in Chiapas. Bioregional ideas were thus communicated in an important forum in Mexico, from which they would be conveyed across the country among organizations of Mexican civil society. It was an auspicious sign for the next continental gathering in Mexico.

First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas

The seventh continental gathering was held on the edge of the town of Tepoztlan in the State of Morelos, Mexico (see chapter five) in late November of
1996 at a boy scout camp called Meztitla. While each continental gathering has been unique, the Mexican gathering stood out from all the others in several ways. First, the event was not only the seventh continental gathering of the "North American" bioregional movement which emerged in the U.S. It was also the sixth gathering of the Mexican bioregional movement, the "Earth Guardian Vision Council" (Consejo de Visiones, Guardianes de la Tierra) of Mexico, which has been meeting annually since 1991. The Mexican bioregional movement is an independent, autonomously organized movement which was inspired, in part, by the North American Bioregional Congresses. At their fifth Council held in Jalisco, Mexico in 1995, the Earth Guardian Vision Council decided by consensus to hold their next annual event in conjunction with TIBG VII. Sponsored by both movements, the over-arching title of the continental gathering in Tepoztlan (agreed to by both movements through consensus process) was "The First Bioregional Gathering of 'the Americas'" (The First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Pre-Conference Brochure 1996).

A detailed outline of the history of the Earth Guardian Vision Council has been provided by Ruz (see appendix A-14). The idea for this network in Mexico was born at a meeting in Huhuecoyotl in 1990 of ecologists, New Age leaders, Native spiritual guides, and scientists from several countries. The Mexican network was initially formed out of an "ecumenical" intention to "end the artificial separation that exists between scientific and spiritual thought" (Ruz appendix A-14). The Mexican bioregional network is described by Ruz as a meld of three movements: the bioregional "ecology" movement, the Rainbow network ("New Age" families, tribes, healers and shamans) and representatives from a dozen indigenous peoples from Mexico and Central America. At their annual gatherings, they developed the practice of contributing both knowledge and hands-on support work for the local village community in which the gatherings...
were held (this aspect was an important part of the Tepoztlan continental gathering as we shall see). In the Mexican Earth Guardian Vision Council gatherings, "hands-on" workshops are given in holistic health, nutrition, permaculture, bioregionalism, recycling of wastes and organic composting, consensus decision-making, group facilitation, drums and shamanic songs, music and dance concerts, puppet theatre, and mime. The Mexican bioregional movement, as an amalgam of the above three movements, has a different base and starting point from the "North American" movement. As such it has its own history and distinct character. Something of its character is reflected in the Huehuecoyotl community and its particular "face-to-face" networking model (chapter five).

The First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas was by far the largest of the bioregional continental events. Over 600 people were officially registered, but others who could not afford the registration fees were allowed to camp and cook their own food. Estimates of the total attendance ranged from 800 to 1,200 participants, some of the local people coming for only parts of the week. One of the organizers, Bea Briggs, estimates there were over 800 camped on the Meztitla camp grounds (some of whom were officially registered). Of the total, about 250 were from the U.S., Canada, Europe and Australia, the majority of these coming from the U.S. Of course, the greatest number of participants were from Mexico, followed by Central America. As well, there were a lesser number from South America. There were about 70 indigenous participants, including elders, shamans, pipe carriers, dancers, and traditional healers. However, only three indigenous participants were from Canada and the U.S.

As we saw in chapter five, this event was also marked by the strong participation of about 40 townspeople from Tepoztlan, including elders and leaders in the successful struggle against the golf course development complex
and for autonomy from the central government in Mexico City. Other local people also visited the gathering at intervals throughout the week.

The greater size of this gathering, the participation of local townspeople, the greater diversity of cultures, the participation of significant numbers of indigenous people, the participation of greater numbers of Rainbow or "New Age" types from both Mexico and the U.S., plus the simple fact that the gathering was held in Mexico and conducted in both English and Spanish, all contributed to making this gathering different in appearance and substance from previous continental gatherings. This was also the first bioregional gathering to be explicitly organized as a ceremonial village. The transformation over an eight year period from bioregional congress model to a ceremonial village model was now completed. All aspects of the ceremonial village model described at the beginning of this chapter were now in place.

The purpose of the ceremonial village was to create an event that borrowed from Native American traditions such as the Mayans who set up temporary villages for "nurture, educational, and motivational purposes" (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 85). The temporary village, in this contemporary context, was conceived to be more than a congress for political decision-making, more than a gathering for cultural experimentation, although it was to preserve and contain both these elements. The primary purpose was expressed as follows in an organizational manual published in the proceedings:

We boldly wish to be a village of the 21st century social life we espouse. It is as if we have been sent back to this decade from some future time. We are attempting to live now, in spite of all our imperfections, the social life toward which we wish to move. Then, after the healing power of such seven day encampments, we return to our ordinary local places and invest ourselves in making elements of this ceremonial village become manifest in those places. (ibid)
At the opening circle on Monday morning the goal, as expressed by Ruz on behalf of the Steering Council, was for the ceremonial village to emulate the gathering of the tribes of ancient times, in this case, to bring together different social movements across the Americas as a "circle of equals" to live together in community for a week (Carr 1996). Within the greater village circle of the whole were the councils or "consejos", each of these also organized as a circle of equals. Prior to the gathering, the Steering Council set up seven councils: Spirituality, Children, Youth, Health, Ecology, Traditions (indigenous peoples), and Art and Culture. To these, participants at the gathering added an Education Council. These councils took the place of the old committee structures and they functioned in a similar manner. The councils were envisioned to be the core of the gathering. Only one committee, the MAGIC Committee (with its very special purpose), continued to meet.

Another difference at this gathering from all the others was the greatly increased number of workshops offered. Close to 100 workshops were held, over three times as many as at any other continental event. The wide variety of topics included: permaculture, reevaluation counseling, bioregional mapping, creating an eco-village network, watershed organizing, unlearning oppression, communication skills, consensus process, creating earth rituals for children, green city/Mexico city and city permaculture, the peace process in Chiapas, eco-spirituality and activism, paper-making, Mexican cultural resistance, ecological waste water treatment, "exploring inner landscapes through authentic movement", "sisters' circle/brothers' circle: bringing the sexes together in healing and growth", reflexology, body and soul nutrition, field practice on medicinal plants, gypsy theatre and dance, bioregional spirituality, "creating new rituals from old roots and diverse traditions", and many others. Many of these workshops were hands-on style, learn-by-doing exercises.
The small talking/family circles of previous gatherings were retained as "clans". These functioned as both talking circle/support groups and work teams to assist with meal preparation, clean-up, child care, recycling, etc.

Evenings were reserved for cultural presentations as at several previous gatherings. These included: presentations of several songs and a salmon dance by bioregionalists from the Yalakom; a slide and musical presentation of the Rainbow Caravan from Huehuecoyotl illustrating their networking trip through Mexico and Central America; a series of folkloric earth songs, "Cantos a la Tierra", by a musical family of reinhabitants from Michoacan called Tamu Tariaticha; a film and discussion about the Zapatista Liberation Army and the indigenous peoples' liberation struggle in Chiapas by Zapatistas and their supporters from Chiapas; and a song sharing circle around the "sacred fire" facilitated by traditional elder, Dona Margarita Nunez Garcia, in which people from many cultures in Turtle Island shared and led songs in their respective languages till very late at night.

Two pre-gathering events were also held in Mexico. One was an accelerated six day Spanish language course at a retreat centre near Mexico City high in volcano country, attended by twenty people. This was given by an experienced teacher to enable anglophone participants to function in Spanish for the bilingual gathering in Tepoztlan. The other event was an eight day "green city" seminar attended by fifteen people in the centre of Mexico City. The participants engaged in a week of immersion in the environmental problems of Mexico City, as well as an examination of some of the solutions and alternative visions proposed for the region. The highlight was a public talk by Peter Berg and Allison Lewis of Planet Drum attended by a variety of local ecology groups. The event stimulated the formation of a new "green city" network in Mexico City. Also, since Mexico City is only an hour and a half drive from Tepoztlan, Mexican
urban eco-activists were able to attend the bioregional gathering for at least part of the week (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas 1997, 41).

At the ceremonial village in Meztitla, the opening ceremony of the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas was led by a traditional "curandera" (healer) in a huge white tent set up for plenary circles. The curandera appeared suddenly, followed by two assistants, holding up a smoking goblet of incense. She uttered an incantation asking for a beam of the light of truth and understanding from the "centre of the universe". Then, she approached the assembled participants, blessing each with thanks to Madre Tonantzin, Aztec earth goddess, while moving the goblet up and down in front of each person's body. With well over three hundred people in the tent this took some time. Then, the assistants dipped large bouquets of branches into water buckets and sprayed water into the air above the participants, after which the three quickly left the assembly. Thus, the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas was officially opened.

Daily sunrise and sunset ceremonies were performed throughout the week of the gathering, drawing on many different traditions. One of these was a conch-blowing ceremony to the four directions. There were also ceremonies to the sun, to the moon, to Venus, to the sacred fire kept by elder Dona Margarita, and ceremonies held in the surrounding wooded hills by some of the participants. There were Mayan ceremonies, Aztec ceremonies, Nahuatl ceremonies, a Nahuatl baptism, and a Nahuatl vigil. In addition, there were daily "temezcals" (sweat lodge or "house of vapours" in Nahuatl), organized especially for children, youth, women, and elders (as well as for men, of course). All this lent a much different appearance and feeling to this gathering and, according to the report of the Council of Traditions, the ceremonies contributed to creating "an avenue of communication" with local campesinos.

Another element that made this gathering different from the others was the participation of the "Chavos bandas" or urban youth gangs. Organized by Helen Samuels, a youth activist based in Mexico City, over twenty "chavos" from Mexico City, Monterey, Oaxaca, Las Angeles (Mexico), and Iztapalapa came to Tepoztlan to learn about bioregionalism and ecology. In return, they contributed to the gathering by providing security throughout the week (given tensions between the townspeople and the ruling central government party security was necessary). These street youth also participated in the Youth Council, in initiation ceremonies and in sweat lodges. The following is a description of a pipe ceremony held for these youth:

With twenty youth pressed tightly against a teepee's canvas, a pipe passes around with a mix of herbs and sacred tobacco by a First Nation pipe carrier. As the pipe travels clockwise around the circle, each chavo makes a prayer, confession, or passes with silence. The pipe finally reaches Beatric, a gang youth from Iztapalapa about to make a journey as a representative to an international youth conference in Vienna. She asks for everyone to surround her with white light and to help her carry the intent of the circle overseas. With all the bad press that gangs get, this incident reveals how urban youth can take their warrior energy and channel it for Mother Earth. (1997, 38)

Here is a striking illustration of the motivating, inspirational power of eco-social capital - channeled by ritual - to transform a form of social capital (the street gang organization) into service for the "community of beings" ethic.

The broad diversity of people at the gathering was reflected, in part, by the colorful diversity of clothing and dress styles. New age and Rainbow Family members in bright "hippie" garb, Mexican campesinos in their white shirts, dark pants, and sombreros, brilliantly feathered Aztec dancers, North Americans (and many Mexicans) in t-shirts and jeans, middle-eastern costumes of new age
"gypsies", Mexican religious radicals dressed all in white or white with red sashes and head bands, clowns, jugglers, costumed stilt-walkers, and others in various all-species costumes mixed together at intervals throughout the week. All this presented a picture of friendly chaos as campesinos, new-agers, gypsies, a variety of indigenous peoples in their traditional clothing, inner city Mexican youth, and Zapatista political representatives interacted with permaculturalists, Mexican ecologists, North American "back-to-the-landers, students, and green city activists.

The outward appearance of chaos at this gathering was reinforced by some serious logistical and organizational problems. Hundreds of unexpected participants put a severe strain on food, water, and latrine resources in a country and a region where good drinking water, in particular, was not easily available. Extra planning and effort were required to ensure an adequate supply (Alberto Ruz 20 Nov., 1996, personal communication). The extra time needed to translate everything from English to Spanish and vice versa delayed plenaries, workshops, and evening sessions. In addition, there was no daily "Voice of the Turtle" gathering newsletter until the fourth day of the gathering and even then there were not nearly enough copies for participants. This made the verbal announcements (and translations) at morning circles indispensable. For those who missed morning circles, there was only word of mouth. Some participants remarked that the only events that happened on time were sunrise and sunset ceremonies (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 73).

In addition to the logistical problems, there were some organizational mistakes made by the Steering Council/Site Committee. The councils, which were intended to remain an essential part of the congressing aspect of the ceremonial village, were not sufficiently explained at the beginning to the many
newcomers at the continental gathering. Indeed, the orientation to bioregionalism was not done extensively enough and not given enough agenda time (only one morning, including translation time), particularly since several previous gatherings had left mandates to give orientation more attention. As well, Haenke's historical introductory talk on bioregionalism, originally scheduled for 40 minutes, was cut to 7 1/2 minutes. As a result, Haenke reacted by presenting a comic skit instead of an introduction (David Haenke, e-mail, 30 Nov., 1996). Moreover, the councils did not even begin operating until Friday, the fifth day of the seven day event. Finally, the clan system of talking circle/work groups was organized according to a rather complicated Mayan Calendar/Astrology system which confused many people who were unable to connect with their clans. These failings were recognized and discussed in the proceedings by several participants (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 60-75), as well as in a flurry of e-mail correspondence after the event.

In spite of logistical constraints due to the larger-than-expected numbers, the bilingual character of the event, and the organizational mistakes, the week-long program was carried out with a lot of obvious enthusiasm. This included the large number of workshops, the councils, the plenary, the cultural sharing evenings, as well as the many different ceremonies, sweat lodges, plant and herb walks, week-long interaction with local campesinos and town representatives, the local community service work day, and the day of activities for local schoolchildren.

On Thursday, the community service work day, a crew of about 60 gathering participants helped build check dams on a local creek the community wanted to restore. Another group helped to start a permaculture garden at an alternative school in Tepoztlan. Meanwhile, At the bioregional gathering, other
participants hosted the visit by 150 local schoolchildren and their teachers to the ceremonial village. The day's activities and educational events included: a play, a puppet show for younger children about the creation of the universe and how to recycle the garbage, a clown show, song circles, and a "bioregional" workshop where children voiced their ideas about how to save Tepoztlan from golf-course development schemes (Carr 1996; Kuri 1996).

That same day, I spoke with Laura Kuri, a key local organizer in the bioregion. She spoke at length about the years of work with local people and groups, with children and elders, that preceded this gathering (see chapter five). She said that the people of Tepoztlan are strong, and that:

They are already living in bioregionalism in their political way; they have their own government - the Municipio Libre y Constitutional de Tepoztlan". She added that: "What is happening here is a way to show the whole world that we can say 'this is it, ya basta! no mas! si, se puede! yes, we can!' This is a way to show the world that we can really take care of our places, that we can decide and in a peaceful way have a taking of the power of our place, no? (Kuri 1996).

At Friday's morning circle under the big tent there were complaints from some participants about the incessant drumming. A clown representative from the MAGIC committee informed the assembly that it was important not to drum between six a.m. and noon since it could disturb local birds in their foraging nearby. Participants were then urged by the clown to: "listen with our hearts, in silence, to the birds, the animals, the flowers, plants, and minerals" (Carr 1996). Many participants seemed unaware of the role of the MAGIC committee which then had to be explained for all.

On Friday during the afternoon, separate women's and men's circles were held. As well, local campesinos visited the gathering to discuss permaculture design and techniques with experienced permacultural design
instructors from across the continent. Friday was also the day when the
councils finally began to meet in preparation for Saturday's plenary
presentations.

On Saturday, the presentation by the Ecology Council revealed an
understanding of the continent of Turtle Island that was new to "North American"
bioregionalists. Up to this point in time, bioregionalists from the U.S. and
Canada understood that the term "Turtle Island" referred to conventional
geographic definitions of the continent which comprised the U.S., Canada, and
Mexico. However, the Ecology Council was proposing that bioregionalists view
both North and South America as part of one continent, "The Americas". They
explained that from Alaska to Chile one mountainous backbone united a single
continent that had been artificially divided by the Panama Canal. This
corresponded to a Mexican, Central and South American view of North and
South America as one continent. Mexican children are taught this view in
school according to Sanchez Navarro (First Bioregional Gathering of the
Americas Proceedings 1997, 56). Further, it was proposed that, since the year
2,000 was the date that the U.S. was due to give back ownership of the Panama
Canal to Panama, the second "Bioregional Gathering of the Americas" be held
in Panama in the year 2,000. This was a rather large new concept to assimilate
quickly for participants from "el Norte" who had not previously considered the
concept of a single hemispheric Turtle Island continent. The final decision was
held over till Sunday.

It is important to note here that the push at this gathering to recognize the
North-South wound and to begin a process of healing it was coming strongly
from the South. Several brightly coloured hand-painted maps of a single
continent linked by a single mountainous "backbone" were on display for the
week as was a placard with the slogan "one continent, one mountainous
backbone, one people". This slogan was not to deny our differences, but to recognize our common humanity as peoples of Turtle Island. Here was a potential antidote (if only symbolic at this stage) to the rigidly narrow identity politics that has dominated social movements in the U.S. and Canada in the last two decades of the twentieth century.

The final Saturday plenary was held in the early evening. It was opened with a "gypsy caravan", a costumed parade (including some all-species pageantry) around the grounds to bring everyone to the plenary under the big white tent. An announcement was made regarding Thursday's permaculture garden project. Some permaculture activists had decided to stay on to complete the project. Then, representatives from Tepoztlan's Committee of Unity addressed the assembly. To support the townspeople in their struggle, gathering participants raised six hundred dollars. The Tepoztlan spokesperson declared that bioregionalists were supporting a struggle that was "one hundred percent ecological", a struggle of organized opposition to "neo-liberalism" (globalism) where townspeople "learned that the town can govern itself with our own representatives without repressive institutions" (Carr 1996). After reports by the Spirituality Council, the Mexican Ecology Council, and a report on North-South networking, the closing ceremonies were held.

First, elder Nunez Garcia invoked the nurturance of Madre Tonantzin for the work of all participants at the gathering on their return to their home places. This blessing was followed by a pipe ceremony in the main tent with many hundreds in assembly. Eleven indigenous pipe carriers from South America to Canada performed an "ecumenical" ceremony to symbolically unite the diversity of cultures, tribes, youth, elders, and to unite North and South. This was done through sharing seven sacred pipes passed around in a series of concentric circles, thus sealing the event by the "sharing of sacred smoke" as Ruz
expressed it and honouring the land and the people of Tepoztlan (participant observation; Carr 1996). One of the editors of the proceedings, Antonio Lopez, commented that it was an "unprecedented ceremony" that was "perhaps the first post-modern exchange of spiritual, indigenous traditions of the Americas" (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 71).

The pipe ceremony was followed by a "drawing down the moon" spiral dance ritual led by Starhawk. Beating a drum, Starhawk asked that the dancers focus on grounding the energy from the drawing down of the moon's energy, and that the soft silvery power of the moon energy be given by the dancers to this land, to this place and to the Tepoztlan people in their struggle for this place. The dancers (everyone at the assembly, perhaps 400-500 people) moved out from under the plenary tent to the fields under the full moon, spiraling and chanting and singing the slogan of the Tepoztlan peoples' struggle for autonomy, "Si, se puede!" (yes, we can!). This ritual of empowerment officially ended the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas, leaving only Sunday morning to decide on any future continental event.

On Sunday, the plenary is beset by tension over strong disagreement. In the plenary, Haenke tells a long story about White Buffalo Woman which illuminates little. Outside the circle, he is more frank, charging that there was too much rainbow, too much new age, too much ceremony. Haenke argues that: "There was too much deference to traditions that don't come out of this movement. I truly believe that this was a wonderful event. The problem was calling it a bioregional congress. It was a rainbow thing, a gypsy thing, only in small part bioregional" (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 68). Haenke is not alone in this view. Although Berg does not agree with Haenke about the nature of the gathering, he explains that certain other veteran bioregionalists do take Haenke's view: "These gatherings
are being boycotted by a certain number of ... bioregionalists because they think there's some woo-woo, some trance-dance, some waked-out quality to this that doesn't go anywhere" (ibid). David Levine, another veteran of the movement who was at the Tepoztlan gathering, also saw the event as a rainbow gathering (Levine 1996).

In the final plenary session, a resolution to hold another congress in two years' time is blocked by one vote. The session turns into a facilitation nightmare. Suddenly, a parade of men, women and children - costumed Aztec dancers robed in snakeskin and plumed in feathers - arrives at the tent to sing a song of thanks. This changes the energy into a hand-holding circle. Then, Starhawk speaks, affirming that in ecology the richest biodiversity is at the edge and that this gathering is an example of "edge", representing a rich cultural mix that is the result of the meeting of three movements - the North American Bioregionalists, the Mexican Consejo de Visiones and the Rainbow tribes. She adds that: "ecology is not a luxury, it is the basic ground of survival for people who still live close to the land, and they are well aware of it. Spirituality is not a frill, but a core survival issue for cultures and individuals" (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 54). A "sacred space" is created ritually, then people who favour a gathering are asked to step into the centre of the circle to commit to a next time. They become the new steering committee and the gathering is over.

The controversy over the large presence of "Rainbow" people continued in the weeks after the continental event. It began with a long e-mail piece by Haenke addressed to "All Bioregional Folks" (Haenke, email, 30 Nov., 1996) ten days after the gathering. Haenke argued that Rainbow people - as traveling gypsies - avow a placelessness and lack of any centre in ecologically defined space or belief that disqualifies them as bioregionalists. What he saw as the
attempt to merge the two movements since TIBG V in Texas was, in his view, harmful to both movements. He also feared that the association with the rainbow/new-age movement would lead to marginalizing the bioregional movement out of existence. He added that the sheer size of the event "tended to overwhelm our capacity to function consensually as peers" (ibid).

Berg replied that the event in Tepoztlan was very much a bioregional event pointing out that native healing plants walks, bioregional mapping workshops, discussions of ecological philosophy and politics both local and international, as well as many other activities featured at previous bioregional gatherings where openly available to all participants. Berg also pointed out that newcomers to bioregional continental gatherings do get an introductory exposure to "a process involving consensus, gender balance, all species representation, eco-philosophies, etc." (Peter Berg, e-mail, 1 Dec., 1996). Berg argued that: "worrying about whether people will accept us isn't as important as bringing in as many new people (whoever they are) into bioregionalism. It's a broadly diverse movement that excludes fundamentalism by its very multiplicity" (ibid).

As we have seen, from its inception the Mexican movement - as a meld of bioregional, Rainbow, and indigenous groups - was different from the bioregional movement in the U.S. and Canada. At the gathering in Tepoztlan, I asked Ruz about the need for more work in the bioregional movement at the international level. He replied that he thought the movement needed "translating" into a form that can be understood by other cultures, and then applied and blended with other cultures. Ruz referred to some "hard core" bioregionalists that have said that this is not a bioregional gathering: "I said, well, from the beginning that it was not going to be a bioregional congress. It was going to be a blending of the best of your proposals, with the best of the
proposals coming from the south; otherwise it would not be bioregionalism, but bioregional imperialism" (Ruz 1996). Ruz added that he thought it was important to translate bioregionalism around the world. He supported the work of Berg in traveling to Japan, Spain, and Italy to speak about bioregionalism and the work of Chris Wells in South America, working with the all-species project in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile. He argued that this work of cultural translation had to be greatly increased, keeping in mind that "for bioregionalism to be real we cannot turn it into a dogma; we have to be very flexible, very open, to see how these things take ground in other fields" (ibid).

I also spoke to Chris Wells about his work in South America and about the bioregional movement. For Wells, the Tepoztlan gathering was very much a bioregional event. Wells, who has spent many years working in South America with various indigenous peoples, reported that when indigenous peasants learn what bioregionalism is about, they relate to it right away because it reminds them of their own traditions:

... everywhere I go now, many different indigenous groups, they're picking up on this word [bioregional] immediately. It makes perfect sense to them in terms of their cultures. (Wells 1996)

From the perspective of building horizontal links with local community and cross-cultural North-South linkages in civil society the gathering must be viewed as a success. Haenke, in spite of his hesitations and fears, recognized the strengths of the gathering:

It was a great cultural festival, a wonder in that dimension. As far as being in the context of a local community, it was by far the best that I have ever seen, by a great degree, or may ever see, especially given the world-class significance of the ecologically based struggle in Tepoztlan, virtually a small nation in succession. The whole of the health system there was again the best ever by far at any event that I have ever been at. I have never seen a wider, deeper, and more effective range of health options before, and I wonder if I ever will. Regarding food, that too was of
the highest order, especially the connection with the local organic growers, with them also being involved with the preparation, composting, and recycling. Overall, just the ability of your administrative capacity to handle such a large number of people under trying conditions was amazing to me. Also, the involvement of urban gang members in the gathering and the security was a wonderful and profound thing, again something I have never before experienced. The overall volume of cross-cultural sharing was immense, and the results of it will reverberate for a long time. (Haenke, e-mail, 30 Nov., 1996)

In spite of logistical and organizational problems, the First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas was successful in initiating cross-cultural North-South linkages. There was symbolic recognition of the need to heal North-South wounds through the concept of Turtle Island as a single hemispheric continent with one mountainous backbone and a common humanity. North-South linkages between permaculturalists were initiated. A permacultural institute in the Cuauhnahuac Bioregion was founded as a result of the gathering. Green city groups continued to meet in Mexico City, inspired by the gathering and the pre-gathering "green city' event. On-going liaison was established with the people of Tepoztlan. The North-South participants directory published in association with the proceedings is another useful product from the gathering. In conjunction with the newly founded Bioregional Association of North America, gathering participants helped to initiate a North-South skills exchange data base. Finally, Huehuecoyotl's Rainbow Peace Caravan is continuing its outreach journey, carrying the bioregional message to South America (First Bioregional Gathering of the Americas Proceedings 1997, 73).

Finally, with respect to international activity of bioregionalists, it must be admitted that, apart from the work of Berg and his partner Judy Goldhaft, the work of Chris Wells, and Ruz's Rainbow Peace Caravan, there is little organizational activity and no intercontinental bioregional movement. Berg
admits that, personally, he finds it difficult to even imagine an intercontinental bioregional movement (Berg 1996). The bioregional movement of Turtle Island has few resources to organize at this level, so the "strategy" of sowing the seeds and hoping they take root in other soils is the best the movement has to offer. Indeed, bioregionalists in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico are already taking on a huge task in undertaking to organize hemispherically.

Conclusion

My narrative account of the story of the continental gatherings of the bioregional movement has focused on bioregionalists' strategy of continental networking and alliance building. This narrative reveals several serious challenges for the movement. First, there is the problem of building alliances across race and culture in civil society. As this account shows, race is a barrier to horizontal alliance-building in the U.S. and Canada. In spite of much organizational effort, time spent, and strong intentions to include people of colour in the congresses from the U.S. and Canada, bioregionalists have managed to achieve few lasting results over a period of seven continental gatherings. It appears that this is a problem that will have to be tackled at a local level. Second, my account shows that gender is also a significant challenge to building horizontal links in civil society in the U.S. and Canada, one that sometimes requires separate men's and women's councils or events to address the issues. Third, my account shows that the organization of continental networking events by bioregionalist activists (with few resources) has been a do-able, but very difficult undertaking with many logistical and organizational problems. This problem has both geographical and cross-cultural dimensions. Moreover, the definition of Turtle Island accepted at the
last gathering in Mexico which includes both North and South America as one continent may multiply these difficulties.

By contrast, this narrative account has also illustrated a number of positive benefits to the continental gatherings. First, there is the creation of a common program. The creation of a common program of values, principles and strategies covering a broad spectrum of many dimensions of life - ecological, philosophical, political, social, cultural, and political - is a major achievement. This program, represented in the aggregated resolutions of the congresses, provides the necessary unity in the obvious diversity of the movement. It also helps provide a broadly conceived alternative to the dominant ideology of capitalist consumerism. Second, this account has indicated that direct face-to-face networking, sharing experiences, stories, songs, etc. at these gatherings addresses the whole person to provide (in addition to intellectual and organizational solidarity) the embodied and emotional bonds of trust, joy, and love that eco-social capital illuminates as essential to community building. Third, in spite of the serious challenges to North-South cross-cultural networking, my account of the gathering in Tepoztlan, Mexico illustrates that real advances were made in establishing North-South linkages of eco-social capital across cultures. This too was an important achievement.

Finally, there is the question of the role of community building tools in face-to-face networking and alliance building. My narrative account of the continental events has shown that, as in the five accounts of local bioregional community building efforts, consensus process plays a central role in the creation of community life and in the building of unity in diversity at these events. My account also shows the addition of several tools for community building to the bioregional "tool kit" over the course of the seven gatherings including: the use of small "talking" or "family" circles, conflict resolution, re-
evaluation counseling, and the representation of all-species at human congresses and council circles. Also illustrated in this story of the continental gatherings is the increasing importance of permaculture design to the bioregional movement. This is important because permaculture design is a potentially crucial key to the reduction of aggregate consumption of natural capital. Finally, my account has illustrated that the use of earth ritual can be a powerful catalytic tool for the formation of social and eco-social capital on the one hand, but that, if used without great respect for both earth ritual traditions and for the diversity of people present at the ritual performance, such ritual can work to undermine the trust essential to forming social and eco-social capital.
Ch. 7: Conclusion: Civil Society Theory and Bioregionalism

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: first, I look at bioregional praxis as a whole from the perspective of the theoretical framework of civil society and draw together the findings from the evidence on the nature of bioregional praxis; second, I discuss lessons gleaned from bioregional praxis for civil society theory and describe what a revised civil society theory might look like; and finally, I discuss the implications of a revised civil society theory for bioregional praxis and make some suggestions for further research.

Civil Society Theory and Bioregionalism

I begin with a brief review of Cohen and Arato's case for democratic societal transformation. Cohen and Arato's theory of civil society recognizes and locates itself in the terrain of democratic cultural modernity. That is, it builds on the norms of democracy, egalitarianism and universal human rights of the Enlightenment. Cohen and Arato recognize that the democratic norms of the Enlightenment have not been fully implemented and therefore there is a need to continue the democratic revolution. In this theory, democratic societal transformation must base itself not on the working class as the agent of revolution, but on the actions of civil society as a whole. As noted in chapter one, for social movements concerned with societal transformation, Cohen and Arato advance a dual strategy based in civil society. I briefly review this strategy here. With respect to the civil society sphere, civil society theory recommends the defense and expansion of civil society through a horizontal strategy targeting cultural identities and models, norms, and institutions of civil society.
This "defensive" strategy would seek to preserve and develop the communicative infrastructure of civil society through efforts to redefine identities, reinterpret norms, and develop egalitarian and democratic associational forms. Horizontal action in civil society is the basis for action in the other two spheres, the economic and political. With respect to the political sphere, for example, an "offensive" vertical strategy would seek to develop spaces within political society that could be democratized through a politics of bridging and building influence for institutional and legal reform. This dual strategy is sufficient for significant change, as the example of the feminist movement of the 1970s and 1980s in the U.S. shows. In the feminist movement, the horizontal spread of feminist consciousness helped change cultural identities, gender norms and institutions of civil society, while also supporting a vertical strategy pursuing equal rights and the political and economic inclusion of women. Together the dual strategies reinforced each other, supporting "a wave of legislative action on feminist issues unequaled in U.S. history", increasing women's access to and influence on political elites, and electing and appointing more women to public office "than ever before in American history" (Cohen and Arato 1992, 552).

When we view the bioregional movement using this theoretical framework, many similarities to the Cohen and Arato dual strategy appear. Certainly, with respect to horizontal strategy targeted on civil society, bioregionalists pursue a whole range of activities that fit into redefining identities, reinterpreting and reclaiming norms, and developing egalitarian, democratic associational forms. The evidence reported in this thesis ranges from bioregionalists' shared values of community, interdependence, respect for one another and recognition of social justice to bioregionalists' socio-cultural and economic strategies of building communities and the networks between
them. The evidence reveals intensive and extensive efforts by bioregionalists to implement such a horizontal strategy. This is reflected in the accounts of the Mattole Restoration Society, the Yalakom River community, the Huehuecoyotl community and in the accounts of green city activists in the San Francisco Bay Area and Vancouver/lower Fraser bioregion. All of these narratives also show that bioregionalists made serious efforts at building horizontal alliances with groups and associations in civil society outside the bioregional movement. In addition, the narrative of the continental gatherings confirms the accounts from particular places and reveals the movement's vision, values, and intense efforts to live their vision of place-community in the very act of creating community at the gatherings.

I have also discussed numerous contextualized examples of bioregional community building tools, including: education, permaculture design, ecological restoration, bioregional mapping, alliance-building, all species projects, consensus decision-making, etc. These examples illustrate bioregionalists' efforts to: build norms of cooperation, mutual aid and civic responsibility; to redefine alienated identities as "social being" identities; to build trust among social actors; and, to build organized networks in civil society. Civil society theory identifies and supports this horizontal strategy.

The narrative accounts and the contextualized examples in my inquiry also show efforts of bioregionalists to pursue a vertical strategy of building influence for democratic and institutional change in the sphere of political society. In the Mattole River Valley, Mattole Restoration Council activists pursue a strategy of influencing the California Dept. of Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management, and the California Board of Forestry for regulatory reform supported by strong horizontal efforts to define new cultural watershed identities, develop norms of cooperation and civic solidarity, and build networks
of restoration activists. In Tepoztlan, Mexico, in the Cuauhnahuac bioregion, Huehuecoytl members work horizontally with a wide range of groups in civil society where relatively high levels of social capital already exist, but they also work to create influence vertically with universities and political parties. In the Yalakom River valley in British Columbia, bioregional reinhabitants work vertically to influence personnel in the Ministries of Forestry and the Environment, campaign for reform in B.C. Hydro, participate in government commissions and on the Lilooet District Community Resources Board. These actions are supported by many horizontal efforts to create community and place-identity locally and regionally. Similarly, in urban regions such as the San Francisco Bay Area and the Vancouver/lower Fraser bioregion, horizontal efforts directed at civil society to establish new cultural identities, to develop and model norms of cooperation and civic solidarity, and to build networks of citizens associations, support vertical efforts in the political sphere to influence municipal politics and policies.

In addition, bioregionalists demonstrate good awareness of combining horizontal and vertical strategies. One example is their discussions and actions with U.S. greens at NABC I and II recognizing that a green political organization could help to secure and protect bioregional principles and practice on the ground through focusing on democratic planning issues and political action supportive of local and regional autonomy.

Viewed in this way through Cohen and Aerator's civil society theory, we see that the bioregional movement strategy can be understood as a dual strategy similar to that of the feminist movement of the 70s and 80s in the U.S. For Cohen and Arato this correspondence of strategies would not be surprising. Indeed, they argue that many social movements of the 70s and 80s (the so-called "new" social movements) demonstrated similar dual strategies (1992,
Moreover, the evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) reported in this inquiry illustrates that bioregionalists have had a certain evident success in pursuing this dual strategy. Recall that the numbers of groups and networks that identify with bioregionalism increased significantly over the period since its gestation as did the number of bioregional publications and other publications that include material on bioregionalism (see chapter three). More importantly, the lived experience of bioregionalists reported in this inquiry shows the existence of strong cultural identities with the communities and the places in which bioregionalists attempt to reinhabit, identities that have kept them in these places for over two decades while patiently building their horizontal communities, networks and alliances as well as their vertical lines of influence to the political sphere. Indeed, the sheer magnitude of all these efforts - horizontal and vertical - testifies to enormous motivation, conviction, and commitment to civic affairs on the part of bioregional actors. The evidence throughout this inquiry also shows that - among bioregionalists - strong norms of cooperation, trust, mutual aid and civic solidarity have been built at the local, bioregional, and continental scales. Finally, there is also some additional evidence of bioregional vertical influence in the political sphere. Two examples are: the California Resource Agency's protocol for federal and state agencies for resource management of the "bioregions" of California; and the Canadian federal government's "Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront" which advanced a concept of the "Greater Toronto Bioregion" in text and map form (see appendix 4). This suggests the possibility of creating spaces within the political sphere for reforms such as that in New Zealand where 14 major watershed boundaries are used to define administrative and political borders (Furuseth and Cocklin 1995).
All of the above evidence appears to strongly suggest that, from the perspective of the theory of Cohen and Arato, bioregionalists are already pursuing a dual strategy akin to that identified and supported by their theory. So, what is the problem? Why would bioregionalism pose any challenge to or offer any lessons for their civil society theory, other than to confirm it with another example of good civil society-based dual strategy? The problem is that their theory remains limited by the anthropocentric norms of the Enlightenment. Perhaps because they see the world with only modern eyes, Cohen and Arato appear unable to conceive of cultural traditions or norms more "universalist" than those of cultural modernity:

... to opt for the preservation of traditions, if accompanied by a denial of the universalist tradition of cultural and political modernity, implies fundamentalism. Accordingly, the question that flows from our model becomes: Which traditions, which family form, which community, which solidarities are to be defended against disruptive intervention? (1992, 25-26)

Here Cohen and Arato pose the problem of cultural relativism, the problem recognized by post-modernists that, since Western culture (modernity) is only one culture among many, how does one decide questions of justice between cultures? In attempting to answer their own question of which traditions to defend, they further reveal their cultural limitations:

Even if cultural modernity itself is just one tradition among many, its universal thrust is the reflexive, nonauthoritarian relation toward tradition - an orientation that can be applied to itself and that implies autonomy rather than heteronomy. Indeed, traditions that have become problematic can be preserved only on the terrain of cultural modernity, i.e., through arguments that invoke principles. Such discussion does not mean the abolition of tradition, solidarity or meaning; rather, it is the only acceptable procedure for adjudicating between competing traditions, needs, or interests that are in conflict. Accordingly, our model points toward the further modernization of the culture and institutions of civil society as the only way to arrive at autonomy, self-reliance, and solidarity among peers. (ibid)
Though Cohen and Arato admit here that cultural modernity is only one tradition among many (therefore, by definition, not "universal"), yet they conclude that only cultural modernity can adjudicate between competing "fundamentalist" traditions, needs, or interests because of its "universal thrust". Moreover, it is implied that only modernity has a universal thrust.

Given such a particular cultural (or social) construction, it is not surprising to find that Cohen and Arato are not open to cultures that could be conceived of as antimodern or pre-modern or fundamentalist:

Finally, we believe that programs of the 'great refusal', whether directed against the state in the name of a civil society suspicious of all politics or against the modern economy in the name of some kind of socially reembedded nonmarket economy based on mutuality, reciprocity, and direct cooperation, are incompatible with modernity and with the presuppositions of modern democracy, despite the self-understanding of many of their proponents. (1992, 469)

It is clear from their discussion of the matter and from their citations of Habermas that Cohen and Arato derive their attitudes from Habermas' thesis on cultural modernity in which he condemns social movements that promote counterinstitutions in civil society as "particularist" and "reactive" as well as "tendentially antimodern communalist projects of dedifferentiation and withdrawal" (Cohen and Arato 1992, 529). Dedifferentiation is the term Habermas uses to refer to the re-embedding of the economic sphere into civil society. It is adopted and employed by Cohen and Arato in defense of their three sphere model which insists on the continued differentiation of the economic and political spheres from the civil society sphere where continued differentiation of the spheres means the continued operation of the formal economy rather than its socialization (see chapter one). What is never really explained in Cohen and Arato is why embedded economies based on
mutuality, reciprocity, and cooperation are by definition incompatible with modern civil society, nor do they explain why such embedded economies necessarily imply dedifferentiation and withdrawal. Instead, they present this argument as if it was self-evident. However, in the case of bioregionalism, for example, the practice of community relations with embedded, mutualist forms of economic development have been accompanied by serious efforts to communicate and organize on a much wider basis, the very opposite of cultural withdrawal.

Habermas' thesis also states that cultural modernity carries with it an increased potential for self-reflection and for what he calls "decentered subjectivity" (which appears to be his expression for "social being") with regard to "all dimensions of action and world relations" (Cohen and Arato 1992, 524). Cohen and Arato approve of this claim though, again, they offer no further reasons why cultural modernity is the best terrain for decentered subjects or increased self-reflection. Yet, indigenous earth-based cultures, bioregionalism and other earth-centered social movements have essential lessons to contribute to civil society theory, lessons that bear on the very definition of humans as social beings.

Bioregionalism and Civil Society Theory

This section discusses lessons from bioregional praxis that might inform civil society theory. Since these lessons have to do with both social and eco-social capital, I begin by summarizing what has been learned about these concepts through my inquiry into bioregional community building.

First, with respect to social capital, my inquiry has revealed important dimensions of social capital not accounted for in Coleman's or Putnam's
concept. One is the powerful synergistic energy released by the joyful experience of social capital, the joy of recognizing one's own social being in carrying out genuinely social acts. Through various means, consensus process, sharing stories, sharing earth rituals, small group work and congressing, bioregionalist actors have created shared identities with each other and with the places in which they live. Moreover, the evidence shows that these means of bonding generate joy and love in the experience of bioregionalists, two important motivating or empowering emotions of social capital.

Second, this inquiry has shown that there is an important and intimate connection between social and eco-social capital. The evidence from both the contextualized examples and the narrative accounts shows that tools of story telling and sharing, talking circles, earth ritual and ceremony, all species days, ecological restoration, etc. function simultaneously to bond bioregional actors to each other and to the greater "community of beings" in particular places. We have seen that, through such shared experiences, meaning becomes relational for the bioregional actors, part of a broader, common story of place. Moreover, place is the common teacher that can build trust between people. The evidence of bioregionalists' lived experiences also shows that eco-social capital formation is an empowering experience, one that can assist bioregional actors (as well as newcomers) to break through the confines of the narrow, ego-centric self typified by *homo economicus*, enabling the direct experience of a broader eco-centric identity. The evidence from the contextualized examples and the narrative accounts supports the view that this formation of eco-social capital is experienced by bioregional actors as a joyful, spiritually empowering release of psychic energy.
Finally, the evidence reported in this inquiry shows that there is no necessary contradiction between the norms of cooperation, mutuality, reciprocity, and civic solidarity (identified in the literature as essential to social capital) and the formation of eco-social capital. Rather, the evidence from the narrative accounts and the contextualized examples of bioregionalists' experience indicates, and examples from indigenous societies supports the view, that most often social capital norms, when informed by the "community of beings" form of eco-social capital, are enhanced by the extension of kinship feelings for other species rather than being undermined by such feelings. In other words, social capital is subsumed by eco-social capital. Stories and ceremonies of indigenous peoples and of bioregionalists, emerging from and informed by the places where people live, help to weave and bind this inclusive relational meaning together. The evidence from various indigenous societies in chapter two illustrates the internal dynamic between the way natural resources in the form of other beings were regarded as both kin to humans and as sacred in their own right and the indigenous domestic economy which stressed the careful and conservative use of and respect for all life.

The evidence both from these societies and from the bioregional movement thus supports an argument for widening the ethical understanding of an anthropocentric cultural modernity to include other species as constitutive of both moral and practical importance for an ecologically sustainable use of natural resources. Informed by such an ecological ethic, the concept of universal human rights is thus guaranteed by rights for all species and for the matrix of life that all species depend upon for habitat. At the same time, with respect to the use of natural resources, an ecological ethic tempers human rights with ethical responsibility for all species.
Reclaiming the "community of beings" ethic does not have to mean withdrawal or retreat into a particularistic, parochial, anti-modern cultural morass. Indeed, the evidence from my inquiry into the bioregional movement shows that, to the contrary, bioregional vision, bioregional values, bioregional strategy, and bioregional lived experiences illustrate a common opening to both a broader, more diverse and more democratic civil society as well as to the community of all beings. Reclaiming a "community of beings ethic" is an important theoretical lesson that my eco-social capital inquiry into various indigenous societies and the bioregional movement has to offer to a theory of civil society. Moreover, this lesson provides an answer to the problem of cultural relativism posed by Cohen and Arato.

The problem here is that, in spite of the claims of Habermas and Cohen and Arato, cultural modernity is really just one more culture among the wide diversity of cultures, including many indigenous cultures that are still struggling for recognition and justice, often against a modernity imposed upon them by modern capitalistic consumerism as a form of cultural imperialism. Ethically speaking, there is no reason why cultural modernity should act as the arbiter for all cultures. As Cohen and Arato argue, cultural modernity has not yet fully implemented its own Enlightenment program, the very reason they call for the continuation of the democratic revolution.

A revised civil society theory that included the "community of beings" ethic, thus extending its moral concern to the whole of life, could supply a common inspiration for unity in the great diversity of cultures extant in the world today. Such an ethical stance should appeal to all cultures to search their own ancient roots for traces of the "community of beings" ethic as part of their evolutionary heritage, part of the understanding that humans need to overcome modern alienation from the natural world. Identity with the "community of all
beings" does not mean an obliteration of human cultural difference, but rather the flowering of difference linked by affinity. As human ecologist Paul Shepard argues, identity is not only a "honing of personal singularity, but a compounding wealth of ever more refined relationships between the person and increasingly differentiated parts of the world. ...The culmination of refined difference-with-affinity is a firm ground of personal confidence and membership in its largest sense" (1982, 12).

However, the evidence from this inquiry into bioregionalism has also shown that problems of cultural difference are not easily solved in practice. Racial difference and, to a lesser extent, gender difference are shown to be serious barriers to building unity in diversity, at least in the U.S. and Canada. Trust, a critical element of social capital, is not easily built between peoples in environments with a long history of racial and economic oppression, segregation, and political repression. Within the bioregional movement, it is the Mexicans who have indicated a way out of serious problems posed by the politics of difference. Their vision of a single continent of North and South America, a single Turtle Island, united by a single mountainous backbone, while affirming the cultural diversity of peoples in the hemisphere, supplies a thread of common identity for all the peoples of Turtle Island. The creation of North-South linkages between indigenous, inhabitory peoples in South, Central and North America and between indigenous peoples and bioregional reinhabitants of South and North is a small but encouraging beginning toward weaving affinity across the diversity of cultures. The broader ethic of a "community of beings" for a hemispheric Turtle Island holds promise as an important unifying thread in this emergent process.

Another fundamental gap in Cohen and Arato's theory of civil society is its failure to address the problem of the unsustainable consumption of natural
capital discussed at the outset of this thesis. Given the magnitude of this problem, any theory of civil society relevant to the twenty-first century cannot ignore the depletion of natural capital and the growing rate of the extinction of species. The evidence from this inquiry into the bioregional movement suggests some lessons for civil society theory in this respect. First, there is the evidence from the early work of George Tukel, the Todds, and Berg on place-patterning and living within solar incomes to support urban reinhabitation. There is also the evidence of eco-city design for mixed-use, cluster development (or integrated density) which promotes a diversity of land-uses at close proximity, allowing land-use to open up for urban agriculture, urban forestry and urban ecological corridors. Finally, there is the evidence of permaculture design with its "kinship gardens" and entropy strategies for reducing energy-use. As well, permaculture supports an ethic which sees all life as allied associations. All these design approaches supply strategies for reducing the aggregate ecological footprints of city dwellers and thus for reducing aggregate consumption of natural capital in urban areas. Urban integrated density means that housing, feeding and moving people and goods can be done with much lower levels of material and energy throughput. Equally importantly, all of these integrated density design approaches include the development of a common urban bioregional cultural identity with place and home, bringing together the concepts of place and commons. This cultural identity of place and commons encourages a common, empowering, urban civic identity inclusive of a "community of beings" ethic, an ethic that would support individual as well as aggregate reductions in our ecological footprints. Thus, the evidence from the narrative accounts supports a double lesson for civil society theory: a moral civic imperative to respect the "community of beings" through careful, conservative use of natural resources by individuals must be
linked to an urban region planning strategy to reduce aggregate consumption of natural capital.

My findings support another related lesson for civil society theory. The evidence from the lived experience of bioregionalists with respect to eco-social capital formation supports the view that reducing individual consumption through voluntary simplicity need not be onerous. Indeed, for too long the dominant neo-classical cultural ideal of *homo economicus* has promoted a cultural view of the human individual as a selfish, economically calculating, maximizer of utilities, an individual who meets his/her emotional as well as physical needs chiefly through the consumption of commodities. By contrast, bioregionalists' experiences with eco-social capital formation support a view of humans as genuine social beings who discover the joy of sharing common identities with other beings of place and the spiritual empowerment of emotional, embodied connection with the community of all beings in a particular place. For many bioregionalists, eco-social capital formation has provided enormous spiritual motivation for living lives dedicated to long-term societal transformation while eschewing market-driven commodity consumption.

This reflection leads to another important lesson for an ecologically-oriented civil society theory. Bioregionalists live with long-term time-frames - several generations - for social transformation. However, nowhere in Cohen and Arato's voluminous tome on civil society theory is there any consideration of a long-term generational time-frame for their democratic revolution. For the immense societal changes demanded by bioregionalism, a long-term transitional strategy is essential. Theory for civil society that envisioned and integrated ecological sustainability would thematize a transition strategy of several generations.
Finally, Cohen and Arato’s theory lacks any geographical dimension. Just as geographer David Harvey brought a geographical dimension to non-geographical Marxist theories of capitalist accumulation by locating the processes of concentration and centralization of capital in the cities and urban regions of the most advanced capitalist countries (1989), so post-Marxist civil society theory can benefit from the place-grounded ideas and experiences of the bioregional movement by thematizing the location of civil society strategies in particular places and bioregions.

**Toward An Eco-Centered Civil Society Theory**

What would an ecologically-centered civil society theory reconstructed from Cohen and Arato’s civil society theory look like? In this section, I present some reflections on an initial outline of an eco-centric civil society theory as my contribution toward the development of a more fully developed theory and practice of democratic societal transformation to an ecologically sustainable society. I discuss both an ethical basis for and some strategic dimensions of an eco-centered civil society theory. I begin with the ethical and normative basis of the theory.

A re-constructed civil society theory would treat the cultural sphere of transformative theory not as a dependent variable, but rather, as a fully integrated dimension of theory. As noted, Cohen and Arato do include some cultural analysis of modernity in their civil society theory, but they fail to analyze its anthropocentric particularity. Thus, they fail to integrate lessons from traditional cultures, simply dismissing them as incompatible with cultural modernity. This dismissal includes any contemporary social movements that
could be construed as antimodern. Thus, they fail to solve the problem of cultural relativity.

An eco-centric civil society theory would begin by integrating the "community of beings" ethic into Enlightenment cultural capital. This would extend the domain of human morals to include ethical considerations for the rest of the family of all-beings. In this ecological kinship ethic, the human family is understood as one member of a larger family. Thus, the theoretical space of civil society would expand to conceptually include other species as part of a greater sphere of freedom. Human identity as a part of the "community of beings" would also expand so that identity would extend to other species and to the life process itself. A person's identity would thus include her/his local watershed and all its creatures. Communicative action, thematized in Cohen and Arato (after Habermas) as essential to democratizing civil society, would not remain limited to human subjects as in cultural modernism. Rather, communicative action would be thematized more holistically as an embodied process that can sometimes include other species, local landforms and ecosystem processes. This would include the study of: interspecies communication; various methods of communing with nature through story, ceremony, and ritualized circle journeys through and around local watersheds or landscapes; process experiments such as all-species representation at human councils; and ecological restoration as a process of healing ecosystems, human communities and individuals.

An eco-centric civil society theory would thematize over-consumption as a moral problem. Morally speaking, human over-consumption of natural capital would be regarded as seriously as exploitation and oppression of human subjects is under enlightenment ethics. For example, human action causing species extinction would be regarded as serious a crime as genocide and a
crime that carried its own moral repugnance. Habitat rights would then apply to all species as a matter of fundamental principle. This is not to suggest that every microbe be given equal treatment with humans, but it does mean that profligate consumption in rich industrial counties that destroys species and their habitats should be regarded as a serious criminal matter. The narrowly defined human "right" to unlimited consumption (*homo economicus* again!) should not be put ahead of vital habitat needs of other species.

A civil society theory which incorporated an ecological kinship ethic as one of its cultural norms along with cooperation, mutual aid and reciprocity would thematize the spiritual energy, joy and love in both social and eco-social capital formation as a cultural capital resource for both individuals and communities. Motivational aspects of this formation process for reducing individual and aggregate consumption of natural capital and for committing to life-long engagement in both personal and societal transformation would be a subject for intensive and extensive theorization and thematic exploration.

What would the strategic considerations of an eco-centric civil society theory resemble? A major strength of Cohen and Arato's civil society theory is its dual strategy with the interplay of vertical and horizontal strategies. This strategy would remain essential to a reconstructed eco-centric version of civil society theory. However, the new theory would contribute an important thematization of the relationship of generational time-scales to civil society-based democratic transformation. Long-term strategy considerations over several generations may alter the emphasis between horizontally directed actions at the civil society sphere and vertically directed actions aimed at the economic or political spheres. However, it must be recognized that the dual strategy of Cohen and Arato, since it emphasizes the importance of horizontal actions aimed at identity and normative change in civil society, does contain a
certain implicit long-term perspective. None of these long-term themes need ignore the short-term urgency for reforms. Indeed, in an eco-centrically revised civil society theory, such urgency would be a priority for theoretical and practical reflection on the relationship of time-scale to cultural transformation.

Geography would become an important dimension of an eco-centric civil society theory. On the one hand, such a theory would thematize the interconnectedness of local places, bioregions, continents and the entire planet. Identity with place would not be seen to contradict identity with bioregion, continent and planet. Rather, they would be theorized as interconnected identities. On the other hand, local watersheds and larger bioregions would be thematized as the geographical scales appropriate to reducing aggregate ecological footprints of human populations.

The self-limiting character of the democratic revolution and of self-limiting radicalism in social movements in Cohen and Arato's civil society theory would remain in a revised ecocentric theory. Cohen and Arato stress that the self-limiting character of movements in civil society must be accompanied by reforms in the other two spheres to check the overdeveloped power of state and corporate structures if civil society is to have sufficient autonomy from state and market forces to continue its democratization process. That is, state and corporate structures must be held to a greater social responsibility through vertically aimed reforms. The difference in an eco-centric version of the theory is that ecological responsibility is added to social responsibility thus compounding the panoply of reforms to be sought and the urgency of seeking them.
Eco-Centric Civil Society Theory and Bioregionalism

This section examines the bioregional movement's praxis from the perspective of an eco-centric civil society theory. Since there is only my suggested outline of such a theory, I recognize the speculative character of this exercise and approach the task with humility.

As discussed above, bioregionalists already do pursue both a horizontal strategy aimed at civil society and, to a lesser extent, they also pursue a strategy of developing vertical influence for reform in the political sphere. An eco-centric civil society theory would encourage the continuation of this dual approach by thematizing it to develop a conscious articulation of its strategic advantages. What was implicit in bioregional strategy would become explicitly recognized. The conscious application of this dual strategy would enable bioregional actors to identify challenges and opportunities in specific strategic contexts. For example, awareness of the need for both horizontal and vertical strategies would alert activists to assess their own energies, capabilities and numbers of people to carry out a dualistic strategy. Given the low degree of community and associational life in the U.S. and Canada, the priority for horizontal strategies in civil society would be thematized. In certain specific situations, opportunities for reform in the political sphere may be identified that, if passed, might create a climate for increased horizontal activity. An example of this would be a campaign to de-centralize certain government functions and jurisdictions to correspond with watershed boundaries as has been done in California and New Zealand. In a region where there was already much horizontal associational activity around, for example, daylighting and restoring creeks and streams and their riparian zones, such a reform in the political sphere would support further conscientization and activity in civil society.
With respect to the question of the state, the emphasis in an eco-centric civil society theory would shift from that of Cohen and Arato. The reflexive continuation of the welfare state would mean not only reforms in the political sphere for greater social and environmental controls, but also the incremental decentralization of the state. The bioregional movement does not have any consensus on the question of the state. There are some who would like to abolish it and others to reform it, but these remain personal opinions of individuals. Long-term bioregional thinking on the nation state has suggested that nation states may ultimately break down. One early influence in this respect is the work of Kohr (1978). However, in spite of their long-term vision of societal transformation, bioregional thought with respect to the state has not articulated any theoretically informed position. An eco-centric civil society theory would contribute to bioregional thought by thematizing the long-term, incremental de-centralization of the state, rather than its abolition. In the short-term, such a theoretically-informed strategy could identify spaces for more immediate reforms that begin to move in the desired direction. For example, right now in Canada, there is a space for increasing the power of municipalities and neighbourhoods in relation to provincial or federal jurisdictions. Bioregional decentralists could take advantage of such situations.

There are some, for example Cholette et al., who critique bioregionalists who would undermine state power by decentralizing at the risk of exposing both state and civil society to the unmitigated power of huge corporations under globalism (1996). Given the enormous and growing power of global corporations this is a well-founded fear. However, such arguments ignore both the long-term nature of the societal transformation problem and the potential strength of a dual strategy pursued in both the political and economic spheres. An incremental dualistic strategy, strengthening and building horizontal
relations in civil society while pursuing reforms to curb both the power of the state and the power of the corporations vis-à-vis civil society, would address these concerns. Limits on state power must be accompanied by equal (or perhaps greater) limits on corporate power. Neither can be achieved without the corresponding growth of horizontal power in civil society. In such scenarios, the continued partial differentiation of state power (however decentralized) acts as a guarantee to protect individual rights against possible attacks from any rogue local civic majorities. I now turn to a discussion of the economic sphere.

As noted in chapter one, the economic sphere represents the formal market economy. It includes collective bargaining and representation of workers on company boards. The reflexive continuation of the formal market, like the reflexive continuation of the welfare state, means that forms of public control are necessary to ensure and enforce greater social and environmental responsibility of corporations. Cohen and Arato suggest that mediation between civil society and the economic sphere would involve strengthening the diversity of forms of property to enable civil society to gain a foothold in the formal economy. Such forms would include worker or employee ownership, nonprofit group ownership, community land trusts, etc. While based in civil society, these forms would mediate between civil and economic society, just as public political forms mediate between civil and political society. This strategy would begin a long-term shift toward industrial democracy without abolishing the formal market.

Bioregionalists have put almost all their economic emphasis in developing and implementing horizontal strategies of community economic development in the informal economy of civil society. Eco-centric civil society theory would thematize this realm as one of primary importance. However, bioregionalists have spent little or no effort working to develop vertical influence
to curb the power of the corporate sector in theory or in practice. An eco-centric civil society theory would thematize strategy in this overlooked dimension of the economic sphere. On the one hand, it would seek to identify challenges for such a strategy. Perhaps the biggest challenge here is to demystify neoclassical market theory and to identify its narrowly conceived cultural underpinnings. This project is crucial to deconstruct the conception of the formal market as a mechanism of liberation. On the other hand, theoretical clarity in this realm would also assist in identifying cracks in the globalist, neoliberal paradigm. For example, there is currently an opportunity for reform to assist in curbing out-of-control speculation of international financial capital through the Tobin Tax.

Eco-centric civil society theory could also inform long-term bioregional strategy by thematizing the relationship of civil and political spheres to the economic sphere in the international arena where transnational corporations and finance capital operate with virtually no social controls (Korten 1995). Given the magnitude of this crisis, theoretical work in this sphere is urgently needed to begin to identify strategies for action. For example, one potential strategy would promote some combination of reinvigorated national corporate charter laws (such as those in the U.S.) combined with the creation of international regulations to enforce corporate social and environmental responsibility. Some citizens are already beginning to act to regain democratic authority over corporate charters. For example, the townspeople of Arcata, California have approved an initiative called "Measure F: the Arcata Initiative on Democracy and the Corporations" which calls for town hall meetings to discuss the issue of democracy and corporations and the creation of a committee to establish "policies and programs which ensure democratic control over corporations conducting business within the city, in whatever ways are
necessary to ensure the health and well-being of our community and its environment" (Paul Cienfuegos, e-mail, 3 April, 1999).

Most importantly, eco-centric civil society theory would thematize the interplay of a strong, continuous horizontal strategy in civil society combined with strategically defined vertical campaigns for legal and institutional reforms in political and economic society. Human needs, values and organizational strength in civil society would remain as crucial strategic considerations, but they would be complemented, informed and tempered by habitat needs of other species to identify the most urgent campaigns for developing vertical influence for political and economic reforms at local and regional scales and by consideration of urgent global problems such as ozone depletion, atmospheric carbon loading and global warming.

Directions/Suggestions for Further Research

In this study I have not explored the views of non-bioregionalists on bioregional praxis. Until recently (the past few years), very few people were aware of bioregionalism. Now that a somewhat larger number of people have become aware of bioregionalism, research on how the vision, values, strategy, tools and experiences of bioregionalists are interpreted and understood by non-bioregionalists should be pursued. For example, motivational aspects of both social and eco-social capital formation provide a potentially useful and important avenue of research to pursue with subjects familiar with bioregionalism. This could begin with research into new adherents of bioregionalism, asking the general question; "why did you get involved with bioregionalism?"
Another avenue of research I have not pursued is the question; why, after more than 20 years, is the bioregional movement on Turtle Island not bigger than it is? Given the breadth of bioregionalism's vision, the obvious long-term commitment of those who do adhere to it, and its promotion of diversity, this is a question that needs to be addressed. It is a question bioregionalists ask themselves. Aberley has begun to address this question. Part of the answer is that bioregionalists have not sought to change existing structures, so much as to provide an identity for its adherents (Doug Aberley, 3 April, 1999, personal communication). My study has confirmed this observation. However, this thesis has also shown that bioregionalists have spent considerable time and energy reaching out to other groups and individuals in civil society, so more research in this area is needed.

Another area of useful research that needs more attention is comparative studies on social and eco-social capital in Mexico. I have reported on one study that looks at levels of social capital in Mexico. This is a potentially fruitful area for comparative North-South studies. More work needs to be done with respect to the Mexican bioregional movement which, as we have seen, has its own particular development and character. Another potentially rewarding area of research here is to look at the strategy of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas. As I reported in this study, there has been some contact between Mexican bioregionalists and the Zapatista leadership. The Zapatistas may be regarded as implicitly bioregional in their sensibilities for their region. They are not a national movement, but a regional one. They explicitly recognize the essential role of civil society in their communiqués.

Research on the eleven tools for bioregional community building I have identified is another area of research where much more can be done. Specifically, more work on the motivational aspects of the tools with respect to
social and eco-social capital formation from the perspective of an ecological psychology may reveal many new insights into these tools and their applications. The study of these tools from the perspective of opening up new avenues for planning education is potentially very rich for academic institutions of community and regional planning.

Also with respect to planning education, my study suggests that research looking at the influence of "private" corporate planning on planning in the public domain is another direction of potentially immense value to society. How does social capital for the private good (the horizontal networks among bankers and CEOs) affect planning for the common good?

Finally, with respect to bioregionalism, more case studies and narrative accounts from different parts of Turtle Island would give a more complete picture of the movement itself. My study has not given enough attention to the east coast of the continent. More work is needed in this area.
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A-1 Interview Guide

Re: Bioregional In-depth Interview with Mike Carr

Introduction: In asking for this interview I want to point out that the word "interview", composed of "inter" and "view", really means the act of developing a view together. Of course, I will be asking you for your views and analysis so the focus of the interview will be around your experience. As a participant as well in the movement and the vision of bioregionalism, I will be interacting with you. I hope to be able to probe with you deeply into your philosophical understandings about the vision we already share at some broad general level within the bioregional paradigm. Building on this shared vision, I would like us to move into the difficult, but potentially rewarding exploration of themes that focus on how broad cultural change can happen in the face of seemingly overwhelming economic growth momentum and cultural hegemony of the dominant system.

The purpose of this interview is to explore and evaluate bioregional thought and culture in the North American bioregional movement as a cultural and economic alternative to industrial monoculture. Specifically, what kinds of cultural initiatives, resources, and consciousness can bioregional thought and cultural practice offer for a transition to a healthy, sustainable community and regional economic development?

The Questions

1. What had been your actual experience with the green or ecological city movement toward ecologically sustainable behaviour changes, lifestyles and supportive community economic development?

2. What is your assessment of the bioregional movement after its first two decades of existence? What strengths and weaknesses do you see?

3. What cultural and ideological resources can the bioregional vision and practice offer for the transformation of our urban regions into ecological cities?
   a) over the next decade?
   b) over the next seven generations (140 years) or longer?

4. We are physically and culturally/psychologically dependent on the automobile in North American mainstream culture. What cultural strengths does bioregionalism offer to move us beyond the car?
A Map of Natural & Cultural Features of Fulford Harbour
Taken from Reminiscences of Ruby Dalton, Alison Walde, Bob & Nancy Peterson, Nancy Brathwaite, Judith Anderson, Sue Mount, etc. Done by Inverness Pen on October 1994 to Record This Special Place.

- INTERMEDIATE SHORELINE BOUNDARY
- LIMITS OF ORGANIC WATERS
- SHELL MOUNDS, VILLAGE SITE
- NATURALLY FORMED SHORE
- HIGH DUNES
- 2ND GROWTH ON CLIFFS
- CLEARINGS PUT TO PASTURE
- CLEARINGS FOR REVISION
- ARBUTUS (DOG FANCY)
- CARRYING OUTDOORS
- ORIGINAL HOMESTEADS
- 99 OLD ORCHARDS
- ROAD-GRAVEL LANE
- WILDLIFE TRAILS

Arid Island, Isabella Amin

St. Andrew's Church, Fulford Harbour

Aberley et al. 1995.
A-3.2 map of Gitxsan Wilp Ownership Statements, Sterritt et al. 1998.
PERMACULTURE DESIGN
The result of a unique assembly of constructs, species, and social systems into a unique pattern suited to a specific site and set of occupants.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>ORGANIC ELEMENTS</th>
<th>INORGANIC AND DERIVED ORGANIC ELEMENTS</th>
<th>SOCIO-LEGAL ELEMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>SELECTION</td>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Materials and Fuels</td>
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<td>People</td>
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<td>ASSEMBLY</td>
<td>Guilds</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Trusts, Companies, Cooperatives, Community Credit Unions.</td>
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<td>Community</td>
<td>Constructs</td>
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<td>SITE SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS</td>
<td>Earth-shaping</td>
<td>Water Supply</td>
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<td>ELEMENTAL (FLOW) CONTROL</td>
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<td>FED BACK</td>
<td>YIELD AND FUNCTION</td>
<td>A marriage of site constraints to people's needs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PATTERNING</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>For best flow, function, and yield whilst conserving resources.</td>
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<td>&quot;A TOTAL DESIGN IN EVOLUTION TO MATURITY.&quot;</td>
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A-5.2 Elements of a Total Design, Mollison 1990.

SITE COMPONENTS
- Water
- Earth
- Landscape
- Climate
- Plants

SOCIAL COMPONENTS
- Legal Aids
- People
- Culture
- Trade and Finance

THE DESIGN
"A beneficial assembly of components in their proper relationships"

ENERGY COMPONENTS
- Technologies
- Structures
- Sources
- Connections

ABSTRACT COMPONENTS
- Timing
- Data
- Ethics
NICHES IN SPACE AND TIME; SCHEDULES.

Not only can we fit species into various levels of plant structure, and broad ecotones of vegetation and soils, but also season, time of day, migration, and scheduling of SPACE-TIME relationships allows a complex use of vegetative resources by a great variety of animal species, such as we see in the natural world.

In this landscape, plant and animal species can find innumerable niches:

a) In the vertical structure of vegetation (I – IV) including a root zone;
b) Across the aspects, zones, or soil catena variations with slope, and with soil water depth;
c) In the different orders of flow in streams;
d) Within the different species that occupy specific sites or assemblies;
e) At the edges or boundaries of any system.

All of the above are independent "dimensions" of the total SPATIAL system. As well:

f) As seasonal migrants through the system;
g) As opportunistic or eruptive visitors in floods, plagues, or after fires;
h) As permanent residents of the system.

All of the above are TIME-SLOTS, further complicated by a TIME-SPACE components:

i) As scheduled visitors sharing a 24 hour access to specific sites, and occupying nocturnal and diurnal time slots.

(f) – (i) refer mainly to animal species, although all plants will have seasonal phases or responses, can invade, or may schedule their flowering times.

As well, the whole system evolves through time, and climate trends or disturbances, such as fire, impose a serial mosaic on the site. Almost every significant time-space complex will have its unique species. There is always a way to enrich species diversity in such a system.
A-7 Location Map of Tepoztlán and the Cuauhnahuac bioregion, Mexico, Lewis 1951.
What is the Bay Area?

• **9 counties**
  We are an administrative entity defined by the Association of Bay Area Governments as: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties.

• **100 cities**
  Our cities range in size from 1 square mile (Belvedere and Emeryville) to 171 square miles (San Jose); and in population from 1,103 (Colma) to 782,248 (San Jose).

• **7,400 square miles**
  The bay and the land surrounding it are about the size of Rhode Island and Connecticut combined.

• **Over 6 million people**
  We are the fourth largest metropolitan area in the nation, with more people than, for example, the state of Massachusetts.

• **2.2 million households**
  Our households are diverse: we are 12 per cent Asian/Pacific Islander, 11 per cent Latino, 8 per cent African American, 1 per cent Native American, 4 per cent non-White, and 63 per cent White.
A-11 Map of South Western British Columbia Bioregions by Doug Aberley
A-13 Community Empowerment Action List - NABC I 1984

I. Relationships of People, Lifeforms, and Place

1. get to know your neighbors
2. practice childcare, neighborcare, and eldercare
3. develop parenting support groups to share childrearing skills
4. share potlucks and socials
5. hold periodic community celebrations and meetings
6. mobilize volunteer units for community protection via gentle direct action
7. be supportive of others engaged in positive community action
8. develop a special outdoor place for solitude, meditation, and nature observation
9. promote the return and growth of species diversity in backyards, neighborhood, workplace, parks, etc.

II. Consumption/production

1. grow as much as possible of your own food organically and support organic farmers
2. shop together, buy food collectively
3. favor local stores and businesses over large chains
4. establish community facilities: gardens, media, washing machines, greenhouses, library, newspapers, shops, bank
5. encourage collective work projects: clean up litter, insulate & weatherize & solarize homes and workplaces, harvesting, construction, work bees
6. prepare a catalogue of community services
7. develop a transport pool
8. reduce waste and recycle
9. promote composting toilets
10. develop a regular, convenient means of junk exchange

III. Culture, Information, and Service Exchange

1. establish and maintain public bulletin boards
2. contact compatible networks and groups already in place, including local government resources
3. consider assuming voluntary tasks in local associations and local government bodies and boards
4. learn and share basic first aid skills and preventative health care, locate a locally-responsible ambulance service
5. organize phone trees
6. organize community barter systems, "green money", and "Briar-patch" networks
7. learn and practice physical survival skills for living without money (Learn weather patterns, flora, fauna, food crops, wild edibles, natural shelters. Learn of local water, utilities, and food supply. Learn about ways of inhabitation and construction of temporary outdoor shelters form natural materials at hand)
8. organize neighborhood crime watch and "Latchkey" programs for single and working parents
9. study local lifestyles and their bioregional consequences (establish appropriate technology information centers)
10. take walks and camping trips throughout the bioregion
11. narrate, record, and celebrate community stories
12. share positive visions of the future
13. develop neighborhood mediation and crisis intervention centers
14. develop alternative community schools
In the spring of 1990, a group of ecologists, new Age leaders, Native spiritual guides and scientists from several countries held a meeting of "Guardians of the Earth" in the community of Huehuecoyotl, in a beautiful corner in the middle of the magical hills of Tepozteco in the state of Morelos, Mexico.

At this first meeting of the Guardians of the Earth, about 40 people from a half dozen countries came together and for two days shared differing points of view on reality, to arrive at the conclusion that the time had come to end the artificial separation that exists between scientific and spiritual thought.

It was time to come together, to complement differing criteria and to search for points of union and solution to global problems, instead of continuing to insist on finding problems in all possible solutions.

In Huehuecoyotl, the idea was also born of promoting future ecumenical meetings of this kind, since out of the meeting had come feelings of affinity. By reaching agreements at the meeting, we were able to break down many prejudices that are fed by ignorance and unfamiliarity with "the other".

Temoaya, State of Mexico, 1991
One year later, in 1991, the First Vision Council of the Guardians of the Earth took place in Temoaya, the ceremonial center of the Nahnu-Otomi indigenous nation, originally from the hills of Mexico. One hundred and fifty representatives of various social change and personal networks from many different countries attended.

In Temoaya representatives of three large movements were present: bioregionalism, which brings together hundreds of ecological organizations in Canada, the United States and Mexico; the Rainbow network, which includes the families and tribes of the international rainbow movement, as well as many groups of the New Consciousness, healers, shamans and transpersonal therapists. The third group was a dozen representatives from an equal number of indigenous groups from Mexico and Central America, including Huicholes, Maya Quiches, Lacandones, Mazhuas, Nahmus and Nahuatlecos.

These spokespersons from the three movements had never before had the opportunity of coming together or of corroborating that the greater part of their objectives for struggle are exactly the same. As well, their work complements each other, since the first are working in the social field, the second in spiritual growth and the third group represents the root, the love and the traditional connections with the Earth and with the natural elements.

During the week, the indigenous people shared their ages-old ceremonies of salute to the Sun, pilgrimages to the centres of power, meetings around the bonfire in the evenings, their profound respect for the signs and signals of the cosmos. The ecologists offered their experiences in the struggle for the defense
of rivers, forests, mountains and oceans, and their connections with the powerful communications media. The New Age groups, for their part, brought to the council their knowledge rescued from other cultural traditions of the world, their use of new and old forms of therapy, the use of quartz, songs, and powerful dances.

The legendary Rainbow Warriors shared their invaluable knowledge of surviving in any situation, no matter how difficult. They were the ones who took on the task of collective food preparation and of the clean-up of the site, the collection of wood for the fires and the entertainment of the young people. And we all ended up learning a little about everything.

The meeting at Temoaya was so successful and the conclusions reached at the various Vision Councils and through networking so valuable that they have been maintained as a real Declaration of Principles of the Earth in Mexico and in various international alternative forums.

Mazunte, Oaxaca, 1992
In May of 1992, the Second Vision Council of the Guardians of the Earth took place in the fishing village of Mazunte, on the Pacific coast, in the state of Oaxaca. This particular site was chosen because of a concern expressed by several ecology groups that the conclusions reached at Temoaya were very positive and advanced but that they were nothing more than "good intentions" as long as they had not been put into practice. The phrase used to express this concern was the following: "We have to bring the Temoaya proposals down to earth in a concrete way". Mazunte was the ideal place to put them into practice.

Mazunte is a village of about one hundred and fifty indigenous families of the hills and coast around Oaxaca, who had made their living exclusively from the industrial harvest of sea turtles until 1990. That year, due to the enormous pressure that environmental groups had been exercising to try to save seven species of turtles in danger of extinction, the Mexican federal government declared a total ban on the harvest and exploitation of those defenseless animals. Also, in that year an economic crisis began for the fisherpeople of Mazunte that threatened either the abandonment of the village or the death by starvation of its inhabitants.

Therefore, one of the Guardians of the Earth groups decided to find a solution for the Oaxaca fisherpeople. Its proposal was for the integrated development of the village, to establish a pilot model of an alternative village that would attract more conscious tourism, that is to say, to encourage eco-tourism as it is called today.

A group called Ecosolar is an organization that links spiritual work with social work, since its founders all come from the Great Universal Fraternity and are disciples of their master and guide Jose Marcelli. But, since the young people belong to a new generation, they are also pioneers of a kind of work that does not end in personal growth, but rather looks for ways to reach out in concrete ways to communities in need.
In May 1992, about 150 of us met in Mazunte, as representatives from 35 organizations and fifteen different countries. An agenda of intensive work began at dawn, with salutes to the Sun and with yoga, continued all morning with actions of social and collective work with and for the community of Mazunte and went through the afternoon with all kinds of workshops and into the evening with artistic and cultural activities of all sorts and for all ages.

During the week we were housed in the cabins of the fisherpeople themselves, which facilitated an immediate and real interchange with them. This exchange benefited host and guest alike. We were looked after and lived the simple life of the fisherpeople, helping them with information around health issues, hygiene and nutrition, etc. as well as economic support for having us there. For their part, they provided us with warmth, love and practical knowledge of living without the necessity of extras, with the basic necessities of a healthy life.

In the days at Mazunte, we organized a clean-up of the village area, created a storage centre, a place to separate waste materials and a Whole Health Centre. We also built a pair of composters for two houses, thereby preventing the water supply from contamination from human wastes. We gave workshops on food conservation and on making whole grain bread. Houses were painted and porches made of palm leaves to enjoy the shade on the beautiful tropical beaches.

Our children and young people mixed naturally with the native people in the area and the evenings were filled with unforgettable parties for one and all, with concerts, improvised theatre, puppets, shadow plays, songs, audiovisuals and dances almost until dawn.

The news of our presence spread to neighbouring communities and bit by bit more and more people started to come from other villages and plantations to confirm the new legend that voices were carrying from place to place.

Nanciyage, Veracruz 1993

One year later, in the spring of 1993, the coordinators of the meeting decided to make another leap for the Vision Council, which was to hold it in the tropical jungle, on the shores of a lake called Catemaco, in the state of Veracruz, invited by the participants of an educational ecology project called "Nanciyaga".

From the 11th to the 18th of April we set up camp in a flat area, dug latrines, improvised a water system, built a communal kitchen with planks, a registration and information office and set up a parking area for vehicles. 160 people representing 51 different organizations from 21 countries attended the meeting.

In spite of the practical difficulties created by the chosen campsite, the development of the spot became more and more harmonious and positive. Activities, once again, were balanced between spirituals, salutes to the Sun, morning meditation sessions, dance, Tai Chi, pilgrimages to powerful places, ceremonies with local shamans, ritual baths of temazcal [herb, medicinal plant]
(Inipi indigenous) and with medicinal muds, social, artistic, and cultural activities.

Several times we left Nanciyaga, as international brigades of Guardians of the Earth to visit local indigenous communities such as Catemaco, Machacapan and Dos Amates, to share workshops with inhabitants, including sessions on nutrition, holistic health, biological farming, permaculture, recycling of wastes and organic composting, ceremonies for the lake, musical and dance concerts, public theatre and shows/workshops on mime and juggling for the native children.

The results of these experiences were parties like those described by Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude", with the arrival of the gypsies and the circus people to the legendary and lost village of Macondo.

But this time, the experience was real and dozens of peace warriors and Rainbow guardians brought to isolated and marginalized communities a glimpse of a possible world, a world of solidarity, a conscious world, a rainfall of colours, hopes and happiness.

In Nanciyaga, out of the final session of the Vision Council, came the group that would coordinate the next Guardians of the Earth meeting, this time to take place near Zirahuen Lake, in the very beautiful state of Michoacán in the spring of 1994.

This group, called the Centre for Social and Ecological Studies, also organized two smaller preliminary meetings that took place in June and November of 1993 along the brook leading from Patzcuaro Lake, so that the Guardians of the Earth of that area could learn about the advances of the Guardians of other networks and countries, and could prepare the camp together for an even more complete and coherent meeting.

Among the participants of the Nanciyage group, another group, composed of a half dozen Spanish visionaries belonging to the Planet Gaia organization were so enthusiastic about the experience lived there, that they offered to take it to the old continent of Europe and try to coordinate an event there similar to those held in Mexico. It wasn't long before it began to happen as Emilio Fiel, coordinator of Planet Gaia, asked for help to organize the First Vision Council of Hispano-American Guardians of the Earth on Palm Island in the Canary Islands, followed almost immediately by the first Vision Council of Spain.

**Patzcuaro, Michoacán 1994**

From the first till the 8th of May, 1994, close to 400 people concerned about the destiny of our planet met in "La Cruz" ranch, near Santa Clara del Cobre, Michoacán.

From the four directions the first Guardians of the Earth began to arrive for the fourth annual meeting of the Vision Council. Carrying their tipis and the long poles for raising them, with bags of food, clay pots, tools, tarpaulins and
blankets, they looked like characters out of the Freak Brothers comics of the 1970's, with their hair tangled like "rastas", their necklaces and earrings, coloured clothes, the women with gypsy dresses and children of every colour all came together as the "seed" group to set up the camp.

The Kalpulli Tamu Tariachiya band, inhabitants of the Patzcuaro lagoon, had extended an invitation to participate in the creation of an alternative ephemeral village "somewhere in the Purepecha Hills."

The call was answered by many "green" groups from a broad spectrum of national and international ecologists and bioregionalists, from Green Space, A.C. to Turtle Island Bio-regional Gathering (TIBG) of the United States and Canada, various indigenous organizations and representatives of indigenous nations, healers and therapists of new and old traditions, New Age artists and artisans, children and young people from the city of Nezahualcoyotl and Oaxaca, students and warriors of the Rainbow Nation.

After long days and the arduous tasks of digging latrines, building a communal kitchen out of wood, a store for basic goods, opening paths, putting up the tipis and tarpaulins, making a space for multiple activities and one for registration, computers and reception, bringing and hanging cables for lights, building a wood stove out of clay and brick, hauling water from the springs, erecting parking signs and camping chores, finally everything seemed to be ready to receive an unknown number of participants.

To this place came people who consider themselves to be Guardians of the Earth, and who had come to participate, not expecting things to be handed to them. What was to take place was the responsibility of everyone.

On the first of May, at the opening, Don Perfecto, an elderly Purepecha with a planetary vision, welcomed us in front of the Cross tree, an old pine with an impressive cross carved into its trunk. There the first altar was mounted, with candles, Holy Water, quartzes, feathers, deerhorns and the staffs of the tribes that were arriving.

By Sunday, May 2, we were 130 people who had, as in years past, each brought their best to share and to create together an experience that expressed our collective intention of creating Utopia. Joining together our individual visions and, like a puzzle, discovering day by day the mystery and magic of a different existence. To stop the world for a moment and to go through a dimensional door to gain access to a reality in which the values of the three dimensional world are forgotten.

The second day began early, with about 30 warriors of all ages going to the ceremonial center of Tinguambate to meet with the representatives of the "Council of 360 Days of Peace and Dignity of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas." They carried 15 sacred stones that since 1992 have traveled the whole continent, from Machu Pichu and Alaska to Teotihuacán and from the City of the Gods to all the corners of the country.
The runners arrived when the sun reached its zenith. Those in the camp who
prepared for their arrival received them in a great plain where we erected the
main tipi, with the Rainbow banner on its main pole and with a circle of 52
stones ready to receive the new fire. They were moments of indescribable
emotion. Words were spoken, visions shared, prayers were raised, along with
songs and prayers from many different traditions. A human circle was made and
from that moment, a structure was created that underlined all subsequent
activities.

Circles of Citlalmina, Meshico-Tibetan dances until morning, salutes to the Sun,
a circle to prepare food in the rustic kitchen, with the kitchen chef the Maya
Antonio Oxté and a team of volunteers thanking Hunab Ku, the heart of the sky
for being allowed to offer this service to the rest of the participants. As well, there
were workshops in bioregionalism, holy dances, plant reproduction,
enchantment and dreams, group facilitating and of the process of reaching the
most advanced form of reaching democratic decisions, consensus.

[There were also workshops in] polarity, massage, Shiatsu, Tibetan candles,
Cherokee dances, drums and shamanic songs, in composting and separating
wastes.

Three areas were set up for provisions, with boxes and pots, to receive all types
of different plastics, bottles, cigarette butts, tins and paper. At the end of a two
week period of close to 400 people living together in the midst of nature, we
only had one dozen sacks of all the separated wastes and left only traces of our
footprints, good vibrations and three piles of compost perfectly prepared to
return their goodness back to the earth.

In the afternoons, all the councils met in circles to work on each of their tasks, in
accord with the colour of the badge each participant received at registration: red
for the communicators and messengers, yellow for the council for children and
educators, green for the ecologists, blue for the magicians, the dream
enchanters and astrologists, purple for those interested in spiritual activities and
the therapists, white for the health guardians, black for the peacekeepers and
the rough work and rainbow coloured for the Michoacán family and the
coordinators of the various tasks and councils, planning of activities and
problem resolution.

Friday was the day dedicated to social work and the majority of participants,
whose number had grown to almost 400, went on a power walk, to the
neighbouring village of La Palma. We were guided by David Mazatl, inheritor of
the oral tradition of Aztec volcano dances, who led us in ceremonial formation
with his serene and delicate authority to the centre of La Palma.

There we thanked the inhabitants for their invitation, the invisible guardians of
the hills for permitting us to do our work and the four winds, so that what took
place there could fly freely in all four directions. We danced in a circle and
presented flowers and a rainbow banner to an elder woman of the village. A
light rain calmed the red dry dust and we divided into councils to "peacefully" take over the place.

One group moved into the school and within a few minutes set up a free clinic of alternative medicines and traditions and received dozens of patients throughout the day. Another group got all the children and adolescents together and spent the morning playing games, songs, dances, puppet shows and telling stories, while the hardy peasants listened in a neighbouring field to Ana Ruz, who gave a talk on organic agriculture, permaculture, pest control through natural methods and biodynamic crop planning. The Maya chef, Antonio Oxté meanwhile organized the day's menu, separating boxes and sacks and sending teams of volunteers to various homes in La Palma to prepare salads in some, drinks in others, lentils in others, whole grain rice, tortillas and guacamoles. The distances between the villagers was broken and each sector or council began to work independently and autonomously from each other. Cooperation was born and barriers broken, visions were put into practice and the impossible was manifested. By the afternoon, we were tired, but we used the horns to call together everyone to share the food. From every house came plates of food, cloths full of tortillas, cups. A circle was formed of more than 300 people, all in an orderly way, and each person was served their portion. No one went short. There was more than enough for everyone.

On Saturday, plenary sessions were held and the councils reported and plans were made for the next meeting. Finally we were in agreement: the next place would be in Teopantli Kalpulli, the "community of the holy place" at the south of the forest in spring, in Mazatepe, Jalisco.

San Isidro, Mazatepec, Jalisco, 1995
At dawn, the purification songs in different languages rose to the sky like the smoke that rose from the three temazcales, while the grandmother Margarita gently played her trarmuhara drum to invite us to salute Father Sun in a sacred circle of dance situated in the valley where we were camped. "We don't come to adore the Sun, nor to make of hi, an unreachable god. We come to thank him for his warmth, his light, because none of us could exist without him," the sweet blue-eyed grandmother said in the semi-darkness of daybreak. "And [we come to thank] the mother of us all, the mama of all of us," she continued, putting her hands into the earth and letting the sand fall through her fingers, "for giving us the opportunity of being her children and of being alive."

Under the rare mezquites, cacti, lizards and enormous pieces of black obsidian, the coyotes finally stopped howling when the first rays of sunlight appeared behind the spring forest, that since the day before had been steaming like many other forests in our country and around the world.

From the tents, tipis and trucks came the children and from behind them the heads of their parents began to pop out, getting dressed before the bell rang for breakfast. The clan of the dragonflies had their turn in the kitchen and it was the turn of the eagles to clean the latrines, check that there was toilet paper and water for handwashing. The members of the Teopantli Kalpulli, situated in the
south of Guadalajara, in the town of San Isidro Mazatepec, woke up asking themselves again if inviting so many strange and folkloric people to their holy place was a good idea or not. "These are hippies," commented one of them, a tall man with a black mustache and a very serious expression; "Well, that's good, because since they arrived, there has finally been happiness and love in this place," responded his neighbour, Betsy, who was completely integrated into the Vision Council. "They have a lot to teach us about ecology," added Sergio, who, once his doubts about "The Guardians of the Earth" had been overcome, was dedicated to spending the day learning what these teachers from the four directions were teaching under the shade of the canvas and the branches, in the dry desert where there can be found this village of pioneers from the Community of the America India Solar (MAIS).

Bio-regionalists from Canada, the United States and Mexico, traditional and holistic healers, representatives of the Wirrarika-Huichol, Maya Lacandon, Nahuatl-Otomi, the Aztec-Chichimeca and Seri, camping side by side, together with the Michoacán tribes of the Tamu Tariatica, the Huehues of Cuauhnahuac-Tepoztlan, the band from San Luis Potosí, the one from Veracruz and from Mazunte in Oaxaca. European and North American Rainbows, South and Central Americans, an Australian woman and another from Africa, all mixed together in each circle of the day with whites, with two Vikings dressed in skins and necklaces, shamans and ecologists of all green currents.

One morning we were awakened by Hare Krishnas with their songs, drums and cymbals, a real "meeting of all colours." The three meals of the day were shared between the two or three hundred of us, with one clan preparing the food, another cleaning up and another serving all of us in the circle, seated on stools or on the ground under a huge yellow and blue tarp we had rented for the event. Vegetarian food, more or less balanced, and an invasion of black flies arriving from the stables of the neighbouring ranch that we did not succeed in controlling in spite of various natural methods that we used. I imagine that the lesson to learn about living with flies is that nature has had to learn to live patiently with us humans and we are much worse than our little winged brothers and sisters.

After breakfast, groups of five to eight people came together, for emotional support, to check how each of us was doing, to plan the day's activities, getting to know new people who came into our group. Then there was a session for each council, that is to say, a morning of workshops. "Today I want to go to the Traditions Council; brother Marzo and the CDN from Chiapas is going to speak," says one of the young warriors from the bioregion of Anahuac. "Well, I'm going to the health one because there are some women elders from Guanajuato who are going to talk about medicinal plants" or "Don Andrecito of Queretaro is going to teach over here near the sacred tree.

Under the blue tarp, about 40 ecologists listened to proposals for uniting the Vision Council with the Turtle Island Group, to create together a ceremonial village like the one we had been living in for several days, but with the presence of a large group of representatives of the families and tribes of the North from
the Alaskan border to the deserts of Texas, from the green California hills to the forests of northeastern America, from north of New York and from Boston. After three large sessions, consensus was reached that the first Bio-regional Council of the Americas would be held. 500 to 800 people were expected for the end of November 1996 in Tepoztlan, Morelos.

On the last afternoon, a circle was formed to allow each Council to speak. Everyone listened and when the moment was right, the grandmother Margarita was asked to lead the ceremonial closing and as she was beginning, the first drops of water to fall since our arrival eight days before. And when the rain had turned into a downpour, we danced in the mud and sang along with the thunder and lightning, playing with the pieces of hail that came down with the rain.