

**BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE:
(RE)VIEWING ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICTS OVER
AGGREGATE EXTRACTION IN EXURBIA**

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Abstract

This research applies a post-structural political ecology theoretical framework to the analysis of an on-going multi-stakeholder dispute over the siting of a large-scale aggregate quarry on the site of an historic farm in Caledon, Ontario. This site is located within easy commuting distance of Toronto, in an exclusive area of rural estates. An application to quarry the site was submitted in 1997 by an Ontario-based aggregate company, and in response, the Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens was formed to mount locally-based resistance to the proposed development. While local resistance to locally unwanted developments is a common occurrence, there are some unique aspects to this case study. Most notably, the ‘local community’ under threat is largely comprised of Toronto exurbanites - individuals who achieved considerable professional success during their careers and were drawn to ‘country living’ in a peri-urban setting near or post-retirement.

While a significant body of research exists on community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses, the vast majority of this literature is based on the experiences of marginalized communities. The elite nature of the Caledon area opens up interesting analytical avenues for exploring the discursive aspects of land use conflicts. In this dissertation I argue that land-use conflicts in peri-urban environments are not (merely) conflicts over the siting of locally unwanted developments. Rather, these conflicts are visible manifestations of complex social struggles over the production of ‘meaning’ and ‘truth’ as it applies to ‘nature’ (and thus land-use decision-making) at particular sites. This analysis begins with an examination of the discourses employed

by key stakeholders in the dispute, and an exploration of the ways 'nature' is invoked in arguments for and against the proposed quarry siting. It concludes with an analysis of 'elite resistance' and an exploration of how the 'exurban subjectivity' of the local resisters has shaped and influenced local resistance to the quarry.

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List of Abbreviations

APAO	Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario
ARA	Aggregate Resources Act
CCC	Coalition of Concerned Citizens
CCRS	Caledon Community Resources Study
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
JDCL	James Dick Company Ltd.
LULU	Locally Unwanted Land Uses
MARPPS	Mineral Aggregate Resource Policy Planning Statement
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
NEP	Niagara Escarpment Plan
OMB	Ontario Municipal Board

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Canada's economic and social history rests on a foundation of natural resource extraction. Recently the intense global economic restructuring of the last two decades has "...drastically reorganized networks of production and consumption at a variety of scales and sites, with the result that old industry-environment articulations have been intensified and new ones generated" (Castree and Braun, 1998, p.3). One effect of these changes in Canada is the preponderance of previously non-industrialized areas now facing threats of industrial development and the growing concerns about the local environmental impact of these activities. One notable manifestation of this in Canada can be found in the numerous instances of environmental conflict emerging in rural and peri-urban areas. These are conflicts in which 'industrialists' (in the form of natural resource developers) encounter various forms of local, community-based resistance to proposed resource development initiatives.

The focus of this research is one such environmental conflict between industrial development and rural preservation: an on-going multi-stakeholder dispute over the siting of a large-scale aggregate quarry in the Caledon area, a peri-urban region within commuting distance to the north-west of Toronto. Throughout this dissertation I argue that land-use conflicts, and associated local resistance, cannot be adequately understood if viewed as merely disagreements over the most 'appropriate' (rational) uses for particular geographic sites. Instead, I argue that these conflicts are visible manifestations of complex social struggles, and best understood as 'discursive battlefields' where struggles and negotiations over meaning occur, and where

relations of power are constructed and articulated through discourse. Following Gismondi and Richardson's argument that environmental discourses are a "...contested terrain where meanings are fought over, shifted, abandoned, transformed" (1994, p. 248), I argue that environmental disputes are actually discursive disputes, and concerned not merely with a particular object in question (e.g., a geographical site), but rather about gaining control over the production of 'meaning' and 'truth' as it applies to decision-making processes within that site.

The central theme of this dissertation is that environmental conflicts are 'inescapably social' in the sense that "...nature is defined, delimited, and even physically reconstituted by different societies, often in order to serve specific, and usually dominant, social interests" (Castree, 2001, p.3). Drawing attention to the ways in which certain (dominant) social interests become privileged while others are rendered less visible or even invisible in natural resource disputes allows for new insights into the complexities of environmental conflicts and the root causes of the intractability of many such conflicts. From this perspective, environmental conflicts are understood as elements of a broader discursive struggle among multiple stakeholders, rather than as potentially resolvable conflicts amongst differing positions. Within the case study presented here, I examine the ways that key disputants invoke 'nature' in their arguments for and against the proposed siting, and identify the broader discourses that disputants draw on to frame their positions. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which certain constructions of 'nature' influence discourses of resistance,

both with respect to the development and implementation of resistance strategies, as well as the overall efficacy of these strategies.

One of the interesting features of the case study followed in this research is the atypical nature of the community-based resistance to the proposed quarry in Caledon. Since the 1970s the area has increasingly been populated by ‘exurbanites’, individuals who have achieved professional success in urban areas and are drawn to peri-urban ‘country living’ late in their careers or post-retirement. While there are many similarities between the community-based resistance in Caledon and other sites, almost all research in this area has been conducted on marginalized communities fighting locally unwanted land use. The elite nature of the Caledon area opens up interesting analytical avenues for exploring the discursive aspects of land use conflicts, providing what Hart (2004) identifies as “windows into constitutive processes, and a means for reconfiguring understandings and practices” (p. 97).

A brief overview of the on-going quarry dispute is provided below, in order to situate discussions about the social construction of nature within the context of a particular conflict. The latter half of this dissertation provides a more detailed discussion of the particularities involved in this dispute.

The Proposed Rockfort Quarry

The town of Caledon, in the Peel Region of South-western Ontario, lies on the perimeter of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) - the largest consuming market for

aggregate in the province. Some of the largest aggregate deposits in southern Ontario are found within the municipal boundaries of Caledon and surrounding areas. The rapid growth of the GTA over the past few decades, coupled with Caledon's ready supply of aggregate and relative proximity, has resulted in broad-based concerns over the management of aggregate resource extraction in Caledon.

In January 1997, the James Dick Company Ltd. (JDCL) purchased, via an intermediary, a 200-acre property in Caledon known as the Rockfort Farm. This property is based in an area known for its rural estates, with the Rockfort Farm being one of many in the vicinity. The property abuts land protected under the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), an area designated by UNESCO as a United Nations Biosphere Reserve. Shortly after purchasing this property, JDCL applied for zoning changes to permit quarrying on the property, and in March 1998, JDCL submitted an application under the Aggregate Resources Act to the Ministry of Natural Resources for a permit to open a dolostone quarry on the Rockfort site. According to the permit application the land would be mined to a depth of 50m (below the water table in the area) with expected annual production estimated to be 2.5 million tonnes per year. Of this production, 1.5 million tonnes would be shipped annually, and the remainder added to on-site inventory. The shipping of aggregate from the proposed Rockfort site would be done by truck, with traffic volumes varying according to annual, seasonal and daily variations in demand. JDCL estimate that during a typical year (1.5 million tonnes per annum)

...truck volumes will range from off season daily averages of about 57 loads out (114 pass-bys per day) to occasional peak season maximum

days with volumes of 354 loads out (708 pass-bys per day). In years when the maximum annual production rate of 2.5 millions tonnes is reached, daily truck volumes may occasionally peak at 590 loads out (1180 pass-bys per day) (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 15).

In 1997 local citizens formed the Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCC) in response to the quarry proposal, and incorporated as a legal entity shortly thereafter. The CCC is comprised of approximately 15-20 active members (who have been meeting on a weekly basis since 1997) and claims as many as 5,000 local supporters in the area. Active members within the CCC are almost all 'exurbanites' - professionals or retirees who moved to the area after successful careers in large urban centres.

The CCC's overall position is that JDCL's permit application for a 2.5 million tonnes/year quarry through the Ontario Aggregate Resources Act is an inappropriate use of the legislation, which was drafted with the intent of streamlining application procedures for much smaller pits and quarries. Permit applications under the Aggregate Resources Act fall into annual production categories of (1) 20,000 tonnes and under and (2) 20,000 tonnes and over. The CCC argues that a 2.5 million tonne quarry should be applying for approval through the much more stringent process of the Mining Act, rather than legislation designed for much smaller scale operations. As part of their overall strategy, the CCC has been focusing their objections to the existing Rockfort quarry proposal around four key themes: its environmental impacts, its potential effects on local water, transportation issues, and economic impacts (CCC, 1999a). To examine the impacts in these and related areas, the CCC hired

their own consultants, including a hydro-geologist, planner, traffic consultant and geologist, to provide expert assessments.

This dispute is still ongoing, in spite of expectations by many stakeholders that it would have ended several years ago. The rezoning application was first pre-empted to some degree by a wait for the completion of the Caledon Community Resources Survey (CCRS), which was intended to provide long-term planning for aggregate extraction in the Caledon area. The CCRS process involved members of the aggregate industry, municipal and regional bureaucrats, politicians and provincial representatives. The province is involved because aggregate in Ontario is considered to be a provincial resource rather than a local one. The CCRS final report (Phase 3) was released in 1999, and based in part on the report's findings, Amendment 161 was made to the Official Plan for the Town of Caledon planning area in March 2000 "to provide detailed policies for the management of aggregate resources in the Town of Caledon" (CCRS, Phase 3, p. 1). Under this amendment, and after the town refused to grandfather the Rockfort application, JDCL was required to undertake a broader, four-season environmental study of the Rockfort site. The terms of reference for this study were completed in early 2004 and JDCL is currently collecting data for this study.

Between 1997 and 2005 a series of Ontario Municipal Board pre-hearings were held regarding the proposed Rockfort quarry, but a full hearing has been delayed by

various factors in this conflict.¹ A full hearing on the Rockfort dispute cannot occur now prior to JDCL completing the four-season study required by the Town of Caledon. Completion of this study is currently not expected prior to the first quarter of 2007 at the earliest.

The dispute to date has been costly, financially and otherwise, for all participants, and several have expressed frustration with the decision-making process in general. Significant financial resources have already been invested, mainly on legal and consulting fees. If the dispute goes to an OMB hearing as expected, this process will likely result in a doubling or tripling of costs. In addition to financial inputs, key stakeholders have also invested significant amounts of time and human resources in the dispute. In the language of conflict resolution, the positions of the two key stakeholders in this dispute (JDCL and the CCC) are decidedly polarized. The President of the CCC recently commented that the CCC and the project proponent both have far too much invested to walk away from this conflict, so they will both continue to fight.

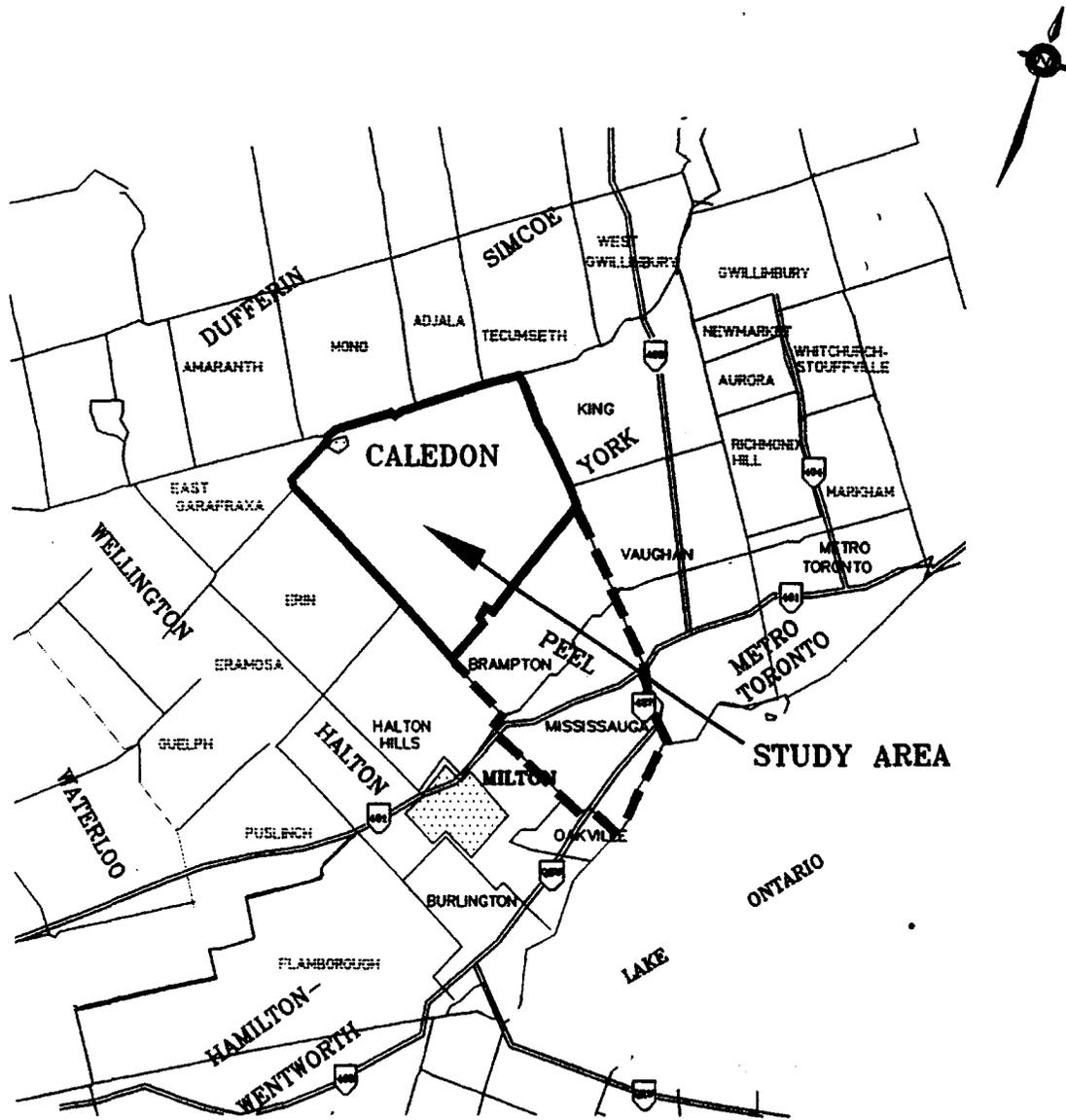
The location of the disputed site and characteristics of the associated community make this a case study of interest and significance. Situated within an attractive rural area in the Niagara Escarpment and within easy commuting distance of Toronto, the Caledon area has attracted a large 'exurban' community, comprised of people who have previously lived in Toronto or other large urban centres, and who moved to

¹ For example, a 2001 OMB hearing on development in the Oak Ridges Moraine had to be completed first as parts of Caledon fall within the Oak Ridges Moraine area.

Caledon to live in a more ‘peaceful’ and ‘pastoral’ rural setting. A map showing the proximity of the area to Toronto is provided in Figure 1. In some cases, residents have homes in both Caledon and Toronto, thus maintaining both ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ lifestyles.

Patano and Sandberg (2005) write about the tensions inherent in the growth of exurban populations in rural areas and the associated “transformation of the countryside from spaces of production to spaces of consumption” (p. 29) as the population of the productive class (e.g., farmers, resource workers) declines and that of a service class (professional and/or retirees) grows in these areas. This is certainly true of the Caledon area, where the ‘production’ of aggregate close to source is in direct competition with the ‘consumption’ of a bucolic rural life sought by many exurbanites. In this dissertation I explore the impacts of this exurban subjectivity on resistance to the proposed quarry in several ways. First, by exploring how exurban subjectivity influences the construction and invocation of ‘nature’ in this conflict, and subsequently, the impact of this construction on conflict dynamics and the development of resistance strategies.

Figure 1: Caledon and Region of Peel
 (not to scale, for illustrative purposes only)
 Source: (CCRS, Vol. 1, 1997)



MAP 1-1
STUDY AREA:
CALEDON AND REGION OF PEEL
 N.T.S.



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Drawing on the findings of research literature on environmental conflict resolution appeared, initially, as an obvious and viable starting point for analyzing the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry. However, the environmental conflict research literature, with its emphasis on conflict *resolution*, is premised on some problematic assumptions², most notably that the vast majority of (if not all) conflicts *are* resolvable and that conflict resolution is preferable to on-going conflict. This literature also assumes a commonality of worldview among disputants, one in which all stakeholders are presumed able to find some common ground. From this perspective it becomes possible to understand environmental conflicts as the result of ‘misunderstanding’ amongst disputants, one resolvable in a host of ways: through better communication processes; through a reframing of the key issues; or as a situation in which resolution is (merely) a matter of overcoming disputant biases “through the application of reason” (Braun, 2002, p. 5).

Examining a case study of a protracted environmental conflict from a discursive perspective challenges these assumptions, primarily by demonstrating the ways that conflict trajectories and dynamics are manifestations of much more deeply rooted discursive struggles about meaning and in this case, control over decision-making about ‘natural’ places and spaces. The critical discourse analysis of an ongoing environmental conflict (the Rockfort quarry dispute) highlights the discursive complexities inherent in environmental conflicts. The use of this non-traditional

² It should be noted that these assumptions reflect assumptions emerging from the more general field of conflict resolution, and as such are not specific to environmental conflict resolution. Rather, within the broader field of conflict resolution, ‘nature’ is treated as another site in which conflict can occur, rather than as a separate type of conflict. The particularities of environmental conflict are discussed in chapter two.

analytical starting point yields new and potentially significant insights into the dynamics of environmental conflict.

Exploring a case study of environmental conflict also provided an opportunity to (re)view these conflicts as discursive struggles, and explore how different stakeholders make sense of ‘nature’ at the Rockfort site. Drawing on a theoretical foundation provided by post-structural political ecology, I explore how the social construction of ‘nature’ at the Rockfort site reflects a deeper social struggle over the power to determine ‘truth’ and ‘meaning’ about ‘nature’ at the Rockfort site. As will be seen in the analytical section of this work, much of the Rockfort struggle is about determining whose vision of ‘nature’ will prevail, and consequently, what constitutes ‘appropriate’ usage at that particular site.

This case study is also of interest for the ways it highlights questions of ‘scale’ with respect to questions of resource development and the resultant impact on local communities. For example, in Ontario aggregate is defined as a ‘provincial’ resource rather than a local one. In this particular conflict, the negative impact is largely manifested at the local level while the positive impacts (other than quarry profits) largely accrue outside the immediate quarry area. Braun (2002) refers to the sacrificial logic of global capitalism as a “logic that deems certain landscapes and communities expendable in the name of nation, profit and progress” (p. 2). In this dissertation I examine the extent to which this statement holds true with respect to the Rockfort quarry conflict and examine the ways in which desires for ‘local’ autonomy

and decision-making conflict with extra-local/global desires for growth and development, through an exploration of the discursive elements of this conflict.

While the focus of this research is on the environmental conflict occurring over the proposed Rockfort quarry, it is also an examination of community-based resistance. The vast majority of North American research on community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses (LULUs) focuses on economically and/or socially marginalized communities. Caledon is neither economically nor socially marginalized and as such it is hoped that this research will provide new insights into community-based resistance through an examination of the ways in which resistance is organized by an atypical (non-marginalized) community and the ways this experience both reflects and differs from the experience of other community-based resistance efforts. In particular, the discussion of resistance examines the extent to which the dominant neo-liberal 'growth and development' discourse has been normalized within the CCC's resistance, and the impact of this on the CCC's ability to create counter-hegemonic discourses of resistance. I argue here that the CCC's exurban subjectivity plays a role in embedding their resistance activities and strategies within a dominant discursive framework, paradoxically, acting to legitimize the very discourse the CCC is attempting to challenge.

I began this research with my own set of biases and assumptions, most notably that the CCC would be successful in their bid to stop the approval of the proposed quarry. This was based in large part on my analysis that the group possessed significant

assets (e.g., extensive social capital, access to resources, knowledge of, and experience with, provincial and national decision-making processes, extensive and relevant business experience) that would enable them to succeed in stopping a locally unwanted development. I also assumed they would be able to do so in ways not available to more marginalized communities. For example, CCC fundraising has provided resources to retain two high-profile legal representatives, as well as commission several reports from nationally recognized environmental consulting companies. In spite of the resources possessed by the CCC, to date the group has not been successful in their ultimate goal of ensuring that the proposed quarry is stopped - although local resistance has played a significant role in challenging the proposed quarry on several fronts. The CCC's lack of overt 'success' to date runs counter to the expectations of many (not least of all, the CCC) and begs an analysis sensitive to the nuanced operations of power, the ways relations of power are constructed and articulated through various discourses, and the impact of the dominant discourse on the creation of discourses of resistance.

Dissertation Outline

This dissertation is divided into two broad parts. The first section provides the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological framework for this research. The second section comprises a detailed deconstruction and analysis of the conflict ensuing from the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry.

This introductory chapter provides general background regarding the Rockfort quarry conflict and an overview of the dissertation framework. The theoretical framework that underpins this research and analysis is outlined in chapter 2. The chapter begins with a critical (re)viewing of the environmental conflict resolution literature, highlighting four significant and deeply-rooted limitations of this literature that affect its analytical value with respect to understanding the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry in particular and the dynamics of natural resource conflicts more generally. Given these limitations, the potential for employing a poststructural political ecology approach is explored, in the sense of (re)viewing environmental disputes as discursive struggles, and as struggles about the power to determine what constitutes ‘truth’ and ‘meaning’ about ‘nature’ in general, and the Rockfort quarry dispute in particular.

A poststructural approach draws attention to the different social constructions of ‘nature’ employed by key stakeholders in the Rockfort quarry dispute, constructions engendering vastly different perspectives on the ‘value’ and ‘appropriate uses’ of nature. Highlighting these differences is useful for shedding analytical light on conflict dynamics. Chapter 2 also draws attention to the importance of place, and presents a poststructural perspective on relations between local and global (extra-local) places, and explores the possibilities and potential for place-based politics of resistance. It concludes with a conceptual examination of ‘exurbia’ (and exurban populations) and the economic and social shifts that currently make exurban environments highly contested sites and sources of environmental conflict.

Chapter 3 details the methodological approach employed in this project, in an attempt to ‘lay bare’ the underlying methodological rationale for this research, and to highlight some of the methodological issues and challenges encountered. It begins with a methodological rationale for drawing on an extended case study approach, and for employing critical discourse analysis. This is followed by an overview of data collection methods and strategies. The final section offers some personal reflection on the methodological process, drawing attention to some of the key methodological issues that emerged during the course of this research.

Chapter 4 is the first of four analytical chapters contained in this dissertation. This chapter provides background on aggregate issues, and an overview of aggregate policy in Ontario as a starting point for contextualizing the discursive struggles occurring over the proposed Rockfort quarry siting. The latter half of this chapter provides a more detailed examination of the trajectory of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry, and examines the multitude of development-centred narratives put forward by three key stakeholders in the conflict – the province, the region/municipality and the proponent.

Chapter 5 shifts focus, and begins an examination of the Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCC), a community-based resistance group that has been challenging the proposed quarry since its proposal. It begins with an overview of the group’s development, and then turns to an analysis of how the exurban subjectivity of

the majority of CCC members has influenced the group's structure and internal organization. In particular, this analysis focuses on the degree to which the group is run as a Board of Directors under a corporate governance model rather than as a grassroots, volunteer organization. Chapter 6 extends this discussion of the CCC and their community-based resistance through the identification and analysis of four principal narratives emerging from a close examination of CCC resistance practices: feelings of citizen disenfranchisement; a focus on presenting 'credible' and 'rational' resistance; protection and preservation of the countryside; and Rockfort as both 'battle' and 'war.'

The final chapter of this dissertation picks up on analytical threads introduced in the previous three chapters and extends two particular analytical discussions. The overall argument presented is that while the narratives invoked by the project proponent (JDCL) and project opponent (CCC) appear quite different at first glance, particularly with respect to the social construction of 'nature,' both are strongly influenced by the prevailing dominant discourse. Examining the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry through an 'environmental paradigm' lens, I argue that while JDCL and the CCC come from seemingly different environmental paradigms, a deeper analysis reveals that both construct nature in similar ways: as something to be 'consumed' – either through productive (extractive) activities, or for consumption by those seeking to 'get away from it all' and 'get back to nature'. As such, the real struggle in the Rockfort quarry dispute is not so much a clash of paradigms, or even an

epistemological struggle, but rather, a struggle over the power to ‘manage’ nature, both at the site in question and in broader terms.

The chapter explores the ways that the CCC’s resistance strategies are reflective of dominant discursive influences, and how the social positioning of the CCC - as a group largely comprised of successful exurbanites – has shaped the group’s production of resistance strategies. More specifically, I argue this has resulted in situating the Rockfort quarry dispute within a broader globalization debate that privileges global (extra-local) growth and development over local concerns, and that the CCC’s embeddedness within dominant discourse significantly limits their potential to destabilize this discourse. This chapter concludes with an exploration of the efficacy of the CCC’s resistance strategies as a ‘place-based political project’, and examines ways that the CCC’s strategies have contributed to a discursive erasure of (local) place, inadvertently creating legitimacy for large-scale aggregate developments in the Caledon area. This chapter concludes with a few thoughts about the potential for future community-based resistance to aggregate extraction in Ontario.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

The central tenet of this research is that environmental conflicts cannot be viewed, as the literature on environmental conflict tends to assume, as disputes merely over the most ‘appropriate’ (rational) uses of particular sites. Rather, I argue that these conflicts are visible manifestations of deeply rooted and complex social struggles over the production of meaning and ‘truth’ as it applies to land-use decision-making processes. As such, environmental conflicts centred on land use issues must be understood as discursive disputes, in which struggles and negotiations occurring between disputants reflect broader battles over highly contested terrain. (Re)viewing environmental conflicts through a discursive lens changes the potential conflict outcome significantly.

From this perspective, these disputes are unlikely to result in the ‘win-win’ (re)solution put forward in the literature on environmental conflict resolution, but rather, to end as battles typically do, with a small number of victors and a host of unresolved issues and tensions, sowing the seeds of future conflict. In this dissertation I will demonstrate the analytical richness resulting from a critical, deconstructive analysis of environmental conflicts. This richness will be illustrated through the deconstruction of the environmental conflict engendered by the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry.

Working within the broad confines of human geography, the case study analysis will be developed within a poststructuralist political ecology framework. More specifically, this analysis will be situated within theoretical discussions occurring throughout the recently emerging literature on ‘social nature’ (e.g., Braun, 2002, Castree and Braun, 2001) which emphasizes the importance of understanding ‘nature’ as a social construction, rather than as an external, pre-determined entity. This starting point is critical to my analysis of environmental conflict and locally based resistance and provides a fundamentally different analytical starting point from that provided within the current literature on environmental conflict resolution.

The overall purpose of this chapter is to situate this research within a conceptual and theoretical framework in general and more specifically, to explore and demonstrate the analytical potential of (re)viewing environmental disputes through a poststructuralist lens. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section critically (re)views research literature on environmental conflict resolution, with an emphasis on recent work on intractable environmental conflicts. This critical (re)view is intended to draw attention to the limitations of environmental conflict resolution research *as it currently exists* for providing a productive and theoretically rich understanding of the dynamics of place-based environmental conflicts.

The second section of this chapter outlines the broad theoretical framework for this analysis: poststructural political ecology in general and recent thinking about ‘social nature’ in particular. Employing a Foucauldian approach to the analysis of the

relationship between power, knowledge and discourse provides opportunities to explore the way power operates with respect to the development of discourses about the proposed Rockfort quarry. The third section draws on selected readings to introduce a poststructural examination of 'place'. This section addresses questions of scale and the relationships between global and local and examines approaches to place-based resistance projects. This chapter concludes with an introduction to the concept of 'exurbia', and the currently contested nature of land use decision-making in exurban environments. It also introduces a typology of environmental paradigms that help to situate the narratives employed by various stakeholders in the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry.

Critical (Re)View: Environmental Conflict Resolution

At the beginning of this research I read extensively across the research literature in environmental conflict resolution with the expectation that this literature would provide some analytical insights – insights not only into the dynamics of the Rockfort quarry conflict, but also with respect to the nature of the associated local resistance to the proposed quarry. However, this was not the case. This section provides a brief overview of the research focus of environmental conflict resolution literature and highlights some of the conceptual and theoretical limitations that currently exist in this body of research. Given these limitations, I argue that a critical analysis based in poststructural political ecology provides a relevant starting point for (re)viewing environmental disputes. A poststructural perspective encourages some interesting

critical insights on the dynamics and trajectory of Canadian natural resource disputes and the potential for place-based politics of resistance in such conflicts.

The first part of this section presents a summary of the characteristics of environmental conflict identified in the research literature to illustrate the rather descriptive nature of this literature. This is followed by a brief overview of recent (and burgeoning) literature on intractable environmental conflict, as ‘intractability’ is a good descriptor of the on-going dispute over the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry. It concludes with a critical look at the significant gaps in the literature on environment conflict resolution, highlighting its atheoretical underpinnings and unarticulated assumptions about ‘nature’ in the research. It reveals a bias towards resolution and lack of analysis of the role of contextual factors in environmental conflicts.

Research on environmental conflict resolution borrows heavily from the more general literature on conflict resolution but notes that environmental conflicts are distinctive in particular ways. Environmental conflicts are sometimes categorized either by type of conflict or by the specific conflict characteristics. Researchers differ somewhat in their delineation of types of environmental conflict. As examples, Campbell and Floyd (1996) identify four varieties of such conflicts: those involving scientific/technical issues; conflicts around natural resources; policy issues or policy development related conflicts; and conflicts involving moral dilemmas (e.g. those that involve trade-offs between jobs and environmental preservation). They also highlight

Percival's delineation of the issues, breaking environmental conflicts into three types: disagreements concerning projected environmental impacts and proposed environmental regulations; values-based disagreements about the effects and significance of environmental policy choices; and disagreements regarding ground rules for getting a conflict processed (Percival, 1992, cited in Campbell and Floyd, 1996).

There are also various categorizations of key characteristics of environmental conflicts. For example, some researchers argue that distinguishing characteristics of environmental conflicts include the multiple forums for decision-making in these conflicts, as well as their inter-organizational (as opposed to inter-personal) nature (O'Leary, 1995). In addition, they can involve multiple parties and multiple issues, are technically complex and scientifically uncertain, and problem solving is often expected to occur in the public/political arena. Klase (1995) comments on the very public nature of environmental resources, as well as the very public nature of environmental degradation, and the extra dimension this adds to environmental conflict resolution.

The value-laden nature of environmental conflicts also adds to the complexity of environmental conflict resolution (Richman, 1987). In addition, the fact that implementation of settlement agreements often occurs over a period of time (rather than being a one time action) results in the need to clarify what recourse is available in the case of implementation problems (Wondolleck et al., 1996). Finally, the

various dimensions of power imbalances between disputants (e.g. between individuals and organizations, or between small organizations and federal governments) should be considered when deciding whether an environmental conflict is appropriate for attempts at resolution. The common themes running through all these categorizations include recognition that environmental conflicts often involve multiple levels of activity (i.e., micro, meso and macro), recognition of the temporal aspects of environmental conflicts, and the subsequent need for consideration of short, medium and long-term effects, and the role of values in environmental conflicts.

In recent years a focus on intractable environmental conflicts has emerged, partially from a broader general interest in intractability, but also in response to increasing incidences of ‘resolution resistant’ environmental conflicts. Much of the existing research in this area views conflicts situated along a continuum of tractability and emphasizes the need to identify and explore avenues for increasing the ‘tractability’ of environmental conflicts. The implications of this approach (attempts to shift tractability) will be explored after brief examination of the characteristics of intractable environmental conflict.

While noting that “...at a surface level, all intractable conflicts look alike,” Putnam and Wondolleck (2003, p. 36) provide a framework for sorting out key characteristics of intractable conflicts. They observe that all such conflicts have two primary characteristics - they are long-standing, and they elude resolution in spite of repeated

attempts at intervention. Beyond this, however, they note that intractable conflicts vary along four key features: the degree of divisiveness - the extent to which a conflict engages and divides people; the degree of intensity - the level of emotionality, involvement and personal commitment involved; the degree of pervasiveness - the breadth of conflict across social and private spheres and the number of stakeholders involved; and finally, the degree of conflict complexity.

Putnam and Wondolleck (2003) also identify four broad sources of intractability in environmental conflicts. The first source, the characteristics of disputant parties, includes differing ideologies, composition of group membership, the relational power between disputants, and the organization of parties (e.g., whether group membership is 'bounded' or 'unbounded'). Identity issues are often at the heart of intractable environmental conflicts, with "...perceived threats to disputing parties' individual or collective identities and culture or lifestyle (characterizing) intractable conflicts in general and environmental conflicts in particular" (Campbell, 2003, p. 364).

A second source of intractability emerges in cases where specific types of issues are involved including value issues, high stakes distributional issues, and threats to health and human safety. A third identified source of intractability is what Putnam and Wondolleck (2003) refer to as 'social system' or contextual issues. The authors identify three specific types of contextual issues that contribute to conflict intractability: ambiguous social systems (in which clear conflict resolution processes or mechanisms are lacking); over-prescribed social systems (encumbered with strict

and often contradictory rules), and conflict issues that challenge the legitimacy of existing social systems. Finally, the authors identify ‘conflict processes’ as a source of intractability, noting that as conflict escalates, tractability decreases.

Campbell (2003) puts forward a complementary but less detailed breakdown of sources of intractability. Drawing on a wide variety of literature on intractable conflict, the author identifies thirteen different characteristics that influence conflict tractability, including: value differences between parties; levels of hostility; and threats to individual or collective identities. She goes on to note, however, that “...little is known about the relative frequency of intractable environmental conflict characteristics, or any relative hierarchy of their importance to conflict intractability” (p. 364). This lack of empirical evidence will be discussed in more detail in the following section of this paper. In the meantime, it is worth noting that much of the environmental conflict literature tends towards description and typology rather than analysis and theorizing.

Limitations of Environmental Conflict Resolution Literature

Although a number of issues emerge from a review of the literature on environmental conflict resolution, the discussion here will be restricted to a focus on four key limitations of the existing research literature: a lack of theoretical development; a lack of attention to conceptualizations of ‘nature’; an (unarticulated) emphasis on the ‘management’ and/or ‘resolution’ of intractable environmental conflicts; and a lack of

attention to the (significant) impacts of contextual factors within environmental conflicts.

Within the field of environmental conflict resolution, some internal critique exists regarding its atheoretical nature. This critique is briefly covered here, followed by more critical analysis from a poststructuralist perspective. While the former highlights some of the issues currently under discussion within the research area, the latter draws attention to the lack of attention paid to the discursive factors shaping the evolution and trajectory of environmental conflicts over natural resources.

It is somewhat paradoxical that while the practice of environmental conflict resolution is flourishing, the corresponding theoretical development is very weak. Blackburn (1995), one of the early proponents of theoretical development in environmental conflict resolution, argues that the development of a clear conceptual framework is critical for advancing practice in this area. Theoretical development may be hampered by the interdisciplinary nature of environmental conflict resolution, resulting in a wide dispersion of published research throughout the literature. The varying terminology used to describe environmentally based conflict resolution is also a factor, as the terms environmental conflict resolution, environmental dispute resolution, environmental mediation and environmental negotiation are often used interchangeably (Blackburn, 1995).

Another possible reason for the lack of theoretical development is related to the empirical foundations of research on environmental conflict resolution. The development of models and conceptual frameworks within environmental conflict resolution, as in other forms of alternative dispute resolution, has been primarily practitioner-driven and as such the emphasis has been on developing models to improve practice, rather than developing more abstract theoretical frameworks. A related critique comes from O'Leary (1995) who strongly criticizes the lack of empirical validation of environmental mediation. Arguing that much of what environmental mediators 'know' has yet to be substantiated through rigorous research, O'Leary makes a strong case for further research.

A recent survey of the environmental conflict resolution literature, however, suggests that progress towards theoretical development is slow. Campbell (2003) notes that still "...very little empirical research has been conducted on any aspect of environmental conflicts" (p. 366). The lack of an empirical foundation for environmental conflict resolution in general is reflected in the corresponding research gaps with respect to intractable environmental conflicts.

While the above critique, emanating from researchers involved in research on environmental conflict resolution, highlights some important factors influencing the scope and direction of research in this area, overall it is unsatisfying. As noted in the previous section, the emphasis of much of this research remains atheoretical in a fundamental way – in the sense that the bulk of the research is either descriptive or

focussed on typological development, rather than providing theoretically grounded analysis. In my reading of the environmental conflict literature, little discussion was found regarding 'power', and what existed presumed a straight-forward, top-down understanding of power, rather than the more nuanced Foucauldian appreciation of the circulatory nature of power. Power, when mentioned at all, is typically invoked in a passive form (e.g., a 'pre-condition' of conflict) rather than as an active (and productive) element of conflict.

A recent critique of the broader field of conflict resolution argued that when power is invoked in conflict resolution discussions, it is conceptualized almost exclusively as either 'personal power' - power as the ability to get your own way - or 'power in relation' to other disputants, with the most 'powerful' disputant expected to exert dominance (Barnett, 2005). Both of these conceptualizations of power view it in traditional ways, as a force possessed by 'the powerful' to use against 'the weak'. Not surprisingly then, no reference was made to the normalizing effects of power within environmental conflicts, or the impact of dominant/hegemonic discourses on the ways environmental conflicts are understood by various stakeholders. Given the gaps noted above, a more theoretically rich analysis of power could have much to offer for the analysis of environmental conflicts. The analysis of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry site is intended to demonstrate the analytical power inherent in applying a poststructural analysis to an environmental conflict.

In spite of the breadth of topics covered within the literature on environmental conflict resolution, there is one gaping (and un-noted) hole in this research – what constitutes ‘nature’ in such conflicts is never explicitly addressed. Rather, the ‘nature’ that is the site of contestation in environmental conflicts is assumed as external and objective - rather than socially constructed and thus contested - and unproblematic in the sense that all parties are *assumed* to be dealing with the same nature.

Understanding nature as socially constructed and “inescapably social” (Castree, 2001, p.3) opens up analytical space for a much more generative discussion than a framework that assumes nature as a pre-determined and unproblematic factor in environmental conflicts. Employing a poststructural political ecology approach (as described later in this chapter) creates recognition of the ways that different social positions can create radically different environmental experiences, and of the multitude of discourses emerging in conjunction with differing conceptualizations of ‘nature’. It also recognizes the possibility that ‘nature’ can then be defined, delimited and even physically reconstituted by different parties (stakeholders) in different ways – ways that serve specific and usually dominant interests (Castree, 2001).

As the environmental conflict resolution literature assumes that ‘nature’ is a given (and thus an uncontested entity) it is hardly surprising then that research in this area focuses on ‘better decision-making processes’ and ‘opening up communication between disputants’. What is lost in this analysis is the opportunity to identify much

more deeply rooted struggles over the production of ‘truth’ about ‘nature’ that are occurring, struggles ‘made visible’ through environmental conflict. (Re)viewing environmental conflicts as discursive battlefields - contestations over not only a material site, but also much more deeply rooted struggles for control over the production of ‘truth’ and ‘meaning’ – opens up new avenues for understanding and appreciating the intractability of many of these conflicts.

In the intractable environmental conflict literature in particular, and the environmental conflict resolution in general, there is strong emphasis on increasing the tractability of conflicts, and a corresponding unwillingness to declare some conflicts fundamentally unresolvable. This features prominently in the conceptualization of ‘intractability’ in the bulk of the research literature. For example, Campbell (2003) comments that after extensive discussion at a 1998 conference dedicated to examining intractable conflicts, it was agreed that ‘resolution resistant’ would be substituted for the term ‘intractable’ until the field developed a better understanding of the latter term. This sentiment is echoed in the work of Putnam and Wondolleck (2003) who observe that intractable conflicts are “...hard to pin down, manage and analyze and extremely difficult to resolve” (p.37). Others argue that given the often dynamic nature of conflict situations, intractable environmental conflicts may be hard to manage, but a conflict being intractable “...does not imply that a conflict is not resolvable” (Davis and Lewicki, 2003, p. 202).

An even more telling quote comes from Campbell (2003) who observes that "...a critical aspect of managing and resolving intractable environmental conflicts, then, is ascertaining how far along the continuum of intractability a conflict has gone...and how to work with stakeholders on aspects of the conflict to help pull it back along the continuum into the range of less resolution-resistant conflicts" (p. 364). Elliot et al. (2003) recommend addressing intractability by reframing substantive goals through the process of 'finding common ground' or visioning/search processes, thus allowing disputing parties to establish a 'superordinate' goal, one that "the parties cannot attain unless they coordinate to attain it" (p. 431). The authors go on to conclude that "...for those intractable conflicts that defy resolution, we believe this approach is particularly promising because it unlocks opportunities for deeper understanding of the dynamics that amplify these conflicts and keep disputants embroiled in them, often beyond their usefulness" (p. 435).

The comments above illustrate an underlying, and unarticulated, bias in the conflict resolution literature – which Sargent (1997), drawing on the work of conflict resolution critic Laura Nader, describes as emerging from a 'harmony ideology.' Working on the assumption that 'harmony' is the desired end goal, the emphasis then becomes one of 'managing conflict' or 'reconciling' conflicting parties, rather than focussing on structural changes that shape and define the nature of the conflict itself. Or, as Sargent states, "making it appear that all conflicts can be resolved through consensual processes such as mediation, rather than through more confrontational forms of political action" (1997, p. 2). In this way, the potential for substantive

change is minimized as both material and discursive differences are glossed over in the search for ‘common ground’ and resolution.

Much of the discussion in the environmental conflict resolution literature, based on the unarticulated and potentially flawed assumption of ‘nature’ as unproblematic, puts the emphasis on identifying the ‘right’ method or developing more refined or sophisticated techniques to increase the ‘resolvability’ of intractable environmental conflicts, or at the very least, assist in better conflict management. Relatively little attention is directed towards examining the nature of the conflict itself (e.g., the social construction of environmental conflicts) or probing the roles that contextual factors (e.g., political, social, economic) exert on the nature and trajectory of an environmental conflict.

Where reference is made to contextual factors affecting the nature of intractable conflicts, the scope of the discussion tends to be limited. For example, Campbell (2003) observes that “...perceived threats to disputing parties’ individual or collective identities and culture or lifestyle often characterize intractable conflicts in general, and environmental conflicts in particular” (p. 364) but does not elaborate on what the implications of this might be in any detail. Putnam and Wondolleck (2003) identify ‘social systems’ as one of four key sources of intractability, but again do not extend their arguments beyond the identification of context as a factor influencing degrees of conflict tractability. Bryan’s (2003) work on context in intractable environmental conflicts focuses attention on the ‘environment’ in which these conflicts occur (e.g.,

the regulatory environment, the legal environment) but does not delve more deeply into questions related to the construction of these environments and the ways that they shape, and are shaped by, the prevailing dominant discourse. In general, the intractable environmental conflict literature rarely moves beyond identifying contextual issues as ‘factors affecting conflict tractability’, and would benefit greatly from delving deeper into the influence of discursive factors on the shaping of ‘contextual factors’ germane to both the creation and development of environmental conflicts.

With respect to identity issues, Wondolleck et al. (2003) argue that although identity issues are often central to intractable environmental conflicts, disputants may be unaware of the ways their identity (defined in the singular, rather than plural) issues are implicated in creating and maintaining conflict situations. The authors argue that conflict tractability can be improved in these situations by drawing attention to identity issues and explicitly recognizing the role of identity in conflicts. Elliot et al. (2003) advocate that “...allowing parties to acknowledge the importance of identity and recognize the legitimacy of their own and others’ identity claims helps to restore self-esteem and allow the parties to refocus their attention on the substantive issues” (p. 428) but do not elaborate on the importance of identity issues, let alone discuss the factors influencing the construction of identity in conflict situations. Nor does this literature appear to allow for the possibility of multiple, overlapping and possibly conflicting identities. A more theoretically grounded examination of the ways

discourse shapes the context in which environmental conflicts occur could also open up some significant and generative analytical options.

While the existing literature on intractable environment conflicts offers some useful insights, it focuses primarily on the ‘visible’ aspects of conflict and is not theoretically grounded in ways that help to uncover the ‘invisible’ components of these conflicts – the discursive factors that influence and shape both the creation and trajectory of these conflicts. Somewhat ironically, the explicit goal of mediation and other conflict resolution processes is to facilitate a shift in which disputants move from ‘positions’ to ‘interests,’ a process intended to ‘make visible’ the underlying ‘invisible’ aspects of particular conflicts. The ‘visibility’ engendered in the conflict resolution literature, however, does not extend to a recognition of the influence of discursive factors. A critical theoretical examination of the factors shaping both interests and positions would add significant analytical strength to existing conflict resolution research.

Analyzing environmental conflicts without addressing the ways hegemonic formations shape and influence discourse(s) around environmental issues creates the risk of producing ‘(re)solutions’ that maintain and replicate dominant ideologies, as these (re)solutions do not result in challenges to the discourses producing (and reproducing) the original conflict-creating conditions. As such, these ‘(re)solutions’ also run the considerable risk of reinforcing existing structural inequities. A critical examination of the discursive factors underpinning intractable environmental

conflicts may enable the production of more theoretically powerful insights into such conflicts. The next section of this chapter turns to a more detailed examination of poststructural political ecology as an analytical framework for (re)viewing environmental conflicts over locally unwanted land uses.

A Poststructural Approach

The analysis undertaken for this dissertation is conceptually grounded within a poststructuralist approach, a perspective concerned with the relationships among people, the world, and the practices involved in the creation and reproduction of meanings (Belsey, 2002). This emphasis on the production of ‘meaning’ entails attention to discourse and discursive practices and the ways in which these shape, and are shaped by, our understanding of the world. In this way, a poststructural analysis of discourse

...is not only a linguistic theory; it is a social theory, a theory of the production of social reality which includes the analysis of representations as social facts inseparable from what is commonly thought of as ‘material reality.’ Poststructuralism focuses on the role of language in the construction of social reality; it treats language not as a reflection of ‘reality’ but as constitutive of it (Escobar, 1996, p. 46).

Put another way, poststructuralism proposes that meaning is not drawn from the world around us but rather produced by symbolizing systems that are learned (Belsey, 2002) and thus discursive formations not only reflect but also “produce the object about which they speak” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 61). Discourses vary among what are often competing, even conflicting, cultural, racial, gender, class,

regional and other differing interests, although they may uneasily coexist within relatively stable (hegemonic) discursive formations (Peet and Watts, 1996, p. 14). In this sense, ideas and discourses are not abstract, but matter because they have very real and important social consequences. So the question then becomes not about the 'truth value' of particular discourses, but rather "...what do these ideas *do*, what real social effects do they have?" (Ferguson, 1994, p. xv) As discourses are "...concerned with a limited range of objects" (Peet and Watts, 1996, p. 14), any discourse will then emphasize some concepts at the expense of others, and in this way discourses conceal as much as they reveal.

Poststructuralist thought requires the re-examination of the 'known' - existing categorizations, norms and values, 'facts' - a re-examination accomplished through the process of deconstruction. Deconstruction acts to destabilize the 'known' and 'natural' categorization of knowledge by calling it into question. Deconstructing the known makes visible the ways that power and knowledge intersect to govern what is and is not accepted as 'true' under particular circumstances. The process of deconstruction requires an explicitly critical stance, one that rejects the notion of universal truths and totalizing discourses in favour of 'partial and contingent' discourses and 'truth' as a reflection of (often invisible) relations between knowledge and power.

Poststructuralism's fascination with discourse

...originates in its rejection of the modern conceptions of truth. Foucault argues that each society has a *regime of truth*, with control of the

‘political economy of truth’ constituting part of the power of the great political and economic apparatuses: these diffuse “truth”, particularly in the modern form of “scientific discourse,” through societies, in a process infused with social struggles. In the poststructural view, then, truths are statements within socially produced discourses, rather than objective “facts” about reality (Peet and Watts, 1996, p. 13).

This research project proceeds from a Foucauldian understanding of the linkages between power, knowledge and discourse. With respect to power, Foucault (1980) argues it

...must be analyzed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in anybody’s hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization (p. 98).

Within this model of power, individuals are not only the targets of power, they are elemental to its functioning, or, as Foucault states, “individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (1980, p.98). This is not to imply that there is no domination, but rather that power is not easily controlled in any simple sense, however unequal and hierarchical relations between individuals and groups may be.

Put another way, a Foucauldian conceptualization of power is understood as “...saturating and productive rather than as unevenly distributed and repressive” (Rose, 1997, p.314, drawing on Gibson-Graham, 1994). Analyzing the effects of power then requires tracing unequal relations of power down to their actual material functioning and their implications for individuals. Otherwise, these power relations “...escape our analysis and continue to operate with unquestioned autonomy,

maintaining the illusion that power is only applied by those at the top to those at the bottom” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 186-187).

This conceptualization of power as a web or a matrix has many implications, not least that for Foucault, power must be understood in terms of its operations, techniques and tools (e.g., “What does power do?”) rather than in terms of simply what it is. This ‘analytics of power’ is central to Foucault’s conceptualization of the relations between power, knowledge and discourse. By (re)viewing the history of modernity to expose the ways that power has worked, Foucault made visible the links between the process of knowledge production, the dissemination of this knowledge through the (apparently) benign process of educating the masses (Lemert, 1997), and articulated the ways this production of ‘truth’ is linked to the systems of power that produce and sustain it. This illustrates the ways that production of knowledge appears separated from the deployment of power (e.g., Foucault, 1997) but is not. This invisible connection illustrates the

...constitutive relations between techniques of power and associated knowledges. For Foucault, power is always present in the formation of any knowledge or calculation, just as knowledge produces a facilitative façade for the exercise of particular power relations (Pavlich, 1996, p. 95).

As such, knowledge becomes a “central component in the historical transformation of various regimes of power and truth” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 117).

A less abstract example of the interplay between power, knowledge and discourse is provided by Peet and Watts (1996). Citing Escobar (e.g., 1996), the authors call

attention to the ways that power is invoked with respect to ‘development’ not through acts of overt force or repression, but rather through processes of normalization (or normalizing technologies) which serve to regulate knowledge and moralize issues in order to control or ‘discursively regulate’ people (p. 17). Normalizing technologies

...operate by establishing a common definition of goals and procedures, which take the form of manifestos and, even more forceful, agreed upon examples of how a well-ordered domain of human activity should be organized. [They] immediately define what is normal; at the same time, they define practices which fall outside their system as deviant behaviour in need of normalization (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. 198).

In this way, normalizing technologies become powerful, insidious and largely invisible forms of domination, linking individuals in ways that “structure the possible field of action of others” (Gismondi and Richardson, 1994, p. 236).

Escobar (1996) notes that investigating the impact of normalizing technologies through an examination of sustainable development discourses has reworked the relationships between nature and society, problematizing the sustainability of the global ecosystem rather than that of local places. In the process, this discourse has reconciled relations between ‘growth’ and ‘environment’ in ways that privilege economic growth over environmental sustainability. So while sustainable development discourses are regularly invoked to ‘protect’ nature, Escobar argues that the acceptance of this model (its normalization) comes with a myriad of implications for environmental practice that remain generally invisible and unarticulated. As Escobar notes, adopting sustainable development discourses means “...accepting the scarcity of natural resources as a given fact” (p. 53) and therefore, prioritizing

'efficiency' of resources use, resulting in a de facto acceptance of a commodity-based approach to natural resource management, and its attendant commercialization of nature. Within sustainable development discourse, policy development is then "...restricted to promoting the 'rational' management of resources" (p. 53) while questions as to who benefits from a commodification model of resource management remain unasked.

Poststructural Political Ecology

In the 1980s, researchers in a variety of different fields began to focus increasing attention on the relationships between 'society' and 'land-based resources' in ways that combined the concerns of ecology and broadly defined political economy. Over time, the study of 'political ecology' emerged as a separate field of inquiry (Peet and Watts, 1996, p. 3). Explicitly recognizing the linkages between environmental issues and political, economic and social relationships, political ecology has emerged as a highly generative field of critical research.

The conceptual and theoretical roots of political ecology are many and varied.

Paulson et al. (2005) trace the intellectual genealogies of political ecology through disparate research fields, including ecological anthropology and cultural ecology; the 'environmental turn' in cultural geography; disaster and environmental hazard research; and political economy. For Castree and Braun (1998), an understanding of the way(s) nature is 'produced' at the millennium draws not only from agrarian

political economy and third world political ecology, but also from Marx's "scattered reflections on nature and environment under capitalism" (p. 7).

Castree and Braun (1998) argue that "more than ever before, then, nature is something made" and that "humanity's relationship with nature, in all its permutations, is ineluctable and inherently subversive of nature-society dualism" (p. 4). Increasing interest in this 'social nature' perspective, in which nature is understood as a social construct, has resulted in a growing interdisciplinary body of research. The implications of viewing nature in this way are significant, and as such, this literature "seeks to explain and illustrate the many ways in which nature is constructed and reconstructed within modern and late modern societies" (1998, p. 4). Far from being 'just' an academic exercise, this exploration of the social construction of 'nature' and 'environmental issues' has significant material implications, becoming, in Castree and Braun's words, "a focal point for a nexus of political-economic relations, social identities, cultural orderings, and political aspirations of all kinds" (1998, p. 5).

In an examination of the historical roots of political ecology, Gezon and Paulson (2005) note four key concepts that guided the early days of enquiry: linking resource use to social relations; the recognition of "... a plurality of positions, interests and rationalities in relation to the environment such that one person's profit may be another's toxic dump"; attention to global connections and recognition of interconnections between global and local processes; and a "refined concept of

marginality” recognizing the “mutually reinforcing” effect of different forms of marginalization (p.2). These underpinnings provide a rich and fertile starting point for subsequent questioning of nature/society relations.

Paulson et al. (2005) identify two central questions that link contemporary debates: “How can we frame, carry out and analyze research that stretches across different spaces, scales, and social groups? And how can we better conceptualize the political in studies of environmental changes, problems and issues?” (2005, p. 25). With respect to the former question, they note that while political ecology began as a field fully grounded in a strong class analysis perspective (hardly surprising given its Marxist roots, especially through political economy), recent work has focussed on a more comprehensive analysis of social relations, allowing for “identification and analysis of dynamics among multiple, overlapping dimensions of identity” (p. 26). With respect to the latter question, the authors note the need to work towards a conceptualization of the political, with ‘political’ understood as referring to the range of practices and processes through which power (in multiple forms) is employed and negotiated. Of central interest to this area of enquiry is attention to the politics of environmental discourse.

A poststructural political ecology is then focussed on a critical examination of the way(s) in which ‘meaning’ is established vis-à-vis ‘nature’, as well as the myriad ways that ‘nature’ is invoked through various discourses to meet different interests. This is not an argument that there is ‘no nature out there’, but rather recognizes

...political economy and ecology as specifically modern forms of knowledge (that)... must be analyzed discursively. It is necessary to reiterate the connections between the making and evolution of nature and the making and evolution of the discourses and practices through which nature is historically produced and known (Escobar, 1996, p. 46).

The suggestion that nature is 'produced' - as opposed to just existing - opens up interesting analytical possibilities making it "possible, if not imperative, to identify *the specific historical forms* that nature's production takes, and to locate the specific *generative processes* that shape how this occurs" (Braun, 2002, p. 11, author's italics).

Critical Geography and 'Social Nature'

Debates regarding the relationships between society and nature inform and reflect current debates in academic geography. Castree (2001) identifies three broad approaches to geographical scholarship, one mainstream and two radical. The mainstream 'people and their environments' perspective, which emphasizes geography's disciplinary position as a bridge between the social sciences, humanities and natural sciences, is arguably the dominant approach in current geographical inquiry. Castree argues that while conventional geography, with its "revivified people and environments' perspective" (2001, p. 2) initially appears to offer potential for unifying geographic inquiry, a more critical analysis reveals its intellectual limitations and political biases.

The limitation of conventional geographic enquiry emerges from a tendency to equate 'nature' only with 'environmental problems' (thus ignoring a much broader interpretation of 'nature' and what is 'natural') while its political bias emerges from the largely technocratic foundation of its arguments, with their emphasis on environmental 'science' and correspondingly little attention paid to the "fundamental socio-economic processes transforming twenty-first century nature" (2001, p. 3).

One effect of these limitations is an approach that promotes the development of policies "...geared to ameliorating environmental problems without ever addressing the deeper causes responsible for those problems in the first place" (Castree, 2001, p. 3). This lack of attention to 'root causes' or the unarticulated assumptions underlying various change initiatives is a significant limitation of this approach to scholarship.

The two radical approaches for examining society-nature intersections noted by Castree are the 'ecocentric' and the 'social.' The ecocentric, or 'nature-first' approach argues in favour of a fundamental respect for nature and a need to 'get back' to nature, achieved through a "...profound critique and dismantling of existing systems of production and consumption" (2001, p. 3). In the social approach, nature is seen as "...*inescapably social*" (Castree, 2001, p. 3, author's italics) and, as such, is defined, delimited and even physically reconstituted by different parties (stakeholders) in particular ways – ways that serve specific, and usually dominant, interests. In other words, the social and natural are interconnected in ways that make their separation – in thought or practice – impossible.

In comparison to mainstream geographic thought, critical approaches to geography are linked to radical political commitments, with what Castree refers to as “two connected moments: critical diagnosis and normative prognosis” (2001, p. 4). Braun (2002) argues that understanding nature as social, in the sense of seeing the world in terms of “...nature-culture ‘hybrids’” not only presents a powerful way of understanding current social and environmental conditions, but also provides an analytical framework for beginning to “...imagine steps toward ecologically sustainable and socially just futures” (p. 10). The next section of this chapter turns towards an examination of the social constructions of place.

The Social Construction of ‘Place’

Destabilization of the ‘known’ and ‘taken for granted’ is a central tenet of poststructural analysis. As such, a poststructural analysis of place-based environmental conflicts requires a discussion of ‘place’ as a contested site. The starting point for place in this research is that of place understood, not as an agency-less entity ‘victimized’ by external forces outside its control, but rather as socially constructed and contingent, and therefore a site of negotiation and (potential) change. Negotiation of place identity occurs both at the local level - as ‘place identities’ are negotiated among and between places – and at the supra-local level, where global forces intersect with local particularities to produce variations on a theme. Or, as Escobar (2001) eloquently notes,

While it is evident that “local” economies and culture are not outside the scope of capital and modernity, it also needs to be newly acknowledged

that the former are not produced exclusively by the latter; this place specificity, as we shall see, enables a different reading of culture and economy (Escobar, 2001, p. 141).

Processes and impacts of ‘globalization’ have been felt so forcefully in recent decades that much attention and research has been directed at a global-level analysis and at the spatializing processes inherent within globalization. Much of this research falls within the purview of geography (writ broadly). One result of this (re)direction of resources is that while the concept of ‘space’ has been comprehensively explored within geographic and other literatures, the concept of place, along with the associated, but different notion of ‘the local’, has been relegated to minor status (e.g., see Gibson-Graham, 2002).

Escobar (2001) argues that under current conditions, for many, a sense of atopia has set in, and that “...for some, placelessness has become the essential feature of the modern condition” (2001, p. 140). Yet place matters, and a growing body of recent work attests to growing attention to how and why place matters (e.g., Escobar, 2001; Gibson-Graham, 2002, 2003; Massey, 2004; Castree, 2005). Escobar (2001) contends that an anti-essentialist notion of place is emerging, one with interest in “finding place at work, place being constructed, imagined and struggled over. One could say that today there is an emerging philosophy and politics of place, even if it is still under construction” (p. 143).

Analogous to the concept of ‘space’ receiving more far more academic attention than ‘place’, globalization discourses have tended to posit the global as the field of

reference, thus situating the local “in a place of subordination, as the ‘other’ within the global order” (Gibson-Graham, 2003, p. 50). Challenging the power of this global/local binary requires first a recognition that “...the differential positioning of the global with respect to the local emerges from the *discourse* of globalization” (Gibson-Graham, 2002, p. 33), italics in original). The impacts of this ‘differential positioning’ of global and local are significant. Escobar (2001) contends one effect has been a discursive ‘erasure of place’, resulting from the

...asymmetry that exists between the global and the local in much contemporary literature on globalization, in which the global is associated with space, capital, history and agency while the local, conversely, is linked to place, labour and tradition – as well as with women, minorities, the poor, and one might add, local cultures (p. 156).

Escobar goes on to argue that capital not only creates space that is abstract from place, but creates very particular, and regulated spaces, thus further contributing to the erasure of place. “To put it simply, capital operates at the local level but cannot have a sense of place – at least not on the phenomenological sense” (Escobar, 2001, p. 165).

Massey (2004) notes within academic and political literature an “overwhelming tendency...[in] discourse and in political practice to imagine the local as the product of the global” (Massey, 2004, p. 10), thus situating place (and local place) as “the *victim* of globalization” (ibid, italics in original). This conceptualization denies any kind of place-based agency at the local level, and therefore imposes serious limitations on the political potential of place-based projects. (Re)viewing relationships between the global and the local requires both first recognition of this

asymmetry in this relationship, but also moving beyond binary thinking in which the global is understood as the (self-evident) frame of reference, thus situating the local as a lesser 'other'. But moving beyond the dichotomization of global and local requires new language, terminology that goes beyond the "poverty of economic language" so deeply entrenched in dominant globalization discourses, in order to provide a "starting point for a politics outside the binary frame" (Gibson-Graham, 2002, p, 36, p. 33).

In this research, place is understood as relational. That is, relationships between and among spaces and places matter greatly, as does the construction of 'place identity'.

As Massey (2004) argues,

If space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations, if we make space through interactions at all levels, from the (so-called) local to the (so-called) global, then those special identities such as places, regions, nations, and the local and the global, must be forged in this relational way too (p. 5).

The political potential of place understood as negotiable, contingent and relational is very different than that of place understood as either 'victim' or 'the global writ small'. This relational and contingent understanding of place relaxes the binary division of global and local, and allows for an exploration of the interconnections between them. It also allows for the possibility of placed-based projects of resistance.

One approach to (re)conceptualizing the relationship between local and global is through the use of the somewhat awkward term 'glocal', to mean that everything is *both* global and local, "...but not global and local in the same way" (Escobar, 2001,

p. 166) Understanding places as ‘glocal’ is an attempt to capture a relationship influenced by local particularities of place (arising out of the on-going negotiation of place identities), the effects of global forces and the interrelationships between local and global.

It should be noted that local and global are relative terms, and that questions of scale should not be assumed in discussions of place. For the purposes of this research, focusing on the ‘place project’ of community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses, place is understood at scale of the local. Some analytical threads in this dissertation focus on disentangling the relationships between the local specificities of the Rockfort quarry dispute, the impacts of global, capitalist discourse on the design and implementation of locally-initiated resistance, and the interplay between these forces with a relatively unexamined context - a peri-urban community with a large exurban population.

Place-Based Politics of Resistance

The predominance of the global in recent decades begs the question of whether an effective politics of (local) place can actually exist. Escobar’s (2001) provocative thoughts about place highlight the challenges inherent in linking place to politics.

To construct place as a project, to turn place-based imaginaries into a radical critique of power, and to align social theory with a critique of power by place requires that we venture into other terrains....It will be necessary...to expand the inquiry into place to consider broader questions, such as the relation of places to regional and transnational economies; place and social relations; place and identity; place,

boundaries and border crossings; place and alternative modernities (p. 157).

While these ruminations provide a jumping off point for a discussion regarding the political potential of place-based projects, the focus of this section is primarily on delineating possible organizational models for effectively practising locally initiated politics of place. This echoes the goals of Marsden et al.'s (1994) study of rural restructuring which sought ways of using "locally based analyses to examine structural processes while accommodating the uniqueness of place-specific action" (p. 130).

This section focuses on political possibilities ensuing from various types of 'place-based' strategies of resistance. A selective reading of the literature on place draws attention to three distinct strategic approaches to the development of effective place-based politics: globalizing resistance; creating translocal and multi-scalar politics of place; and reframing globalization discourse. The first of these is touched on briefly below while the latter two are discussed in more detail. These approaches are presented as a means of highlighting the counter-hegemonic potential inherent in different conceptualizations of global/local relations, and are also intended as a starting point for 'opening up' discussions regarding the possibilities of locally initiated place-based projects of resistance. It is not meant to imply that these encapsulate the range of possible strategies, but rather to draw attention to some alternatives for the practice of counter-hegemonic politics.

One response to the predominance of the global is to develop global resistance strategies addressing numerous local struggles by finding a connecting (global) foundation through which to link local struggles to global issues. Castree (2005) identifies this approach with the work of David Harvey, noting that “Harvey’s point is that whatever identities place-based actors choose to emphasize – gender, ethnic or religious identities, say – these must necessarily engage in some form of class struggle that transcends the localities in question” (Castree, 2005, p. 147).

In contrast to focussing on ‘upscaling’ resistance to the global level, Castree (2005) presents an organizational model focussing on the development of a translocal network of resistance while simultaneously paying attention to place-projects. The focus of Castree’s arguments for this model is on ‘indigenism’, a term used to describe “indigenous groups who are consciously building translocal solidarities as a means of achieving local aims and ambitions” (p. 151). As Castree notes, indigenism, unlike most social movement subjects, is fundamentally about control over place.

Castree uses the term ‘introverted’ to describe inwardly-focussed place projects, and ‘extroverted’ to describe outwardly-focussed ones. By moving beyond the dichotomy of inward/outward focus he argues that “local movements are not either introverted *or* extroverted, but can be *both* simultaneously and with a *variety* of local and extra-local consequences” (2005, p. 150, italics in original). The emphasis in this approach is on “the conjoint local *and* translocal nature of these struggles” (ibid, p.

137, italics in original) and the way this dual nature demonstrates a compatibility “...both with ‘closed’ place-projects *and* a form of ‘openness’ to outside relations and constituencies” (ibid, italics in original).

From a geographic perspective, Castree (2005) notes that indigenism is interesting in that “the project to (re)appropriate certain places is being pursued through a set of *translocal* initiatives that involve both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and institutions ...[L]ocal agendas are, in this case, being pursued by global means” (p. 152). In this example, developing global solidarities is seen as a viable strategy for furthering specific place projects. It is also, Castree contends, a “cosmopolitan” approach to place politics that “...embraces place interdependency while defending local specificities” (p. 158).

This strategy of organizing simultaneously at the local level, translocally, and of scaling up (where appropriate) is highly similar to Barron’s (2000) ‘politics of articulation’ with the key difference that Barron’s theoretical focus is on the contingency of identity, while Castree focuses on the contingency of place. Linking these two in the concept of ‘negotiated and contingent place identities’ provides an interesting and potentially powerful model for creating linkages (articulations) across a broad set of interests. Castree does offer one caution though, regarding attempts to ‘scale up’ resistance strategies:

These arguments, like them or not, suggest that local and translocal needs may be fundamentally *irreconcilable* such that loyalties and justice at one scale may have to be served *at the expense* of those at another. Though Harvey’s call for multi-scalar solidarities is appealing, circumstances may

dictate that it is not, in fact, an appropriate one to heed (2005, p. 159, italics in original).

This caution is highly relevant for the analysis of the Rockfort quarry dispute and will be examined in the analytical sections of this dissertation.

Gibson-Graham (2002, 2003) takes a fundamentally different, and more radical, approach to creating a politics of place. Working from a starting point of place as a ‘relational construction’ opens up space for challenging hegemonic (capitalist) discourse, and for drawing on local imaginations in order to create new understandings of place (Massey, 2004). The core of Gibson-Graham’s approach is “an enlightening critique of globalization” (Escobar, 2001, p. 153) that challenges the dominance and hegemony of the capitalist models of development. This challenge opens up new and imaginative spaces for (re)viewing the political potential of place by ‘thinking outside the capitalist box’ and enables the possibilities of rethinking social reality and (re)valuing the potential of non-capitalist development alternatives.

Or, as the author notes:

Globalization appears to call for one form of politics – mobilization and resistance on the global scale. But we believe there are others ways of practising transformative politics – involving an opening to the local as a place of political creativity and innovation (Gibson-Graham, 2002, p. 53).

Rather than focussing on enhancing the potential for place politics through network creation (via translocal or trans-scalar linkages), Gibson-Graham instead turns to a ‘participatory deconstruction’ of globalization discourse. This involves working with local communities to draw attention to ways globalization discourse dichotomizes the

global/local relationship, and to demonstrate the effects of this process – the situation of the local in a position of subjugated other. It also emphasizes the need for local transformation to occur, a transformation of local economic subjects (2003, p. 55) that challenges rather than accepts the dominant discursive constitution of individuals as economic subjects under a neo-liberalist, capitalist regime. Putting this idea into practice entailed action-oriented research in two communities with recent histories involving downsizing, privatization and deindustrialization.³

The goal of this research was nothing less than a resubjectification of individuals, a resubjectification in which the ‘local’ was “to become the active subject of economic existence” rather than being situated “in a place of subordination, as the ‘other’ within the global order” (p. 50). Put another way, Gibson-Graham is calling for a ‘radical reframing,’ one powerful enough destabilize the dominant discursive landscape and open up space for alternative ways of being and seeing. Or, as Gibson-Graham (2002) notes:

It seems to us that a politics of the local (an antiglobalization politics that is not simply ‘grassroots globalization’) will go nowhere without subjects who can experience themselves as free from capitalist globalization. Our project of revaluating the local as a site of politics is not about ‘liberation’ from subjectification as such, but about creating new discourses that *subject* in different ways, thus enabling subjects to assume power in new forms (p. 36).

As Massey (2004) notes, this work is one way of linking a local particularities with global forces in order to refashion a politics of place (Massey, 2004, p. 6).

³ One in the Latrobe Valley of southeastern Australia and one in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts.

The discussion above highlights the analytical potential in understanding place from a post-structural perspective, and of the potential inherent in this as a starting point for place-based politics of resistance. The next section presents a post-structural perspective on ‘exurbia’ as a particular, and highly contested, type of place, and introduces a model of ‘environmental paradigms’ that provides a useful starting point for understanding the positioning of key stakeholders in environmental conflicts.

Contested Landscapes: Exurbia

As Marsden et al. (1993) note in their examination of the “role of rural space in the restructuring of advanced capitalist economies” some rural places are becoming increasingly contested sites. In these sites, conflicts between ‘consumptive’ and ‘productive’ forces are common. The authors note that in affluent societies, for some segments of the population, material and positional goods become high priorities *in addition to* the accumulation of assets. Rural spaces “provide many sought after opportunities, such as for living space, recreation, the enjoyment and amenity of wildlife, and a wholesome and pleasant environment” (p. 2). As the primacy of agricultural production decreases in rural areas new consumptive practice are emerging (e.g., recreation, conservation) often concurrently with new primary-production activities (e.g., mining). Not surprisingly, areas facing increased interest from both consumptive and productive activities are sites of environmental conflict.

These tensions are exacerbated by increasing numbers of urban and exurban residents living in rural areas and by

the fact that spatial and cultural changes have enhanced the significance of consumption as a source of identity and political conflict. Consumption of the natural environment has become a distinctive feature of spatially expansive lifestyles associated with certain mobile and influential social strata (Marsden et al., 1993, p. 9).

As such, rural areas, particularly those falling within a 'peri-urban' boundary, are increasingly conflicted sites, arenas in which rural development processes become "a key arena in which representations are mobilized and through which access is regulated to increasingly scarce resources" (ibid).

While Marsden et al. (1993) note that the movement of ex-urbanites into rural areas is not a new phenomenon, by the mid-1970s it had become "ubiquitous" and "recognized as a widespread national and international trend" (p. 25). The focus of research on exurban populations has largely been on what has been termed, somewhat confusingly, the "service class", a term used to denote a group largely consisting of managers and professionals. This group tends to be geographically mobile, a factor affecting their shift towards housing located in peri-urban rural areas, housing which provides 'the best of both worlds' - relatively easy access to urban areas, with the benefits of a rural lifestyle.

Patano and Sandberg (2005) argue that this conceptualization of rural space - as sites of contention between consumptive and productive forces - closely corresponds to the

situation in the Niagara Escarpment Area⁴, where “the promoters of the aggregate industry clearly represent a productivist landscape whereas their opponents represent a post-productivist (or consumptionist) landscape” (p. 29). Examining the way(s) these tensions are manifested at the discursive level in the Rockfort quarry dispute is critical to understanding the conflict in general, and the resistance strategies of the CCC in particular.

Understanding the social positioning of disputants in an environmental conflict is critical for understanding the discursive dynamics of these conflicts. Taylor (2000) provides a framework for this purpose in an extensive review of environmental justice literature from a social constructivist perspective, and argues for the importance of understanding the historical context of different schools of environmental thought. In her discussion of the social construction of nature and the implications of these constructions for practices of environmental justice, Taylor (2000) contends that

since the mid-1800s, conceptualizations of human environment relations have been dominated by three major environmental paradigms: the exploitative capitalist paradigm; the Romantic environmental paradigm; and the new environmental paradigm (p. 528).

Taylor argues that the exploitative capitalist paradigm was dominant throughout most of the 19th century. Within this paradigm, resources are viewed as plentiful and easily available, and as such, are extracted and used extensively with little attention to issues of future supplies. The romantic environmental paradigm emerged in the late 19th

⁴ The Rockfort quarry site abuts a protected area of the Niagara escarpment.

and early 20th centuries as a response to the exploitative capitalist paradigm, challenging the pace of natural resource destruction, encouraging preservation and conservation of natural resources and calling for a return to a ‘simpler lifestyle’. Taylor uses the term ‘pragmatic conservationism’ to refer to “concepts of regulated use, wise use, scientific management, and commercial development of resources that defined conservationist ways of thinking about natural resources” (Taylor, 2000, p. 531), and argues that the REP “still forms the core of American environmental ideological thought” (*ibid.*).

While the romantic environmental paradigm challenges the pace and scope of natural resource extraction, it does not challenge the concept of extraction per se. As such, it is hardly surprising to find many examples of relationships between industrialists and environmentalists sharing this perspective. Historically, many early proponents of preservation and conservation of ‘nature’ were business leaders and outdoor recreationists (e.g., hunters, anglers, explorers).

The new environmental paradigm that emerged in the 1960s⁵ built on the ideological foundation of the romantic environmental paradigm, but from a more critical environmental perspective. It also incorporated a more politicized standpoint, although the emphasis of the movement was on reform and incremental change, rather than radical social change. In recent years a fourth environment paradigm has

⁵ Spurred in part by the publication of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* and resultant attention to linkages between physical environments and human health and survival.

begun to emerge, focussing on environmental justice. The environmental justice paradigm emerged in large part due to a growing recognition that

the environmental experiences of people of colour differ markedly from that of Whites; therefore, it is not surprising that their environmental activism, agendas, and paradigms differ from those constructed by middle- and working-class whites (Taylor, 2000, p. 533).

Taylor notes the importance of one's social positioning on the social construction of nature, and the impact issues related to race, class, gender, labour market experiences and politics have on organized resistance activities. From a constructionist perspective, social location matters and there is an explicit recognition that different social positions can create radically different environmental experiences. This not only influences perceptions of issues, but also corresponding discourse construction and strategy development . Taylor (2000) provides a good example of this in her comparison of 'mainstream environmentalists' with 'environmental justice activists' noting that the framing processes of the former draw from "their cultural stock, and evoke images related to wilderness and wildlife protection to motivate their supporters" while the latter group, "given the 19th century experience of people of colour (forced relocations, living on reservations)...evoke images of racism, appropriation of land and the destruction of communities and culture" (p. 514). This strongly echoes Castree's (2001) argument about the ways in which different groups use different discourses to make sense of the same 'nature'.

As an example of the impact of social position, Taylor identifies four "major pathways" of environmental activism from a historical perspective, each with

particular appeal for certain groups. The first pathway, currently the mainstream environmental perspective, equates nature with ‘wilderness/wildlife/recreation’. This pathway has historically been dominated by middle-class white males (19th century) and in the 20th century has increasingly attracted middle-class white females. A second, more progressive, pathway has focussed on urban environmental issues, emphasizing the importance of parks, open spaces, and public health. A third pathway emerged as members of the white working-class joined forces with unions and other activist groups to focus on a working-class environmental agenda, emphasizing occupational health and safety, worker rights, and access to recreational areas such as public parks. A fourth pathway is that taken by people of colour, linking environmental issues with broader social justice concerns such as human rights, social inequality and protection from environmental hazards (Taylor, 2000, p. 524-525).

Understanding of the root cause(s) of environmental conflict and locally-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses in exurban spaces requires an understanding of the differing conceptualizations of ‘nature’ that exist within these environments, and the existing discursive tensions. As noted previously, the critical question is not the ‘truth’ or ‘accuracy’ of these differing conceptualizations and accompanying discourses, but rather their social effects, and how these present different constructions of ‘nature’ through what is revealed, concealed and prioritized. These differing effects comprise a central analytical thread of this dissertation and are highlighted through a detailed analysis of the siting conflict for the proposed Rockfort

quarry. This discussion includes an examination of the ways various invocations of ‘nature’ shape conflict dynamics and influence the (in)tractability of environmental conflicts.

(Re)Viewing Environmental Disputes

Because environmental conflicts typically exist at a particular geographic site, they provide an excellent vantage point for examining the various discourses of nature that are invoked in these struggles, and the ways in which different constructions of ‘environment’ and ‘nature’ serve specific social or ecological ends. Environmental conflicts also clearly demonstrate the ways individuals groups use different discourses to make sense of the same ‘nature’, discourses that

...do not reveal or hide the truths of nature, but rather *create their own truths*. Whose discourse if accepted as being truthful is a question of social struggle and power politics. Furthermore, many nature discourses become so deeply entrenched in both lay and expert ways of thinking that they themselves appear natural (Castree, 2001, p. 12, author’s italics).

The starting point for the analysis in this dissertation is an understanding of these struggles as discursive (rather than *merely* material). While the dispute is ostensibly about what constitutes an ‘appropriate’ use of a particular sites, it is, in fact, a small part of a much larger social struggle, one in which the social construction of the rural environment is “is constituted out of competing representation” (Marsden et al., 1993, p. 32). From this perspective, the language of conflict resolution, with its focus on ‘shifting from positions to interests’ and ‘finding win/win solutions’ becomes problematic. In particular, due to the unquestioned (and within conflict resolution,

largely unchallenged) assumption that ‘common ground’ can be found at the level of interest-based negotiation, and belief that a solution might exist that will be satisfactory to all parties, requires further examination.

Braun (2002) provides an interesting Canadian example of this – discussing his discomfort after participating in a highly contentious multi-stakeholder meeting that attempted (and failed) to find ‘consensus’ on future uses of the British Columbia forest:

It was commonly thought that the meetings failed because stakeholders had divergent interests. Reflecting on the event sometime later, however, I began to wonder whether the language of “stakeholders” and “interests” was, in important ways, inadequate. I was struck by the spatial organization of the sessions, with chairs set in circles. Circles assume a centre, and the physical arrangement of the chairs implied that, despite the varied economic and political ‘interests’ of participants, they were all contemplating and discussing the same object. The meeting presupposed an epistemology. Thus it followed that if individuals could only look beyond self-interest, they might find points of convergence, reconcile differences, and come to a unified position over the fate of this thing called the rainforest. By this view, the problem was one of bias, something that could be overcome through the application of reason (p. 4-5).

As Braun goes on to note, in that particular situation, the problem was actually not one of fostering ‘better’ communication about what should happen in the forest, or of overcoming certain biases. Instead, the lack of consensus reflected a far more challenging conceptual issue – “what was needed was a sustained examination and appreciation of the multiple ways that the forest was invested with meaning and value” (2002, p. 5). Or in other words, a deconstructive analysis, examining the production of ‘meaning’ and ‘truth’ within the context of forests in British Columbia.

In this dissertation I undertake a similarly deconstructive analysis, one which examines the production of ‘meaning’ and ‘truth’ within the context of aggregate extraction in south western Ontario.

A poststructural (re)viewing of the literature on environmental conflict resolution raises many questions about the interconnections between power, knowledge, and discourse and the effects of these interconnections on the context in which conflict occurs. For example, it raises questions regarding the way(s) different ‘regimes of truth’ shape the terrain in which conflict occurs, and how these ‘regimes of truth’ structure the possible field of stakeholder actions, and by extension, overall conflict trajectory and tractability. The analysis of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry site is intended to demonstrate the analytical power inherent in applying a poststructural analysis to an environmental conflict. This analysis is contained in Chapters 4 through 7 of this dissertation.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Epistemologically and ontologically, this research is grounded in an understanding of environmental issues from a ‘social nature’ perspective – that is, as an assemblage of overlapping, competing and sometimes contradictory discourses of ‘nature’.

Methodologically, this research has its roots in humanist geographic traditions which emerged in the 1970s in response to the dominance of quantitative, scientific methodological approaches. In contrast, humanistic geographic enquiry employs a critical and reflexive approach to the collection of qualitative data. The dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry provides a unique opportunity for examining the ways that ‘nature’ is invoked by various stakeholders in an environmental conflict, and for demonstrating how discursive struggles fundamentally underpin environmental conflicts.

Kobayashi (2001) argues that the “ethical, ideological, and methodological issues faced by the geographer in the field” are complex (p.55). This chapter attempts to ‘lay bare’ both the underlying methodological rationale for this research, as well as highlight some of the methodological issues and challenges encountered. The first section of this chapter provides the methodological rationale for using an extended case study approach, and for employing critical discourse analysis. The second section details the data collection methods used within this research. The final section is more (self-)reflexive, highlighting some of the methodological issues that emerged throughout the course of this research.

Methodological Approach

The historical emergence of geography as a discipline, with roots in both the natural and social sciences, has contributed to the use of a broad range of research methodologies within the field, drawing from both qualitative and quantitative approaches. While this methodological range has contributed to the richness of current geographic enquiry, it has also contributed to a degree of ‘methodological messiness’ as well. This messiness is particularly visible when viewed against the methodological practices of other social sciences, where a more limited range of ‘acceptable’ methodological approaches exist and as such, less explanation and justification may be required for employing a particular methodological approach.

Methodologically, the approach used within this research is grounded in the humanist approach to geography, which began emerging in the early 1970s. Humanist geography began with epistemological challenges to the claims of ‘neutrality’ and ‘value-free’ status of scientific research methods that dominated geographic enquiry prior to this (Dwyer and Limb, 2001). Somewhat more recently, post-modern and poststructuralist approaches have challenged the reliance on ‘grand’ or ‘totalizing’ theory, and postulate instead the existence of multiple, partial, ‘situated’ knowledges (Haraway, 1991), as well as multiple (and contingent) subjectivities. Qualitative research has been a central methodological component of humanistic geographic enquiry, with its emphasis on subjective understandings of social reality.

Qualitative methodologies start from the assumption of a dynamic and changing social world, “constructed through the intersection of cultural, economic, social and political processes” (Dwyer and Limb, 2001, p. 5). This methodological approach also emerges from the belief that “the world is not real in a fixed, stable, or knowable way, that it is not entirely accessible, and that it does not appear empirically the same to everyone, no matter how hard we look” (Smith, 2001, p. 24-25). In contrast to the majority of quantitative approaches which emphasize the need for extensive, numerical data collection in order to provide statistically accurate description or generalizable predictions, qualitative approaches emphasize an understanding of ‘lived’ experience, obtained through in-depth examination, and seek subjective understandings of social reality. (Dwyer and Limb, 2001). Obviously, the ontological starting point (that no ‘real’ world exists, waiting to be measured) and the subjective nature of qualitative research require particular attention to the relationship between the researcher and the researched, and the ethical dimensions of this research approach.

In addition to beginning from a starting point that is explicitly subjective and concerned with multiple subjectivities, this research also began from an explicitly critical stance. A critical approach to scholarship “takes a position on what is, and what could be, as well as providing a theoretical understanding of the systemic ways in which social relations are constructed” (Kobayashi, 2001, p. 55). A critical stance also requires a willingness to engage in critical examination of multiple terrains: one’s current social world; the historical and social conditions that provide a

foundation for current intellectual activity; existing categories and conceptual frameworks; and other works of social explanation (Calhoun, 1997). Such a stance requires reflexivity, the practice of continuously reflecting upon and questioning the assumptions and statements of one's research (Hoggart et al., 2002).

The use of a 'global ethnography' (Burawoy, 2000) approach allows for a detailed examination of local place-based particularities, both with respect to the overall conflict, and the locally initiated resistance. Discourse analysis is used to make visible the ways that different stakeholders invoke 'nature' in an environmental conflict, and to highlight the discursive struggles that underpin environmental conflicts. This analysis helps to contextualize local particulars, highlighting the ways that local conditions are shaped and influenced by extra-local discourses - in this case, globalized discourses that privilege growth and development over local social and environmental concerns. Discourse analysis will also be employed to (re)view the CCC's discourses of resistance, and examine the influence of the area's exurban subjectivity on resistance practices.

The first part of this section draws heavily on the work of Robert Yin (1993, 1994, 1998), widely recognized for his expertise in the 'how to' aspects of qualitative case study research. The second section (re)examines the analytic potential of case study research by drawing on the four dimensions of the 'extended case study' approach cited in Burawoy (2000).

Yin states clearly that case study research is only one of many ways to do effective social science research, and stresses the importance of choosing research methodology based on the problem(s) to be solved.

In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are to be answered, when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (Yin, 1994, p. 1).

Yin echoes much of the qualitative research literature, also stating that case study research is useful in cases where the boundaries between the phenomenon under investigation and the context are not clearly defined (or even evident). This description closely fits my research problem in Caledon. I am, to some extent, addressing the questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ the situation is as it is; I have little (if any) control over the events that are unfolding there; and the focus is very much on examining the real-life context of a very contemporary problem in order to get a sense of the changing, and constantly shifting, context for community-based resistance to proposed natural resource development in Canada.

Yin (1998) makes a distinction between three types of case studies: explanatory, descriptive and exploratory. In brief, explanatory case studies attempt to address questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ things are happening, and to identify linkages and interconnections between various components of the case study. Descriptive case studies are filled with ‘thick description’ and are intended to be written to provide an insight into a particular case study so that readers are able to draw their own conclusions. In practice, Yin notes, that even thick description has its biases (as the researcher’s biases inevitably creep into the textual description) so descriptive case

studies need to be used with a degree of caution. Lastly, there is the exploratory case study, which is likely to be employed in cases where "... available literature or (the) existing knowledge base is poor, offering no clues for conceptual frameworks or notable propositions" (Yin, 1998, p. 235). Lack of initial knowledge about a topic, as Yin is careful to point out, does not excuse the researcher from formulating at least rudimentary conceptual propositions, such as defining what is to be explored, the overall purpose of the investigation, and the criteria by which the exploration will be considered successful.

Yin (1998) clearly articulates the challenges to case study research and notes that undertaking this type of research places significant demands on the researcher. Case study research requires the researcher to be able both to collect and analyse multiple types of data and to find points of convergence. In addition, case study research requires continuous, iterative interaction among design, data collection and analysis. It also requires a researcher capable of watching for the emergence of categories across data from multiple types of inquiry in order to help focus the research question(s) and to connect these findings (or test these findings against) existing theory (Yin, 1998; Field and Morse, 1985).

More specifically, Yin (1998) identifies five specific categories of skills that case study researchers require: the ability to pose effective questions; the ability to listen actively and effectively; adaptiveness and flexibility; a good grasp of issues being studied; and lack of bias and/or openness to ideas that are contradictory or don't fit

the emerging model (p. 244). This is a diverse set of skills to master, and it puts more demands on the researcher than many other methodological approaches which emphasize developing expertise in one or two areas only. Yin is quite blunt about this point:

In actuality, the demands of a case study on a person's intellect, ego and emotions are far greater than those of any other research strategy. This is because data collection procedures are *not* routinized....In fact, a point to be emphasized throughout...is that the skills required for collecting case study data are much more demanding than those for experiments or survey (Yin, 1994, p. 55).

What should be evident from the discussion above of case study research is that while the method can be effectively used in some contexts, it is also one that is time and labour intensive and requires care and skill to be done well. As such, Yin argues that case study research should be limited to situations in which the case study is somehow significant, and has the potential to become an exemplary case study. Recognizing that a researcher's choices may be limited by lack of time, resources or 'significant' case study material, he nonetheless recommends that if possible, case studies be chosen because

...the individual case or cases are unusual and of general public interest; the underlying issues are nationally important, either in theoretical terms or in policy or practical terms; or they are both of the preceding (Yin, 1994, p.147).

Yin's work is particularly helpful in breaking down the 'how to' of case study research. This approach can be analytically expanded by drawing on complementary methodological research focussing on 'extended case study' methodology (e.g., as cited in Burawoy, 2000). For Burawoy, extended case studies can be used as one

means of building towards a global ethnography that links the particularities of micro-level practice to broader global forces. Burawoy's introduction highlights four dimensions of the extended case study, with emphasis on bringing "...sensitivity to questions of power and reflexivity" (p. 26). The author correlates each of these dimensions with aspects of power, highlighting the way(s) extended case study methodology can address 'typical' power imbalances inherent between the researcher and the researched.

The first dimension is the "*extension of the observer into the world of the participant*" (p. 26, author's italics) rather than having research participants coming to the domain of the researcher (e.g., laboratory, office), thus forcing the research to "leave the security of the university for the uncertain life of the participant" (p. 26). The purpose of this, with respect to relations of power, is to minimize the unevenness of this relationship and to mitigate at least some of the researcher's potential dominance over research participants. The second dimension refers to "*extensions of observations over time and space*" (p. 27, author's italics) which recognizes the importance of context, the ways in which local context changes over time and the numerous local and extra-local factors influencing these changes. As Burawoy notes, paying attention to this dimension underscores "...the contribution of some agents at the expense of others. It necessarily involves the second face of power – *silencing*" (p. 27, author's italics).

The third dimension refers to “*extending out from micro processes to macro forces*” (p. 27, author’s italics) and extending analysis to incorporate geographical and historical context. In Burawoy’s thinking, the micro is not viewed as smaller-scale expression of the macro, but rather micro and macro are linked entities in which the former is “shaped by its relation to the whole, the whole being represented by ‘external forces’” (p. 27). The dimension is meant to counter the danger of the objectifying nature of power, and the resultant feelings of helplessness that can accompany objectification (i.e., when external forces are all perceived as beyond one’s control).

The fourth dimension involves the “*extension of theory*” (p. 28, author’s italics) through the identification and incorporation of empirical anomalies that do not fit with existing theory. As Burawoy (2000) notes about fieldwork: “What makes the field ‘interesting’ is its violation of some expectation, and an expectation is nothing other than some theory waiting to be explicated” (p. 28). The element of power addressed here is that of normalization, and resultant tendencies for researchers to attempt to make the field data fit into a preconceived framework, rather than adapting the framework to better fit the empirical findings.

While Burawoy (2000) notes that each of these four dimensions can be engaged and problematized, any particular use of this approach is most likely to focus primarily on one or two dimensions. In this research project, the primary focus is on analysing the way(s) that local resistance practices (micro-level processes) fit into, and are

influenced by, broader global discourses (macro-level forces). Critical discourse analysis is employed as a means of deconstructing the discursive elements of this particular struggle.

A Foucauldian approach to analysing discourse was introduced in the previous chapter, and will now be extended to include a discussion of critical discourse analysis. Jaworski and Coupland (1999) define critical discourse analysis as the practice of probing texts and discourse practices in order to discover hidden meanings and value structures. Conventional practices of discourse analysis (emerging primarily, but not exclusively, from the field of linguistics) focus on analysis of text and conversation, and while these approaches often provide voluminous description of discourse(s), they tend not to be critical of the “constitutive categories and conceptual frameworks” (Calhoun, 1997) that underpin discourses. In contrast, critical discourse analysis focuses both on the existing discourses and also on the process of discourse construction. In this practice, theory and method are intimately connected, with the theoretical assumptions (e.g., that language reflects/constitutes larger ideological perspectives) strongly influencing the methodological approach to research (Jaworski and Coupland, 1999).

Informed by critical social theory, particularly poststructuralism, this approach stresses the importance of discourses as more than merely ‘language in use’, noting that

...discourse is *beyond* language in use. Discourse is language use relative to social, political and cultural formations - it is language reflecting social

order, but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals' interaction with society (Jaworski and Coupland, 1999, p. 3).

Put another way, critical approaches are less concerned with discourse as a set of specific interactions and more concerned with the ways in which particular discourses come to constitute objects and subjects (Potter, 1997, p. 145). For example, applying a discourse analysis approach to the ways that 'nature' can be socially constructed allows insight into the means by which "...ideas about ecology and political economy *actively shape* human perceptions and uses of nature; thus, their contested definition is a matter of great importance" (Bryant, 2001, p. 162, author's italics).

Foucault interprets discourses as being bodies of knowledge or 'disciplines' and moves discourse analysis away from the focus on language and linguistic grammar. Thus Foucauldian discourse analysis focuses on the historically specific relations between bodies of knowledge and forms of social control. In particular, Foucault was interested in the conditions out of which discourses emerge and the ways particular discourses produce a particular kind of social subject (McHoul and Grace, 1993).

Foucault (1982) argues that power exists only when it is put into action and thus discourse analysis emerges as a way of studying power relations. Relations of power and knowledge are played out in discourse; subjects are constituted in and through discourse. In this way, discourses both constrain and enable what is 'knowable' in part by normalizing and validating some types of knowledge while disregarding

others. The normalizing power of dominant discourses conceals particular social interests and power relations, a function critical discourse analysis seeks to disturb and disrupt. Not surprisingly, attempts to subvert the dominant discourse(s) and assert counter-discourses are highly political.

Building on a Foucauldian understanding of the relationship between power, knowledge and discourse, critical discourse analysis involves deconstructing discourses to destabilize the 'known' and to reveal its ontological and epistemological assumptions. Engaging in critical discourse analysis is a way of making the effects of discourse visible, by demonstrating how language (in both verbal and textual forms) can be used to gain, consolidate and maintain power, or to challenge dominant discursive frameworks through the development of counter-discourses (Richardson et al., 1993).

Valverde (1991) highlights two particular tools she views as relevant to the critical analysis of social discourses. The first draws heavily on the work of Derrida on difference, highlighting the need to undermine the apparent rigidity of binary oppositions. Derrida notes the problems involved with the creation of 'oppositions' as is the tendency in Western thought. The creation of oppositions serves to create a hierarchy, in which one term in the opposition is (usually) unquestioned as superior, and thus the second term is set up as its inferior relation (e.g., advanced culture/primitive societies) (Manzo, 1995). To take this a step farther and put a Foucauldian spin on it, the recognition of these binary dichotomies is only the first

step. What is needed next are ‘...systematic and rigorous questions of the history of modern concepts, which asks...how a dichotomy came to be produced in the first place’ (Manzo, 1995, p. 238). Critical discourse analysis seeks to disrupt and destabilize the apparent ‘naturalness’ of these dichotomies and to call the underlying assumptions into question.

The second tool identified by Valverde (1991) draws on linguistic research emphasizing the importance of figures of speech (e.g., metaphors and rhetoric). Linguists have shown the effect that language has on perception, and vice versa, and the overall way(s) in which language shapes what can be thought. Tannen (1999) notes the importance of figures of speech and the way in which language “...invisibly moulds our way of thinking about people, actions and the world around us. [For example] military metaphors train us to think about - and see- everything in terms of fighting” (p. 14). If language is a ‘statement’ of a larger struggle over discourses, as Foucault postulates, then an analysis of metaphors can assist in revealing these discursive underpinnings.

Gismondi and Richardson (1994) provide examples of the use of both types of tools.

With respect to binary oppositions, they note that:

...binary oppositions, such as scientist *versus* environmentalist, [play] to the belief that scientists deal objectively with facts, while environmentalists and concerned citizens may be well meaning, but deal with emotions and values (p.16).

This devaluing then results in the discounting, in this example, of what is said by environmentalists or non-specialists, and invisibly supports the presumption that ‘facts’ are more relevant than ‘values’ or ‘emotions’ in particular decision-making processes.

With respect to the use of metaphors, Richardson and Gismondi (1993) draw on their own findings from the study of a public hearing addressing the proposed siting of a bleached kraft pulp mill in Northern Alberta. Over the course of this hearing, the following metaphors provide a sample of the ways that language was used in attempts to ‘constitute reality’ in particular ways:

...trees were ‘weeds’; effluents were ‘contributions’; chlorine was ‘an element of table salt’; government financial subsidies were ‘commitments’; deforestation and pulp mills were ‘forest industry initiatives’ (p. 17).

In this example, project proponents, drawing on the dominant growth and development discourse, argued that “forests were ‘getting old and dying instead of being put to good use’” (Gismondi and Richardson, 1993, p. 17) and that the ‘best use’ of the forest was for ‘productive’ economic purposes. The authors note that the development of counter-discourses to challenges these metaphors became a key strategy for political resistance.

With respect to the Rockfort quarry case study conflict, I will be examining the influence of the dominant ‘growth and development’ discourse on the conflict trajectory, as well as analyzing the discourse(s) of resistance invoked by the CCC. In

particular, I am arguing that the CCC's embeddedness within the dominant discourse limits their potential to destabilize this discourse, and paradoxically, this legitimates much of what they are fighting against.

Research Methods

The previous section provided an overview of the methodological framework employed in this research. This section details the specific research methods used to collect data for this case study. Following the case study research standard of using multiple methods, several research methods were used for this research. Primary data regarding the local resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry were collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with CCC members who agreed to be interviewed as part of this research process. In total, I conducted 14 interviews with 10 different CCC members (some were interviewed more than once), taking an average of 1.5 hours per interview. Attempts were made to interview all members of the core CCC group who were active with the group during the interview period (1999-2000). One-on-one, in-person interviews were conducted with each member willing to make time for the interview process. Several attempts were made to follow-up with individuals not immediately available for interviews.

CCC members were interviewed about the quarry conflict in general, and more specifically, about their motivations for participating in organized resistance activities, the development of the CCC's organizational capacity, and the

development and implementation of resistance strategies. A list of sample questions asked to CCC members is provided in Appendix A. Each interviewee was informed at the start of the interview that I would likely be using quotes from the interview, but that interviewee names would not be attached to these quotes. In addition, I attended approximately a dozen of the CCC's weekly meetings over a 3-year period and made notes as a participant observer. The CCC made minutes of their weekly meetings from 1998 to 2002 available.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with key informants outside the CCC, including the project manager for the proponent, a representative of the provincial aggregate producer's association, a Toronto-based municipal planner familiar with the case, and a municipal politician. Each of these individuals was asked questions pertaining to their interest in, or knowledge of, the proposed project and associated conflict. Individuals in this group were selected based on their position, relevant knowledge of specific aspects of the quarry dispute, and their willingness to participate in an interview.

Other data sources (including relevant policy documents, media coverage, consulting reports and other assorted documents) were used to glean background information on the conflict and provide insight into the discursive environment surrounding aggregate extraction. Prior to and during my involvement with the conflict, the CCC produced several printed documents (e.g., newsletters, community updates), which were invaluable for critical discourse analysis. In addition, the nature of this conflict,

and associated resistance, created a situation that attracted more media coverage than a typical 'local issue', another valuable resource for discourse analysis. Finally, key stakeholders had invested extensive resources in planning, consulting, and technical documents related to the quarry, which again added to the wealth of material available for discourse analysis. Within all these documents, particular attention was directed at the way(s) various documents frame key issues involved in the dispute (and associated community-based resistance) and the ways this framing reflects discursive struggles for control over the terms of reference for discussion regarding the proposed Rockfort quarry. I was able to obtain many of these documents directly from the CCC, as they were housed in the 'War Room', a carriage house on the property of one of the CCC members that had been turned into the Coalition's office and regular meeting space.

The original design of this research envisaged either an action research project, or at the very least, an action research component to complement a more 'traditional' (non-participatory) approach. I put this forward to the CCC several times during the course of the research, but found little enthusiasm, or even interest, for this approach. I did choose to adopt some of the practices of a participatory/action research approach, most notably ensuring that each CCC interviewee received a copy of their interview transcript(s), and was provided with the option of 'striking things from the record' of the transcript if they were uncomfortable with some of this information being used in the case study analysis. Additionally, I circulated copies of various

papers written during the course of this dissertation⁶ to the CCC before presentation for comments and discussion. The purpose of this was to provide an opportunity for CCC members to raise any concerns regarding the release of potentially sensitive information in light of the on-going nature of the conflict. As well, circulating draft documents also provided an opportunity for the CCC to understand my interpretation of the Rockfort quarry dispute and the opportunity to both correct my mistakes and challenge any of my perceptions that they disagreed with.

Reflections on Research, Methodology and Fieldwork

This chapter ends on a personal and introspective note to counteract my frustration with some approaches to writing methodology. I did not want to present my methodological choices (and the inevitable methodological trade-offs made throughout the research) as a process that unfolded in an unproblematic or linear way. Although any case study research comes with challenges, in this section I will touch on some of the specific methodological challenges the Rockfort quarry case study presented. The first part focuses on my attempts to conduct this research within a participatory framework, the second details some of the methodological challenges encountered in working with an elite group.

⁶ (e.g., a document compiling their resistance activities and strategies, and a conference presentation on the role of public policy in environmental disputes)

Doing Action/Activist Research

This project was originally designed with the intent of conducting participatory/action research in collaboration with a community-based initiative. On a personal level, the deliberate attempt to use this approach grew out of feelings of dissatisfaction with non-participatory research approaches, and my discomfort with my own experiences with more conventional research methods. Over the span of my involvement in several different research projects, I consistently felt that I took far more away than I ever gave back to those ‘being researched.’ Some argue that research subjects benefit indirectly from the growth and development of knowledge and that this is enough to justify the time and energy required of research subjects. Personally, I’ve never felt comfortable with this justification, particularly when those being researched are ‘marginalized’ in some way, and may overestimate the researcher’s ability to influence those in power and/or to effect change, or the pace at which social change typically happens.

On a theoretical level, this reflects an extensive conversation within feminist research approaches in general, and feminist geography in particular, regarding situated knowledges. This perspective highlights the interplay between power and the production of knowledge and emphasizes the situatedness of knowledge “...as a means of avoiding the false neutrality and universality of so much academic knowledge” (Rose, 1997, p. 306). Participatory/action research approaches are one

attempt to make visible the process of knowledge production, in part through the active involvement of research participants in all stages of the research project. Put another way, it invites research participants to become subjects, rather than objects, of the research process.

In the early days of research I made very conscious attempts to make the research process as 'visible', participatory, and action-oriented as possible. I sought the CCC's participation in the research process, ideally by working jointly with group members throughout the research project. Methodologically, this was an explicit attempt to "...democratize the research process between the researcher and local interested parties" (Greenwood and Levin, 1998, p. 4). As noted previously, this offer was met with little enthusiasm and less uptake, and as a result the research approach employed for this project was far more conventional than initially planned.

In hindsight I have far more conflicted feelings about attempting to employ an action-oriented approach than I did at the beginning of this research. Participatory and action research methodologies emerged in response to more traditional approaches in which the researcher was clearly the dominant partner in the relationship, and emphasized the importance of sharing research responsibilities and decision-making between researchers and researchees. I would argue these methodologies are also premised on the assumption that the researcher is bringing something of perceived value to the research relationship that would not otherwise be available. As such, one

goal of participatory/action research methodologies is to design research in a way that is beneficial to both partners.

Attempting to employ participatory methodologies in working with an elite group presented new challenges. In this particular research project, ‘mitigating my dominance over research participants’ was really the least of my worries. Instead, I found myself in the vulnerable position of using an ‘extended case study’ method (and attempting to use action research methods) in a research relationship that did not fit within the ‘mutually beneficial’ research framework I originally envisaged. Additionally, I found the demands of conducting doctoral research challenging enough, and in hindsight, am not sure how comfortable it would have been to have even less control over the research process while simultaneously attempting to meet the requirements of a doctoral degree.

This methodological challenge was exacerbated by a lacuna in social science research literature. Emerging from largely leftist roots, much attention in social science has been paid to researching the experience of the Other, comprising, in essence, a body of ‘research from the margins’. It is hardly surprising then that within more ‘progressive’ fields of social science research extensive emphasis has been placed on highlighting the “privileged relation” (Rose, 1997, p. 307) of academic researchers in the research process, and consequent exploration of the implications of researcher positionality for social science knowledge production. Without wanting to take issue with this body of research, which I find highly interesting, there appears to be

something of a methodological gap for employing a critical approach when working with a non-marginal population. The next section of this paper explores this challenge in the context of conducting doctoral-level research with an elite community.

Working with an elite group

Any research project entails judgment calls and case study research comes with a set of inherent challenges as noted previously. But conducting research involving a group of highly competent and largely affluent individuals, situated within a generally prosperous area, had its own challenges. Two particular issues stand out, in part because both were unexpected. The first centres on negative comments received from other researchers about the choice of case study site; the second centres on the dynamics of conducting doctoral research within the context of a well-resourced and well-connected resistance group.

I argue throughout this thesis that the unique composition of the CCC vis-à-vis other community-based volunteer groups (e.g., the extensive business and/or government experience possessed by many CCC members) and the overall wealth of the area make it a potentially significant case study. Yet I was often challenged, primarily by other researchers in environmental studies, on my choice of case study site. The particular concern expressed throughout these conversations was around the ‘appropriateness’ of conducting research related to environmental justice issues

through the study of an elite community. The main message in these comments - expressed subtly in some cases and not in others - was that those living in a prosperous area could take care of themselves, while academic researchers, due to their privileged position, had a moral imperative to work alongside, or at the very least on behalf of, marginalized populations. On two particular occasions, at the end of lengthy discussions about the Caledon case study specifics, the conversation concluded with the comment “But Sherrill, isn’t this really just a case of NIMBY?⁷” The implication of these comments was that NIMBY arguments are clearly self-serving and thus easily dismissed.

With respect to NIMBY as it pertains to community-based resistance to natural resource development, I feel the concept needs to be problematized and explored in much greater detail, rather than used in the pejorative sense. That discussion, however, is outside the scope of this analysis so will not be examined in detail here. But I suspect that had I been presenting a case study focussing on local (aboriginal) resistance to quarry siting on Manitoulin Island⁸, the case study would have received a different, and more sympathetic, reaction. I also believe the NIMBY argument would not have been invoked to dismiss the relevance of the local struggle within the larger context of natural resource decision-making. This experience left me with the strong feeling that for at least some social science researchers, a study of ‘resistance strategies’ in marginalized communities was considered a valid research choice, while the same study in an affluent community was suspect in fundamental ways.

⁷ “Not In My Back Yard”

⁸ Manitoulin Island is another Canadian site with a comparable source of high-quality aggregate materials.

Fine (1994) comments on the lack of research on elite groups and invokes the concept of ‘scholarly imperialism’ in explanation. This imperialism is “...evident in terms of whose lives get displayed and whose lives get protected by social science. Put another way, why don’t we know much about how the rich live?” (p. 73). Fine attributes this to a “...collusion between social researchers committed to sanitizing/neglecting the elite through scholarly omission, *and* an elite discourse of comfort and simplicity which conveys a relatively bump-free story of their lives” (ibid, author’s italics). I would not argue that collusion doesn’t exist, but disagree about it being the sole cause regarding lack of research on elite communities.

While challenges to ‘site selection’ entailed some interesting discussion and exploration as to what constituted ‘appropriate’ research regarding the nature of environmental inequity, a more significant methodological challenge came from working with the CCC itself. My initial entry point into the CCC was through the CCC’s President. I contacted her through contact information provided in local media coverage of the Rockfort quarry conflict. During our initial telephone conversation I described my interest in environmental conflicts and related community-based resistance to locally unwanted developments, and was invited to Caledon to meet and discuss the Rockfort quarry conflict in greater detail. During our initial conversation she commented that one of her sons was just starting university and that she “thought it was important to help students with their projects”. Further to this conversation I was invited to my first meeting with the other members

of the CCC, and thanks to the President's support of my research (and what I assume was a lack of over-riding resistance to my presence and research collection from other CCC members) I was able to attend several CCC meetings, collect sources of primary data (much of which was provided by the CCC) and set up semi-structured interviews with several CCC members.

Although it was never stated directly, I am quite sure that at least some of the CCC members were less than comfortable with the involvement of a researcher. I suspect they felt the potential risks entailed in my involvement outweighed any tangible benefits to the group. Although I repeatedly expressed my interest in developing the case study research within a participatory/action research framework, there was little interest from the group. CCC members did not perceive me as a resource, or see any obvious way that I could contribute to the work they were doing. Had they seen some use for me, I am quite sure I would have been asked to contribute, but I don't think that 'social science' research, or its potential relevance for local resistance, was well-understood by CCC members. Nor, for that matter, was doctoral-level research understood. Within the CCC, 'research' was understood largely in the context of applied science, and as either academic or technical in nature, rather than applied and participatory. So while the CCC was willing to allow my participation, it was understood as a 'favour' to me and not as a mutual exchange of information and ideas.

What only struck me much later was the presumption through much of the methodological literature that researchers occupy positions of dominance within research relationships, and are perceived by research participants as having a particular value, e.g., because of particular expertise, or because of their social positioning, or due to some other advantage they are deemed to possess. It seems assumed throughout much of the methodological literature that researchers have some ‘utility’ vis-à-vis community-based resistance initiatives, due in part to the perception that the researcher can provide something that the community does not possess⁹. One example of this presumption of ‘researcher value’ is found in Burawoy’s (2000) discussion of global ethnography methods, where the ‘first dimension’ noted refers to the need to get researchers into the field in order to mitigate the unevenness of the relationship, and “the relation of *domination*, which distorts the mutuality of exchange” (p. 27, author’s italics). Another example emerges from Rose’s (1997) discussion of research reflexivity, in a compilation of strategies for redistributing power in research relationships (e.g., “by shifting a lot of power over to the researched” (p. 310, citing England, 1994, p. 82)). Buried in these statements is the (self-evident) assumption that the researcher is the more powerful partner in the research relationship.

Fine’s (1994) comments on the “imperialism of scholarship” reflect this sentiment as well. However, I would argue that collusion between privileged researchers and privileged communities constitutes only one rationale for the lack of social science

⁹ For example, creating links between a particular community and the broader world of policy and decision-making, or as a means of providing extra-local legitimacy to a local struggle.

research engagement with 'elite' individuals and groups. This 'omission' may also occur due to researcher discomfort, primarily around being the 'non-dominant' partner in the research process. Two risks come immediately to mind, although there are likely others as well. The first concerns the professional risks to the researcher of engaging in research without the comfort of a 'mutual benefit' framework, and the resultant lack of control the researcher may have over the terms of reference of the research 'partnership'. The second is related to the risk of personal discomfort, and in which one's 'personal expertise' is perceived as having little relevance. Put another way, I would argue that doing research with an elite group requires a degree of researcher comfort with risk and a willingness to forgo the role of 'academic expert' and its associations.

While working with an elite group was daunting in some ways, their organizational capacity was a significant benefit to me as a researcher. For example, one CCC member had set aside a small house on his property as a full-time office and meeting space for the CCC. Known to the CCC as the 'War Room', this office housed a large collection of materials related to the Rockfort quarry and to the CCC's fight against the quarry, including maps, photographs, consultants reports, policy documents, media clippings and other relevant documents. It also provided a meeting space for weekly meetings and served as the centre for CCC organizing. In addition, the CCC created many of their own materials to support and/or publicize their struggle against the Rockfort quarry, including newspaper articles, newsletters, update flyers and so on. This material provided valuable data and was a key resource for analysis.

The personal and professional experience of many group members also made a difference to the interviewing process. Many CCC members had occupied professional positions where they were regularly asked to speak ‘on the record’. So in spite of any discomfort with my role as a researcher, CCC members did not appear to have any discomfort with the interviews being taped and transcribed¹⁰. During individual interviews, respondents were highly articulate and provided reflective responses (and at times complex analysis) to the semi-structured question set. This provided a rich data set for analysis. While interviewees were generous with their time and insights regarding the Rockfort quarry dispute, during some of the interviews I had the sense that their ‘media savvy’ nature also precluded the articulation of more ‘off the cuff’ comments. However, I was also surprised by the degree of openness and blunt honesty they brought to some of their analysis, particularly with respect to intra-group dynamics. These comments provided valuable insights into the success of the group in remaining internally cohesive and high-functioning over several years of a community-based struggle.

I struggled at times with my own boundaries vis-à-vis the research, particularly when I was attending CCC meetings semi-regularly and spending time interviewing CCC members individually. Overall, CCC members were very likable – they were smart, funny, strategic, and committed to their cause. In addition, several of the CCC members were entrepreneurial by both temperament and practice, and as such,

¹⁰ This applies to those who agreed to be interviewed. Some members of the CCC were unavailable throughout the interviewing periods, and while this was sometimes related to scheduling problems, I suspect it was also at times indicative of an unwillingness to participate in the interview process. No members of the CCC refused the request for an interview outright.

possessed common entrepreneurial traits (e.g., charismatic personalities, superior (and creative) problem-solving skills, good senses of humour (Prabhu, 1999)). On occasion I had to remind myself that the Rockfort quarry was their struggle, not mine, and that my role was as a researcher documenting process and strategies.

In particular, when I was actively involved with CCC activities, I worried about my own biases and finding ways to document and analyze my findings that entailed being both intellectually rigorous *and* ethical. It was also important to me to find ways to ‘tell the story’ fully and accurately without breaking confidences or being inappropriately hurtful to CCC members. Some time and distance away from active involvement have eased some of my concerns, although I expect that some tension is an inevitable part of conducting qualitative community-based research. In particular, the challenge of “working the hyphens” (Fine, 1994) of my insider-outsider relationship to the CCC was difficult, and more emotionally challenging, than I had expected it to be.

I spent the better part of a year developing a conceptual framework to help theorize my research findings within a poststructural political ecology framework and (re)examining my data in light of this new theoretical foundation. While this process has undoubtedly strengthened the analysis, it has also helped alleviate some of my personal discomfort regarding the presentation of the research findings. As the analysis becomes more theoretically grounded within poststructuralist analysis, in many ways it also becomes more ‘abstract and general’ than specific with respect to

the CCC. This is not to take away from the particularities of the CCC's resistance to the proposed quarry but rather puts less emphasis on these specifics and more emphasis on making visible the discursive context and its influence on resistance activities situated within particular contexts.

Chapter 4 Discourses of Development: The Need for Aggregate

The first half of this dissertation provided a conceptual, theoretical and methodological foundation for this research. The second half of this document uses this foundation to undertake a critical poststructural political ecology analysis of the on-going dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry. The purpose of this chapter is threefold: to introduce the Rockfort quarry case study and detail the trajectory of this particular conflict from its emergence in 1997 to its current unresolved state; to provide relevant contextual information about aggregate extraction in Canada; and to make visible the multiple and often overlapping discourses employed by the key stakeholders in this conflict. All three of these objectives are undertaken to assist in the development of a discursive understanding the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of aggregate issues and the current context for aggregate demand. This is followed by an examination of provincial and regional policy frameworks for aggregate extraction in the Caledon area, including an analysis of the aggregate extraction narratives employed at the macro (provincial) and meso (regional/municipal) levels. The third section of this chapter presents an overview of the Rockfort quarry conflict, and identifies the narratives employed by the project proponent (JDCL).

Aggregate and Aggregate Extraction

Aggregate, or mineral aggregate, is the collective term used to describe sand, gravel, limestone, bedrock and many other types of rock used in construction, industrial and manufacturing processes. Aggregate exists in two principal forms, consolidated (e.g., limestone) and unconsolidated (e.g., sand or gravel). Consolidated aggregate is extracted from quarries, unconsolidated aggregate is extracted from pits (CONE, 1998). Aggregate is an essential component for growth and development in urban and rural areas, forming a literal foundation from almost anything built in modern society – houses, office towers, roads, breakwaters and bridges (Gorrie, 1993).

The growth boom that has been occurring in south-western Ontario, projected to continue well into the future, requires aggregate for the development of infrastructure to support this growth. The economics of aggregate extraction are such that it is most profitable when extracted close to the source of demand, yet the negative environmental and social impacts of aggregate extraction generate significant resistance from communities in these areas. There is no known substitute for aggregate in building. Recent growth of cities, towns and transportation corridors has resulted in increasing demand for this resource in Canada, particularly in the rapidly expanding population corridor in Southern Ontario. Demand for aggregate in Canada has significant economic implications - aggregate extraction in Canada is big business. In the early 1990s Gorrie (1993) estimated the industry was worth \$1.15 billion per year to the Ontario economy and a slightly later estimate by Yeadon

(1997) asserts that gravel pits within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) alone have a market value of greater than \$1 billion annually.

As with any other natural resource, the extraction of aggregate comes with a particular set of issues and environmental concerns. For example, unlike agriculture and forestry, both resource industries with geographic boundaries that are somewhat elastic, aggregate can only be extracted from sources in which it occurs (Campbell, 2000). This means that the negative externalities of aggregate extraction will occur within the geographic boundaries of the aggregate source, leaving local communities in aggregate regions to bear the brunt of these costs. In addition, there are different types and grades of aggregate that can be extracted. New construction techniques require stronger and lighter weight aggregate, so this type becomes a particularly sought after resource. Dolomite limestone from southern Ontario's Niagara Escarpment is prized for its durability, tendency to crush into chunky, jagged pieces, and ability to bind tightly with cement. "It makes exceptionally strong concrete, the type needed for buildings like Toronto's CN Tower and Skydome, and for soaring office towers, and curving, elevated expressway bridges" (Gorrie, 1993, p. 82).

The heavy and bulky nature of aggregate contributes to high transportation costs, as it is expensive to truck long distances in quantities required for building. Rail transport has not been widely used for aggregate, in part because rail lines are rarely located close to both supply and demand, and therefore trucking and transfer charges are still incurred. Transportation by water is considerably less expensive over long distances,

but again only viable when both supply and demand of aggregate are near port areas. Typically, developers prefer to develop aggregate extraction sites as close as possible to sources of demand. This demand tends to be concentrated in large, urban areas, so preferred sites of aggregate extraction often conflict with preferred land uses of those living in the quasi-urban periphery around these urban areas.

Quantities of aggregate required for building are not small: “About 325 tonnes of aggregate are required for the foundation, concrete and mortar in an average new suburban house” (Gorrie, 1993, p. 81). Road construction is thought to be the leading use of aggregates in Ontario, with the construction of a two lane highway consuming approximately 15,000 tonnes of aggregate per kilometre (Winfield and Taylor, 2005). The industry is one of the largest employers in the GTA with over 50,000 people employed directly or indirectly, not including construction jobs that rely on aggregate as a primary material (Yeadon, 1997). Approximately 165 millions tonnes of mineral aggregate are mined in Ontario each year (Winfield, 2005).

In spite of the recognized need for aggregate for industrial, manufacturing and building activities, the aggregate extraction process itself is often very contentious. Aggregate is extracted from quarries in an open-pit mining process, so it is not surprising to find resistance to proposed sites coming from local citizens affected by the aggregate extraction processes. Common environmental problems of aggregate extraction include noise and dust pollution, increased heavy truck traffic on local roads, sediment loading in streams, destruction of fish and wildlife habitat,

environmental degradation including threats to groundwater and general disruption of environmentally sensitive areas (WCEL, 2000; Campbell, 2000). As Winfield and Taylor (2005) note, the "...extraction of aggregate significantly and permanently alters the natural environment. Operators of pits and quarries remove virtually all vegetation, topsoil and subsoil to access the resource "(p. 8). The impact on surface and groundwater are one of the largest concerns about aggregate extraction, as "the extraction of aggregate resource changes the slope of land and alters water drainage patterns" (ibid, p. 8).

Due to factors noted above, siting decisions for aggregate extraction projects almost always negatively affect local property and land values (CCRS, Phase 1, 1997).

Additional concerns cited with respect to the proposed Rockfort quarry include the impact of aggregate extraction on local tourism, the impact of trucking on local roads including the costs of road maintenance and upgrades, and air pollution (CCC, 1999a). Permits for new aggregate extraction projects are often accompanied by significant local objection to their initiation. The significance of these objections, and the emotive reactions that aggregate extraction can evoke, have not been lost on aggregate producers (D'Oyley, 1997).

While some resistance arises in reaction to the negative local externalities of extraction, resistance is also associated with the past actions of pit and quarry operators, who have a long history of quarry owners abandoning quarries when supplies are exhausted. This has changed somewhat in recent years, as increasingly

stringent operating requirements have been put in place for pit and quarry operations – e.g., out of use pits can no longer be abandoned or turned into garbage dumps. Owners are required to undertake reclamation work on these sites, an activity which can be costly and time-consuming (Gorrie, 1993).

Yet the importance of aggregate as a building material is well recognized, which “...explains why quarries enjoy a measure of political support that even the best-connected developers can’t boast” (Lorinc, 2001, p. 90). As Gorrie (1993) notes “With so much at stake in having the right kind of aggregates available at reasonable cost, the conflicts over pits and quarries are taking on increasing importance” (p. 83). This is exacerbated by the increasing incidence of protest when quarry projects are proposed, as those affected “...are becoming more sophisticated and knowledgeable about their rights” (p. 79) and accordingly, both anxiety and participation levels in local resistance have increased.

Policy Framework for Aggregate Extraction in Ontario

At the provincial level, aggregate in Ontario is viewed as a provincial, rather than local, resource, and one that the province clearly controls in terms of development. This is clearly articulated in the province’s 1983 Mineral Aggregate Resource Planning Policy Statement (MARPPS) which emphasizes the responsibility all municipalities have for meeting provincial aggregate needs when the resource is available within municipalities. As Winfield and Taylor (2005) note, “this policy

required that official plans identify both existing pits and quarries and *unmined deposits of aggregate, and protect both from any incompatible land uses*” (p. 13, italics added). In spite of revisions to this policy statement in 1995 and 1996, the overall policy intent of the document has remained (CCRS, Phase I, 1997). This approach to land-use planning is not atypical in Canada, where the regulation of land use largely falls to provincial governments and the administration of land use to local authorities (NACEC, 2005).

In 1989 the Aggregate Resources Act became legislation, resulting in the implementation of a comprehensive set of rules and regulations for the establishment of new aggregate operations, as well as for on-going operation and rehabilitation of existing pits and quarries. Further changes to approval requirements were made to the Aggregate Resources Act through Bill 52 in 1997, refining the standards for new aggregate applications, operations and rehabilitation sites. Aggregate producers applying for permits under this Act can apply in one of two categories: Class A permits for pits and quarries removing more than 20,000 tonnes of aggregate per year, and Class B permits for pits and quarries removing less than 20,000 tonnes of aggregate per year (ARA, 1998).

Much of the aggregate is for use in construction, manufacturing and industrial activities within the GTA, which includes the geographic area of jurisdiction of the City of Toronto and the surrounding Regional Municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel and York. Demand for aggregate in this area is high and expected to increase.

Population growth in the GTA has been increasing steadily in the past decade, a trend expected to continue well into the next decades. One forecast is for the GTA population to increase from its 1991 level of 4.2 million to 6.7 million over the next twenty years, an increase of 67% (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 7). Toronto and surrounding suburbs are the country's major market for construction materials and in the early 1990s were consuming approximately 70 million tonnes of aggregate per year. At that time the Aggregate Producers Association predicted that this demand could climb to over 110 million tonnes per year over the next two decades (Gorrie, 1993, p. 83). Toronto was recently noted as having the third fastest growth of any city in North America, behind Los Angeles and Dallas-Fort Worth (Lorinc, 2001).

The 1996 policy statement (under which James Dick Company Ltd.[JDCL] applied for the Rockfort permit)

...recognizes that the Province's resource base, including mineral resources, provides economic, environmental and social benefits. Long-term economic prosperity depends on protecting and optimizing the availability of resources, including aggregate (cited in Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 17).

According to this Policy Statement,

...mineral aggregate operations will be protected from activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact. Existing mineral aggregate operations will be permitted to continue *without the need for official plan amendment, rezoning or development permit under the Planning Act* (Provincial Policy Statement 1996, p. 7, italics added).

The updated 2005 Provincial Policy Statement echoes the 1996 Policy Statement with respect to aggregate extraction, stating that “mineral aggregate resources shall be protected for long-term use” (p. 19) and that “as much of the mineral aggregate resources as is realistically possible shall be made available as close to markets as possible” (*ibid.*), although it does note that extraction should be “undertaken in a manner which minimizes social and environmental impacts” (*ibid.*) and that the conservation of these resources should be promoted where feasible. Both versions of the Provincial Policy Statement require both “progressive” and “final” rehabilitation of quarries when production ceases although “in actual practice, rehabilitation is commonly not done” (Gravelwatch, 2004, p. 2). As Taylor and Winfield (2005) note,

the current provision of both the Aggregate Resource Act and the Provincial Policy Statement reflect the 35-year trend of limiting local control over aggregate development, and giving aggregate development priority over other potential land uses. Other aspects of the province’s policy framework with respect to aggregates also emphasized the theme of maximizing access to the resource at minimum cost to resource users (p. 14).

With respect to rehabilitation, little was done to ensure rehabilitation of used quarries until 1990 when the ARA took effect. Under this act, operators were required to perform both progressive and final rehabilitation on sites, although there were exceptions to this requirement.¹¹ However, by 1997 provincial monitoring of aggregate rehabilitation “ceased, and the responsibility for restoration of abandoned pit and quarry sites was transferred to an arm of the [Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario (APAO)]” (Sandberg, 2001, p. 2). Currently, the management of aggregates in Ontario is carried out through a partnership between the Ministry of

¹¹ For example, pits and quarries covered by water are exempt if this is not the result of quarrying below the water table.

Natural Resources (MNR) and the APAO, and the industry does self-inspection on the rehabilitation of sites (Gravelwatch, 2004).

In 2005 the provincial government passed the Places to Grow Act (Bill 136) which provides

a legal framework necessary for the government to designate any geographic area of the province as a growth area and develop a growth plan in collaboration with local official and stakeholder to meet specific needs across the province (MPIR Website, 2005).

This strongly echoes the sentiment in the provincial policy statement regarding the importance of making aggregate available as close to market sources as possible, thus prioritizing provincial ‘need’ over local autonomy and planning processes and contributing to a discursive erasure of ‘local place’ within Ontario planning practices.

Understanding the political and economic context of the aggregate industry in Ontario is helpful for appreciating the dynamics and trajectory of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry site in Caledon. Throughout the course of this dispute, each of the key stakeholders (JDCL, the CCC, and provincial and municipal governments) have invoked multiple narratives to support their respective positions within this dispute. The narratives of three key stakeholders are identified in the following section of this chapter, along with further specifics regarding the dispute over the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry.

Provincial Government Narratives: “Building Growth and Prosperity”

Two provincial governments sat in the legislature during the period of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry. The Progressive Conservative government of Mike Harris was in power from 1995-2002, and during his tenure, Harris pursued an aggressive neo-liberal agenda,¹² earmarked by extensive cuts to spending and taxes. Harris resigned in 2002 and was replaced as leader and Premier by Ernie Eves. The Conservatives were defeated in 2003 by the Liberal Party under Dalton McGuinty’s leadership. The Liberals are currently in their first term. Regardless of political changes, a clear ‘growth and development’ discourse emerges throughout provincial policy as it relates to aggregate extraction, and a related reliance on competition and market forces to facilitate this growth.

In this section, three narratives emerging from this discourse are highlighted. Two are related to general provincial policy and planning practices, and one specific to aggregate extraction as part of this process. The first narrative highlights the importance of continuous growth and development within a competitive, market-based environment, the second argues for ‘planned’ growth, and the third is that of ‘need’ for aggregate. This analysis draws in particular on key documents from provincial policy sources - Ontario’s Provincial Policy Statements (1996 and 2005),

¹² This platform was billed as the “Common Sense Revolution” and largely modelled on the socially conservative “Contract with America” of the U.S. Republicans.

materials from Ontario's 'Smart Growth' planning processes (2002, 2003) and supporting material for Bill 136, the recently passed "Places to Grow Act" (2004).

Development (1): Economic Growth = Increased Prosperity = Better Quality of Life

Throughout the 2004 Smart Growth Discussion Paper, economic growth, prosperity, and quality of life are linked together in a (seemingly) self-evident causal chain, a linkage which remains unchallenged throughout the document. As stated in the discussion paper, continuing growth "allows the region to prosper" (p. 5). There is no discussion regarding either 'how' economic growth, prosperity and quality of life are linked, nor is it noted anywhere that these 'benefits' might not be distributed equitably amongst the population, either within Southern Ontario or between Southern Ontario and the rest of the province. Other non-economic factors that might be perceived as influencing quality of life (e.g., environmental or social conditions) receive only minimal mention. Because growth is assumed to equal prosperity and positive quality of life, then presumably lack of growth is understood to mean the end of prosperity and decreased quality of life.

Market-based competition between regions is emphasized throughout this paper, as a positive force that leads to "high quality jobs and investment in innovative industries" (p. 1). In this argument, innovation is seen as a key factor in creating a pool of resources to drive economic development. Future action is framed as a competition in which urban regions are "competing to enhance the quality of life in their

communities in order to draw in talent, future investment and innovation” (*ibid.*). While the economic benefits of this strategy appear to make Southern Ontario the clear economic winner in this growth strategy, the competition is not only between the Greater Golden Horseshoe area¹³ and other urban regions. The mantra of increased competition as the most effective route to higher productivity is threaded throughout these documents:

We will create the conditions for clusters of interrelated and supporting industries to locate in the Greater Golden Horseshoe and compete with each other, making Ontario a leader in innovation, [thus maximizing] the productivity of Ontario’s diverse, highly skilled, well educated and creative workers (p.3).

The link between ‘competition’ and ‘innovation’ remains unchallenged throughout this narrative.¹⁴

There is a strong ‘open for business’ narrative running throughout this document, linked to the ‘need’ to attract new businesses continually in order to create jobs and improve the investment climate. Threaded throughout this narrative is one form of ‘politics of place’ in which the provincial government states that “as urban regions compete for these resources [jobs and investment] *we can no longer afford to think short-term or municipality by municipality*” (p. 2, italics added). This latter

¹³ The Golden Horseshoe is a densely populated and industrialized region at the west end of Lake Ontario in southern Ontario, Canada. The built-up region extends from Niagara Falls at the eastern end of the Niagara Peninsula, wraps around Lake Ontario west to Hamilton, and then east again across the northwest shore of Lake Ontario, past Toronto to the east of Oshawa. A July 13, 2004 report from the provincial Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal entitled Places to Grow coined the term Greater Golden Horseshoe, extending the boundaries west to Waterloo Region, north to Barrie, and northeast to Peterborough. A subsequent edition released February 16, 2005 broadened the term further, adding Brant, Haldimand and Northumberland Counties. Statistics Canada defined the region first in its 2001 census as the Extended Golden Horseshoe, combining many census metropolitan areas.

¹⁴ Although competition is viewed within economic discourse as the most effective means of allocating resources and increasing innovation, there is a great deal of evidence that competition has a contrary effect (e.g., see Kohn’s 1986 book *No Contest: The Case Against Competition*)

statement, presented as the ‘obvious’ outcome in a competitive environment, requires municipalities to support the larger (provincial) goal of creating economic growth in the Golden Horseshoe Area. The assumption embedded here is that fuelling the engine of economic growth will move the whole province forward, an argument very similar to the classic neo-liberal shibboleth that ‘a rising tide lifts all boats’.

Development (2): “Smart” Growth: Planning for ‘Sustainability’

In spite of the strong free-market narrative noted above, a second narrative emerges in the Smart Growth documents - that of the importance of ‘strategic’ and ‘planned’ growth, to “ensure that new growth is healthy growth....To do this we must maximize the benefits of growth while minimizing the costs” (Smart Growth, 2004, p.5). Or, put another way, “Smart growth welcomes growth because it generates new businesses, jobs and the revenues necessary to support the services we value. As much as it supports growth, this initiative also recognizes the growth must be managed to protect the environment and ensure residents a high quality of life” (MMAH, 2003, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_12251_1.html).

According to Smart Growth documents, planned growth can be ‘harnessed’ allowing growth to happen ‘strategically’ in ways that lead to ‘future prosperity’. Planned growth is thus set up in an (unarticulated) binary relationship with ‘unplanned, haphazard’ growth - the type of ‘bad’ growth which results in deterioration of air quality, the consumption of agricultural land, lack of affordable housing and

transportation gridlock (all of which are currently politically attributed to the previous Progressive Conservative government and their reliance on market strategies rather than ‘planned’ growth). “Planning for Smart Growth” is an initiative of the Liberal government of Dalton McGuinty and notes that while previous governmental initiatives in this area “have not lived up to expectations”, the current government will focus on “restoring Ontario’s place as a leading jurisdiction for attracting and reaping the benefits of new growth” (ibid, p. 6) through good land use planning.

The phrase ‘Smart Growth’ creates a binary in which Smart Growth is set up as the superior approach, in contrast to two inferior possibilities: ‘stupid’ growth or non-growth, both of which are assumed as lesser or non-options.

Development (3): The GTA Needs Aggregate

In spite of the political sideswipe noted above, both the current Liberal government and the previous Progressive Conservative governments (under the leadership of both Mike Harris and Ernie Eves) share a commitment to growth and development, particularly in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area of southern Ontario. Not surprisingly, aggregate is a key component of this strategy. Like many non-renewable resources, aggregate supply often exists some distance from demand. The ‘responsibility’ of municipalities located on top of aggregate deposits to make supply available where needed is a narrative that runs throughout Ontario provincial policy documents.

As noted previously in this chapter, aggregate in Ontario is viewed, at least by the province, as a provincial rather than local resource. This perspective is supported by several policy documents, including the 1986 Mineral Aggregate Resource Policy Statement which emphasizes the responsibility of all municipalities for meeting provincial aggregate needs when aggregate resources are available within municipalities, a policy intent which has remained unchanged in subsequent revisions. This intent is supported by the 1996 and 2005 Ontario Provincial Policy Statements. The 2005 document states that “mineral aggregate resources shall be protected for long-term use” (2005, p. 19) and that “as much of the mineral aggregate resources as is realistically possible shall be made available as close to markets as possible” (*ibid.*). The policy statement also states that

...demonstration of need for mineral aggregate resources, including any type of supply/demand analysis, *shall not be required*, notwithstanding the availability, designation, or licensing for extraction of mineral aggregate resources locally or elsewhere (*ibid.*, italics added).

It is worth noting that sites where aggregate exists but is unavailable for mining (e.g., where it is buried under existing residential areas) are commonly referred to as ‘sterilized’ and the aggregate industry and province are working closely together to ensure that future ‘sterilization’ is minimized.

Supporting this narrative are dire predictions of potential aggregate shortages, although it should be noted that at least some of these estimates derive directly or indirectly from the Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario (APAO). As Patano and Sandberg (2005) note, “the ‘need’ or ‘demand’ narrative is supported by mineral

forecasts that are advanced by a series of actors starting from the national to the local level and ranging from the industry to the work force” (p. 32). The underlying threat in all of these forecasts is that without adequate access to large volumes of aggregate at relatively low cost, economic growth (and thus prosperity and quality of life) will suffer throughout Ontario. Accordingly, extracting ‘needed’ aggregate from available supplies is viewed as a small cost in comparison to the benefits accruing from aggregate availability, and thus the ‘obvious’ future choice.

As one example of this, in 1992 the Ontario MNR commissioned a report on the state of aggregate resources in Southern Ontario. This report recognized the essential role that aggregate resources played in the continued economic and social prosperity of the province, noting that provincial demand for these resources has been increasing steadily since the 1960s. Among other conclusions, the report states that

...for the period between 1990 and 2010, Southern Ontario is moving towards a *critical* economic, social and environmental situation in terms of protection of, and access to, aggregate resources required to meet the increasing demands of Ontario residents (*italics added*) (State of the Resource Study, 1992, p. i)

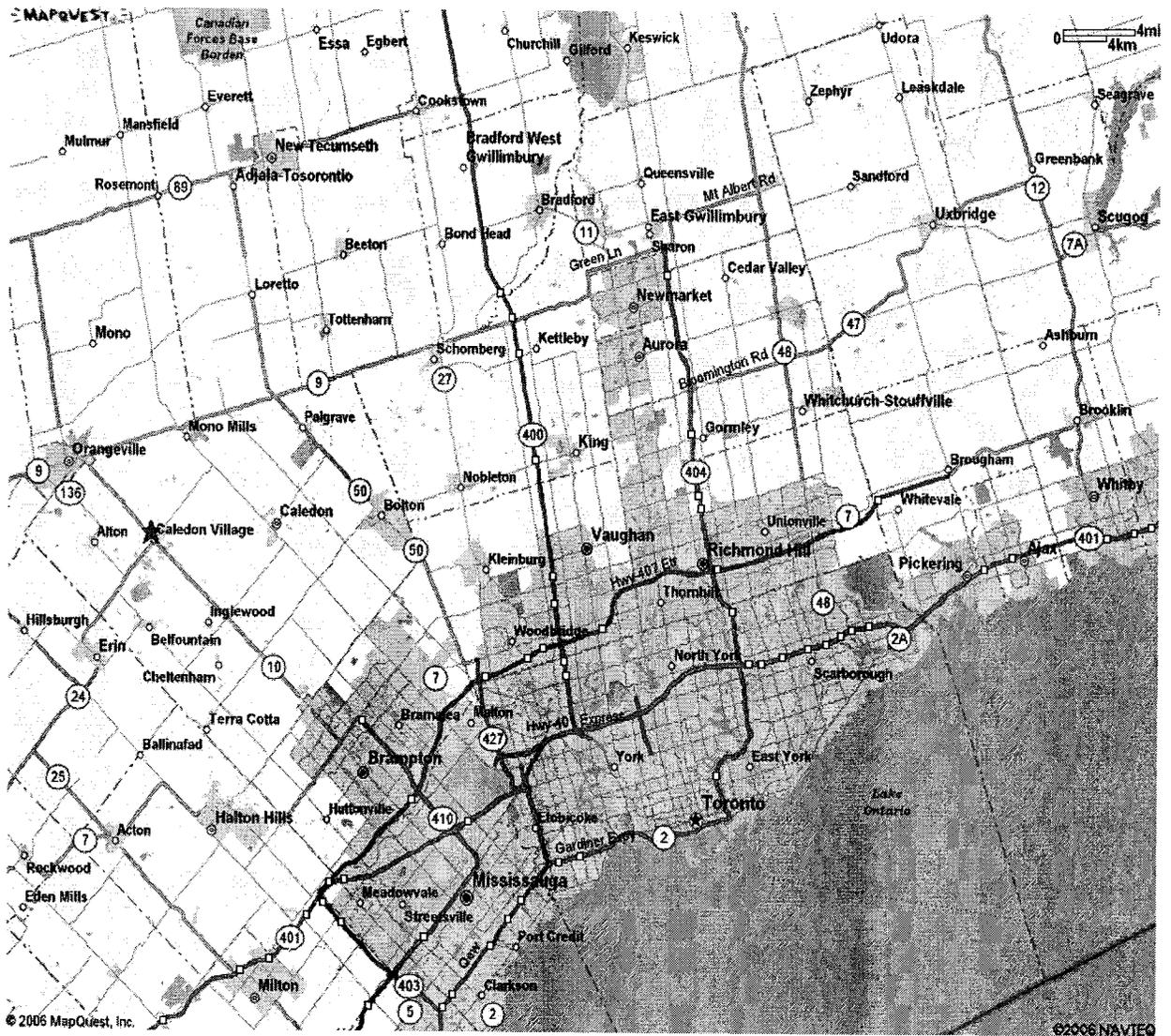
It further cautions that “...total existing licensed aggregate reserves within the major market areas of southern Ontario....would be depleted as early as 1995 in some areas if new reserves are not licensed” (*ibid.*). Thus, the ‘obvious’ strategy for growth and development becomes an (unchallenged) opening up of new aggregate resources, ideally at sources close to demand points.

The social construction of ‘nature’ within provincial policy (vis-à-vis aggregate extraction) is unquestionably an industrial one and resonates strongly with Taylor’s (2000) exploitative capitalist paradigm in which nature exists as a source of raw materials, to be extracted and transported as necessary in order to support economic growth. In this paradigm, aggregate is viewed, quite literally, as the foundation for future industrial and residential growth in Ontario’s heartland.

Aggregate Extraction in Caledon

The town of Caledon falls within the Region of Peel in Southwestern Ontario on the perimeter of the GTA, the largest consuming market for aggregate in the province. A map of the area is provided in Figure 2. Some of the largest aggregate deposits in Southern Ontario are found within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Caledon and surrounding areas. Caledon is also situated on two major geological features, the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment, containing some of the highest quality aggregate found in the province. These are the principal supply sources of aggregate for Ontario (Gorrie, 1993). This combination of quality and quantity of aggregate has resulted in Caledon facing increased pressure for aggregate extraction in the area over the last twenty years (CCRS, Vol. 1, 1997) and resulted in broad-based concerns regarding the wise management of aggregate resources in Caledon (CCRS, Vol. 3, 1999).

Figure 2: Caledon in Relation to Greater Toronto Area
(not to scale – for illustrative purposes only)
(source: www.mapquest.com)



Location also plays a significant role in the attractiveness of Caledon as a source of future aggregate production. Caledon is close to sources of market demand for aggregate in the western GTA, most notably in the rapidly growing cities of Brampton and Mississauga. Transportation costs for aggregate are high, to the extent that some argue that it

...cannot be economically transported over long distances. Accordingly, provincial policy is based on the understanding that areas of the province which possess quality deposits in close to market locations share a responsibility for meeting local, regional and provincial demands (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 19).

In the face of growing demand for aggregate, coupled with a recognition of the negative externalities of aggregate extraction, in 1996 the Town of Caledon and the Region of Peel jointly commissioned the Caledon Community Resources Study (CCRS) in order to “develop a sustainable community model for the management of the aggregate resource that will enable the Caledon ecosystem to be maintained and enhanced over the long term” (CCC, 1999a, p. 7). This followed a highly controversial provincial initiative which identified High Priority Mineral Aggregate Resource Areas (also known as HPMARA’s) throughout the province, and designated these areas as protected for significant future aggregate resource extraction initiatives. Having an high priority mineral aggregate resource area designation effectively stops land owners from any future development on their property that would hinder the future extraction of aggregate (CCC, 1999b). Several high priority mineral aggregate resource areas were identified within Caledon boundaries.

The final volume of the Caledon Community Resources Study was completed in November 1998, and recommended that the province, region and municipality designate identified Caledon High Priority Mineral and Aggregate Resource Areas as either Priority 1, for development now or in the near future, or Priority 2, for conservation of resources for possible future development (20 or more years in the future)(CCRS, Vol. 3, 1998). The report argues that prioritization would not only preserve some resources for future use, but also provide greater certainty to local residents as to when and where aggregate development would occur over the short term. Under this system, the Rockfort site was classified as a Priority 2 area, one that should be preserved for future development (CCRS, Vol. 3, 1998). JDCL has argued that since the application to quarry the site pre-dated the final prioritization decisions of the Caledon Community Resources Study that an exemption should be granted for the application.

Regional/Municipal Narratives: “Balancing Competing Interests”

Given the economic and political significance of aggregate in the Caledon area, and the pro-aggregate stance articulated with the Provincial Policy Statement, it is hardly surprising that the narrative of the municipal and regional governments is focussed on balancing competing interests within geographic boundaries of the municipality and region. Concerns about the increasing numbers of aggregate applications being referred to the Ontario Municipal Board for arbitration in the 1980s and 1990s spurred local action to develop guidelines for future aggregate extraction. As stated

in the first volume of the Caledon Community Resource Study (CCRS, 1997), the purpose of the study was to “prepare an optimum Aggregate Management Strategy for mineral resource extraction, which meets environmental, economic and social objectives, while enabling the aggregate industry to meet market requirements” (p. 1) as part of a broader strategy of developing a “sustainable community model for the management of aggregate resources that will enable the Caledon ecosystem and community to be maintained and enhanced over the long term” (ibid, p. 1).

The two-tier system recommended in Phase 3 (1998) of the study, involving the identification of possible extraction sites as either Priority 1 or Priority 2, is intended to address issues raised by both the aggregate industry and the local citizenry. It is also intended to ensure both short and long-term availability of aggregate in the area, and to create a long-term planning schedule to provide clarity as to where and when extraction activities are expected to take place. As stated by one observer,

The Town of Caledon...decided it was necessary to find a long-term solution to the prospect of aggregate extraction that would adequately balance the need for economic development and growth with residents’ quality of life concerns” (Hardy Stevenson and Associates, 2005, p.1).

It should be noted that this balancing act does not challenge any of the arguments regarding the ‘need’ for aggregate extraction, but is rather intended as a means of planning for ‘optimal’ extraction processes – processes that maximize aggregate extraction over time, while simultaneously minimizing social impacts.

Another example of balancing competing interests is captured in the Town of Caledon’s development of Bill 161, an aggregate-specific amendment to the town’s

Official Plan. Development of this amendment began in the 1990s as a multi-stakeholder process that brought together representatives from the municipal government, the aggregate industry, local communities and other stakeholders to create a ‘made in Caledon’ solution to the challenges presented by future aggregate extraction needs. It is “a little more stringent than what currently exists in the Provincial Policy Statement” (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Hansard Excerpt, 2005) and reflects CCRS recommendations regarding the prioritizing of aggregate extraction areas, allowing for ‘planned’ future extraction.

The Proposed Rockfort Quarry

In January 1997, JDCL purchased, via an intermediary, a 200 acre property in Caledon known as “The Rockfort farm”. The ‘official’ purchaser of the Rockfort farm property was Greg Sweetnam, son-in-law of James Dick. Sweetnam first saw the property during a garden tour of the area with his wife and children, and noticed that the property was for sale. During the tour Sweetnam inspected the limestone outcroppings on the property and “within days, returned with his wife, telling the realtor that they wanted a place to raise their kids and run a horse farm” (Lorinc, 2001, p. 88). The sale price of the property was in the \$900,000 range. The seller of the property was unaware that Greg Sweetnam had any connection to James Dick and states she would not have sold the property to him had she known (CCC, personal communication). Shortly after the sale was completed, James Dick applied for a permit to quarry the site. At the time of the Rockfort purchase, JDCL was already

one of the largest aggregate mining operations in the GTA with 200 company owned trucks and annual revenues in the \$100 million range. JDCL owns several large gravel mines in the Caledon area, a cement-making operation and other construction divisions (Lorinc, 2001).

The Rockfort farm is based in an area known for its rural estates and is one of many in the immediate vicinity. The Rockfort site was one of the first farms to be settled in the area (in the early 1800s) and “features incredible stone bank barns with arched doors. The stone farmhouse is also an historic landmark in the area” (CCC, 1999a, p.2). The Rockfort property sits on a source of consolidated bedrock known as Amabel dolostone, a high quality dolomite valued for its suitability for high strength concrete and other high durability products, and because of its suitability for a wide variety of uses and construction applications (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998). The Rockfort property also happens to fall within an area designated as a Caledon High Priority Mineral and Aggregate Resource Area, although residents of the area were unaware of this designation at the time the property was sold (CCC, 1999b).

By early 1997 it became widely known that JDCL intended to use the Rockfort land as a quarry, after the company applied for zoning changes to allow such land use. James Dick argued that there was “critical need for new licensed sources of aggregate in the Greater Toronto Area” (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 2) as no new licenses had been issued since 1978 to quarry in the Amabel Formation. In March 1998, JDCL submitted an application to the MNR for a permit to open a dolostone

quarry on the Rockfort site. If allowed this would result in two-thirds of the land being mined to a depth of 50 metres (CCC, 1999a). The expected annual production for this proposed quarry would be a maximum of 2.5 million tonnes of aggregate/year, with 1.5 million tonnes/year actually being shipped. The additional product would remain as on-site inventory for peak years (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998). JDCL argued that opening the quarry would “employ about 65 people and supply essential products for Ontario’s economic growth” (Introduction to the Rockfort Quarry, no date, p.1).

As part of the application process, JDCL held a public meeting the same month and 600 local residents turned out, many angry about the proposed quarry. Local citizens had 45 days to file letters of objection after the application was filed and by the end of the 45 day period over 1,300 letters had been received by Ontario’s MNR.

According to JDCL’s proposal, the shipping of aggregate from the proposed Rockfort site would be done by truck, with traffic volumes varying according to annual, seasonal and daily variations in demand. JDCL estimated that during a typical year (1.5 million tonnes/annum) “truck volumes will range from off season daily averages of about 57 loads out (114 pass-bys) to occasional peak season maximum days with volumes of 354 loads out (708 pass-bys). In years when the maximum annual production rate of 2.5 millions tonnes is reached, daily truck volumes may occasionally peak at 590 loads out (1180 pass-bys)” (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 15). As many of the roads along the designated haul route are not designed

for truck traffic, upgrading of these roads would need to occur. Existing roads would require on-going maintenance due to the increased traffic. These costs would be shared by JDCL and the Region of Peel, although details of cost sharing remain undiscussed (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998).

The Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens has been challenging the proposed Rockfort quarry since the permit application was filed in 1997. The substantive details of their opposition are discussed in detail in the following chapters of this dissertation. For now, it suffices to say that this local resistance has resulted in a situation of intractable environmental conflict, one which is on-going today, and not expected to be resolved prior to 2007 at the earliest.

In Ontario, the usual mechanism for resolving these types of disputes is through the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), an independent, adjudicative tribunal that hears appeals and applications on land use disputes. As noted on the OMB website (<http://www.omb.gov.on.ca>), members “are appointed by the Ontario government to mediate and/or resolve these disputes under a variety of legislation.” An OMB ruling on the proposed quarry was initially delayed as the OMB first dealt with challenges to development in the Oak Ridges Moraine (as parts of Caledon fall within the protected area of the Moraine).

Further delays in hearing the Rockfort quarry dispute were encountered due to the need for a prior decision on local planning changes proposed by the Town of

Caledon. In response to general concerns regarding the impact of aggregate extraction on groundwater in the Caledon area, the town began working with multiple stakeholders in the late 1990s to develop new policies and adopted Official Plan Amendment 161 (OPA 161) in the spring of 2003. In the fall of 2003 the Town of Caledon, the Region of Peel, and the CCC put forward a motion at the OMB pre-hearing that it was in the public interest to have the Rockfort quarry application heard under the tougher new planning requirements. In response, the OMB, broke with its usual practice of grandfathering applications under the policies in place at time of application (known as the ‘Clergy’ principle), and ruled that the Rockfort quarry application should be heard under the 2003 planning requirements (CCC Newsletter, April, 04). As a result, JDCL is now required to undertake a four season study of the proposed quarry site. Successful completion of this study is not expected prior to 2007, and possibly as late as 2008 (CCC President, personal communication, June 2006). Throughout this dispute, numerous OMB pre-hearings related to the Rockfort quarry have been held, an expensive process for all concerned.

JDCL Narratives

Patano and Sandberg (2005) identify four distinct narratives emerging from the discourse surrounding the conflict regarding the expansion of an existing quarry in the Caledon region: the ‘need’ narrative; the ‘good corporate citizen’ narrative; the doctrine of ‘good work practices’ and the ‘rehabilitation’ narrative. I will draw on an adapted version this narrative framework as JDCL’s discourse employs similar

narratives. My adapted framework combines the ‘good corporate citizen’ and ‘good work practices’ narratives (as these are often connected in this case study), changes the emphasis of the ‘rehabilitation’ narrative to one in which quarrying and rehabilitation are viewed as ‘enhancements’, and adds two other narratives that emerged throughout this case study - that of a locally-based, small business ‘starting from nothing’ and growing to compete (successfully) with large multinational aggregate producers in the area, and the construction of local resistance as NIMBY opposition.

Need for Aggregate

The ‘need’ narrative is clearly laid out in provincial policy regarding aggregate extraction, and JDCL draws on this in the Rockfort Application, noting that the 1996 Provincial Policy Statement (in place when JDCL applied for the Rockfort permit) states that “long-term economic prosperity depends on protecting and optimizing the availability of resources, including aggregate” (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 17). Therefore, there is a “critical need for new licensed sources of aggregate in the Greater Toronto Area” (Rockfort Quarry Application, 1998, p. 2).

According to JDCL’s project manager for the proposed Rockfort quarry,

...back in 1972, we had a comfortable cushion of about, as a province, about 350 million tons [of limestone] licensed. Well today, we’ve got a mere fraction of that, and the calculations that we’ve done show that basically in ten years, or slightly less than 10 years, we’re out, completely (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

Lack of adequate aggregate supplies is described variously as a ‘crisis’, a potential ‘disaster’ and the cause of severe future limitations on Southern Ontario’s growth and development. Not surprisingly, the project manager stresses the positive benefits of ensuring continuous supplies of high quality aggregate, and JDCL displays these arguments prominently throughout the Rockfort application and related promotional materials. These purported benefits include industry-related employment and associated local spending, increased tourism due to extensive quarry rehabilitation, and this narrative argues these benefits come at no cost to local ratepayers. As with the provincial discourse regarding ‘need’, a binary relationship is assumed – with growth as the positive result and non-growth as the negative possibility.

The need narrative pervades the Rockfort quarry application in specific ways. For example, the scale of the quarry is a highly contested issue, but Sweetnam argues this scale is necessary in order to stay competitive:

We’re going to do a million and a half a year. A million and a half tons a year. It’s our year in-year out business, we’ve applied for 2.5 million tonne license, to allow us to bid on mega projects like Pearson International, because one contract at Pearson International could have a million tons in it. So we want enough slack in our license that we can take that on (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

Good Corporate Citizen/ Good work practices

The narrative of JDCL as both a good corporate citizen and as a company committed to good work practices run throughout promotional and other materials from the company and the industry. JDCL’s website notes that

In addition to producing aggregates, JDCL is building a reputation for doing things right. We have a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and many would confirm our willingness to develop innovative approaches and mutually acceptable solutions” (www.jamesdick.com).

A promotional article on the company in a trade magazine states that JDCL “is very pro-community and sponsors numerous programs and agencies in its hometown of Caledon” (Heavy Construction News, 1998). Perhaps coincidentally, in 1998 the Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario awarded JDCL its Community Relations Award (HCN, 1998), just as community-based resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry was mounting.

With respect to rehabilitated quarries, JDCL notes that one of its companies, Caledon Sand and Gravel, has turned land over to Caledon for a public beach (Stein, 1999). This land is to be leased to the Town of Caledon, which will pay \$1 per annum and assume liability (HCN, 1998). Responding to questions regarding the Rockfort quarry application, the Rockfort project manager made reference to JDCL’s community reputation:

James Dick is an excellent corporate citizen in the town if I can say that, I mean we sponsor everything from A to Z....I just started going through the press clippings and letters we received from different organizations and sent [a consultant for the town of Caledon] a package like this, and so I think he was quite impressed with the level of community support we give (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

And as the website states, JDCL is “community minded and [has] responded to those who have asked for our help. We are a proud private Canadian company” (www.jamesdick.com). The JDCL website page dedicated to the Rockfort quarry

shows a picture of a man in a Scout Leader uniform (presumably James Dick, although no attribution is made) standing outside with three Boy Scouts (Figure 3).

Figure 3: James Dick (?) and Scouts
Source: www.jamesdick.com



In addition to ‘doing good works’ in the community, the company emphasizes its commitment to ‘innovative’ solutions: “We are innovative thinkers, not doing exactly what others did before us, but improving old ideas, imagining new ones and dreaming of ideas yet to come” (www.jamesdick.com). It is worth noting that one of these ‘innovations’ is the proposed grout curtain around the quarry, the efficacy of which remains highly contested.

The Rockfort project manager did not see a contradiction between ‘good practices’ and JDCL’s purchase of the Rockfort farm under false pretences. Rather, the circumstances of the purchase were viewed as another form of ‘good practice’. When queried about this, he argued this was not only standard business practice, but also a smart one.

When we buy lands we never buy them under the company name. We usually go in and buy the lands and then put them into a company afterwards. But there was some controversy there because people saw

that as not really an honest way of doing things. But when you're competing with Switzerland and you know, guys who've got 50 times as much money as we do [this practice is justified] (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

He also invoked the argument that, because JDCL employs over 500 individuals who rely on this income, it would be irresponsible to do anything that would jeopardize the company's continued stability and growth.

Local Boy Makes Good

Almost every story written about James Dick notes that he started the company single-handedly in 1964, with one truck and one bulldozer, and grew it to what it is today - a business with revenues of \$100 million a year and more than 500 employees. One story even noted that James Dick got his start in the business world by delivering butcher orders on his bicycle (HCN, 1998). JDCL does business in “20 municipalities and owns and operates almost 2,000 pieces of equipment, including a fleet of 150 gravel trucks and 100 mixers” (HCN, 1998). Reference is inevitably made to the Dick family's tenure in the area, noting the family has been in Caledon for 150 years (Stein, 1999) or seven generations (www.jamesdick.com)

One theme running through this narrative is that of the Canadian ownership and ‘independent’ nature of the company (in contrast to the large number of non-Canadian multi-nationals involved in aggregate extraction).

We're the largest independent ready-mix concrete producer in southern Ontario. When I say independent, I mean we're not tied into the

multinational cement companies...We always say, we're a Canadian company and we service a clientele of about 10,000 small Canadian companies (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

The 'local hero' aspect of this narrative is emphasized by comments addressing the possibility of future supply shortages:

"...if we can't do it, a Canadian born and bred company, with grassroots, you know, kind of sprung up from nothing in 1964....if we can't do it, if we can't extract it the best way it can be extracted, then nobody can do it" (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

A second related theme emerging from this narrative is that of James Dick as an 'everyman' and just another one of the guys. In this theme, James Dick becomes hard-working family man "Jim" who is, as the website states,

...integrally involved in all aspects of his businesses....He is joined in the business by his wife, Anne, his son Kenneth and his son-in-law Greg Sweetnam. *Jim enjoys riding inexpensive horses, working, collecting antique trucks, working, going to equipment auctions...and working* (<http://www.jamesdick.com/about.asp>).

The final sentence has the effect of casting James Dick in opposition to many members and supporters of the CCC, most of who are relatively new to the area, some of whom raise purebred horses and many who are very comfortably retired after successful professional careers in large urban areas.

Quarrying as Environmental Enhancement

Quarry rehabilitation is also invoked as an example of JDCL's commitment to both environmental sustainability and 'doing things right'. Given the aggregate industry's

poor track record with respect to rehabilitation of used quarries, this emphasis is not particularly unusual. What is somewhat unusual is JDCL's approach to issues related to quarrying and rehabilitation and the company's emphasis on the temporal nature of these activities, particularly as they related to 'geologic' time. As the JDCL website states: "We are custodians of our lands, where aggregate extraction is but a blink of an eye on a geologic time scale, we restore and enhance where we have taken resources" (<http://www.jamesdick.com/about.asp>).

The theme of quarrying and associated rehabilitation as temporally insignificant emerged in interview with the quarry project manager as well, as he argued that "...extraction is, what's the word I'm looking for, it's never a permanent land use. Extraction is always a temporary land use." (Rockfort Quarry Manager interview, 1999). During the interview the project manager showed pictures of rehabilitated British quarries, but neglected to mention the lengthy time frame involved in rehabilitation until asked directly, at which point he acknowledged that the pictures were of a quarry that stopped producing approximately a hundred years earlier. This somewhat 'elastic' perspective on time is also evident in the JDCL website, where, until recently, the link to the 'site plan for the Rockfort quarry' brought up not the site plan for the quarry, but the post-quarry rehabilitation plan with nothing to indicate that the rehabilitation plan is - according to JDCL estimates of quarry lifespan - 40-45 years in the future. The project manager states that site 'improvement' will start immediately, with "more trees there after the quarry opens than there are now on the farm" due to land serving as forested buffer (Toronto Star, July 15/03). Post-

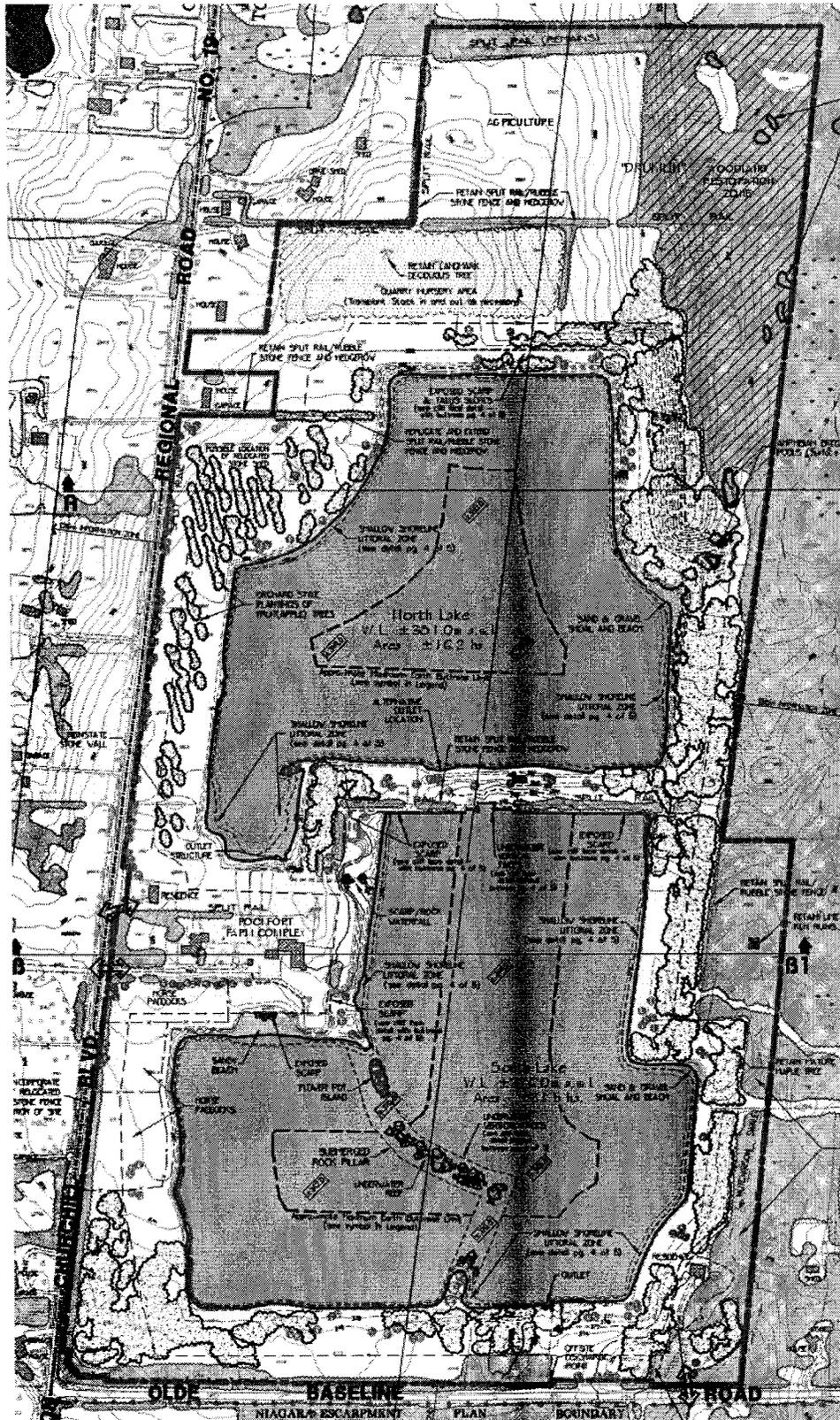
rehabilitation the site is projected to contain 1 million more fish than pre-quarry as well as lakes, beaches, orchards and horse paddocks (Figure 4).

Running throughout is the theme of quarrying and associated rehabilitation as ‘enhancements’ to the local landscape. The Rockfort project manager argues, essentially, that quarrying the Rockfort site is little more than changing from one productivist land use to another, with the latter (quarrying) resulting in a more desirable landscape:

So you’re not going and cutting down sensitive forests or sensitive wetlands or all this sort of thing. You’ve basically got a ploughed agricultural field and you’re going to change that into a lake” (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

Again, the temporal aspect of this shift goes unmentioned.

Figure 4: Rehabilitation Plan for Rockfort Site
 Source: (<http://www.jamesdick.com/rehabplan.htm>)



Interestingly, the project manager challenges the presumption of preservation as the main source of positive site enhancement.

So whenever you read...planning documents, you always see the words 'preserve' or 'enhance'. And I argue, that the only way to enhance is to intervene, and where man [sic] intervenes... that's where enhancement can take place. Because other than that you're just strictly preserving, you preserve habitat, but to enhance it involves man's [sic] intervention. So natural resource policy, natural resource extraction, can lead to enhancement if it's done smart. If you do it stupid, certainly you can have negative impacts. But I think what people perceive is you're not going to do it smart. You know, and when you come in and do Rockfort, people perceive you're going to come in here and do this stupid and you are going to have negative environmental impacts and you're going to dry up creeks and dry up people's wells and cut down forests and all that sort of thing. It just isn't the case. You know, because we're trying to do it smart" (Rockfort Project Manager Interview, 1999).

With respect to discourses of 'nature', citing industrial development as a mechanism for environmental enhancement is an unusually creative way of justifying the impact of industrial processes.

Opposition as NIMBY

'Smart' development as a source of landscape enhancement, coupled with the downplaying of community concerns (labelled as 'perceptions') also feature as part of a narrative in which the legitimacy of local resistance is discounted. In this narrative, local resistance is depicted as a typical and unavoidable side effect of development proposals, and as a reaction that reflects the 'self-serving nature of communities' rather than the substantive local impacts of development. This sentiment is reflected in the following comments made by the Rockfort project manager: "(w)ith all due

respect to the rate payers group, this is a not in my backyard issue – no matter where we go we will run into opposition” and “99% of all gravel pits there’s always somebody and it only takes one person...and you’re going to a hearing” (Rockfort Project Manager interview, 1999). While it may well be the case that opposition to proposed quarries is common, comments such as the ones above also dismiss (without ever explicitly acknowledging) local concerns regarding safety (e.g., road and water) and potential economic impacts (e.g., decreased property values and increased property taxes).

What is most striking about the provincial, regional and proponent narrative is how deeply embedded they are within dominant neo-liberal discourse, with its emphasis on the need for continuous growth and development. Throughout all the narratives noted above, the ‘need’ for growth and development is taken as self-evident, and therefore remains unchallenged.

Overall, the different narratives invoked by these key stakeholder share some common assumptions – most notably, all fit easily within the exploitative capitalist paradigm identified by Taylor (2000) with its focus on the economic benefits of aggregate extraction. In this paradigm, aggregate ‘in the ground’ has no (economic) value, while those who extract it, such as JDCL, are understood as ‘local heroes’ who contribute to the growth and well-being of the local and regional economies via the ‘value adding’ extraction process.

In these narratives, 'nature' is thus constructed primarily as a source of raw materials, and aggregate is understood as both a literal and figurative foundation for this growth. As such, the 'need' for aggregate is also taken as self-evident, with the central issue then one of managing the extraction process in ways that best facilitate growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area, an area presumed to be the economic driver overall provincial growth. This is a striking example of a Foucauldian political technology, in which a political decision (e.g., the regulatory framework for aggregate extraction) is presented as an apolitical one, driven in this case, by the imperative of 'need.'

What is not found in these narratives is any significant challenge to the idea of 'growth', the 'need' for development, or the 'need' for aggregate extraction. The implications of this for the Rockfort quarry dispute are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. This dissertation now turns to a more detailed examination of the CCC's strategies and practices of resistance, and the discourse(s) that underpin these activities.

Chapter 5 Community-Based Resistance: the Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens

As noted previously in this dissertation, in the past three decades there has been a significant change in rural production patterns, including a shift away from the primacy of agricultural production and towards other types of productive activities (including mining and related activities). Correspondingly, rural areas have also been affected by changing demographics, with the increased mobility of many ‘service class’ individuals opting for rural or peri-urban residences (Marsden et al., 1993). Given the competing tensions over land use between productivist and post-productivist forces (Patano and Sandberg, 2005) the increase in community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses in many peri-urban areas is not surprising. This chapter begins examining the impact of exurban subjectivity on the CCC’s resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry, an examination that is continued in the subsequent chapters.

The previous chapter examined various development-oriented narratives invoked by key stakeholders during the conflict over the proposed Rockfort quarry site. This dissertation now turns to a more detailed focus on the CCC’s resistance, and an examination of both discourses and practices of resistance, and the interrelations between the two. The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the CCC’s formation and development as a resistance group, and highlights the group’s position on key issues related to the impact of the proposed quarry siting. The second half of this chapter examines Coalition membership more closely, and how the exurbanite

nature of the group – dominated by successful, mobile individuals attracted to the area by the promise of the bucolic nature of rural life – has influenced the group’s development of community-based resistance practices. This begins with an overview of the exurban character of the group, and then turns to an examination of the ways that this exurban subjectivity has influenced their development as a volunteer organization in very specific and important ways. The following chapter shifts to an examination of principal resistance narratives invoked by the CCC over the course of the Rockfort quarry dispute. The final chapter of this dissertation then draws on this material to provide a broader and more comprehensive analysis of discursive influences on the development of CCC’s resistance practices, and more generally, to provide insights into the intractability of the conflict over the proposed Rockfort quarry.

Caledon Coalition of Concerned Citizens

Initiated in 1996, the Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCC) was formed by a group of residents from Caledon and surrounding areas who were concerned about the local impacts of the proposed Rockfort quarry. Although early community-based resistance formed when the discovery was made of Ontario’s mapping of high priority mineral and resources areas in Caledon in 1996, CCC activities really began in March of 1997. At this point, on the advice of a local lawyer, group members agreed to create a formal organizational structure with nine official members, who formed a Board of Directors for the organization. In April of the same year the CCC

hired a Toronto-based lawyer and incorporated as a legal entity. For legal reasons¹⁵ it was decided that Coalition would officially be comprised of only the identified directors, and that all others involved would be considered ‘community supporters’, in order to facilitate easy legal dissolution of the group once the dispute over the proposed quarry was settled.

Since their formation in 1997, a core group of between fifteen and twenty CCC members has met regularly, usually weekly. Some of these individuals have been with the CCC since its beginning, while some joined later as local awareness of the proposed quarry increased, and others were recruited because of particular skills sets they possessed. Some members have resigned from the group over this time period as well, often citing ‘life changes’ such as babies or new and more onerous responsibilities elsewhere. CCC weekly meetings provide an opportunity for CCC members to share quarry-related information, discuss strategies for fighting the proposed quarry and explore fund-raising alternatives. According to Coalition members, these meetings are open to any community members interested in the issue and able to volunteer time to attend.

The time commitment required of regular members can be onerous, although members participate at differing levels according to the time and energy they have available. There is also some seasonal variation in participation levels, reflecting

¹⁵ The CCC was advised that incorporation would require all group members to be notified of Annual General Meetings and of dissolution when the group stopped existing, so an organizational structure was suggested for the CCC such that the Directors would be the only official members, and that other supporters would be known as “Friends of the Coalition” to make notification requirements more manageable.

seasonal differences in time commitments¹⁶. In addition to regular weekly meetings, CCC members have also participated in other, related activities within the community¹⁷ and have been active in lobbying politicians at the municipal, regional, provincial and federal level. Other CCC activities requiring volunteer time commitments include regular fundraising events and occasional public meetings. Both of these activities are used to raise awareness of the quarry dispute, and highlight the negative local impacts of the proposed Rockfort quarry.

The CCC's stated goal is

the development of a balanced plan between aggregates and residents. The CCC strongly believes that the location of mineral and aggregate resources is not the sole factor that shall determine where extraction is applicable. Consideration must be given to appropriate locations which give regard to resident concerns including traffic, safety, noise, water and various environmental concerns (CCC flyer, 1997)

It is the CCC's position that the current Rockfort proposal

does not meet the Caledon Community Resource Study's (CCRS) test of balanced interests between the aggregate industry and the interests of local community and natural environment. Approval of James Dick's application will cause undue economic hardship upon the area residents, with an unacceptably high risk of substantial environmental impairment (CCC, 1999a, p. 4).

The CCC website (www.coalitioncaledon.com) lists the CCC's objectives as follows:

¹⁶ For example, one member runs a construction company which does most of its business in the summer. Another operates a riding stable, and is consequently much busier during the competition season.

¹⁷ For example, activities related to the development of a comprehensive aggregate plan for the Town of Caledon.

- To uncover the relevant facts, issues, and risks associated with the Rockfort proposal and any other proposal for industrial development that could have an adverse impact on the human and natural ecology of the Caledon Hills;
- To provide timely and accurate information regarding the above, to all who might be impacted within Caledon Hills and beyond;
- In addition, the goal of the CCC is to encourage all levels of government to adopt sound land-use planning policies which protect the unique environmental importance of the region.

The CCC's overall position is that JDCL's permit application for a 2.5 million tonne/year quarry through the Aggregate Resources Act is an inappropriate use of the legislation, which was drafted with the intent of streamlining application procedures for much smaller pits and quarries. Permit applications under the Aggregate Resources Act fall into the annual production categories of 20,000 tonnes and under and 20,000 tonnes and over, and the CCC argues that a 2.5 million tonne quarry should be applying for approval through the much more stringent process of the Mining Act.

As part of their overall strategy, the CCC originally focussed their objections to the existing Rockfort quarry proposal around four key themes: its environmental impacts, its potential effects on local water, transportation issues, and economic impacts (CCC, 1999a). To identify the impacts of the proposed quarry in these and related areas, the CCC hired their own consultants, including a hydro-geologist, planner,

traffic consultant and geologist, to conduct technical assessments. These four themes are presented here as part of an overview of the CCC's resistance activities.

With respect to environmental issues, the CCC argues that the Rockfort site is on environmentally sensitive lands, and as such should be considered for protection from quarrying and other extractive activities. The Rockfort site abuts land protected under the Niagara Escarpment Plan, an area designated by UNESCO as part of the United Nations World Biosphere Reserve. This designation is used to recognize areas representative of the world's important ecosystems (CONE, 1998). According to CCC documents, the area is home to an abundance of wildlife, including several endangered species (CCC, 1999a), and the group argues that allowing the Rockfort quarry to proceed would result in disturbed habitats and wildlife transportation patterns. The Coalition argues that since the Amabel dolostone formation is extensively distributed in south-western Ontario (Harper, 1998), other less environmentally-sensitive sites should be examined as quarry possibilities rather than the Rockfort site.

The CCC also cites the quarry's potential effects on local groundwater as an area of concern. Quarrying at the Rockfort site is planned to a depth of 50 metres which involves mining below groundwater level in the area. One possible effect of deep quarrying is that groundwater could flow into the open quarry, potentially disrupting local water supplies. To counteract the possibility of this, JDCL has proposed the construction of a 'grout curtain' to stop water from flowing into the quarry. The CCC

argues that as this technology has never been tested under similar situations, no data are available as to its efficacy (CCC, 1999a) and as a result, the Coalition remains deeply sceptical of this approach as a way to alleviate the impact of the quarry on local groundwater. The efficacy of the ‘grout curtain’ has been a highly contested issue throughout this dispute.

The trucking of aggregate out of the Rockfort site is also a highly contentious issue for several reasons. First, the local roads, particularly the ones leading out of the Rockfort site, are currently gravel roads, not designed or built for heavy truck traffic. Allowing the Rockfort quarry to begin operation would require upgrading local roads and maintaining existing ones, a cost that would be paid partially by JDCL, but also borne by the regional municipality of Peel, and therefore by local taxpayers. One American study estimates that one loaded gravel truck (weighing 36 tonnes) does as much damage to a road as 9,600 passenger vehicles (Aggregate Resources of Southern Ontario, 1992) so the costs of road upgrades and maintenance would be significant. The CCC estimates that “the initial cost of building and upgrading the road system needed to service the proposed Rockfort quarry, would be \$15 million, with an additional \$80 million being required over the operating life of the quarry” (CCC, 1999a, p. 19).

The issue of safety on local roads has also been raised by the CCC. Shipping aggregate from the Rockfort quarry would result in as many as 1180 vehicle trips per day (590 loads out) in the area during peak production times (Rockfort Quarry

Application, 1998). As truck drivers are generally paid per trip, there are economic incentives to make as many trips as possible during a day, at significant travel speeds. These are the same roads that local school busses travel on, raising concerns for the safety of children during peak travel times. Additionally, there are concerns regarding the effects of the proposed quarry on the area's horse industry, which is "a major employer within the Region, generating direct employment for over 2,400 and revenues of about \$100 million annually, as well as providing recreation for over 5,000 children and an even larger number of adults" (CCC, 1999a, p. 4).

The fourth issue identified by the CCC is the economic impact the Rockfort quarry would have on the local area if it were to begin production. In particular, the CCC has voiced two key economic concerns. First, they argue about effects of the quarry on local real estate prices, with CCC members estimating that values of property around the Rockfort site could drop by as much as 40% overnight if a quarry permit is granted. The second issue of economic concern is that tax increases (via property tax) would be assessed to area residents to help cover the cost of road upgrades and maintenance for quarry-related haul routes.

Research literature on community-based mobilization in response to locally-unwanted land uses identifies two foci for resistance strategizing – one focussing on technical/legal arguments (e.g., Walsh et al., 1997, Fisher and Kling, 1990) and one focussing on political strategies (e.g., Kuhn and Ballard, 1998; McGurty, 1997). Historically, it is noted, political strategies have

historically been more ‘successful’ in blocking siting processes. This finding, however, is based almost exclusively on the analysis of the resistance practices of marginalized groups, so may or may not be relevant to this particular dispute. It is possible there is an inherent weakness in relying on technical/legal approaches to land use disputes, in particular the very real risk of having few options left for resistance if technical arguments are rejected. However, this finding may also be the result of marginalized groups lacking resources required to hire the consulting and legal expertise required to pursue this resistance approach. Environmental disputes are almost always technically complex, and community-based groups rarely have experience or expertise in these areas. Thus, developing technical arguments against a proposed land use typically requires extensive outside assistance during the early stages of local resistance – for many groups, an impossibly expensive process.

One of the reasons the CCC makes such a compelling case study is due to their extensive use of technical and legal strategies in the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry. In spite of the CCC’s stated understanding of the Rockfort quarry dispute as a political issue, in practice a significant proportion of their energies and financial resources have been directed towards engaging in technically and legally-oriented strategies. Throughout the Rockfort quarry dispute, the CCC has actively pursued a dual strategy - using technical/legal strategies to build a scientific, evidence-based business case against the

proposed quarry, and subsequently employing a ‘balanced’ and ‘rational’ approach to get this evidence to key political decision-makers¹⁸.

The CCC’s commitment to pursuing both types of strategies, and to ‘making the business case’ for the Rockfort quarry being an ‘inappropriate’ site, is evident in the following comment made by one interviewee.

I mean you may have great technical expertise but you have no money, you can’t get in front of the people you have to be in front of. If you are great at political shmoozing but you have no case, nobody’s going to listen to you. So you have to have some technical merit, saying this does not work or it’s high risk, you have to have done your homework. Otherwise the politicians say “They’re entitled to run their business.” So every one of those, it’s like a three legged stool, you remove one of those and it falls down....If you attend [various meetings], the city’s consultants will be very much less likely to negotiate and give away concessions to James Dick if he knows you’re in the same room. And maybe you can ask the odd question that will trigger this guy to say, yeah, what about that? That’s an important thing, we can’t let that go. Maybe you can talk to the city’s consultant before the meeting and say, these are the important items to us, make sure that you cover those. And you can get them to work as a team member on your behalf. (Interviewee 4)

In order to review JDCL’s initial proposal

...the Coalition retained technical experts from leading consulting firms to review the Rockfort proposal submitted by James Dick. In addition, the CCC and its own consultants have examined the peer reviews of the Rockfort proposal conducted by consulting firms hired by the Town of Caledon and Region of Peel. Additional research has been conducted on aspects of the environment not considered by James Dick in the Rockfort proposal. The Coalition is therefore well informed of the relevant facts, issues, benefits and risks, and is in an excellent position to speak to the technical issues that surround this and other industrial development applications (CCC, 1999a).

¹⁸ The CCC’s attempt to present ‘balanced’ and ‘rational’ resistance is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

A 1999 letter to the Canadian Environment Defence Fund, submitted as part of application for support, notes the following technical reports available on request from the CCC:¹⁹

- Valcoustics Canada Ltd.: Review – Noise and Vibration Impact Study
- Golder Associates Ltd.: Review – Mining Plan and Physical Barriers
- H.A. Simons, Ltd.: Review – Air Quality
- Hardy Stevenson: Review – Social Impact
- Hough Woodland Naylor Dance Leinster: Review – Cultural Heritage
- Ecological Service Group: Review – Natural Environmental Impacts
- Marshall Macklin Mohagham: Review – Truck Haul Route Study
- Jagger Hims Ltd: Review – Site Characterization and Evaluation of Water Resources
- Report from GAMAH International Ltd: Review of JDCL Application documents

The CCC has received significant legal advice since its inception. In addition to having a local lawyer handle the group's initial incorporation process, the group engaged in several conversations about legal issues in its early days with the Canadian Environmental Law Association, the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, the Suzuki Foundation and the Friends of Ontario Naturalists. CCC members noted that conversations with the Canadian Environmental Law Association were particularly useful, providing the CCC with information as to what they could and could not do

¹⁹ Some of these studies were initiated and paid for by the CCC, others were produced for the Town of Caledon and/or the Regional Municipality of Peel.

without a lawyer, what to expect in a hearings process and other relevant information.

The CCC subsequently retained two environmental lawyers of their own, one to deal with provincial issues and one to deal with federal issues²⁰.

With respect to hiring legal representation, the general CCC approach is similar to their approach with consultants – hire the best out there.

...if you don't have a good lawyer, you've got to find out in the network who is good and who isn't, you've got to ask the question "who's the best, and how much is it going to cost?" and then you have to look at funding. If you don't have somebody who is really good, you're not going to.... you're dead in the water, so you might as well save the money. So you've got to get advocates, and get a good one. (Interviewee 9)

In spite of the central role accorded legal and technical professionals within the CCC's overall resistance strategy, one interviewee expressed a high degree of cynicism about the role of consultants in the overall process.

...I am amazed that consultants on one side can have such an entirely different viewpoint as opposed to the consultants on the other side, and yet they're all coming from the same background and academic knowledge, etc. etc. It's really opened my eyes that way. You know, the answer seems to swing with who's paying you....I guess what I find amazing...the word wouldn't be ingenious, but ... the deductive reasoning to modify the answers so that they appease one side on the one hand, and then the group on the other side can come up with different deductive reasoning, same evidence, to support something else. Do you understand what I'm saying? They're so versatile! (Laughter) (Interviewee 6)

²⁰ Provincially, legal advice was mainly required for advice and representation at OMB pre-hearings; federally, legal advice was retained to pursue the possibility of triggering an environmental impact assessment under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act due to the impact of the proposed quarry on cold water fisheries in the area. This latter strategy was later abandoned.

Several CCC members also expressed cynicism about the importance of technical arguments in a process that was perceived as an inherently political one. Political was understood in this case to mean that a decision had already been made ‘behind closed doors’. While this did not stop the CCC from investing heavily in technical reports, it also highlighted the importance of political processes in aggregate decision making. With respect to the development of politically-oriented resistance strategies, CCC members repeatedly stressed the importance of understanding the “political game” being played at each level (municipal, regional, provincial and federal) and emphasized the importance of lobbying or working with politicians at all levels.

Several respondents commented during the interviews that “....a lot of these things are decided in the back rooms”, so one key strategy was the development of initiatives that would place pressure on politicians. This process was understood within the CCC as ensuring that relevant politicians were aware that offering political support for the proposed Rockfort quarry application would “...create more grief than they anticipated” (Interviewee 9). As one respondent notes:

The substance of their technical arguments and all that is totally irrelevant. Okay, at the end of the day, it doesn't mean a damn thing. Politicians don't understand them, they don't read them. If there's an executive summary they might skim over it, but that's it. What they will deal with is the emotional issues, they will deal with what's motivating the masses out there, and so on. And that's what they're going to deal with. That's their thought process. If it's something that they're into, then they'll embrace it. If it's something that's going to be a pain in the butt for them, then they'll just take the indifferent approach. Until the polling shows that “we've got a problem here.” And then...then it works. (Interviewee 8)

In the late 1990s, some CCC members endeavoured to influence politicians and bureaucrats involved with the Rockfort siting decision by providing site tours of the area to highlight its natural beauty. These tours were provided to representatives from the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources, the Town of Caledon, Peel Region and the federal Fisheries department. Particular attention was paid on these tours to the ponds and watersheds that would be affected if the quarry were to go ahead. The tours were intended to highlight the fragility of the existing ecosystems, as well as the natural beauty of the area. As one CCC member noted, "...decisions are made removed from the site and that you need to bring the site to the decision-makers." (Interviewee 7)

Research on community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses (e.g., McGurty, 1997, Walsh et al.) highlights three specific politically-oriented strategies that community might choose to engage in: direct action; public education; and horizontal and vertical networking strategies. Because this literature draws almost exclusively on the experiences of marginalized groups, an (unarticulated) assumption became apparent when examining the CCC's experience against this framework - that 'politicization' of issues is equated with grassroots mobilization. The implications of this are significant. For example, within this conceptualization horizontal and vertical networking strategies are assumed to be of benefit because they can help to increase the number of resisters. This stands in contrast to the CCC's understanding of 'politicization' as equating with access to political decision-makers, and as such, networking activities focuses on creating access to - and influencing - key decision makers. This understanding of 'politics' has important implications for the

development and implementation of resistance strategies, implications which are discussed briefly here and more fully in following chapters. This conceptualization of ‘issue politicization’ may also point to a conceptual limitation of research on community resistance practices based solely on the experiences of marginalized groups, for which ‘access to political decision-makers’ may not be a strategic option.

As a result of viewing political activity as a means of reaching and influencing key decision-makers, rather than mobilizing grassroots support, the CCC has very deliberately set out to frame their arguments in a “rational, objective way” and to present the group as a “...focussed, dissenting voice that's been thoughtful, not just raging away” (Interviewee 9). The CCC has also been careful to frame their arguments in way aimed at preventing the conflict from being perceived as (merely) a not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) dispute. In spite of this attempt at framing the issues this way, in practice the group has remained solely focussed on resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry, rather than challenging the quarry siting as part of a broader environmental, political or social resistance strategy. While this strategy has been undertaken with the intent of “not diluting the group’s limited energies” it has also limited the scope of their resistance strategies.

As part of their political strategizing, the CCC largely chose to forego direct action strategies, due to concerns about maintaining ‘credibility’ with key decision-makers²¹. With respect to public education and raising local awareness, the CCC was

²¹ This is explored more fully later in the next chapter, as part of the discussion of the CCC’s resistance narratives.

active in several ways. From the beginning, the CCC was actively involved in raising public awareness of the proposed quarry and its local implications. This included the development and dissemination of local newsletters, the development of a media strategy to ensure that quarry-related articles and editorials appeared in local newspapers and magazines,²² and the organization of several public meetings - many with attendance levels between 100 and 600 people. As one respondent commented:

...there were a number of things that the Coalition did at the same time, and it was, you know, we had a fundraiser in the fall, Sandra Seamus, a theatre evening. We had people positioned down on the bridge by the brickworks, handing out flyers because the bridgework had been going on. We had a commuter traffic survey being done. So that we were in there face a little bit more all the time. And that, again, you know with newsletters, that's the thing. I mean, you've just got to keep going back to them, and keep getting a broader....broader base. (Interviewee 3)

Public meetings and newsletter were used as a means of regularly communicating quarry-related information to large groups of interested community members, although the time and energy required for organization, dissemination and generating publicity was noted as significant. However, CCC members felt these meetings were good ways to disseminate information and spur debate and discussion on specific issues such as water and road safety. The CCC had also large red and white "Stop the Trucks" and "No More Pits" signs printed up, which were sold locally. The signs provided high visibility support for CCC activities (particularly in areas adjacent to the proposed site) and provided opportunities to discuss the implications of the proposed quarry.

²² Attempts to generate media coverage outside the area were less successful, although occasional articles appeared in the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, and Toronto Life magazine.

As the CCC evolved, and became clearer in its overall goal, some networking activities were undertaken with individuals and other non-profit organizations, although the CCC stated clearly throughout this process that while ‘common cause’ might be found between groups, their focus was nonetheless fighting the proposed quarry on the Rockfort site. However, attempts were made to raise awareness of how specific aspects of the proposed development might affect others in the area. For example, with respect to water issues in the area, concerns about the proposed extraction below the water table were raised in public meetings, highlighting the potential impact of the quarry on others in the community (e.g., local farmers). For example,

[Name] and [name]... they staged this meeting with the water issue. It happened to be, I would say, very helpful for us that we also had an exceptionally dry winter. And so all of a sudden you had farmers that were...had dry wells, and were saying “Good God, we don’t have any water.” And a lot of residents in the area have no water. And so then, all of a sudden people say “whoa. If I don’t have any water now, what’s going to happen to me if that quarry goes in? I’m really going to be out of luck.” Then they start to pay attention. You know, and that was what generated the interested in that meeting about water. That’s why I think you had the turnout there that you did. (Interviewee 3)

Respondents also commented on the impact of these meetings on community awareness of the potential water-related impacts of the proposed Rockfort quarry:

A lot of people don’t understand it yet, but that’s why the water meeting that we had, a number of people have been down talking to us since, saying “I did not realize all of these issues with water could affect us so many different ways”. And of course it’s not in Dick’s interest to go out and tell them that. (Interviewee 2)

Similarly, the CCC attempted to demonstrate ways in which increased truck haul traffic on local roads were an issue of concern to local commuters, to those with children on school buses using the same roads, and to those using the country roads for leisure and recreational purposes such as riding. The CCC also endeavoured to generate local awareness regarding the impact of the trucking of aggregate on the area's horse industry and impact on local hunting, fishing and ski clubs. Ensuring that the impact of the proposed Rockfort quarry on these local issues became (and remained) public and visible generated some partnership interest from other groups, although the CCC's exclusive focus on the Rockfort quarry effectively limited the scope of these alliances to a mutual agreement to support each other's goals rather than a more engaged form of partnership.

Some horizontal and vertical networking occurred in attempts to create partnerships with other community or interest-based groups. For example, attempts were made early in the CCC's development to create partnerships with other local groups such as the Friends of Ontario Naturalists, Bruce Trail users (many of whom were non-resident in the area), and the Caledon Ski and Fishing Clubs, who were concerned about the impact of the proposed quarry on their local members. More recently, the CCC developed similar alliances with others engaged in resistance in the area, including the Caledon Countryside Alliance and the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance. The tight focus of CCC resistance activities – with emphasis on all resistance activities specific to the Rockfort quarry - limits the potential of partnering as a strategy for developing broad-based grassroots political support. Consequently, the CCC has

subsequently limited its partnering efforts to the development of ‘strategic alliances’ with other groups in which the involved organizations support each other’s goals and objectives (writ broadly) but work independently on individual activities.

More recently, the majority of networking activities initiated by the CCC have focussed on establishing linkages with key decision-makers at all levels – municipal, regional, provincial and federal. The importance of networking was frequently acknowledged, but the goal of this activity was clearly understood by most CCC members as ‘reaching key decision-makers’ rather than ‘mobilizing broad-based community support’. As noted one interviewee,

...we have certainly brought the concerns of this whole Caledon area to the attention of the politicians. The politicians know all about us. The municipal politicians, the regional politicians know about us, certainly James Dick, the proponent, knows all about us and where we’re coming from. (Interviewee 9)

Community-based resistance, as practiced by the CCC with its dual focus on both political and technical/legal strategies, is an expensive process. As a result, fundraising has been a strong focus of CCC activity since its inception. Annual fundraising events include a spring garage sale and a fall golf tournament. The former is a significant fundraiser - the first (in 1997) raised over \$20,000, and the most recent (2006) raised \$45,000. Fundraising totals were not provided for the golf tournament. Other fundraising events have occurred intermittently, including four “hoe-downs”, a variety of theatre events²³, and a “PMS Event” clothing sale

²³ Previous events have included a night with Sandra Seamus, a new production by Dan Needles (the latest play in his popular Wingfield Farm series), and an organized bus tour to a Toronto theatre production.

consisting of “Previously Modelled Stuff”. In early 1997 the CCC estimated its local strength at approximately 350 supporters in the community. Two years later the CCC claimed approximately 3,000 supporters in the community (CCC, 1999b). By 2003 the CCC estimated local support in the 5,000 person range and fundraising activities had netted over \$625,000 (www.caledoncoalition.com).

Through their affiliation with Canadian Environmental Defence Fund, and upon approval of their status as a community-based resistance group, the Coalition secured the ability to provide tax receipts for donations. As one interviewee noted, this was of significant benefit to the CCC.

It will enable people who might be prepared to give you a five thousand dollar, or a ten thousand dollar donation. It'll enable them to have a tax receipt, which will make a very big difference. (Interviewee 3)

Although the Coalition's fundraising has netted significant resources for the group, most of this money went to either consulting fees (in the Coalition's early days) or, more recently, legal fees. At one point in the early days of this dispute, the Coalition attempted to trigger an environmental assessment through the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans²⁴. As part of this strategy, the CCC was invited to make a presentation to a Senate Committee in Ottawa, and retained the services of a high-profile environmental lawyer to represent them at this meeting. Attempts to trigger the environmental assessment (under the provisions of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act) were later abandoned. This was due to the Coalition's assessment

²⁴ The potential impact of a large-scale quarry on the cold water fisheries in the area was the issue proposed as the trigger for an environmental assessment.

that the legal costs of pursuing this avenue were prohibitive given the perception of limited chances of successfully blocking the proposed quarry this way.

The largest CCC expenditures have been on legal representation at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), the government appointed body that adjudicates land use disputes in the province. The OMB's ability to adjudicate the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry has been complicated by the interconnected nature of other related hearings and policy decision-making processes. For example, the approval of the Caledon aggregate resources plan (Bill 161) was delayed until the OMB had ruled on development in the Oak Ridges Moraine, as parts of Caledon fall within the Moraine area. Adjudication of the Rockfort quarry dispute was subsequently delayed as the OMB refused to grandfather JDCL's application after the Town of Caledon introduced its aggregate resources plan in 2003, ultimately requiring JDCL to meet the more stringent municipal guidelines set out in Bill 161. This resulted in JDCL being required to undertake a four-season watershed study as part of the application process for the proposed Rockfort quarry. This study is currently in progress, so a final OMB hearing will be delayed until study completion, which is expected no earlier than the first quarter of 2007.

While these procedural complexities have delayed a full OMB hearing on the proposed Rockfort quarry, they have also necessitated several years of pre-hearings. The Coalition President estimates that between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000 has already been spent on legal fees for Coalition attendance at OMB pre-hearings. This figure

includes Coalition attendance at approximately six pre-hearings per year between 2003 and 2005, and a smaller number in prior years. When a final OMB hearing does occur, the CCC will attend with legal representation. This hearing is expected to take approximately three months, and the cost of legal fees to the Coalition are expected to be in the range of \$250,000. It was also noted that OMB pre-hearings related to the proposed Rockfort quarry have already outlasted different chairpersons, with a sixth expected prior to the final hearing. This has required each new chair to review the case prior to continuing with the pre-hearing process (CCC President, personal communication, June 2006).

Before turning to a closer examination of the CCC's approach to community-based organizing, it is worth first taking a closer look at the membership of the organization. As is demonstrated through the transcript excerpts below, the exurbanites of the area play a predominant role in CCC organizing and activities, and this exurban subjectivity is strongly reflected in both the group's internal organization, and their development of externally-oriented resistance strategies. In many ways, the CCC is the antithesis of the typical community-based resistance groups profiled in the research literature, which tend to be marginalized, poor and often non-white. How the CCC differs from 'typical' local resistance groups, both in composition and approach, is highlighted in many of the comments below, as is the influence of the group's exurban subjectivity on Coalition activities and practices of resistance. The next section of this chapter examines the composition of the Coalition in more detail, and explores the impact of the group's composition on their

internal organization, most notably in the highly professional nature of this ‘volunteer’ organization.

It is worth noting the use of language in the quotes below from Coalition participants, particularly with respect to the way different individuals describe the CCC. Some use the term ‘we’ and ‘us’ while others (also Coalition members) use the terms ‘they’ and ‘them’. It is perhaps not surprising that the majority of respondents who referred to the coalition in the third-person (as ‘they’, rather than ‘we’) are no longer actively affiliated with the CCC, although each left for different reasons. Overall, this use of language may indicate that these members exhibited less of an identification with the CCC than some others, or possibly, a lack of ownership over quarry resistance initiatives.

Exurban Subjectivity and the Professionalization of Community-based Organization

The Caledon area has experienced a significant demographic change over the past three decades, primarily in terms of rapid growth of an exurbanite population. As one interviewee who had grown up in the area noted,

...when I was a kid, when I was being brought up here, there wasn't anybody here but rural people, but farm people, and most of them had been her for four or five generations, not all by any means, but many. So this area was a very rural and agricultural community. ...Approximately 30 or 35 years ago, the change was starting to come. I was starting to notice that there were non-farm people living out here and at first it was a

few, but now, oh, it's the majority. ...The people who moved out here chose to live out here, to get away from something in the city, not hard to imagine why they wanted to. But they still worked in the city, and all their friends were still city people, they still socialized in the city.
(Interviewee 1)

Due, in part to its natural beauty and close proximity to Toronto, Caledon has become a sought after retirement area for many successful exurbanites. One of the first things of note is the demographic difference between Caledon and most other rural populations in Ontario.

...if you looked at the population of Caledon as compared to the population of a number of other rural communities, I think you'll find that there is a much higher affluence, and I think a much higher percentage of professional people. I've heard it said there are more millionaires in the town of Caledon than anywhere else in the country, per capita.
(Interviewee 1)

Also of note is the number of CCC members who are entrepreneurs, or who possess significant business experience with large (and often national-level) organizations.

As one interviewee noted,

If you have noticed talking to all of the individuals up there, there's a very large number of individuals who occupy today, or have occupied, very senior positions within large corporations. Of all these individuals, there are presidents, chairmen of the board, and that sort of thing.
(Interviewee 2)

This depth of professional experience also translated into a strong skills base for CCC activities.

Well, we've got a myriad of skills. Golly, you've got very strong leadership skills in a number of people. You have very good public speaking skills in, I would say, three or four people, and that certainly is one of my strongest points. You have very strong writing skills in the group, and different kinds of writing skills. We have writing skills that are of an editorial nature, we have writing skills that are of a...more of a creative writing, prose, exactly. Planning skills, fundraising skills....I mean, I initially came in with fundraising skills and...in fact, I guess I

started fundraising about eighteen years ago, and...what have I done? I've been on the Board of an independent school, in charge of two major capital campaigns, one for 7.3 million dollars, the other for 6.5 million. Well, that kind of fundraising is a one-on-one...that's a total one-on-one solicitation. And then I've done a bunch of special events fundraising. You know, dinner auctions and that kind of stuff. I've also been on the Board of an agency, a...social service agency that supported newly separated, divorced or widowed women. And I learned in that process a lot about government applications for funding and foundation application for funding. (Interviewee 3)

In terms of technical expertise, CCC membership includes (or has included in the past) a number of internal 'experts' that is unusual for community-based groups.

Expertise noted by one member included the following:

I have a certain amount of technical expertise in the area of environmental permitting, how it works...[Name] it's his business to know the mining industry - technically he's very competent. Some people - you've got [name], who is politically active, [and] who is talking daily with the politicians, that's her milieu...she feels very much at home in the political process. So they've got good resource for that type of job that needs to be done, the person making political liaisons. You've got someone to maintain links to the province, the town, the whole thing [who] asks the right questions, gets them to ask the right questions of James Dick. [That person] is able to look at what reports they produce and interpret that and feed that information over to [name] who can then say, did you know what the impact of this is? [Name] owns and operates his own tax business. So every one of them is basically...has the framework of a CEO, even if it's CEO of the local Reform constituency. So there's a lot of strategists there, a lot of upper level thinking, in terms of "get it done", get it organized and have an organized process for getting it done. (Interviewee 4)

Another member with a construction background commented on the breadth of his own experience:

...certain knowledge I've got, from my own business background, and more generally the construction background, and my particular business is limited to a particular field right now, but my background is quite varied. When I was talking with the hydro-geologists after our meeting at

the school down here, one of them expressed...how should I put it... surprise at the depth of my knowledge of hydrogeology. (Interviewee 5)

Several CCC members also possess extensive social and political capital, at a variety of levels. At the time of the interviews, one interviewee noted connections with both ruling governments at both the provincial and federal level:

Well, that's because you see some of the guys from the coalition, and this is where they've got hold of all the people at various levels. They've got the guy who deals with the Liberals and the senators in Ottawa, you've got the guy, actually the two guys, who are on the Board of the one of the universities, directors at one of the large universities, and you've got the guys who are sitting at the provincial government, Mike Harris' tables for fundraisers, or next to his table, so like they're all over the place, and that's where we've got a real mix of people that are there. (Interviewee 2)

The social capital possessed by CCC members was explicitly linked to the Coalition's ability to fundraise: One interviewee noted this in terms of fundraising experience:

[Name] is good at fund raising, got lots of connections with people who have many [resources]and seems to draw that in. So the key things you have to do as an effective body is you have to raise money, you have to be politically active, you have to identify the technical issues, you know there's lots of things you have to do. Typically they are well resourced do all of those things. (Interviewee 4)

Another Coalition member explicitly noted the Coalition's social capital in the financial sector: "I think you've got financial skills...You've sure got your heavy hitters from the Bay Street community." (Interviewee 3)

It is worth noting that while most members of the Coalition, and their local supporters, are exurbanites (in the sense of having moved to the area after successful

professional careers) there is a range of ‘local’ knowledge within the group. Two members (a brother and sister) were raised on their family’s farm, located near the proposed quarry site. Others who moved to the area have a long and involved history in local affairs. Some CCC members maintained two properties (one in Toronto, one in Caledon) for several years, and became full-time in the area only after retiring from Toronto-based careers. One interviewee noted that some individuals became Coalition supporters only after committing to rural life on a full-time basis, and that others still maintained stronger social ties to Toronto than to the local area, and thus remained somewhat unconnected to local issues such as resistance to the proposed quarry. Regardless of this variation, the exurban perspective is dominant within the group, and this subjectivity permeates CCC discourses and strategic planning. The impact of this exurban subjectivity on community-based resistance is discussed throughout this chapter and the following ones, first in an examination of the ‘professional’ nature of the CCC’s community-based resistance, and subsequently through an analysis of the CCC’s resistance narratives.

Distinguishing characteristics of the CCC as a community-based group include the wide-ranging skill set and extensive social capital possessed by the group and the high-level of professional experience members bring to the Coalition by virtue of their previous work and life experiences. These skills and professionalism were strongly visible in the internal organization of the CCC, which, in many ways, functions more like a Board of Directors working within

a 'corporate governance' model than a typical community-based volunteer organization.

Research literature on community-based resistance to locally-unwanted land uses (e.g., Heiman, 1990, Walsh et al., 1997, Kuhn and Ballard, 1998) identifies a number of factors as critical to the successful organization of community-based resistance, including good leadership; clear articulation of organizational goals and objectives; some form of organizational structure; and mechanisms to deal with internal conflict resolution and communication. The CCC demonstrates significant organizational strength in each of these areas, as well as in other organizational domains not noted in the literature²⁵. Maintaining strong internal organization and group cohesion has been one of the CCC's strengths since its inception. Throughout the research interviews, members of the group indicated a comfort with, and preference for, 'professional' organizational structures. Some concrete examples of the CCC's organizational strengths provide an effective illustration of the links between the Coalition's composition and the degree of professionalism brought to bear on volunteerism within the CCC.

Social protest is generally recognized as a learned activity (Capek, 1993), one that requires strong leadership and basic organizational structures. One of the comments that emerged spontaneously and repeatedly throughout the research interviews was

²⁵ For example, the CCC has been skilled in recruiting members with specific skill sets, and in functioning as a 'learning organization'.

the importance of leadership within the CCC and the effectiveness of the CCC's long-term President. Almost without exception the members of the CCC commented on the "excellence" of their President, her "even-handedness" in volatile situations, her strong work commitment and work ethic and her consistency in "getting the job done." Comments by one interviewee cite the challenges involved in managing this particular group:

I would say [name] is, to me, anyway, an excellent leader. Because she's very steady and she's very on target, and nothing seems to ruffle her. And she ...she has a lot of forbearance. Because one of the things in a volunteer group that... is difficult, is that they're all volunteers. They're wonderful, but they're all volunteers and they all have different....levels of time, different amounts of time that they can give, and they all have different gifts to give. They bring different things to the table, they're a very disparate group usually, and trying to keep them on track and not getting angry with each other, or having dissension, trying to keep also...the big thing is trying to keep the coalition...the group itself on track. (Interviewee 9)

Another interviewee made observations about her leadership style:

Well, you've got to give [name] credit for being the leader and probably moderator most of the time. She's doing a heck of a job there, and she does it calmly and quietly. Yeah, she can get noisy when she wants to (laughs) but typically she doesn't, you know. (Interviewee 5)

The traits noted as strengths (e.g., calmness, fairness, dedication) were considered not only as traits of a good leader, but as essential when tensions were running high in the group. The section on conflict management and communication within the group addresses this issue in more detail, but the following comment explicitly links the role of leadership with self-management of conflict.

I made the conscious decision, one or two things is going to happen here, either I'm going to explode, and I'm going to tell somebody what I think, or I'm going to back away and let them carry on, and it was a very

deliberate, conscious decision that no, the cause would not be furthered by, I'll feel a lot better if I explode on this, and if I chew that son of a bitch out, but it won't do the cause any good, and it will make it harder for [the President], because she'll have to try and put the pieces back together. So I said the best thing for the cause is if I just back off and either let them carry on, or let someone else tone them down, or whatever, but I'm not the right person to do this. (Interviewee 1)

Strategically, it is easiest to organize a group when individuals can be brought together around one overarching goal or purpose. Having one clearly defined goal provides a centre to coalesce around during group formation and development stage. If the group's goal is perceived as superseding individual interests, it may have the added benefit of decreasing internal conflict within the group. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, the CCC established clear goals and objectives for their resistance in the early stages of group formation, and a clear statement of the group's purpose is visible in most of their printed materials and on their website. It also emerged as a topic of discussion in research interviews. For example, one CCC member noted the importance of having clearly defined goals and objectives in order to provide a rationale for resistance to the proposed quarry.

You've got to have a purpose, you've got to have a mission. ...you've got to represent something positive, and people will be more likely to follow something positive than something negative. It's getting purpose, mission, vision, values, and then we can focus everybody behind those things, rather than just go off in every direction. (Interviewee 4)

While the development of clear organizational goals and objectives is not particularly unusual for community-based groups, the articulation of these into a formal mission statement is notable, again reflecting the professional experience of CCC participants. The group's collective focus on the 'big picture' was noted as helping to maintain

group cohesion, while the existence of multiple objectives served to create niches allowing for matching the interests of various individuals within the CCC. The benefits of both strategies were reflected in several comments made during the interviews with CCC members. As one interviewee noted,

[T]he thing to remember here is that there is one overall objective. And it's up to each to come to decisions within that objective. The difficulty is to decide the path you're going to take, whether you're going to work with each other, and then you get consensus, but the thing to remember here is that there is one overall objective. And let people go and do it. (Interviewee 2)

Developing resistance strategies building on the individual talents and interests of CCC members emerged as a factor in keeping the group cohesive, and also allowed individual CCC members to break resistance work into smaller and more manageable pieces. In addition, encouraging members to pursue individual interests (e.g., roads, water, marketing) fostered the development of subject matter expertise in the group, while reducing potential for intra-group conflict by created clearly defined roles for individuals within the CCC. For example, two Coalition members were actively involved in raising awareness about the potential impact of the Rockfort quarry on local groundwater supplies.

For example, [Name] and I, we've gone off on a tangent working on water. The group hasn't done a lot of work on that. Now we've gone off on a tangent, this is kind of, I guess, an idea that we worked out, that I've been consumed with very much, which is to set up another group, of people who are all interested in water only. Let them stand up, let them get their own organization going, let them start up and start to stir the politicians to realize that there are other groups, not just us, up there, that there's other side issues that are important to everybody. So you can get away from this NIMBY thing. (Interviewee 2)

Another respondent commented on the benefits of clearly identifying 'lead people' in various areas, and developing subject matter capacity within the group as a result.

The rest of them, I think, some of them have been more interested in some parts of this than others so some of them had.... transportation was their area. They got really involved in that and they'd attend all the meetings. Other people are getting involved in water issues, and they basically stick handled all those issues. So there's been in effect a lot of informal sub-committees that were formed, and people are finding - the more they find out about the issue, the more they get involved and drawn into it and, so there was very little conflict from the fact that being the recognized expert on water nobody's going to tell you, you know, really disagree with you on your approach on that part of the strategy, expanding the Coalition's, you know, reach into that area. (Interviewee 4)

One female interviewee also noted a gender difference reflecting the different work and life experiences between the men and women in the group, and how this played out in terms of working towards a common goal.

...a lot of the men and....I'm not trying to be sexist at all, but a lot of the men....have great business skills, and they are different from volunteer skills. So I think, for instance, when you were in any dissension or disagreement, men who have not been involved in a volunteer organization... you have to stop them and say look, you know, you have to work through this because just remember we have one focus. Everybody has a common focus, you can't let personalities come into this. (Interviewee 11)

Effective community-based organization typically requires some type of organizational structure, and some (e.g., Bettencourt et al. (1996)) go so far as to identify structure as a key factor in the success of community-based resistance. A clearly defined organizational structure has existed within the CCC from its earliest days and the group's comfort level with this type of structure reflects, at least in part, the professional background of many CCC participants. From its inception, the group has held regular weekly meetings, a

practice that has continued through almost eight years of organizing to the present. In the first year or so meetings rotated between various members' houses, after that a permanent office space was donated by one of the CCC members. Local supporters who exhibit interest in further involvement in quarry resistance are usually invited to drop by a weekly meeting and see what they can do.

Early in the CCC's history, one member began setting up a database of supporters, with names, addresses and telephone numbers to make it easy to get in touch with interested citizens when new development occurred, in order to announce public information meetings. As the CCC grew larger, and meeting attendance grew to a core group of between 15 and 20 members, a part-time secretary was hired to help with the record keeping and activity tracking. Because a CCC member has donated space for a permanent CCC office, meetings can be held at the same time and place each week, eliminating confusion as to where and when the next meeting will occur. The one exception to this is in the summer where meeting dates are varied somewhat to accommodate summer schedules, usually by shifting from Sunday morning meetings to Tuesday evening ones.

CCC meetings are relatively structured – each meeting follows a pre-set agenda, meetings are chaired by one of the CCC members (usually the President) and a secretary records the minutes. Between meetings a set of minutes is sent electronically to each CCC member, which includes a task list and agenda for the

next meeting. The task list is used to track on-going activities and ensure that everything on the agenda can at least be discussed, even if only minimal progress has occurred. Accountability to the organization is assumed, with individual members being expected to carry out relevant Coalition responsibilities as required, and use the weekly meetings to report on progress. As one respondent noted about CCC meetings,

I don't need to drive an hour both ways to get there and then sit and be frustrated and think, really I didn't need to be there. And so I think that that sort of put the, you know, onus on everybody to know that they'd done their homework, and to know that they will be prepared to speak to something. (Interviewee 3)

Another respondent commented that

...you have to respect people's time in a meeting. And particularly in this group, because that time is recreational time. It becomes even more critical. So don't bring me to a meeting if I don't need to be there. If there isn't enough on our agenda, cancel the meeting. Don't have a meeting just to meet. (Interviewee 9)

The need for effective meeting management was noted as well during the research interviews, with ample recognition of the importance of good time management when working with a group of volunteers. The importance of moving towards group decision-making consensus between weekly meeting times was also noted.

I think because the meetings are only once a week, and because the issues, you know, because there are so many of them, that you have to decide which are the important ones, and I think that's why a lot of the talk goes on before. You've got to have an agenda, if you're going to get anywhere. Meetings should be short, and fast. Over with, bang, and get on with what you have to do next. You don't do them at the meetings, you just approve things. The work has to be done outside...So you've got to keep everybody, you come to a meeting, you've got to have them all

ready before hand. You've got to do your lobbying, get everybody on the same team. You can't have anybody out of step. So you've got to smooth all the feathers so that things happen. (Interviewee 7)

Stated more concisely,

Decisions are always made before they go into the group. I think in most cases the group as a whole makes the decisions, outside they talk to each other, work with each other, and then you get a consensus. (Interviewee 2)

There is no formal decision-making mechanism in place for CCC meetings, but group members expressed a preference for reaching group decisions by consensus after (sometimes extensive) discussion. A loose form of 'majority rules' was used in cases where consensus could not be reached. Some differences were discussed and dealt with in weekly meetings. Other issues, such as differences not amenable to quick solutions, often continue as discussion items outside group meetings. There was general agreement in the interviews that engaging in too much heated discussion during weekly meetings would be counterproductive – slowing meetings down, and possibly frustrating CCC members to the point of not participating. In cases of contentious discussion, one or two of the core CCC members typically conduct telephone or in-person follow up with involved individuals, both to encourage group consensus as well as to “smooth all the feathers.”

With respect to intra-group communication and conflict resolution, the CCC is also exemplary in many ways. For reasons noted above, the group has been able to attract a number of individuals with extensive business and professional experience to the

CCC. While the experience these individuals bring to the CCC undoubtedly provides a highly professional framework for effective organization and strategic planning there are also challenges associated with keeping a group of strong and opinionated individuals working cohesively together. As one respondent noted:

I just think the interactions between the various individuals that are there... you see that even then, even though they're very, very good friends, they can still fight like cat and dog over a couple of issues (laughs). Okay, but it's also something that you see very much at those levels, those individuals, there's a lot of gamesmanship, and it's very interesting to see the interaction. (Interviewee 2)

One particular conflict became somewhat infamous, although it was joked about at later meetings. "I've been at meetings where one guy has threatened to punch another guy out at the meeting, you know, it's gotten a little bit tense at some of the meetings." (Interviewee 4)

Several respondents noted that the group's dynamics had changed over time. A key change involved certain individuals making the shift from 'leader' to 'participant'. In other words, some former executives had to learn to function as part of a group, rather than as an executive leader in charge of delegating tasks to subordinates. This change was noted by one respondent as follows:

It's also very, very different from when it started, when it all started out you could see the former executives kind of expecting decisions, say something and it will happen, because that's what I'm used to doing (laughs). And you've seen them all back off, and it's a much more group thing now, you see it changes (Interviewee 2).

In spite of the management challenges presented by a group of strong willed and experienced individuals, the CCC has been uniquely successful in managing these

internal tensions. This has been accomplished primarily by maintaining the group's focus on the overall goal of stopping the Rockfort quarry, and ensuring the primacy of this goal over any issues emerging from individual differences. It is likely the extensive professional experience of Coalition members has helped in this matter – individual members overall were very good at framing disagreements as difference of opinion over substantive issues, rather than as personal attacks. As noted by one interviewee,

Most of them are entrepreneurial, and they've got the ego to allow them to make suggestions without feeling that, you know, if they're laughed at, it doesn't matter...in most cases (they) separate the problem from the person....The people here are very strong - the people who are left have strong egos, so they get shot down regularly, but it doesn't matter. People get taken down, they get questioned, and it's very public and people don't mind, because you just go on to the next issue after that. (Interviewee 4)

Another interviewee articulated the separation of 'personal' from 'group' agendas clearly.

[Name] said to me two or three weeks ago, she said "Well, how do you feel about that?" and I said "I didn't join this thing to run it, I joined it to be a member of a group, and follow a democratic process." Other people are saying "it's not a good idea" so I'll go with that. I'll still have my opinion, and I'll still voice my opinion, but if the other people collectively think what I say is not the right thing, or it's the wrong time, whatever, that's the way it is. I can make my own choice, and they make the collective choice, and I will, you know, I'll support that. Unless it's really against something I believe in, then I can always get up and leave. (Interviewee 5)

One interviewee also remarked explicitly about the necessity of not letting personal emotions detract from the Coalition's pursuit of its overall goal of preventing the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry.

I think it's because of this cause, I think that people just know that we can't let those things split us, as a group. We can't afford to let personal feelings or conflicts divide the group, because we've got to stay focussed if we're going to beat (the Rockfort quarry). (Interviewee 3)

Several interviewees made reference to strategies that involve the management or self-management of conflict, and the importance of walking away from potentially conflictual situations when emotions are running high.

...some of them, having been in the management positions that they have, myself included, as we all know that you sometimes have to, you have to let other people talk, have their say and so on, so it's part of the normal interaction,....I think they're just too skilled, and managerial, some of them, to allow [destructive conflict] to happen....And I think that they know when to back off, and back down, and when to cover the conflicts outside. You'll never resolve a conflict in a group meeting. I meant that's... you never will. If you have a problem, you table it and you solve it outside [the meeting]. (Interviewee 2)

Another interviewee noted the importance of occasionally letting things go in a meeting, rather than challenging a group member in an emotional state.

Yeah, and there's other times when you see somebody is really wound up in something, the best thing to do is back off and just let them say what they want to say, and just quietly move on to the next subject. You've got to just watch them, see how they're reacting to a subject, and at times, you know, kind of let them go. (Interviewee 5)

Several references were made to group members acting as informal facilitators when tensions were running high in the group, something I also observed during some of the meetings. Interestingly, while it was often – but not always - women functioning in this role, the role of gender in this process was noted by several people.²⁶ A female

²⁶ I did not ask any direct questions about gendered dimensions of Coalition activities (internal or external) but did follow up on these as they were raised by others. Interestingly, one comment about gender (made by a woman) was the only thing I was asked to strike from the interview transcripts.

interviewee commented on her role (at times) as an intervener when things got heated between some of the men in the group.

...sometimes when you get [name] and [name] who can be [very entertaining] but can also be at each other, and you get [name] into that, I'm the one that sometimes has to wade in and just 'okay, boys, now come on' (Interviewee 3).

A male interviewee commented on the role women played in the group, and how a female Coalition president was able to work with the group in ways a male president might not be able to.

[Some men in the group] they will let themselves...not be dictated to, but be directed by one of the female members of the Coalition...You look at [name] or [name]...I couldn't see either of those guys accepting another male with as strong a conviction as either of them trying to run that thing. Because they would be too much in their face. They'd have a fight. [The women] are certainly more diplomatic and calming...the fiery male ego just backs off when the woman says 'calm down' where if a guy said it, he's liable to get the other guy to just jump down his throat (Interviewee 5)

Although the majority of internal conflicts were resolved with the group, some were not. In a few instances where individuals were perceived as acting in ways that were counterproductive to the group, or working at cross-purposes with CCC's goals, these individuals either left on their own accord or were asked to leave for the overall good of the organization. One respondent observed that the Coalition

...lost some people who just couldn't...who have the opinion that their way is the right way and they're not willing to think that there's any other approach, other than their approach, which is a valid approach. They've basically been...put on the sideline, they were ineffectual and they stopped coming to the meetings. (Interviewee 4)

A few other factors emerged as aspects of the CCC's organizational strength. The role of 'fun' and the importance of humour is something not often mentioned in the community-based resistance literature (Allen, 1999, being an exception), but an issue which arose in several interviews and something observed in several CCC meetings. Although the meetings encompassed a lot of serious discussion, and sometimes heated debate, the meetings I attended also had a lot of laughter. One participant noted the importance of ensuring that everyone walked away feeling good about what had happened and of making follow-up calls during the week to ensure that any hurt feelings were smoothed over prior to the next meeting.

We come to the table and, I know that we're not all going to agree, but we all have to give and take. But once we leave the table we have to be the best of friends or I don't want anything to do with it. We all have to get up from that table and laugh and joke or kid one another that we may feel differently on different issues, but get on with it. (Interviewee 7)

Asked about key elements of group cohesion, another member observed that

I mean, it's a sense of humour. My god, if you didn't have a sense of humour we would have not lasted....we just, we would not have lasted at all. That we sort of get into the nitty gritty in the middle and then we sort of get to the point where it's like okay, enough of that, now we need to restore some humour. So that everybody can go away feeling positive. (Interviewee 3)

Two other factors also emerged as factors in the CCC's organizational strength - the importance of recruiting members with specific skills sets, and the need for the group to function as a learning organization. Neither of these aspects appeared in the research literature on community-based resistance. With respect to the former, the particular composition of the CCC, and the high level of skills possessed by individual members, was raised repeatedly throughout the interview process, and

noted as a factor in the group's ability to develop effective resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry. The latter skill allowed the group to learn from its mistakes and use this knowledge and to hone their resistance strategizing based on this learning.

Several respondents noted the skill involved in identifying local resources available in the community - financial and otherwise - and incorporating these into an cohesive and strategic community-based resistance strategy. While the resource-rich nature of the area is likely a key factor in this process, several interviewees nonetheless noted the recruitment of particular skill sets as a key factor in CCC operations. It was noted that since its inception the CCC had actively sought members able to provide specific types of expertise for CCC activities, for example, technical and practical knowledge of the mining industry, environmental approval processes, fundraising, roads and construction. The benefits of having assorted expertise available within the Coalition (rather than having to hire external subject matter specialists as consultants) was observed repeatedly. For example, one respondent noted

I think it's key that you get the right people involved. You have to have two or three key people that have (quarry) rage, that are well-organized and know the industry... We've been able to draw on a few people that....are experts or certainly know the mining industry, or are connected to people who know something about how it all works. So when you have that, that really helps you....I mean I know nothing about aggregates, or I didn't know anything....so if you can get a few key people that will work maybe part-time for you and give you some advice....That really helps (so) you don't spend you energy in the wrong places. (Interviewee 9)

Another respondent focussed on the importance of ensuring the group had some implementers involved to complement the group's extensive strategic skills.

In every group you have to have a mix of skills and a mix of things, and you also need people who, in many cases, will carry out some of the things that are dreamt up by all the individuals who are at the meeting (laughs) who come in and are not accustomed, necessarily, to going out and doing the dirty work. So you need a bit of a mix of skills...It's like any other corporate structure, at every level there are different jobs to be done, and various types of things, and that's what has happened particularly with our group. (Interviewee 2)

The importance of functioning as a 'learning organization' and increasing Coalitional capacity by learning from mistakes also emerged as a key CCC characteristic in the research interviews. For example, in its early days, the CCC organized a couple of fundraising activities that were poorly attended due to scheduling conflicts with other events in the community. As a result, CCC members drew up a master calendar of community events used this as a reference point when planning fundraising events and public meetings. I was also able to observe the group incorporating a discussion of past mistakes into the planning of future activities. As one interviewee noted about the group's ability to adapt and develop in this way,

They're not making the same mistakes that they were making...(they'll say), "here's what I'm going to do." And everybody critiques the idea before they go do it, they do a bit of brainstorming, and they always came up with something as a group which was better than the original idea. Very supportive in that way. If you look at the characters here, they're very much solution oriented. I've seen people... some people who are so blinded by ideology that that ...basically handcuffs them. It prevents them from innovating. ...Here I think people are much more free to improve, and that's allowed and encouraged within the group. But...when you look at what (people) do for a living... I make my money by being creative. I find solutions. My job is to think out of the box. There's a lot of that at the meetings, where people just say, well, try this, try this, and just throw out stupid things. A lot of them do work. (Interviewee 4)

In spite of their significant organizational strengths, and long organizational tenure, members of the CCC often appeared surprised in response to complements about their organizational effectiveness. The following comment typifies their reaction to acknowledgement of their organizational proficiency:

And this we found out from [name], from the Canadian Environmental Defence League... You know, he took a look at what we're doing and he said, you know, we usually get in on the ground floor where we help people and do this kind of stuff. He said that "you people are incredibly organized." But you can't - we can't just pat ourselves on the back - we've got to move ahead and stop thinking about that. We just forget about that, let's get on with the battle. Don't be complacent. (Interviewee 7)

The emphasis on 'professional' resistance is evident throughout the comments above, and in particular, the use of corporate language to describe the coalition. Throughout the research interviews, Coalition members drew on business analogies. For example, even in the small sample of quotes used in the preceding section, the internal organization of the Coalition is described as being "like any other corporate structure" with each member having the "framework of a CEO". These business analogies are obviously comfortable for CCC members, but highlight the differences between this group and the typical marginalized group profiled in the research literature on community-based mobilization to locally unwanted land uses.

The unique nature of this group, and the high levels of technical, political and business expertise possessed by members was of interest initially for two particular research-related reasons. First, it was a working hypothesis that the diversity of these skills, combined with the social capital of CCC members would give this group a far

better chance of succeeding²⁷ than a more marginalized community-based opposition group. Second, it was felt that the skills and experience this particular group brought to the resistance process might result in valuable ‘lessons learned’ that could be of use to other community-based resistance groups.

The impact of the CCC’s exurban subjectivity on all aspects of the group’s activities is noteworthy. It can be seen strongly in their organizational practices, and in their desire and ability to remain focussed on one key goal – blocking the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry. It can also be seen in the group’s fundraising activities, which have been successful in generating funds for on-going resistance activities. Fundraising events organized by the Coalition – with the exception of the annual garage sale - have tended to be rather elite activities aimed at attracting the interest of a (relatively) small group local supporters. The annual golf tournament, the sale of high end, albeit used, clothing, and various theatre events are all typical of upper middle class social activities. Even the annual Great Big Garage Sale, which is viewed within the Coalition as a means of generating broad-based grassroots awareness of the proposed quarry, offers a larger selection of high end items than typically found at garage sales.²⁸

The professional backgrounds of the majority of Coalition members has resulted in a highly professionalized approach to both group organization and to their development of resistance strategies; one which shows significant differences from ‘typical’

²⁷ Success in this case being defined as local resistance resulting in the blocking of a locally-unwanted development.

²⁸ Including antique furniture, fine jewellery, and china.

community-based resistance as practiced in marginalized communities. For example, the CCC's political strategy is focussed on using the group's existing (and potential) social capital to gain access to key decision makers. This access is used both to build a business case against the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry, and as an opportunity to emphasize commonalities between decision-makers and Coalition members. This stands in stark distinction with politicization as understood within the social movement literature, which emphasizes the importance of grassroots mobilization, and the framing of issues so as to attract the largest possible number of resisters.

In spite of the Coalition's organizational skills, significant fundraising success and the multi-faceted strategic approach employed by the CCC, the actual impact the group has had on the decision-making process is hard to evaluate, particularly as a final decision on quarry siting has not yet been made. This decision is not expected any earlier than 2007 or possibly even 2008. A fuller discussion of the potential success of the CCC's community-based resistance strategies takes place in Chapter 7. To facilitate and support this more detailed analysis of this example of community-based resistance, the next chapter of this dissertation now turns to an analysis of the principal narratives of resistance invoked by the CCC during the course of this dispute. The influence of the Coalition's exurban subjectivity is clearly visible in the development of resistance narratives.

Chapter 6 Discourses of Resistance: CCC Narratives

Similar to other stakeholders in this complex dispute, the CCC's resistance discourse is comprised of multiple narratives. This chapter explores four principal narratives emerging through CCC resistance practices. While these narratives are presented here as distinct and separate entities, in reality they are overlapping and interconnected. These narratives focus on: citizen disenfranchisement; presenting 'rational and credible' resistance; preservation and conservation of the countryside; and the Rockfort dispute as 'war'. The narratives highlighted below provide an avenue for exploring the ways that particular (dominant) discourses are both produced and reproduced through the CCC's practices of resistance.

Citizen Disenfranchisement

One narrative emerging throughout CCC interviews and print materials is that of the people of Caledon being 'disenfranchised citizens'. Feelings of disenfranchisement were frequently noted during research interviews as a motivating factor for involvement with the CCC. Several respondents noted that "quarry rage" was a good motivator for mobilization, and commented that their involvement grew directly out of their anger at being left out of significant decision-making processes. This anger was identified throughout the interviews as a strong motivator for continued resistance. Capek (1993) notes that within the environmental justice movement, the perception of being treated as a 'second-class citizen' has been a powerful motivator

for change, especially in poor and non-white communities. While the vast majority of the population in Caledon is neither poor, nor non-white, the perception of being treated unfairly emerged throughout the interviews with CCC members. As one respondent observed,

I think that most people who got involved in this issue did so initially because they were outraged personally at what the effect to their own property could be. And I think that's what got most people involved. Then it became, as people became more involved and learned more about it, and learned, you know, the wider environmental issues associated with it, then, I think then people became more committed to it than ever. (Interviewee 3)

Several respondents also expressed shock at what they perceived as the advantages given to aggregate extraction companies.

I think it's just the rights of a few over the rights of many in this community ... (they think) just because the material is in the ground it's theirs to take and theirs to develop. And there's still a sense of consideration for the rest of us here. (Interviewee 6)

The issue of trust was raised repeatedly as part of this narrative, with CCC members repeatedly invoking lack of trust as a central component of their newfound disenfranchisement. The lack of trust was typically raised in two particular contexts – a lack of trust in the provincial government, given the perception of bias towards industry in the regulatory frameworks for aggregate extraction, and a lack of trust in the project proponent, given the history of the proposed Rockfort quarry development and comments made by the project manager.

Of particular note is the strong perception among CCC members of a decision-making process clearly biased in favour of the aggregate industry. Several CCC

members raised this issue when asked about their motivation for continued involvement in the Rockfort dispute, although questions of industry bias were not directly asked in the interviews. What also emerged during the interviews was the surprise of many CCC members at the legislative power of the Aggregate Act and Provincial Policy Statements and their impact on municipal-level decision-making vis-à-vis aggregate extraction. For example,

Reading provincial policy...just how stacked it is for the aggregates. As a layperson I would never have believed... And once you read it, it is amazing... of course you get into that, then you read the aggregate policy, and you realize how much that has changed over the years, in that the environment has been put on the backburner, and more is going to the development of aggregate. Then you realize that once these things are carved in stone, i.e., policy, how hard it is to get any of the government or bureaucratic people to even see the grey around those areas. I mean, they just don't. It's written that way, that's the way it is....The policy, the provincial policy the way it's written, gives aggregate - aggregates reign supreme over everything else. And they fall back on that, so when they're listening to you, they're listening but they're thinking well, you know I can listen to them, but in the end, this policy is going to reign supreme anyway. So, you know, it's just all pleasantries. (Interviewee 6)

The perception of policy bias was also noted as a source of motivation.

And politically, the way that the rules were obscenely slanted, and blatantly slanted in favour of the aggregate industry, got me pretty mad. So that probably got me more motivated than anything else. (Interviewee 8)

The process by which aggregate decisions are made in Ontario emerged as a contributing factor to feelings of disenfranchisement. Several aspects of decision-making processes related to the Rockfort quarry proposal appear to have enraged CCC members from the time the project was announced. This anger at the 'way

things were done' served to foster feelings of disenfranchisement as well as act as a catalyst for collective mobilization.

The trigger was the deceit on the part of the government, the mapping²⁹ of the areas done through the province. They didn't want us to know. It was common knowledge that the government didn't want the people to know, it was the municipality that let the people know what was happening. (Interviewee 6)

This disenfranchisement was compounded by a perception of that local citizens had little, if any, role in the decision-making process.

I think the outrage then will be a question of hey, you know what, this application is full of holes, we've shown that to you clearly with professional expertise, demonstrated that, you know, grout curtains are not proven, that the whole issue of fisheries is one that he hasn't responded to, all of those things. And I think then it would be, well, really does it matter then what the citizens really have to say? What rights do the individual citizens really have? I guess they don't have any when it comes to, you know, going head to head with a government decision. So I think then you'd have an issue of individual rights, community rights. (Interviewee 3)

As stated in one CCC newsletter, "...once again, quarries, gravel pits and/or open pit mines were being parachuted into the middle of a rural landscape with no regard for the properties that were in the immediate path of the aggregate industry" (CCC Newsletter, Sept, 2002). While Coalition members demonstrated significant anger about the impacts of 'unfettered' aggregate extraction, anger and motivation arising from feelings of citizen disenfranchisement was largely focussed on the provincial government, both politicians and bureaucrats. As one respondent noted about the Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario:

²⁹ This refers to the mapping of the high priority mineral aggregate resource areas (HPMARAs) undertaken by the province.

They'd certainly be one of the groups you could bitch at. But there again, they're only working within a system that... which they have been, granted, very instrumental in putting in place...but it is a system there, and if the system allows it to go ahead...really, it will be the bureaucracy you can put the finger on. (Interviewee 5).

In this case, anger is directed at the advantage the provincial government has provided aggregate companies through the policy framework for aggregate extraction, and the unfairness of this to local citizens. A particular concern focuses on the perceived economic advantage aggregate producers receive and concerns that local citizens are not only bearing the social and environmental impacts of quarries, but also subsidizing quarry development and operation through higher local property taxes. As expressed in a CCC newsletter: "We must challenge change from all levels of government that helps aggregate producers at taxpayer expense" (no date).

Feelings of citizen disenfranchisement were also reinforced by the CCC's perception that public participation processes required under the Aggregate Resources Act were essentially meaningless. While community members were invited to participate in some consultation around the proposed quarry, the general sentiment among CCC members was that this participation would have no influence on the outcome of the (already pre-determined) decision-making process. As one respondent commented,

...it's just, the input is not that great because it's just part of the process of the Aggregate Resource Act and they have to listen to you sort of with one ear and yes, thank you very much, but the Resource Act will overrule whatever you say anyhow. So there isn't any real input. The business about writing them, and them answering your objection and all this stuff is just B.S. It's just part of the process. (Interviewee 7)

Another interviewee remarked

Have they listened? No. No. No, they think they've listened to us but they've just been polite. You know, they haven't really listened....That was more about arrogance and the fact that anybody (the project proponent) thought that they could ride roughshod over the community. (Interviewee 6)

When the citizen disenfranchisement narrative is invoked with respect to JDCL and the proposed Rockfort quarry, emphasis is placed on the benefits accruing to one individual (James Dick) while the economic, social and environmental costs are spread across the municipality. As stated in CCC materials: "Should the selfish needs of one individual be allowed to create an environmental disaster and destroy a unique community and ecosystem?" (CCC flyer, no date) and "Remember, people and wildlife live here too, not just James Dick construction" (from CCC newsletter, Sept, 2002).

In this particular case, local anger was exacerbated by the way in which the Rockfort property was bought by the Dick family, and by the CCC's reaction to the project manager of the proposed quarry. Two themes consistently emerged when CCC members discussed this project manager: the perception that he was treating them as a nuisance group (rather than addressing their concerns at a more substantive level) and the belief that he could not be trusted, based on previous actions, including the purchase of the Rockfort farm. The former exacerbated feelings of disenfranchisement, while the latter was an on-going irritant for Coalition members. As one interviewee remarked,

I think why people are so angry is the way in which this was done. It was so underhanded. You know, opposite that, I fully recognize and don't expect that Sweetnam or James Dick are going to walk in and say "hey we're going to put a gravel pit on this property." But they just...there were a number of opportunities where they might have been able to come a little cleaner than they did. We're sure that a lot of people in the community, myself included, you just feel so stupid for letting it somehow....for somehow having let the aggregate community buy up as much property as they have. You somehow feel that you were really duped. So maybe you feel angry at yourself as well. (Interviewee 3)

A very specific lack of trust in the project manager of the proposed Rockfort quarry was noted by some interviewees. One said,

When he gives you stories and makes you promises that he has broken, you have no trust in that person. So how can you trust him when he's told you he'll have all kinds of public meetings, and he refuses to have them, and he says if you've got a problem with your water lately, don't worry about it. So how can you trust somebody like that? He's totally doing as he's supposed to do under the Aggregate Act, reply to people's concerns, with his blinkers on. With stories that are not true. For example, he tells you that state of art system, that's tried all over the world, we've continually asked him where, consultants have said "It's not going on, it's not tried, it's not proven, how can you make statements like this?" So how can we trust someone like that? (Interviewee 7)

Another remarked that

...first of all, [the project manager] said publicly he expects that within a couple of months there would only be a handful of people left who opposed the project....At the initial meeting he said "yeah, there's opposition now, but you watch, within a few months it will all disappear". (Interviewee 4)

Issues of scale arise throughout the narrative of citizen disenfranchisement, with Coalition members articulating a sense of trust in local politicians, and also a corresponding sense of powerlessness given the extra-local nature of aggregate policy decisions.

Local politicians, like our councillors, they can go to the town meetings, they can assess whether they should rezone or not, they can say yes and it's over and done with. And they've saved the town of Caledon \$600,000 in lawyer's fees or whatever. If they say no, it goes to the OMB, and the OMB can approve it, and tell the councillors to do it and they have no choice to do it. So therefore they are in a losing position, if they say yes, all the citizens will be at them, if they say no, they might be told do it anyway (Interviewee 2)

Many respondents also indicated a strong belief that the ultimate decision about the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry would be political in nature, and made at the provincial level. This sentiment further contributed to feelings of local disenfranchisement. This was exacerbated by the knowledge that the provincial government is a primary buyer of aggregate, and thus in potential conflict of interest vis-à-vis the development and implementation of aggregate policies. One respondent noted that

...if Caledon approves this resource study, and having approved the resource study sort of means that the voting for the rezoning will be no, because I can't see them passing the resource study the way it is, and then sort of saying differently on rezoning. So if that happens, he's got two strikes against him when he goes to the OMB. OK? But that doesn't mean a damn thing. Because the OMB are just political appointments, puppets for the provincial government. (Interviewee 7)

Another commented that

It is about the quarry. But I really fear that politics could rule the day despite all the holes that have been poked in their application, despite all the peer reviews, despite all of the objections. I worry that it could get to the OMB and strictly become a political issue. (Interviewee 3)

Coalition members also commented on the importance of understanding the impact of scale on their resistance activities.

...everything that we have to look at, we have to look at from the local community level, how do they perceive it? Then we have to look at James Dick Aggregates, how will they perceive it? Then we have to look at the municipality, how will the Town of Caledon perceive it? Then we have to go to the OMB. Then we have to go to the whole province and then politicians. Then we have to go to the Feds. And we have to....every time we look at a move, we have to think, how is it going to work its way through those different levels. So there is certainly a lot more strategic planning I would say...than with some other organizations that I've worked with. (Interviewee 3)

In the disenfranchised citizen narrative, the CCC presents itself as fighting a democratic battle against what is viewed as rampant and inappropriate industrialization in the area, and against the government support provided to these activities. As the CCC states in large, bold font on one of their flyers, "We believe government should plan for people, not more gravel pits" (no date). In appealing to concerns regarding democracy, the CCC highlights the broad-based nature of their support, and its local inclusiveness, noting that the CCC

represents a broad base of affected constituents – local taxpayers and residents, hikers, sport fishermen and naturalists, environmentalists, horse breeding operations and small business owners – groups who would otherwise have no voice with in the permit approval process (CCC, 1999a).

Throughout this narrative, the CCC states its support for good land use planning, which is understood in this case as planning that ensures the survival of the countryside for the long-term benefit of all citizens. Thus (democratic) 'good planning' is cast in opposition to (undemocratic) 'bad planning' which enriches developers by stripping local citizens of their rights. Examples noted regarding the impact of 'bad planning' include the impact of the proposed quarry on local property values and municipal taxes, with the negative impacts borne by the community, while

the benefits accrue to an individual (JDCL) and the province. This sentiment is captured in the following statement, where the CCC challenge governmental decision-making that would “just plain sell out our interests as residents and taxpayers to aggregates” (CCC newsletter, no date).

‘Rational and Credible’ Resistance

A second narrative running throughout CCC discourse is focussed on presenting the CCC’s resistance as ‘rational’ and ‘non-activist’ in nature. Put another way, the CCC has invested heavily in developing a very ‘professionalized’ form of community-based resistance. There are three key, and highly interconnected, elements to this narrative. First, a belief in technical and scientific enquiry as an effective means of clearly and unequivocally demonstrating the inappropriateness of the Rockfort Farm as site for the proposed quarry. Second, a dichotomization of ‘emotion’ and ‘fact’, with the latter being privileged over the former. Third, an emphasis on ensuring that CCC resistance practices are viewed as credible by two principal audiences - key decision-makers associated with the Rockfort quarry, and supportive local individuals who might be inclined to make significant donations toward the CCC’s efforts to stop the Rockfort quarry.

The centrepiece of the ‘rational and credible’ resistance narrative is an emphasis on the production of rigorous technical and scientific knowledge to provide evidence as to the danger of ‘unsound development’ such as the proposed Rockfort quarry. The

central belief embodied in this narrative is that scientific reports - produced by high profile and well-regarded consulting companies - can provide the hard evidence necessary to prove definitively that the proposed Rockfort quarry should not proceed. This narrative draws almost exclusively on 'expert' knowledge and professional credentials. Running throughout this narrative is a strong belief in scientific enquiry as a means of getting at the 'truth'³⁰ and demonstrating that the Rockfort quarry should not proceed *on scientific grounds*. This appeal to reason is highlighted in the conclusion of the Rockfort Brief (CCC, 1999a) which states: "You must realize that the experts agree with the concerns of our supporters". This reliance on 'expert' knowledge has continued throughout the Rockfort dispute, with a recent newsletter noting that "All JDCL reports submitted to meet the requirements of OPA 161 will be reviewed and evaluated by CCC experts" (CCC Newsletter, April 2005). As demonstrated by the following interview excerpts, maintaining the CCC's credibility is a key issue for Coalition members. One member emphasized the importance of the CCC being perceived as an 'objective' stakeholder in the dispute.

Well, the most effective thing we've done is that we have become a voice...for a dissenting....we have been a focussed dissenting voice that's been thoughtful, not just raging away. We've been attacking the problem in a very objective, technical way, and on all fronts. (Interviewee 9)

Another emphasized the importance of the Coalition presenting a position that is not anti-aggregate, but rather in favour of 'better decision-making' about site selection.

What we had to be very careful of, and what we do have to be very careful of, is....is we've spent a lot of time being sure that we don't put ourselves into a position of being a NIMBY group. That strictly is "No,

³⁰ While CCC members noted their surprise at the 'versatility' of consultant conclusions about the impact of the proposed quarry, this typically generated speculation about consultant ethics, rather than doubts about the efficacy of scientific enquiry.

at no cost, no aggregate.” That’s not where we’re coming from. Where we’re coming from is “this application does not fit under the CCRS guidelines”, it does not fit for environmental reasons, or for water reasons, you have an alternate source, that’s where you should be doing it. You can’t just say “No, no, no.” I mean, you have no credibility if you do that. (Interviewee 3)

While this narrative emphasizes technical and scientific expertise, the CCC has also invested heavily in legal expertise as well. The production (and reproduction) of expert-centred discourse has occurred, in part, through the CCC’s commitment to ensuring legal representation throughout its activities. As one interviewee commented,

...you need to get a lawyer, that’s really important. Because if it’s an issue that’s going to get to be a big issue, if you don’t have a lawyer ... you’re not even in the game. You can make all the little, nice briefs that you want, but unless you have some sort of advocacy ability.... you really need someone who can fight for an issue. Legally, technically, and as an advocate for your side ...because the aggregate industry ...they’re going to have a legion of lawyers sitting there. I think also your advocate needs to be politically astute. Because what it all comes down to, a lot of these things are decided in the backrooms. And you have to make a lot of heat for politicians so that they either decide to drop the issue only because it’s going to create more grief for them than they had anticipated. You need a lot of money. (Interviewee 9)

A consistent theme running throughout all CCC initiatives is a deliberate, strategic attempt to present themselves as a “rational” voice of dissent and to downplay the perception of being a “radical” or “fringe” group of “angry environmentalists”. In this sense the CCC has clearly dichotomized reason and emotion, with the former clearly preferable to the latter in this case. The centrepiece of this strategy is a clearly articulated position – *the CCC is NOT against development per se, but rather against this particular development because of its scientifically proven “unsound” nature.*

This creates and reinforces a dichotomy between ‘rational’ resistance - supported by technical and scientific evidence - and ‘angry’ environmentalists (who are assumed to be both ‘emotional’ and anti-development).

Research on community-based resistance (e.g., Richardson and Gismondi, 1993) notes a propensity for siting proponents to portray community members as ‘hysterical’ and ‘reactionary’. In light of this, it is not surprising then that the CCC rejected many direct action strategies typical of community-based resistance initiatives, especially those which might be viewed as inflammatory and thus conflict with the CCC’s preferred ‘objective’ framing of the issue. Many CCC interviewees stressed how critical it was not to be perceived as ‘just another group of angry environmentalists’. This required not engaging in any form of resistance which might be construed as ‘activist’ behaviour, as group members felt this would be dismissed from the outset by decision-making authorities. Given that a significant portion of CCC resistance is premised on the environmental impact of the proposed quarry, this required a delicate balancing act. The following quote clearly demonstrates the discounting of emotional responses to the proposed quarry and the privileging of technical arguments.

We considered, like, you know, okay, what grounds do we really have to oppose this on? Other than emotion and gut response, because clearly that was the first response. But we had to go beyond that, and find some substance to oppose. ...The more we started working through the environmental issues and talking to technical people in the field, the more we started to realize there were some technical issues. And that’s where, in order to put forward an opposition that would be respected at an OMB hearing, it has to be from somebody as professionally respected as they [the proponent] have used (Interviewee 3).

Another respondent speaks to the perceived political danger of engaging in ‘radical’ resistance initiatives.

...anybody who is dramatically at the edge of any position loses credibility, anybody in the political process realizes that that is not the mainstream. And so politicians won’t support you, no one will. You have to appear rational, moderate and willing to support any reasonable proposition...in order to become part of the process. (Interviewee 4)

One CCC member also noted the importance of timing for direct action initiatives, and the need for a political climate receptive to such actions.

...that quarry in Acton that they wanted to turn into a dump. And they went on about the way they fought their battles, and they were very public about it. Which was fine, because there was an NDP government in power at the day. But NDP governments are supposed to be a people’s government, care about the environment ... so Queen’s Park was a damn site more receptive then than what it is right now. That type of tactic would not work as well with Mike Harris. So you’d be wasting your time trying that tactic. Yeah it worked then, but it wouldn’t work now. I recognized the strengths of it then...if you got down to it, and we figured things were getting tight, I’d be down at Queen’s Park. I wouldn’t give a damn. But right now I don’t think it would be an advantage, I don’t think we’d gain anything. I’d sooner keep the group going the way it is. Trying the political process...pushing it, squeezing, yeah. But following it, rather than being in their face. (Interviewee 5)

Another CCC member argued against public displays of emotion under any circumstances. Reflecting on the televised news coverage of a rally at Queen’s Park in response to funding cuts implemented by the Mike Harris government, the damage of ‘extreme emotion’ to decision-maker support for a cause was noted in no uncertain terms.

...some ladies’ group was protesting...I guess it was cuts to daycare or something like that. So they trotted off their kids in baby carriages all around Queen’s Park with signs on the little kids...sorry, that just doesn’t cut it. You know it just doesn’t wash. Yeah, they got their picture in the paper, but they looked like idiots. ... And of course if you look at it

visually, this man [Mike Harris] is standing there, quiet and calmly, she's screaming, I mean literally screaming. ...And he [Harris] knows that lady lost it. Not only emotionally lost it, she lost whatever she was supporting. Because the sound bites, you know, and the film clip, will show her, as it did, show her screaming her guts out, and him sort of standing, you know, understanding smile, no reaction whatsoever. He won, she lost. Big time. (Interviewee 8)

Embedded within this narrative is an interesting twist on visibility and invisibility.

While 'typical' community-based resistance activities are aimed at increasing the visibility of the struggle, and drawing attention to the resistance by increasing the numbers of supporters for a cause, there appear to be two separate components to the Rockfort struggle. On one hand, there is the very public face of the CCC, and this group has actively worked to attract media coverage of the quarry dispute. However, the work of the CCC is supported, in some cases, by individuals who have chosen to remain invisible, at least in the public sense. As noted during the interviews, this 'invisible' support is a significant component of the Coalition's resistance strategy. Once again, the perception of CCC credibility emerges as a key factor in retaining the support of this group. One respondent made the following comments about one 'invisible' supporter of the CCC.

I've never met the man, but he's donated a lot of money and he has kept informed. He has one of his staff phoning us all the time, getting updates, even when he's out of the country, he gets material faxed to him. So he's obviously interested, and I'm quite confident that we'll see him as a major backer when we need enormous quantities of money for the OMB. That's where we'll see people like [name] coming to our aid. But we've got to build up some credibility, obviously, before they'll do that. (Interviewee 1)

Another interviewee made similar comments about another 'individual' supporter of the Coalition.

...he has supported it financially, but he doesn't come to meetings anymore....Now people recognize that he...does play a role, he definitely wants to keep involved, he will support it financially, he can and he will...he'll do it. But he's not going to be part of this [the CCC]...But that's just one example. I think there are several like that, and I think this group has now learned to accept what role people will play. (Interviewee 10)

Running throughout this narrative is an implicit, but strong, focus on maintaining a separation of 'objective' technical arguments and political activism. To some extent this approach contradicts the Coalition's stated belief that the decision about the proposed Rockfort quarry would ultimately be a political one. Publicly, however, CCC members worked hard to keep the focus on 'objective, technical' arguments against the quarry (which could then be presented to key decision-makers as part of a business case against quarry development) and not link Rockfort resistance to broader political activism. One example of this is provided in the following comment from a discussion of an unsuccessful Coalitional strategy:

Bumper stickers backfired, and that was really interesting. Bumper stickers backfired because ...what did they say... "We're really pits off Mike." And that really backfired. People did not like the fact that it was Mike Harris. And it was 'No, don't put it into that arena. Get him off that bumper sticker.' It was the wrong message. Wrong in terms of pulling Mike Harris in. Because, I think a lot of people in the province have felt that...overall, he's done a very good job. And so I think people were very reluctant, and would not, many people wouldn't put the bumper stickers on. (Interviewee 3)

This particular narrative embodies some paradoxical elements. For example, some members of the group spoke about the need to attract media attention to their cause, and the significant challenges encountered to date in doing so.

We need to get there. We need to get the media. We need to...beyond local newspapers, which we've been successful with. And we have had a couple of articles in the Toronto Star. We did have one in the Globe. But we need to get more. And we really need to get on the visual screen (Interviewee 3).

But the highly technical nature of the dispute to date, coupled with the CCC's focus on developing 'credible' and 'professional' resistance does not lend itself to media coverage in the same way a more emotive approach might.

Similarly, the emphasis on downplaying emotion, and relying on technical and legal arguments stands in broad contrast with the many examples of anger displayed in the previous narrative on citizen disenfranchisement, as well as the group's expressed belief that the Rockfort quarry decision would ultimately be a political one. From a Foucauldian perspective, this is an excellent example of a political technology; an attempt to (appear to) remove the political elements of the decision-making process and recast the decision as a purely technical, objective one.

“Friends of the Countryside”: Narratives of Protection and Preservation

A third narrative running through CCC discourse is that of the need for “protection and preservation of the countryside” with the CCC clearly articulating their role as

‘Friends of the Countryside’. In this narrative, protection invokes a romantic perspective on rural environments:

It’s about the people who live here and those who visit here. It’s about families on a day trip to the country for a picnic or just to savour the natural beauty that still remains. It’s about country fairs. It’s about a child’s first visit to the great outdoors or the excitement of catching that first fish. It’s about shopping for works of art, crafts or antiques in small, friendly shops for items not found in ‘big box’ stores in the city. It’s about learning all about our natural world and how to ride a horse. It’s about our heritage and our history and more (CCC, 1999a).

This understanding of rural (and correspondingly of ‘nature’) is of small scale agriculture, non-industrial development, and of ‘country communities’ – pastoral and bucolic countryside as a place to get away from urban stress and discomforts and to relax in a ‘simpler’ environment. CCC documents highlight the importance of protecting the ‘integrity of [a] country lifestyle’ and of retaining ‘country roads limited to cars and small truck traffic’, roads that are also safe for local horse riders, cyclists and joggers. As one long-time resident noted about the appeal of the area,

I told you before, the tranquility here... wish it was evening, we’d have to raise our voices to be heard over the frogs down here in the swamp. And that has real value to me, and I honestly think that has no value whatsoever to [the proponent] and to a whole number of people.
(Interviewee 1)

Another interviewee, who maintained residences in both Toronto and Caledon, expressed anger at the provincial government for not protecting the ‘countryside’ around Toronto.

Caledon is such a special place, it’s such a wonderful community, and it has always been a very peaceful community, very, very green and very peaceful. ...at what point as a government do you have accountability to the residents of Ontario to protect some grain land around the GTA and

not just simply for the sake of development continue to rape the countryside? (Interviewee 3)

The concept of safety is invoked throughout this narrative through discussion of ‘protection’ – protecting people, especially vulnerable populations such as children, protecting animals (e.g., horses, wildlife, fish habitat), and protecting the environment (e.g., groundwater quality). In this narrative, protection and preservation are linked to safety while local industrial development is viewed as “environmental disaster” in the making. The CCC has clearly stated throughout all their resistance activities that they are not against development per se, but rather against unsound development that would damage sensitive local environments.

The fact is, we’re in favour of the economic benefits to Ontario of highway and building construction...But how much can the Escarpment sustain? Which farms and properties, recreation and protected areas will be lost forever? (CCC flyer, no date)

As the proposed Rockfort quarry abuts the Niagara Escarpment, which is part of UNESCO’s World Biosphere Reserve, the CCC invokes comparisons to the outcry that would occur if similar industrial developments were proposed in other areas of the Biosphere Reserve, such as the Galapagos Islands, the African Serengetti and Florida’s Everglades.

There is also a temporal aspect to this narrative. Preservation is encouraged to “help us stop this theft of our heritage” (CCC flyer, no date) and to conserve the area’s natural resources for present and future occupants of the area. Reference to the historic and cultural significance of the Rockfort farm, and the need for cultural

preservation of this heritage is one example of this. In this sense, CCC narratives correspond closely with Taylor's (2000) romantic environmental paradigm, with its emphasis on encouraging preservation and conservation of natural resources, and calling for a return to a 'simpler lifestyle'. Historically this paradigm has linked business and environmentalists, given that several early proponents of preservation and conservation activities were business leaders interested in preserving outdoor recreational activities in areas previously untouched by industrial development. CCC narratives echo many of these sentiments, in their call for a halt to industrial development in the area in order to preserve the area's natural beauty and remaining wilderness.

I'm not against aggregate development in the province. I'm not against it because it's something we all need. I do, however, feel there are other sources of supply, and that we know categorically that are not going to disrupt a recreational community the way this did. That isn't going to destroy a historical farm. And it is one of the most historical farms in the province. (Interviewee 3)

The importance of maintaining the 'natural beauty' of the area for tourism purposes is emphasized, and the scale of tourism in the area brings an interesting twist to the typical 'jobs versus the environment' debate. Given the demographics of the Caledon area, coupled with plentiful construction jobs available in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area as a result of the on-going building boom, few references were made regarding the need for jobs provided by the proposed Rockfort quarry project. In fact, with respect to the proposed quarry, the jobs/environment argument³¹ was invoked only by the project proponent as justification for pursuing the quarry permit.

³¹ Where a dichotomy is created between job creation and environmental protection, and in which job creation is privileged over environmental protection.

In this particular case, the Coalition argues that allowing the quarry to proceed will severely impact tourism in the area, and the destruction of the ‘natural beauty’ will create significant job loss in tourism-related industries, including the very lucrative riding industry, estimated to provide direct employment for over 2,400 people and generate revenues worth \$100 million per year in the area (CCC, 1999a). Reflecting on the value of tourism in Canada (which one Coalition member had recently heard was worth \$47 billion), one interviewee commented as follows:

So I then related it back to the Coalition that...this statement has been made a few times, that this area here is second only to Niagara falls from an attractions standpoint. Well that also has to translate into dollars. If that whole industry’s worth \$47 billion across Canada, how many certain million is Niagara Falls worth, and what does that make this one worth, per year? And has anybody ever calculated that cost...as a potential loss if a large quarry like that goes into operation and the destruction of the whole area...it’s going to drive away tourists like crazy, obviously. ...If this is going to have a negative overall dollar impact, then it’s going to be really tough to support it from any point of view (Interviewee 5).

What is notable about the CCC’s resistance, vis-à-vis the ‘protection and preservation’ narrative invoked here, is the very clear position the group has taken with respect to resource-based development. Highly visible in much of the CCC literature is the statement the group is “not against development *per se*”, but rather against the particular development proposed for the Rockfort site, due to the environmental, social and other impacts this development would entail³². Put another way, the CCC implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) differentiates between types of development. The key element in this differentiation is as to what constitutes appropriate development in the Caledon area, with ‘appropriate’ development

³² This position was also articulated repeatedly throughout the research interviews.

determined, in large part by the impact of different developments on ‘nature’ in the area.

With respect to the area around the Rockfort site, this narrative highlights ‘good’ development activities, which include traditional production-oriented activities (e.g., family farms) and development that enhances local consumption of existing nature (e.g., development of sites for recreational activities³³). This perspective on ‘nature’ is very closely aligned with Taylor’s (2000) description of a ‘romantic’ perspective on nature. Correspondingly, new types of ‘production-oriented’ (industrial) development, such as large scale quarrying/mining constitute ‘bad’ development, due to the impact of these activities on the pastoral and bucolic nature of the area. Negative effects of mining and other related activities noted by the CCC include impacts on groundwater, increased noise pollution, and destruction of environmentally sensitive areas (especially wildlife transportation corridors and habitat areas). Only one interviewee explicitly distinguished between types of development, but an implicit distinction was echoed in other interviews.

Well, there’s nothing wrong with development, but it’s the kind of thing like that that will destroy the environment, and the area. Development, there’s many different types of developments, so let’s not talk about development. I’m talking about development of that type of mining. Where the guy has the nerve to stand up when somebody asked him at the first meeting, how noisy will it be? He said ‘well, if you stay in your house, you won’t be bothered.’ And that’s the kind of thing I’m talking about. There’s no problem with a horse farm up there. There’s nothing wrong with having a large greenhouse building, and other types of businesses that...there’s nothing wrong with the farms, doing the natural thing out there. [Large scale quarries] don’t bring any value to the community. (Interviewee 2)

³³ Recreational activities identified in research interviews include skiing, fishing, hunting (including an annual fox hunt), gardening and riding.

Another respondent commented on the (negative) change that would accompany industrial development if the quarry were to proceed.

What got me involved was, I could see how it was going to totally change the...this area from a rural horse farm type of area to an industrial area. Completely change this whole thing over a period of time. (Interviewee 7)

The following quote highlights two fairly typical sentiments expressed by many in this research – the negative impact of aggregate trucking on commuters in the area, and a perspective on wildlife as adding to the ‘rural charm’ of the area.

The presence of heavy traffic, obviously will affect my commute. It will also mean more roadkill from the animals and all the little critters that are up there. I like looking out on my front lawn and seeing deer. Or bunny rabbits playing around, or whatever. And that’s why I moved out here. (Interviewee 8)

The concept of ‘acceptable’ and ‘unacceptable’ development was also invoked with respect to the impact of the quarry on local groundwater, in the sense of ensuring that water was preserved for ‘acceptable’ forms of development (such as farming and recreational activities) and not usurped for ‘unacceptable’ industrial development activities.

Take the fisheries, none of them ever realized that the cold water fisheries would be affected, yet we have a very powerful fishing club up there. Oh, yeah, very...the fishing club is the type of club that if you have to ask if there is a fishing club, if there is a membership, then you shouldn’t even be there (Laughs) (Interviewee 2).

While environmental protection and preservation was presented as a central theme in the CCC’s printed materials, only one CCC member identified environmental

preservation as a primary factor for personal motivation. This same individual was also the only one who cited the potential for recycling aggregate as a possible means of slowing down the need for aggregate extraction processes.

You know, the whole aggregate thing has really started to bug me over the way they keep punching holes in aquifers, or collection areas, certainly up by highway 24 where all the sand and gravel pits are, these are main collection areas for the water that's the big sponge that soaks it all up, and the filtering mechanism. And they're just destroying it without any thought for the future. And that's the future....it's a precious and extremely valuable resource... Well, you certainly need aggregate, if you want to continue the world in the way that we've gotten used to it. But I'm not altogether sure that's always good, by anyway....Our whole way of life, pace of life, type of life, is non-sustainable in the long run. ...And I just go nuts when I go by construction sites and I see piles of rocks and concrete stuff, and they bury it. [If you] Put it on a truck, take it to a crusher...you can use it again. (Interviewee 5)

Other CCC members did note that they had learned a lot about environmental issues as part of their quarry-based resistance and some indicated they would 'likely' be more involved in future environmental issues because of this.

Running throughout the 'protection and preservation of nature' narrative is an (seemingly self-evident) understanding of nature as existing for purposes of human consumption. 'Nature' in this sense, must be protected and preserved to ensure that continuation of the 'pastoral' and 'bucolic' countryside that was the initial attraction for many exurban members of the community. Protection and preservation are also required to ensure on-going recreational opportunities, both for local residents and tourists, and to preserve traditional forms of productive activities, such as small scale farming, that fall within the purview of this romantic perspective on rural 'nature'.

The CCC's arguments against 'bad' development are strictly focussed on the

Rockfort site (and surrounding area) and with the exception of the one quote above no attention was paid to a broader and more environmentally political questioning of the need for aggregate. Nor was the need for growth and development ever questioned, in spite of the clear links between economic growth, and the environmental impacts of aggregate extraction.

Winning the Battle AND Winning the War

A fourth narrative that emerges strongly in the CCC's resistance is that of the struggle over the proposed Rockfort quarry first as both a 'battle' and a 'war'. The 'battle' is over the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry, and the 'war' is about ensuring that no other aggregate extraction projects are proposed in future. Two key elements of this narrative will be examined here. First, the use of highly adversarial language by Coalition members, along with associated warlike metaphors is explored. A second, and related, issue is the firm belief expressed by several Coalition members, that the struggle over the Rockfort quarry was about far more than just the Rockfort quarry, and that if one quarry is allowed into this previously protected area, many more would likely follow. As such, the 'battle' takes on larger dimensions than might be seen if the proposed quarry was perceived to be a one-off project, and helps to explain the CCC's extraordinary commitment to fighting the proposed quarry.

After several readings of the interview transcripts, I was suddenly struck by the extent of the adversarial language employed by Coalition members as they described their

struggle against the proposed Rockfort quarry, and the military metaphors employed by some. With respect to the latter, the following interview comments highlight this ‘battle’ narrative. As one interviewee responded when asked what advice she might pass on to others involved in community-based resistance activities,

Oh boy. I think the first thing I’d say is know your enemy. Find out as much as you possible can about the people or the entity that you’re opposing (Interviewee 3).

Another respondent felt the conflict should be treated as a military campaign, and strategized as accordingly.

It’s war. Treat it like war. And you won’t make a lot of mistakes. And you will be fighting the battle on a number of fronts, just like any war. (Interviewee 8)

Another interviewee stressed the importance of continuing to press forward, even when circumstances seemed positive for the Coalition.

But you can’t - we can’t just pat ourselves on the back – we’ve got to move ahead and stop thinking about that. We just forget about that, let’s get on with the battle. Don’t be complacent. (Interviewee 7)

The military metaphor extends to the informal naming of the Coalition’s permanent meeting space, colloquially known as the ‘War Room’.

Embedded in this narrative is a deeply felt competitiveness expressed by many CCC members, again, likely reflective of the group’s exurban subjectivity.

Those able to retire in the Caledon area are individuals who have done extremely well within a capitalist system, and its clearly defined system of winners and losers. The nature of the competitive capitalist system, and its

(dichotomized) production of ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ remained uncontested throughout this research. Individual Coalition members often identified winning as a key issue, and one that seemed to be more a matter of principle than an economic issue.³⁴ Asked about the impact of a potential loss in the Rockfort quarry dispute, some members were angry, while others were unfazed, feeling that the fallout for others (such as key decision-makers) would be significant. As one interviewee commented,

If it [the decision on the proposed Rockfort quarry] is politically swept away, the repercussions will be enormous. For the government. Because I think that the Coalition and the broader membership at this point would be just so outraged if that happened. (Interviewee 3)

Another argued that the project proponent had underestimated the strength of local resistance.

They just picked a corner from Caledon, they shouldn’t have, where they picked on the wrong folks. They had no idea who they were picking on. (Interviewee 2)

Members of the Coalition used to ‘winning’ within a capitalist system expressed irritation at the possibility of ‘losing’ if the Rockfort quarry were to proceed. .

I don’t like to lose something that I believe in. Don’t like people stealing out of my pocket. That’s what they’re doing to us. And we’re not going to be compensated for it. (Interviewee 7)

The language employed in the Coalition’s print materials was also highly adversarial, further contributing to the polarization of conflict between JDCL and the CCC. As

³⁴ In other words, while people noted the impact of the proposed quarry on property values, a sense of personal violation, and unwillingness to ‘lose’ appeared to be a stronger source of motivation.

one CCC flyer notes, “We get: trucks, tax bills, decreased property values. They get: the water and the money”. Similarly polarized positions were observed between the CCC and the project proponent around other aspects of the proposed quarry, including impact on the water table (none versus extensive damage); the availability of Amabel Dolostone (rare versus extensively available); the expected life span of the quarry (45 years versus 25-30 years); and the economic impact of the quarry on region (economic benefit versus economic drain). (www.coalitioncaledon.com)

This strength and duration of the CCC’s resistance has also been influenced by a belief that the dispute over aggregate extraction in the area will continue well beyond the struggle over the proposed Rockfort quarry. One element of this is temporal, based on the belief that local resistance will eventually disappear. As one interviewee notes,

And that’s what guys like James Dick, he...that’s how he wins his battles. If he loses the first one, he just waits another two or three or four years, and applies for it again, and wait for it to die and then people will move on, and everything else, and they can start again. So that’s why, unless you have a whole bunch of other things happening, and other people working on other issues, on a continuing basis, you’re not going to stop him. But see, what’s going to happen is this. Once the, if he gets defeated, the whole thing is going to continue, there’s going to be lots of other people wanting to develop and do the same kinds of things, and start business from the beginning. So unless you have other small sub-groups that are in there and start to set up and build their objectives and look at the various issues, you’re just going to have it happening again and again and again. (Interviewee 2)

Another, related element of this narrative is grounded in the belief that the Rockfort quarry proposal is the ‘thin edge of the wedge’ and if one quarry is allowed into the area, many more will follow. Related to this is the belief that a

portion of JDCL's costs related to the Rockfort dispute are coming from an (invisible) partner with long-term interests in opening up the area for aggregate extraction. Two interviewees made explicit reference to this as a rationale for vigorous opposition to the proposed quarry.

I have learnt all the way along that there are bigger players behind this. Not necessarily being overtly involved, but certainly, you know, quietly in the background, probably providing some of the financing...through discreet channels. (Interviewee 5)

Stated more directly, "...there have been suggestions made that they [JDCL] are being financially supported by a much larger firm." (Interviewee 3)

In terms of community-based resistance, speculation about other (invisible) stakeholders requires attention to the possibility of broader aggregate interest, and the need to take this into account when developing resistance strategies.

The implications of multi-national involvement were noted in a couple of the research interviews. As one respondent commented,

This one is precedent setting. Oh this is not about one quarry. ...If this one...if this application and this re-zoning goes through, it will make the rest of the re-zoning, I think, pretty easy. And that's why I think we're not just fighting this one quarry. What we're fighting right now is something that's going to be very precedent setting, I think, under the way that aggregate policy has now been defined. And I really do think it's going to be the tip of the iceberg. (Interviewee 3)

Another noted the strategic implications of multi-national support for the proposed Rockfort quarry:

Well, when you get one in, sets your precedent, maybe you can squeeze some more. See if they can turn this place into another Milton[a highly quarried area to the south]. ...To me, that is the only logical answer to it.

[Otherwise] it doesn't make any sense. Why put it in? It's small, it's Mickey Mouse, you spend millions doing this and fighting all the rest of it. But if it isn't really him [JDCL], and if it's a big entity, a multi-national that's behind...do you really think they give a shit about [permitting dates]. You know, do they care about the permit running out. No. What's a few extra, few hundred thousand dollars to them. I don't really believe that we truly know what is behind all of this. Is it this small town boy made good trying to expand his operation? Or is it the multi-national that's out there that's feeding him? (Interviewee 5)

Understanding the CCC's assessment of the Rockfort quarry proposal as merely the 'thin edge of the wedge' also helps to contextualize Coalition's resistance strategies and initiatives. For example, the Coalition's determination to pursue a legal strategy (with significant associated financial costs) becomes more comprehensible when the goal is understood to as ensuring that no aggregate will be extracted from the area in future, rather than (merely) stopping the JDCL proposal from going ahead. While the latter might be accomplished in many ways, the former is most likely to be satisfied through the setting of a legal precedent. It also provides a context for understanding community-based resistance as a 'battle', one that 'must be won' in order to preserve the 'natural beauty' and 'tranquil nature' of the area, rather than as an 'intractable conflict' that might be made more 'tractable' through various conflict resolution mechanisms.

One final element of this narrative deserves noting, in part because of its seeming contradictions. Coalition members were obviously committed to fighting both the proposed Rockfort quarry and the extension of quarry-related activities into the Rockfort area, and expressed feeling 'mad as hell' about

provincial aggregate policies and their impact on local-level decision-making. Yet little anger was directed at JDCL as an aggregate company. Coalition members indicated anger at the way the Rockfort property was purchased, and at several of the comments made by the project manager. In spite of this, at least two interviewees commented that there was really ‘nothing personal’ about the Rockfort quarry proposal because ‘business is business’.

[JDCL] buys a lot of this material outside of the town of Caledon. It cost him more money to do that, this makes him non-competitive in the marketplace, so he wants a cheaper source of supply. It’s just business, it’s nothing personal. And there is a cheap source of supply right here. You know, that’s all. He doesn’t hate the local residents or anything like that. I think he’s just a business guy trying to make a buck. (Interviewee 8)

It seemed taken as self-evident that JDCL had the ‘right’ to make money, and to do whatever was required within the legal and regulatory framework to accomplish this. “He [JDCL] wants control of his own supply. Makes good business sense. Why wouldn’t he?” (Interviewee 5)

One Coalition member even noted that part of his business interest involved buying from JDCL, and saw no conflict in separating his role as a businessman from that of a citizen.

I told the guys in the Coalition, when I first went there, that I do business with James Dick, and I would continue to do business with him. I don’t see...to me there is no conflict. If his product is cheap, I buy it. End of story. But I’ll fight him tooth and nail on that thing [the proposed quarry]. When I go up there, I’m there as a resident, as a citizen, not as a business person. (Interviewee 5)

This sentiment, that ‘business is business’ and ‘nothing personal’ helps to explain why the majority of the CCC’s anger was directed at the provincial government. Embedded in this is a firm and unchallenged belief in the capitalist model, and the role of government in ensuring a ‘level playing field’ within which business competition takes place. In this model, JDCL is perceived by the Coalition as a businessman working within a system that is “biased” and “obscenely slanted” towards the aggregate industry, while the provincial government is viewed as having created this ‘unjust’ system, and thus bears the brunt of the Coalition’s blame.

It is likely that this separation of ‘fact’ (business is business) from ‘emotion’ (it’s nothing personal) is another manifestation of exurban subjectivity, in which doing good business (understood as looking for ‘cheaper sources’ in order to produce ‘higher profits’ is taken as a (self-evident) given and as such, remains unchallenged in CCC resistance narratives. The implications of the CCC’s exurban subjectivity, in terms of understanding the world in unchallenged and unquestioned capitalist terms is explored in more detail in the following chapter, which examines the impact of this exurban subjectivity on the CCC’s resistance practices.

Several CCC members explicitly took notice of attempts by JDCL to foster certain perceptions of both James Dick (as an individual) and JDCL (as a company). For example, one interviewee noted several aspects of JDCL’s activities that involved efforts to position James Dick (the individual) as a ‘good corporate citizen’ and

‘community supporter.’ This included efforts to become locally active in various arts boards,

Because it becomes very clear the degree to which they have planned for a long, long time...how they were going to get this quarry through. And in terms of painting hands, in terms of positioning themselves on all of your, you know, cultural boards in the local community, ingratiating himself to everybody...being the good guy. They’re not stupid. They know exactly what they’re doing. (Interviewee 3)

This also involved positioning JDCL’s quarry rehabilitation efforts as a means of attracting high-profile sporting events to the area.

They [JDCL] are part of a, I believe, part of an application for the Toronto Olympic bid that’s gone in, and their pits over on Highway 10, which are now holes, gaping holes in the ground, have been put into a proposal for Olympic rowing and kayaking. So you know what? You have Mr. Dick and the Town of Caledon and he’s a local hero because if he brings the Olympics to Caledon he’s going to generate employment. He’s very astute. No fool. (Interviewee 3)

JDCL’s efforts to focus on quarrying as an enhancement to the local environment was also noted.

And I mean, I think back to one of those early town hall meetings, in Belfountain and Greg Sweetnam arrived, and he had these big glossy, glossy pictures, you probably saw them in his office. Big glossy pictures of what Rockfort was going to look like in a hundred and fifty years. Magnifico. It’s going to be...it’s going to be a hiker’s delight. It’s going to have rock climbing. Yeah. Sure. (Interviewee 3)

Another interviewee also noted the environmental enhancement narrative.

So the story they’re trying to put forward is that they are environmentally conscious and friendly. When they’re finished reorganizing that landscape, it will be one of the most beautiful things you’ve ever seen. However, if you go to where they’re already been doing that landscape reorganizing, in the village of Caledon for the last 20 years or whatever, you’ll see it’s a moonscape, that’s just a bloody big hole in the ground. That’s all it is. (Interviewee 8)

The Coalition's implicit recognition of the power of narrative in this dispute highlights an intuitive understanding among the group and the project proponent as to the importance of the struggle to determine whose 'regime of truth' will prevail in the dispute over the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry.

The CCC's exurban subjectivity is clearly demonstrated throughout their narratives of resistance. Most notably, this emerges in their focus on creating 'rational' and 'credible' resistance, in large part through the production of specific technical knowledge aimed at proving that the Rockfort farm is the wrong site for the proposed quarry. Their focus on credibility is aimed at two key audiences; decision-makers at all levels and local supporters in a position to make significant financial contributions as the need arises.³⁵ While this narrative is highly consistent with the CCC's understanding of 'power' and 'politicization of issues,' it also creates something of a dilemma for resistance strategizing. In this particular case, the CCC has to balance the need to make the dispute 'visible' locally (and provincially to some extent) without engaging in direct action initiatives or other resistance activities which they associate with 'radical' and 'emotional' resisters.

The group's exurban subjectivity is also demonstrated in their reproduction of the arguments supporting the 'need' for both aggregate, and associated growth and development in Ontario. As part of their 'rational' resistance, the CCC has made it clear they are pro-development, and opposing the quarry only on the basis of a 'poor

³⁵ For example, when the dispute goes to a full hearing at the Ontario Municipal Board.

locational choice' rather than opposing development per se. At the local level, however, the group's Romantic perspective on 'nature' becomes clearly visible in their delineation of 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' forms of development. The former includes activities that enhance the (local) consumption of nature, especially activities focussed around tourism, development of (small scale) recreational amenities, and the horse riding industry. Small scale (non-industrialized) farming is also considered to be appropriate to the area. Inappropriate development includes newer types of productive (industrial) activity in the area, especially mining and related activities. By supporting development in principle, *but not at the Rockfort site*, the CCC's resistance offers little support for other more broadly-based environmental initiatives in the area.

The influence of exurban subjectivity is also visible in the CCC's inability to create a counter-discourse that challenges either the 'need' for aggregate, or the assumption that continuous growth and development is not only a good thing, but also 'needed' to insure Ontario's competitiveness in a globalized economy. Given the success of the majority of CCC members within a capitalist context, it is hardly surprising to find the tenets of capitalist discourse threaded throughout their resistance strategies. This is illustrated both by their collective surprise at how easily local place could be discursively erased within the province's regulatory framework for aggregate extraction, and in their use of highly adversarial language (with its emphasis on winners and losers) to describe their approach to 'battle.'

The final chapter of this dissertation now turns towards an exploration and analysis of the CCC's exurbanite-influenced resistance narratives on the overall trajectory of the Rockfort quarry dispute.

Chapter 7 Resistance, Conflict, Discourse and Politics of Place

The previous two chapters explored the CCC's practices of community-based resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry, and the narratives that shaped and guided these practices. This chapter now turns to an analysis of discourse, both with respect to the development and implementation of CCC resistance strategies as well as the overall trajectory of the Rockfort quarry dispute. This analysis includes an exploration of the ways CCC resistance strategies have been influenced by discursive factors, including the group's construction of 'nature' in this dispute, the normalization of neo-liberal growth and development discourse, and the impact of exurban subjectivity on the practice of place-based politics. More specifically, the central argument running through this chapter is that the CCC's embeddedness within dominant discourse fundamentally limits their potential to destabilize this discourse through resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry, and paradoxically, aids in legitimizing the very discourse they are fighting against.

This chapter begins with an investigation of the (seeming) paradigmatic clash between the Rockfort quarry proponent (JDCL) and opponent (CCC) vis-à-vis understandings of 'nature' and subsequently, the appropriate use of 'nature' at the Rockfort site. More specifically, it argues that in spite of the inherent differences in these two understandings of nature, a closer examination reveals the extent to which both conceptualizations of nature draw heavily from the same discursive foundation: a capitalist, technocratic growth and development-oriented perspective. From this

perspective, nature is understood to exist for human ‘consumption’, albeit in two different ways – either through productive (extractive) activities, or for ‘consumption’ by those seeking to ‘get away from it all’. As such, the real struggle involved in the Rockfort quarry is not so much a clash of paradigms, or even an epistemological struggle, but rather a struggle for the power to ‘manage’ the consumption of nature, both at the site in question and more broadly.

This analysis then turns to an examination of CCC resistance strategies, and how these are strongly reflective of dominant discursive influences. In particular, this requires linking the social positioning of the CCC - as a group largely comprised of successful exurbanites – to the group’s production of resistance strategies. This analysis demonstrates how the CCC’s social positioning has, to some extent, resulted in situating the Rockfort quarry dispute within a larger debate about growth and development that privileges global (extra-local) growth over the negative local impacts of development. I argue that the CCC’s embeddedness within the dominant, neo-liberal discursive framework significantly hinders their resistance potential, through the limits it places on their ability to develop counter-hegemonic resistance discourses. As such, this section examines how the CCC has contributed to a situation in which they find themselves positioned as the “subjugated other” (Gibson-Graham, 2003) within a global/local binary that privileges the former over the latter.

The third section of this chapter continues an examination of Coalition resistance strategies, but shifts the analysis towards quarry resistance as a ‘place-based political

project’. More specifically, it examines the ways that strategies employed by the CCC have contributed to the discursive erasure of (local) place by not challenging the ‘need’ for continuous growth and development, thus legitimizing large-scale aggregate developments such as the proposed Rockfort quarry. In addition, this has significant implications for the potential of the CCC’s place-based political resistance. This chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the implications of the findings of this case study of elite resistance to locally unwanted land uses, and briefly explores what this means for future locally-based aggregate resistance initiatives.

Social Nature, Environmental Conflict and the Rockfort Quarry

Intractable environmental conflicts are characterized by their long-standing nature and resistance to resolution, in spite of repeated attempts at intervention (Putnam and Wondolleck, 2003). The lengthy and as yet unresolved dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry clearly meets the first of these criteria. While it could be argued that neither the project proponent nor the locally-based resistance group have been party to ‘repeated interventions’ aimed at resolution, it could also be argued that the dispute appears to be - in environmental conflict resolution terminology – decidedly ‘resolution-resistant.’

As discussed in Chapter 2, the burgeoning literature on intractable environmental conflicts suffers from some significant conceptual limitations. The development of

this literature mirrors the development of conflict resolution literature in general, as a body of research that has emerged primarily from a practical (practice-based) starting point, rather than a theoretical one. Key weaknesses identified in this literature, in addition to its atheoretical nature, include a lack of attention to conceptualizing ‘nature’, a bias towards resolution (expressed through an emphasis on the development of methods and tools to improve communication between stakeholders) and limited attention to the influences of contextual factors on environmental conflicts. As such, it was felt that (re)viewing environmental conflicts in general, and the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry in particular, through a discursive lens would provide an analytical richness not currently available through sole reliance on the conflict resolution literature.

Castree’s (2001) argument that nature is “inescapably social” and thus must be understood as something defined, delimited and even physically reconstituted by different parties (stakeholders) in particular ways is aptly demonstrated in the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry. The central argument running throughout this dissertation is that understanding environmental disputes as discursive struggles, rather than (merely) conflicts over the appropriateness of particular sites for a locally unwanted land use, opens up interesting and relevant avenues of exploration. (Re)viewing the conflict over the proposed Rockfort quarry as a dispute over (competing and/or overlapping) social constructions of nature and as a struggle for the control of the production of ‘truth’ and ‘meaning’ as these apply to particular

understandings of 'nature' presents a fresh way of examining and evaluating the intractability of environmental conflicts.

A discursive examination yielded numerous narratives put forward by various stakeholders over the course of this dispute. Each narrative represents only a partial perspective of the overall dispute and there is significant overlap and competition between and among these narratives. But viewed together they depict a complex and multi-faceted (discursive) dispute, one in which the struggle is about far more than the (mere) decision about the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry. At one level, the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry is undoubtedly about the actual siting of the proposed quarry and the economic, social and environmental consequences of this land use decision, especially for residents within municipal/regional boundaries. Understood more broadly, however, it is also a struggle for social control and the power to determine (in large part, through discursive normalization) what constitutes 'appropriate' land usage in the area, both in general terms and at this particular site. An apt quote about the conflict appeared in the Toronto Star in 1999, from a journalist who described the key issue as follows: "How much control should a local town have over a vital regional and provincial industry? That's what this Caledon fight is all about" (Stein, 1999).

One of the unusual features of this case study is that the conflict involves, to a great extent, a clash of dominant interests – a locally elite resistance group challenging both the project developer as well as the extra-local (provincial) forces responsible

for establishing the policy framework for aggregate extraction in Ontario. ‘Typical’ community-based conflicts over locally-unwanted land uses involve marginalized communities mounting challenges to the dominant discursive framework through the development of counter-hegemonic discourses of resistance. From an analytical perspective, this conflict over the proposed Rockfort quarry is of interest because it involves a clash of dominant discourse at differing scales – local and extra-local.

In the case of the proposed Rockfort quarry, the struggle of various stakeholders to define a particular conceptualization of ‘nature’ looms large in discursive struggles over land use. The Rockfort quarry dispute is fundamentally a struggle over contested, and to some extent, competing, conceptualizations of ‘nature’. As Castree (2001) so aptly states, “(w)hose discourses are accepted as being truthful is a question of social struggle and power politics” (Castree, p. 12, 2001). In Foucauldian terms, this struggle is about determining which ‘regime of truth’ (in this case, whose construction of ‘nature’) will predominate in Caledon. And as noted by Ferguson (1994), it is not the ‘truth’ value of particular discourses that is of interest but rather the “real social effects” (p. xv) these discourses have. In the case of the Rockfort dispute, the real social effect of the struggle is the power to define and to normalize certain constructions of ‘nature’ in Caledon in ways that allow certain types of land use to be considered (self-evidently) ‘good’ and ‘appropriate’ while other types of land use become impossible by virtue of falling outside the norms delineated by dominant discourses.

In discursive terms, the two key stakeholders in this Rockfort quarry dispute are working from what Taylor (2000) describes as competing environmental paradigms' and what Marsden et al. (1993) attribute to the contested nature of peri-urban rural sites, and tensions between 'productive' and 'consumptive' (post-productivist) conceptualizations of nature. To start with Taylor's environmental paradigm model, the Rockfort quarry conflict is, to a large extent, a paradigmatic clash between the exploitative capitalism paradigm espoused by the project proponent and supported by provincial and municipal policy frameworks, and the romantic environmental paradigm espoused by the CCC.

JDCL's quarry-related narratives are firmly entrenched in economic growth and development discourses which stress the 'critical' need for aggregate quite literally as the foundation for on-going growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area of Southern Ontario. As Taylor (2000) notes, within the exploitative capitalist paradigm 'nature' is viewed as a source of materials which are valuable only to the extent that they can be extracted and sold. As such, JDCL argues that not only does the proposed Rockfort quarry actually create (economic) value on the site, further 'value added' accrues from the environmental 'enhancements' that accompany progressive and final rehabilitation activities.

In this narrative, resource extraction activities such as the proposed Rockfort quarry are beneficial because they 'liberate' resources (which are assumed to be of (economic) value only upon extraction), 'enhance' the local environment through

quarry-related activities and encourage technological innovation (e.g., the proposed, and untested, ‘grout curtain’). An unarticulated industrialist discourse of ‘nature as source of raw materials’ runs throughout the narratives of both the province and the proponent. To some extent, this discourse is evident in regional and municipal narratives as well, although tempered with the need to address the local impacts of natural resource extraction processes, to some extent, through ‘good planning’ processes.

In the Rockfort project, JDCL builds on arguments privileging economic growth, by emphasizing the ‘need’ for developing large-scale aggregate extraction projects close to market. Situating the discussion in this way casts JDCL into the role of ‘local hero’ for supporting local and extra-local economic growth and development initiatives through natural resource development. In this paradigm, there is no inherent conflict between the economic benefits that accrue to James Dick (some of which are disseminated throughout the company) and James Dick’s status as a good (corporate) citizen.

In contrast, the CCC’s narratives of resistance are firmly grounded in what Taylor (2000) refers to as the Romantic environmental paradigm, and take as their starting point that the need for preservation and conservation of ‘nature’ (understood as ‘wilderness’, ‘wildlife habitat’ and as site for ‘recreation’) is self-evident.

Community-based resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry is premised on an understanding of nature as ‘pristine’ and ‘bucolic’, a place where people can go to

‘get away from it all’ for necessary rest from the busy (capitalist) world. While the importance of environmental protection was invoked in several of the research interviews, it should be noted that nature was understood largely as a backdrop for people-centred recreational activities.

At first viewing, there appears to be an overt paradigm clash between JDCL and the CCC. This is, in many ways, a classic situation for conflict escalation – one in which the project proponent and project opponent are fundamentally unable to ‘see’ each other’s position due to their paradigmatic disjuncture(s). At the local level, both stakeholders feel (to some extent) misunderstood, and not surprisingly, now occupy highly polarized positions. The fact that both JDCL and the CCC have hired lawyers and consultants to advance their respective positions has also exacerbated the adversarial nature of this conflict.

An exploitative capitalism paradigm perspective on ‘nature’ – in which nature is of value only to the extent to which raw materials are extracted fundamentally conflicts with a Romantic environmental paradigm perspective which values the preservation and conservation of natural resources. Alternatively, drawing on Marsden et al. (1993), one could argue that the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry is deeply rooted in a struggle between shifts in productivist forces, as local farming activities are replaced by large scale quarry developments in the Caledon area, that unavoidably conflict with the increasing local demand for the ‘consumption’ of a particular type of ‘nature’ (bucolic, pristine, rural) by incoming exurbanites. Understanding the dispute

over the Rockfort quarry as a discursive struggle, rooted in deeply held values - manifested in this particular conflict through various social construction of nature - helps to explain the contested nature of the proposed quarry project, the highly adversarial nature of the conflict, and the determination of all key stakeholders to stay in 'for the long haul' in spite of the costs.

This conflict is further complicated by a provincial position on aggregate which posits the need for municipalities to support the 'greater good' of province-wide development through the 'contribution' (voluntary or not) of important resources such as aggregate. This argument effectively contributes to the discursive erasure of the particularities of 'local' communities by privileging provincial growth and development over local autonomy with respect to aggregate decision-making. While there is reference to doing this with 'minimal' social and environmental disruption, it is strikingly clear in the provincial policy framework that economic growth is privileged over both the social and environmental impacts accruing from such development.

The degree of polarization between JDCL and the CCC is evident in their many diametrically opposed positions on various issues³⁶. An example of this polarization was at one time posted on the home page of the CCC's website, on which a large two-column table was posted with the headings "James Dick said" and "CCC said", which laid out a multitude of opposing positions on aspects of the Rockfort quarry

³⁶ For example, estimates of available aggregate, the quarry's impact on the water table and the potential disruption to local wildlife.

impact. The overall trajectory of this conflict, and the degree of divisiveness it has engendered, exhibits little, if any, potential for ‘resolution’– not because of ‘lack of dialogue’ between key disputants (as the environmental conflict resolution literature might posit), but rather because of the fundamentally incompatible perspectives of ‘nature’ invoked by each in this particular struggle, and the resultant irreconcilable differences.

Braun’s (2002) discussion of conflict resolution with respect to forestry issues in British Columbia identifies some of the analytical failings inherent in approaches which focus solely on the material aspects of environmental conflicts, while ignoring the impact of discourse(s) in producing and reproducing the conditions for these conflicts. (Re)viewing the Rockfort dispute in a similar way highlights the discursive incompatibility of some environmental conflicts, an intractability unlikely to be resolved through any amount of dialogue among stakeholders searching for ‘common ground’ or amicable resolution. As Braun notes, analysis of some environmental conflict requires a recognition of the limits of interest-based negotiation and the belief that “...if individuals could only look beyond self-interest, they might find points of convergence, reconcile differences and come to a unified position over the fate of this thing called the rainforest” (2002, p. 4-5).

Analyzing the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry at the level of discourse highlights the key challenges involved in employing an environmental conflict approach to the Rockfort quarry dispute – the existence of two fundamentally

different constructions of ‘nature,’ constructions lacking a shared conceptual foundation in which ‘common ground’ can be found. As such, the very substantive limitations to an interest-based negotiation approach to conflict resolution must be recognized. In addition, trying to deal with the conflict without addressing the influence of discourses on the production and reproduction of the conditions that create particular stakeholder positions and interests runs the risk of continually recreating these conditions under the guise of negotiating differences.

While the two perspectives on ‘nature’ noted above appear fundamentally incompatible, a deeper analysis highlights the influence of dominant discourse on both these constructions. This influence is the focus of the next section.

Fighting Dominant Discourse with....Dominant Discourse?

The previous section drew attention to the (seeming) paradigmatic clash between the exploitative capitalist paradigm invoked by JDCL and the Romantic environmental paradigm invoked by the CCC during the Rockfort quarry dispute. While there are obvious and significant differences between the two paradigms, as demonstrated by the different narratives invoked by the two key disputants (JDCL and the CCC), these paradigmatic perspectives also share notable, deep-seated similarities when viewed from a historical perspective. As noted previously, the romantic environmental paradigm emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in response and challenge to the rapid exploitation of natural resource development that occurred during the

early years of industrialization. The goal of this movement was to protect and conserve existing wilderness areas, allowing for the preservation of pockets of ‘natural’ areas before these were destroyed by large-scale industrialization. It is worth noting that this focus on preservation did not challenge or impede industrial development in general, or argue for wide protection of the ‘nature’ at a broader scale. In its early days this movement was dominated by middle-class white males, many with strong ties to the business world. Over time this movement attracted others, but has largely remained the purview of ‘middle-class whites’, and consequently is a movement far more reformist than radical in intent (Taylor, 2000).

Given the historical entanglements of these two paradigms, and their discursive similarities, it becomes difficult to fundamentally challenge the exploitation of nature from a Romantic starting point. The Romantic environmental paradigm shares the exploitative capitalist paradigm perspective of ‘nature’ as a source of raw materials, but argues in favour of ‘managing’ this development, rather than leaving it (solely) to market regulation. Taylor (2000) uses the term ‘pragmatic conservationism’ in reference to the central tenets of the romantic environmental paradigm – “regulated use, wise use, scientific management and commercial development of resources” (p. 531) a perspective strongly reflected in CCC narratives. This ‘managerial’ perspective on environmental issue is evident throughout the CCC interviews and print materials examined over the course of this research. As stated clearly during the interviews, the CCC clearly and deliberately articulated their position as “not against development per se” but rather against the particular proposed development of the

Rockfort quarry due to the ‘irrational’ choice of site. This perspective is also reflected in CCC statements regarding their understanding of the need for aggregate to support provincial growth and their reliance on scientific and technical ‘expertise’ to demonstrate the ‘inappropriateness’ of the Rockfort site. This positioning of the CCC’s resistance serves to exclude more broadly-based challenges to the ways that ‘need’ for aggregate is normalized within provincial policy statements, as is the ‘need’ for continuous economic growth and development.

The concept of ‘pragmatic conservation’ is also echoed in several recent Ontario provincial policy discussions, e.g., the Smart Growth discussion papers and the recent (2005) Greenbelt legislation, as well as in the recent aggregate-focused Official Plan Amendment (OPA 161) recently implemented by the Town of Caledon. In this sense, the key stakeholders in this conflict are bound by elements of a common understanding of ‘nature’ (as a source of materials to be exploited) and are disagreeing about the management of exploitation *rather than about exploitation per se*. The impact of this ‘managerial’ perspective on CCC resistance strategies is examined below.

In other words, it can be argued that while the key stakeholders in the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry appear, at first, to be situated within competing environmental paradigms, at a deeper (discursive) level, they are actually competing from the same basic epistemological starting point vis-à-vis ‘nature’. As such, the dispute over the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry is thus a social struggle over

whose vision of ‘environmental management’ will prevail, and a struggle for the power to determine ‘appropriate’ usage of particular sites. That all key stakeholders are fighting within the dominant discursive perspective aids in both producing and reproducing arguments privileging arguments favouring ‘need’ – both the need for economic growth and the need for aggregate. This in turn (re)produces the normalization of ‘need’ to the extent that a focus on the need for aggregate can be seen as structuring the fields of action of all key disputants in this conflict. This normalization results in an effective limitation on the development of counter-discourse(s) challenging the ‘need’ imperative. In this case study, the CCC’s explicit support for aggregate extraction – albeit somewhere other than Rockfort - serves to inadvertently (re)produce the status quo support for continuous growth and development.

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the CCC developed an array of resistance strategies during the course of their resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry. Quarry resistance activities fall roughly into one of two key categories: those focussing on technical/legal approaches and those focussing on political approaches. The CCC’s strategies in these two areas will now be explored, and examined with respect to the implications of these strategic choices to the on-going dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry.

The CCC’s social positioning, as a group largely comprised of affluent and successful exurbanites, is a key factor in their strategic orientation. Given their exurban

subjectivity, the CCC's affinity towards a Romantic view of nature is unsurprising. Taylor (2000) notes the importance of social positioning on the social construction of what is 'natural', and what is privileged or marginalized within this discourse. One example of this impact is evident in the historical perspective Taylor (2000) presents regarding pathways to environmental activism. The first pathway, currently the mainstream environmental perspective, equates 'nature' with wilderness, wildlife and recreation - a movement historically dominated by middle-class white males in the 19th century, and began to attract more middle-class female support in the 20th century. This description correlates strongly with the core membership of the CCC, and is also reflective of their 'exurban subjectivity' as discussed below.

Several members of the CCC moved to the area after successful business careers and chose the area because of its natural beauty. Large country estates and high housing prices have ensured a degree of social exclusivity in the area. The CCC has repeatedly and clearly stated their position as centred on protecting and preserving the 'natural wilderness' found in Caledon, maintaining the area as an attractive one for outdoor recreational pursuits, and protecting local flora and fauna habitat.³⁷ Their approach throughout this dispute has been intentionally and determinedly technocratic, with an emphasis on presenting 'rational' arguments grounded in 'expert' knowledge. As part of this, concerted efforts have been made to make the visceral element(s) of this conflict largely invisible in the CCC's resistance strategies.

³⁷ There are several ironies here, including that this area has, to some degree, been 'developed' so residents can 'get back to nature'; and that one of the 'outdoor recreational pursuits' is the Caledon Hunt Club's annual Fox hunt, complete with horses and hounds. It is also somewhat ironic, from an environmental protection perspective, how many trucks and SUVs are driven to CCC meetings.

This technocratic approach has had several implications for the CCC's locally-based resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry.

Castree (2001) notes that mainstream geography, with its emphasis on 'people and their environments' is deeply rooted in a technocratic foundation. One result of this is an emphasis on scientific evidence regarding 'nature', reflective of a deeply held managerial bias towards 'nature'. A mainstream geographical approach stands in contrast with the more radical geographical approaches embodied within the 'eco-centric' or 'social nature' approaches, which are premised on a much more critical perspective on the 'natural' world. Castree (2001) argues that the relatively uncritical approach employed within mainstream geography has resulted in two significant limitations within this approach: a tendency to equate 'nature' with 'environmental problems', and a bias towards understanding nature in terms of environmental 'science', with little attention paid to the "fundamental socio-economic processes transforming twenty-first century nature" (p. 3). This dominance of this approach is clearly reflected in the efforts of all key stakeholders in the Rockfort quarry dispute to produce 'definitive' and 'scientific' knowledge about the potential impacts of quarry development, and the emphasis on 'managing' nature at the Rockfort site.

From a Foucauldian perspective, while the deployment of power may appear to be distinct from the knowledge production processes, the production of knowledge is intimately, and often invisibly, linked to the systems of power that produce and sustain it. As such, Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) argue that the production of

knowledge is a “central component in this historical transformation of various regimes of power and truth” (p. 117). The CCC appears to have a good, intuitive understanding of the importance of knowledge production processes. Knowledge production has been a key component of the Rockfort quarry dispute. During the course of this conflict, each of the key stakeholders has entered into contractual arrangements with well-known consulting companies for the production of technical and scientific consulting reports on various topics. The ‘knowledge’ produced in these reports was used to support the various arguments put forward vis-à-vis the ‘best’ and ‘most appropriate’ use of the Rockfort site, ostensibly with the belief that ‘expert’ opinions would provide clear and unambiguous conclusions.

Early on the CCC identified the ‘production’ of their own technical evidence as an important strategy to counter the technical reports put forward by JDCL, and hired their own consultants to prepare technical reports of the potential effects of quarry development in four areas the CCC considered key: hydrogeology, planning, traffic and geology. They also hired experts to do peer-reviews of the documents prepared on behalf of the proponent, to raise questions about the accuracy of these documents, and to question the data interpretation and analysis included in the reports. In spite of this very intentional production of knowledge to support the CCC’s position vis-à-vis the Rockfort quarry, one CCC member admitted to some surprise that hired ‘professional’ consultants could produce reports that conflicted with the findings of other consultants, given that they all started with the same basic set of ‘facts’.

Another very deliberate strategy related to knowledge production is reflected in concerted attempts to hire “the best (technical/legal expertise) you can get” (Interviewee 9) in spite of the cost, and to see this as an ‘investment’ rather than as an expense. As one member commented, trying to cut costs by hiring less experienced or less reputable consultants can leave you “dead in the water” (Interviewee 9). In keeping with their general approach to community-based resistance, the CCC set out early on to find and hire the ‘best’ technical and legal expertise available, at significant financial cost to the CCC.

The technocratic nature of the CCC’s resistance strategizing is also reflected in their determination to separate ‘emotions’ from ‘facts’. One example of this can be found in repeated attempts to differentiate the CCC’s “balanced” and “focussed” resistance from that of “angry environmentalists”. In dichotomizing ‘reason’ and ‘emotion’, the CCC (re)produces a binary opposition within which ‘rational’ and ‘scientific’ approaches are understood as superior to ‘raging’ and ‘emotional’ responses. This approach reflects Gismondi and Richardson’s (1994) findings regarding the denigration of emotions during the hearing process for a locally-unwanted land use in Northern Alberta, and the ways this dichotomization effectively privileged scientific information over community knowledge:

ALPAC ‘spin masters’ often labelled criticisms of their project as emotional in order to devalue them. This technique can be called “derogatory semantics”; discourses that are marked emotional are marked negatively. In the hearings, scientific interventions that are marked emotional are marked negatively in a specific way, that is, as non-scientific (p. 241).

The key technical/legal strategy employed by the CCC in the dispute over the proposed quarry has been to challenge the proposed Rockfort quarry siting on technical grounds, and to demonstrate unequivocally that Rockfort is the ‘wrong’ site for the proposed quarry due to the social and environmental impacts of the proposed quarry. In order to implement this strategy, the CCC has invested significant resources in technical and legal expertise, and deliberately chosen to keep their focus firmly on the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry, rather than the development of partnerships with other groups in the area working on more broadly-based, environmentally-oriented issues. The CCC’s rationale for this is the importance of keeping attention firmly focussed on the quarry proposal, rather than diluting their efforts (and group time and energy) into other activities viewed as more peripheral.

One impact of this emphasis is the significant limitation it imposes on the scope of resistance and the opportunities lost for framing resistance to the quarry as part of a broader challenge to the ‘need’ for growth (and therefore large-scale aggregate quarry development) or as part of a larger struggle for greater local autonomy vis-à-vis resource decision-making in the area. Limiting the scope of the dispute to arguments regarding the ‘appropriateness’ of the Rockfort site has important implications for CCC resistance practices. For example, it reinforces one of the narratives invoked by JDCL, who argues that resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry is nothing more than ‘not in my back yard’ (NIMBY) resistance. In important ways, the CCC’s technocratic focus reinforces this perception as resistance activities focus largely on negating the choice of a particular site, rather than challenging either the need for

aggregate or elements of provincial policy regarding aggregate extraction. In addition to possibly impeding the CCC's changes of success for blocking the proposed quarry siting, it also allows key issues such as the autonomy of municipal land-use planning processes to remain invisible, and thus unchallenged.

From a discursive perspective, challenging and resisting the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry through a technocratic approach draws on many of the same discursive elements employed by the proponent. This then situates the CCC in the position of 'playing the same (technical and legal) game' as the proponent. Unlike the majority of disputes in which locally-based resistance groups do not have the resources to engage consultants and lawyers to challenge those of the proponent, the CCC has been able to do so. This has resulted in a rapid escalation in legal and technical consulting costs for all key stakeholders, fuelling further conflict escalation and stakeholder polarization, as each group has become increasingly heavily invested, financially and otherwise, in the dispute outcome.

There is also compelling evidence of the ways the CCC's political strategy, and resultant framing of their resistance activities, has been influenced by the largely exurban subjectivity of the group. In particular, the CCC's political strategies reflect a particular understanding of how political change is effected. Whereas the emphasis of the social movement literature is on change through some form of broadly-based participatory democratic process, CCC members appear to have a very different understanding of political change processes. Within the literature on community-

based mobilization to locally-unwanted land uses, which focuses almost exclusively on the experience of marginalized communities, strategic ‘politicization’ is understood in terms of activities undertaken to mobilize broad-based support. This is undertaken as a means of reaching politicians and thus, ideally, influencing political decision-making.

The CCC’s political strategies are quite different, in the sense that the group’s goal is to gain access key decision-makers and attempt to influence political decision-making through these relationships. Consequently, the focus of CCC political strategizing has been on building relationships with relevant decision-makers at municipal, provincial and federal levels, and ‘making the business case’ as to why the Rockfort farm is a poor site choice for the proposed quarry. In contrast to the very public and visible nature of grassroots mobilization strategies, building relationships with key decision-makers is, from a public perspective, a relatively invisible approach.

Throughout the research process, many CCC members spoke articulately of their belief that decisions regarding the Rockfort quarry would, ultimately, be political rather than technical in nature. Given this, the amount of resources allocated towards legal/technical strategies is somewhat paradoxical, until the CCC’s understanding of ‘power’ is examined more closely. I would argue that the CCC conceptualization of power in general, and political power in particular, is understood largely as ‘top down’, or, in Foucauldian terminology, ‘sovereign’ power. If this is the case, one way to effect political change is through exerting influence on key decision-makers,

especially through personal contact. In colloquial terms, the group is comprised of many individuals whose problem-solving strategy involves going ‘straight to the top,’ a strategy requiring the CCC to be perceived by this group as both ‘reasonable’ and ‘credible.’

CCC members who indicated a belief that the Rockfort decision would ultimately be made in a political forum also commented that they felt these decisions would ultimately be made ‘behind closed doors’ and/or as part of a practice of ‘backroom’ politics. In this conceptualization of political decision-making, the challenge then becomes one of finding ways to gain access to key decision-makers and attempt to exert influence on the process through this access. This is a fundamentally different process than that of creating (public) political pressure on politicians through public demonstrations and broad-based mobilization strategies. This former approach is far more private, and also requires extensive ‘evidence’ and ‘facts’ relevant to the development of a compelling ‘business case’. It also requires highlighting and emphasizing the ‘common ground’ between decision-makers and those seeking to influence these decision (i.e., the CCC). In this context, the CCC’s emphasis on the production of high quality, ‘scientific’ and ‘expert’ knowledge, is decidedly logical, as is their determination to be perceived as a ‘rational’ and ‘focussed’ voice of dissent. In other words, the CCC has contributed to (re)producing the dichotomy between ‘rational’ people who make the ‘right’ decisions based on ‘scientific evidence’ and ‘angry environmentalists’ who are presented as arguing with lots of passion but little hard evidence.

As noted previously, the CCC possesses significant social capital, particularly in the form of weak ties that are recognized as critical for horizontal and vertical networking.³⁸ While the CCC has been actively engaged in networking activities throughout the duration of this dispute, these efforts have been concentrated mainly on creating and fostering connections with key decision-makers. This very deliberate strategy speaks to a top-down conceptualization of power, in contrast to a Foucauldian understanding, in which power circulates, and is exercised in a much more diffuse and less unidirectional way. Analyzed this way, the CCC's approaches for resisting the Rockfort quarry are 'rational' in the sense that they are internally consistent with the CCC's understanding of power and mechanisms of social and political change. Throughout this dispute, the CCC has emphasized the importance of framing issues related to the proposed Rockfort quarry in ways designed to resonate with key decision-makers, rather than framing issues with the intent of mobilizing broad-based grassroots support. Again, the private and invisible nature of the networking undertaken by the CCC stands in obvious contrast to the very public networking undertaken by others groups.

³⁸ Ties resulting from face-to-face, intra-group interaction are known as dense ties, while those resulting from inter-group interaction are referred to as 'weak ties.' This terminology is used to differentiate between intra-group social capital (social cohesiveness, or 'social glue') and inter-group social capital (social linkages or 'social bridges') (Foley and Edwards, 1999). For an interesting discussion of the somewhat counterintuitive power of 'weak' ties, see Gladwell, 2000.

Employing the framing terminology often used in critical analysis of social movements,³⁹ the CCC's sole focus on the Rockfort quarry has resulted in the creation of a restricted frame, one that is relatively rigid, one unlikely to attract support other than from those directly affected by the proposed project. This framing contrasts with that of the more open and inclusive elaborated frame, one in which the conflict over a particular issues (in this case the siting of the proposed Rockfort quarry) becomes one component of a larger (social) struggle. For example, while the Rockfort dispute encompasses some issues of broader significance in the region (e.g., the impact of the quarry on road safety and water quality throughout the region, municipal autonomy regarding land-use decision-making), the CCC has deliberately selected a relatively narrow framing of these issues.

At first glance, it appeared to me that the CCC's narrow focus on Rockfort, rather than a broader focus on aggregate policy issues, was a strategic mistake, in the sense that it (inadvertently) precluded many opportunities for partnering on policy-related issues and limited potential for collaboration. In light of the arguments above, however, I wonder if this narrow focus actually served multiple and intentional purposes. The CCC very clearly stated that their strategy was designed to keep resistance efforts focussed on the quarry dispute, and not dilute the group's energies elsewhere. However, setting up resistance in ways that preclude active collaboration with other groups (other than mutual agreement to support one another's causes in principle) also serves to preclude any danger of partnerships that might prove

³⁹ For a full discussion of framing within social movements, see Benford, 1997; Benford and Snow, 2000; Taylor, 2000, Croteau and Hicks, 2003.

detrimental to the CCC's 'credibility' with key decision-makers. In other words, opening up the dispute frame beyond the Rockfort quarry could, potentially, create situations in which the CCC would be publicly linked with 'angry' environmentalists, thus discrediting the premise of their resistance strategy, with its focus on presenting 'rational' and 'credible' resistance.

Within the social movement literature, framing strategies, and the strategic choices involved in developing either restricted or elaborated frames, are highlighted because the type of frame employed has an impact on mobilization for broad-based collective action. The literature on framing in social movements emerges from research based primarily on the experiences of those on the margins, both in general, and with specific reference to environmental issues. For example, environmental justice emerges from, and is firmly situated in, a very different paradigmatic starting point than that encompassed by the exploitative capitalist paradigm or the Romantic environmental paradigm. Taylor (2000) notes the emergence of the new environmental paradigm in the 1960s, which while building on the reformist roots of the Romantic environmental paradigm, employs a far more critical and politicized analysis of the issues. More recently, a new paradigm has emerged, the environmental justice paradigm, which explicitly recognizes the experiences of people of colour, and how these experiences of 'nature' differ from those of middle-class whites (ibid). The critical stance of these two paradigms (the latter in particular) and their positioning outside the dominant framework requires a 'grassroots' political approach, one with a broad enough base to mobilize large numbers of people.

Politicizing issues from the margins is quite different than politicizing from the centre, and each fosters a different type of political engagement.

The CCC's embeddedness within the dominant paradigm has influenced their choice of framing strategies in very particular ways, resulting in the development of a highly restricted frame. The narrow focus of the CCC's Rockfort quarry resistance was a deliberate choice and makes sense in light of the CCC's attempts to 'politicize from the centre' rather than the margins. It is possible, however, that by narrowing the focus of their resistance in this way, that the CCC may have 'boxed themselves into a corner' strategically, by limiting the scope of their resistance options. In other words, the strategic choice to focus solely on the proposed Rockfort quarry severely limits their future ability to foster broad-based mobilization if other resistance strategies prove unsuccessful. Framing the Rockfort quarry dispute in a way that offers little incentive for those outside the immediate quarry area to get involved is a somewhat risky strategic decision, especially if efforts to influence key decision-makers fail to block the siting of the proposed quarry.

Strategically, the CCC has also made a choice to argue that quarry development on the Rockfort site will privilege the 'needs of one' (James Dick) over the 'needs of many' in the community. While this argument may have local resonance, it is strikingly similar to arguments put forward by the province, in which the 'needs of one community' (e.g., Caledon) should not be allowed to interfere with the 'needs of many' (i.e., provincial growth and development). In this example, the CCC's rather

limited framing of the issues in the dispute, and the consequent lack of challenge to the normalization of the ‘need’ for growth and development’ in Ontario, may negatively impact the group’s overall resistance potential.

Throughout the course of the Rockfort dispute, the CCC has made great efforts to ensure that their framing of the dispute situates them firmly within the rational, scientific, economically neo-liberal dominant paradigm and emphasizes their collective links to those in the centre of this group. This is in contrast to working from outside the dominant paradigm, considered the purview of ‘angry environmentalists’ and other marginalized groups. While this choice reflects both conscious and unconscious influences, like any other choice it has its share of consequences. The most notable of these is that it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to develop an effective counter-hegemonic discourse by drawing so heavily on dominant discourses.

The overall effect of this technocratic and managerial approach to resistance, advanced by the CCC through technical, legal and political avenues, is a (re)production of dominant growth and development discourse, effectively negating the potential development of a counter-discourse to challenge the ‘need’ for continuous economic growth in the greater golden horseshoe area (and related need for large-scale aggregate extraction). Given the degree to which economic growth and development discourse has been normalized in this dispute, the role of aggregate as a literal and figurative foundation for this growth, and the discursive erasure of

place-based particularities that accompanies this normalization (e.g., through the provincial policy statement), the effectiveness of the CCC's approach to 'politicizing' the Rockfort quarry decision remains to be seen. If the CCC is unable to reach and persuade key decision-makers about the 'devastating' impacts of the quarry on the community, there is little chance of the CCC subsequently being able to mobilize large numbers of individuals and groups around the Rockfort quarry issue. As noted by one journalist, "If Caledon has decided to protect itself as a kind of greenbelt, it's one that has little to offer the general public beyond pleasant drives in the country and hikes along what's left of that particular section of the Bruce Trail" (Lorinc, 2001, p.90).

This chapter now turns to an examination of the implications of the CCC's exurban subjectivity on the group's development of place-based (local) resistance.

Creating Effective Politics of Place

In addition to the issues raised above, this case study also throws into relief questions regarding place, scale and growth. In the case of aggregate extraction in Ontario, policy decisions have clearly been made which clearly privilege regional/provincial development over local autonomy vis-à-vis land-use planning. With respect to aggregate in Ontario, this has been the situation for some time now (Winfield and Taylor, 2005). What appears to be changing, however, is the scale and geographic scope of sites considered 'appropriate' for development. Communities previously

exempt from the threat of locally unwanted land uses, such as the one in which the Rockfort Farm site is located, are now increasingly embroiled in public and overt resistance to proposed development.

The dominant perspective on place running through this case study resonates with Escobar's (2001) comments about a sense of atopia and a placelessness embedded in current thought. This is reflected in current policy discussions in Ontario, and comments such as the following put forward as part of the Smart Growth Discussion Paper (2004): "...as urban regions compete for these resources [jobs and investment] *we can no longer afford to think short-term or municipality by municipality*" (p. 2, italics added). Embedded in this statement is a discursive erasure of (local) place, in the seemingly self-evident logic that what is good provincially will be equally beneficial for municipalities. It also assumes that municipalities are essentially interchangeable, and without local particularities that might require a more nuanced policy approach. With respect to aggregate, however, the obvious negative place-based externalities involved in development are rendered invisible, while the economic benefits accruing from this development are made highly visible. Underpinning this 'greater good' argument is an (unarticulated) assumption that benefits of growth and development will be distributed relatively equitably across municipalities.

Historically, elite communities, such as the one around the Rockfort site, have been protected from the negative externalities involved in natural resource extraction, and

this protection may have been assisted by ‘backroom conversations’ with key decision-makers. The availability of a high-quality, close to the surface, and close to market source of aggregate found at the site of the proposed Rockfort quarry has been known for some time, which begs the question of why a development proposal has gone forward at this particular point in time, and not earlier.

In the current globalized environment, it remains to be seen whether the ‘balance of power’ between elite communities and industrial development has changed to the extent that a large-scale development will be allowed to proceed in a previously non-industrialized area. It will also be interesting to see how the decision made about the Rockfort quarry siting will affect other development initiatives in the area. The 2005 Ontario Provincial Policy Statement asserts that “mineral aggregate resources shall be protected for long-term use” (2005, p. 19) and that “as much of the mineral aggregate resources as is realistically possible shall be made available as close to markets as possible” (*ibid.*). These statements reflect a discursive environment which privileges global (extra-local) economic growth over local (place-based) concerns regarding the local economic, social and environmental impacts of this growth.

As Gibson-Graham notes, globalization discourses have tended to posit the global as the field of reference, thus situating the local “in a place of subordination, as the ‘other’ within the global order” (Gibson-Graham, 2003, p. 50). Analysis of the CCC’s resistance throws into relief the extent to which the ‘local’ is currently subordinated in peri-urban Canada, as even elite communities now appear threatened

by a discursive erasure of place as they are surrendered to what Braun (2002) describes as the “sacrificial logic of global capitalism”, a “logic that deems certain landscapes and communities expendable in the name of nation, profit and progress” (p. 2). The CCC’s overt and long-standing resistance to the proposed Rockfort quarry, and lack of resolution to date, may signal that the line demarcating ‘expendable’ communities from ‘protected’ communities is shifting.

In examining options for creating an effective local-level ‘politics of place’, and challenging the atopia of global development, three approaches to resistance were examined: upscaling resistance; creating and fostering translocal linkages and trans-scalar alliances; and local ‘resubjectification’. In the case of the dispute over the proposed Rockfort quarry, upscaling does not appear to be a viable option for many reasons. First, the CCC’s narrow framing of the situation has emphasized the siting of the Rockfort quarry as the central – and only – issue. This is in contrast to the potential inherent in creating a more elaborated frame that might invoke broader issues, such as local autonomy, participatory democracy or other issue likely to attract broad-based interest and support at extra-local scales. Restricted frames, with their emphasis on a specific (local) issue, also make it difficult attract extra-local support for resistance activities.

Considered further, however, the reasons employing an upscaling strategy to resistance appear to be two-fold; first, to increase the numbers of supporters for a given cause, and second, to increase the perceived legitimacy of the cause. In other

words, garnering extra-local support for a local resistance initiative can provide credibility for a cause and provide access to many resources not available to most local resistance groups, including financial resources, access to key individuals and organizations, and public awareness of the issue. Given the nature of the CCC, and the differences between the resources available within this group as compared to a ‘typical’ resistance group based in a marginalized community, it is not clear that the benefits of upscaling would be either available or useful to the CCC.

The second strategy, creating translocal and trans-scalar linkages would also prove challenging given the current state of the Rockfort quarry dispute. The restricted framing of the dispute limits the potential for translocal coalition-building, and the development of trans-scalar linkages might prove difficult given the extent to which scalar goals (local and extra-local) are fundamentally irreconcilable in the current policy environment. In the course of this research I came across some counter-hegemonic aggregate discourses emerging from non-profit organizations (e.g., the Pembina Institute and GravelWatch) but am not aware of any attempts by the CCC to create operational linkages (e.g., in the form of strategic alliances) with these groups. A discussion of the benefits accruing to the CCC from this strategy is similar to the arguments noted above with respect to upscaling. With respect to trans-scalar alliances, it might well be that the risks associated with these alliances might be perceived as greater than any potential benefits provided. In other words, from the perspective of the CCC, developing trans-scalar alliances might require partnering

with other groups perceived as either ‘more radical’ or ‘less credible’ than the CCC, both of which would be counter-productive to the CCC’s chosen strategy.

A third possibility raised in the research literature is that of resubjectification. Gibson-Graham (2003) posits a ‘resubjectification of the local’ as an option for enhancing the potential for place-based politics. This approach provides an alternative to the models noted above, with their emphasis on the creation of networks as a mechanism for fostering broad-based support for resistance activities. In contrast, resubjectification requires challenging the dominant discursive construction of individuals as economic subjects within a neoliberalist, capitalist regime. The goal of this process is to situate the local as the “active subject of economic existence” rather than being situated in “...a place of subordination, as the ‘other’ within the global order” (Gibson-Graham, 2003, p.50) in order to create “...new discourses that *subject* in different ways, thus enabling subjects to assume power in new forms” (Gibson-Graham, 2002, p. 36).

Resubjectification requires a reframing of citizens as ‘local economic subjects’ who contribute to a (re)visioning of the ‘local’ through participatory deconstruction of globalization discourses. This process requires challenging the dominance and hegemony of capitalist models of development in order to open up new and imaginative spaces for (re)viewing the political potential of place by ‘thinking outside the capitalist box’ and (re)valuing the potential of non-capitalist development alternatives. Gibson-Graham (2002, 2003) notes both the potential for place-based

political opportunities resulting from resubjectification, as well as the immense difficulties encountered in the process of trying to re-subject the local in non-capitalist ways.

This model also appears to offer limited insights for CCC resistance strategies. Gibson-Graham (2003) discusses her surprise at how challenging the process of resubjectification was, even in a group that had little to lose, and lots to gain, from this process. For the CCC, given their deep capitalist roots, the potential for (re)examining their local status in terms by ‘thinking outside the capitalist box’ seems limited at best.

Within the tenets of globalization discourse, and its emphasis on privileging global growth and development over local impacts of this development, the local is almost always situated as the ‘subjugated other’ and cast as a ‘victim of globalizaiton’. One way to move beyond the global/local binary, according to Gibson-Graham (2002), is to find ways to move beyond the paucity of economic language as a means of moving towards a starting point for politics outside a binary (global/local) frame. But therein lies the dilemma for the CCC. Given their exurban subjectivity, and the degree to which their strategizing is reflective of the dominant discursive (capitalist) framework, there currently appears to be little potential for the group to move towards a practice of politics outside the binary frame. Rather, the resistance strategies of the CCC are actively engaged in (re)producing that binary frame.

In light of this, and given that the three place-based political strategies noted above appear to offer little political potential for the CCC's place-based resistance to the Rockfort quarry, what are the options for the CCC?

Broader Implications of Exurban Resistance to the Proposed Rockfort Quarry

The CCC's resistance strategy has situated the group in a high stakes position, and it appears this dispute will be settled by arbitration, with clear-cut winner(s) and loser(s). The CCC's multi-faceted strategic approach, with its emphasis on creating a compelling business case against aggregate extraction at the Rockfort site may yet result in the preservation of the Rockfort farm. And the CCC's emphasis on pursuing a decision through legal means, and setting a public legal precedent, may result in protecting the area from aggregate extraction well into the future. Alternatively, the OMB may rule in favour of the proposed Rockfort quarry project, as the Board has a long history of being highly pro-development, particularly where aggregate is concerned.

At the time of this writing, the Rockfort quarry dispute appears to be at least a full year away from arbitration. With no way of knowing what the outcome of this dispute will be, it seems appropriate to conclude this research with an exploration of two possible outcomes, and examine the implications of each for other cases of community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses. My personal belief is that the balance of power that has traditionally protected elite communities from locally

unwanted land uses has shifted, reflecting the sacrificial logic of global capitalism (Braun, 2002, p.2). Under this new arrangement, communities previously protected are viewed as expendable when extra-local growth and development hang in the balance. Perhaps a point has been reached in which the local-level negative externalities of this type of development will no longer be contained along class lines, but rather the effects will be felt across the breadth of place at the local level. In this scenario, the central schism will be between local (negative) impacts and extra-local growth and development, leaving all local places vulnerable to imposed development driven by extra-local agendas.

As such, while I believe the Rockfort case study is interesting in and of itself, I also believe it signals significant future change, and expect to see more examples of local-level elite resistance in coming years. If this is in fact the case, then the significance of the outcome of this dispute is heightened. One way or another, the GTA will continue to grow, and the demand for aggregate - as the literal and figurative foundation for this development - will continue to increase. This leads me to wonder what the outcome of the Rockfort decision might mean for other cases of community-based resistance to aggregate extraction, and what lessons can be learned from the CCCs experience in this area.

If the CCC loses the Rockfort dispute, and the proposed quarry proceeds, this loss would raise certain resistance-oriented questions. First, to what extent would the loss explicitly demonstrate the power of the aggregate industry in relation to local

communities (assisted by a provincial policy framework favouring extraction over preservation)? A loss might signal that even powerful and well-resourced groups are now expendable within a globalized economy. Or perhaps it would validate the findings of the research literature on community-based resistance to locally unwanted land uses in marginalized communities, and demonstrate the importance of resistance strategies centred around grassroots mobilization rather than those focused on reaching and influencing key decision-makers with scientific and technical knowledge. This latter finding would highlight the importance of developing active resistance coalitions, and work towards elaborated framings that foster broad-based coalition building, in contrast to the restricted frame employed by the CCC, with its tight and exclusive focus on the Rockfort quarry siting.

But if the CCC were to win the Rockfort dispute, in the sense of ensuring that the Rockfort site remains a non-quarried site well into the foreseeable future, what would this win have to offer other cases of community-based resistance? Obviously it depends, to some extent, on an analysis of the winning factors in the resistance. If winning comes as a result of the CCC's strategic approach, what are the implications for others? While the case may set a legal precedent for the Rockfort site, would this be relevant at a broad level? Or rather, would the win be most relevant to other elite groups able to pursue the same strategies, either through the production of 'expert-driven' knowledge (an expensive process), mounting a legal challenge (a more expensive process), or through drawing on influence gained through key social networks (an exclusive forum)? Would a win through a technical/legal challenge to

the proposed siting of the Rockfort quarry- premised on the CCC's support for aggregate extraction at more appropriate sites - provide any further support or legitimacy for other community-based groups protesting locally unwanted aggregate extraction developments? Although the CCC has focused on winning the battle AND the war at the Rockfort site, this particular war is still very narrowly defined, and defined in ways that significantly limit its applicability for other cases of resistance to locally unwanted development.

The highly adversarial nature of the dispute and the CCC's adversarial stance on the siting of the proposed quarry also raises questions about this type of resistance. Is a win/lose strategy the best option for community-based resistance? Or is there also potential for less polarized, more collaborative approaches? And is this high stakes, winner-take-all strategy a viable strategy for any group, or viable only for groups such as 'exurban elites,' most of whom could easily afford to move away from the area if and when a decision is made to quarry the Rockfort site?

Throughout this dissertation, differences have been noted between the community-based resistance approaches employed by marginalized communities and those employed by the CCC during the course of the Rockfort dispute. Given what I perceive as a growing threat to local places, with little class-based differentiation, it is interesting to imagine the potential for a hybrid model of community-based resistance might look like. In theory, local-level class-based differences would be superseded by a common focus on protecting local places from externally-initiated, locally

unwanted development threats, and would draw on the best of both approaches. For example, it might highlight the strategic importance of framing resistance activities within a broad-based, elaborated frame, while simultaneously drawing on the significant organizational and creative problem-solving skills possessed by groups such as the CCC. In practice, however, it is harder to imagine this hybridization of the two, given the CCC's very deliberate attempts to situate their resistance firmly within the dominant paradigm, and to portray their struggle as very different from those on the margins. It will be interesting to see what happens next.

Appendix A

Sample Interview Questions for CCC Members

General:

How long have you lived here?
What brought you to Caledon?
What are the key issues for you in this conflict?

Motivation

What initially got you involved with the CCC?
What keeps you involved?
What are the benefits of participation for you?
What are the costs of participation?

Organization and Strategies (internally-oriented approaches)

What were early CCC meetings like?
What changes have you noticed in the group over the previous two years?
How are decisions made?
What happens when there are differences of opinion in the group?
Are you involved in other community-based groups in the area?
What are the key factors that keep the CCC together?

Influence on decision-making processes (externally-oriented approaches)

What strategies have been particularly effective for the CCC?
What strategies have not been effective for the CCC?
Are you working with any other local groups?
Are you working with other non-local groups?
What have you learned during the course of your involvement with the CCC?
What advice would you give other groups protesting unwanted local development?

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