

3
2007

**LIBRARY
Michigan State
University**

This is to certify that the
thesis entitled

**MAKING A RHETORIC OF SUSTAINABILITY:
TRACING "LOCAL" DIMENSIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL
WRITING**

presented by

Donnie Johnson Sackey

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

**Master of
Arts**

degree in

**Critical Studies in Literacy &
Pedagogy**



Major Professor's Signature

8/4/2009

Date

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
LEO 2 6 2010 07 23 10		

**MAKING A RHETORIC OF SUSTAINABILITY:
TRACING “LOCAL” DIMENSIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING**

By

Donnie Johnson Sackey

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

MASTERS OF ARTS

Critical Studies in Literacy & Pedagogy

2009

Abstract

MAKING A RHETORIC OF SUSTAINABILITY: TRACING “LOCAL” DIMENSIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING

By

Donnie Johnson Sackey

In this thesis, I am concerned with environmental rhetoric and its peculiar methodological predicament. Most scholarship on environmental rhetoric builds rhetoric via textual interpretation of things produced by individuals and groups and scholars have been all too comfortable to study texts in isolation as the foundations of environmental rhetoric. While the method of rhetorical analysis is valid in producing a certain kind of knowledge, it is limited in that it sees texts as the central locus of the rhetorical situation. This thesis proposes a way of examining environmental rhetoric to where what we know as green rhetoric or green knowledge becomes more complex by tracing textual production via practices in a network. This is a work of rhetorical theory. It is a contribution that occurs twofold: 1) a method as a means of building a rhetoric and 2) an emergent rhetoric of sustainability. With these two deliverables, I am primarily assembling a careful look of how sustainability is practiced in a particular locale, thus this project can best be seen as a working model derived from practice as it occurs at Michigan State University's Office of Campus Sustainability. This thesis differs from other work on environmental rhetoric because it develops theory from practices leading to claims about a rhetoric rather than claims arising from the arbitrary interpretation of texts.

Dedication

In Memoriam

Louis Augustan Sackey, Sr.
(Grandfather)

2006

Pamela Jean Herring Cooper
(Ecologist, Teacher, Friend, Mother, & Savior)

2007

Clementina Rebecca Fahie Milliner-Sackey
(Grandmother)

2008

ad astra per aspera

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for their guidance and help.

Collin Craig
Dánielle Devoss
LaToya Faulk
Jeff Grabill
Bill Hart-Davidson
Stacey Pigg
Stefan Lanwermeier
Jim Ridolfo
Martine Courant Rife
Dena Rutledge
Diva Rutledge
Robyn Tasaka
Alma Villanueva
Douglas Walls

amicitiae nostrae memoriam spero sempiternam fore

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No
Derivative Works 3.0 United States License. To view a copy of this license, visit
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/> or send a letter to Creative
Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Section One	
Introduction.....	1
Towards a Sustainable Method: Reaching to Intercultural Rhetoric.....	8
Methods: Procedures and Vital Definitions.....	20
Section Two	
Introduction to Cases and Summary of Findings.....	29
How a Grant Made an Office Sustainable.....	35
Case I—Definitions of Sustainability.....	42
Case II—“Vote Local First”	59
Case III— “Sustainability @ MSU”	68
Case IV—“Stories of Sustainability”	75
Section Three	
“Drawing Things Together”—Claims & Conclusions.....	85
Appendices	
Appendix A: Recruitment Email.....	96
Appendix B: Interview Questions.....	97
Appendix C: Pre/post-interview Survey Questions.....	99
Appendix D: Sample Messages Used in the Study.....	105
Appendix E: Transcripts: Terry, Sara, Chris, Rich, Hanna, and Michael.....	111
References	206

List of Tables

Table 1.	Descriptive Summary of Coded Indicators Found in Cases II-IV.....	31
-----------------	--	-----------

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Rhetorical Triangle.....	5
Figure 2.	Atkinson's Rendering of Complex Interaction.....	12
Figure 3.	Continuum.....	23
Figure 4.	Conceptual Map.....	24
Figure 5.	Terry's Sketch of Decision-Making.....	46
Figure 6.	Circulation of Ideas and Definitions.....	57

Introduction

Some experts have predicted that by the year 2050 we will encounter the reality of a global population around 9 billion, which will likely not only test the carrying capacity of ecosystems around the world, limiting who has access to food and water, but also increase other environmental stressors linked to extinction, rising global temperatures, and concerns pertaining to air/water quality (Smith, 2008). These seemingly complex issues have come together in such a way under a single banner that the world has ostensibly collapsed into constellated local communities organizing around a single cause—"environmental sustainability." We can best understand "environmental sustainability" as the movement to maintain ecological processes and biodiversity on behalf of human and biological systems. It is without a doubt that the past twenty years has seen an exponential growth of the environmental movement; however, long before the moral global panacea carried under the banner of "environmental sustainability," which characterizes the ephemeral zeitgeist of the present, there were individuals and groups who characterized the burgeoning of green activities within the United States and around the world. Local and global grassroots activists and NGOs like Greenpeace and Earth First, who were largely seen as radical and out of touch with the mainstream, carried out most of these activities. Yet, recent cultural transformations seem to suggest that "the ever more cooperative, or 'constructive,' roles that many environmental organizations and former activists have taken on can be said to represent a transition from movement to institution, as ideas and activities that were previously considered radical or alternative are now being translated into more acceptable forms" (Eder qtd. in Jamison, 2001: p 45). This turn from movement to institution presents an interesting research

avenue where can begin to provide accounts of how green knowledge circulates and whether it sustains the same meanings to those engaged in green practices. Furthermore, it highlights that activity that comes to define green knowledge is not only physical but also exists as a rhetorical phenomenon that in some ways remain unexplained.

By saying this, I mean to say that there exist ambiguities with what we have come to understand as green knowledge or environmentalism in general. What seems to be a single unified movement is actually a conglomeration of different ideas and agendas that in many ways are divergent in scope. For instance, the concept of sustainability, which is only a fragment of the environmental movement is riddled with conflicting embedded definitions that are often contradictory. This is a result of the concept traveling from its birthplace of environmental studies and ecology to disciplines such as economics, computer science, architecture, and business management. Although, they are influenced in part by the environmental movement their respective disciplinary lenses impel them toward different orientations of the term. Owens (2001) highlighted that problems with “sustainability” as a term stems from its root definition “sustain,” which presents a multitude of divergent meanings and subsequently different implications for how sustainability is practiced. A common example of this confusion occurs when “sustainability” is often used to denote “sustainable development.” At these times notions of environmental preservation and protection are at odds with business practices that call for the “wise use” of natural resources. In this example, ecocentric and anthropocentric ideals are literally in opposition with their understanding and application of sustainability as a concept. Peterson (1997) offered an account of how sustainability means by providing a “rhetoric of sustainable development.” It was important for her to deal with

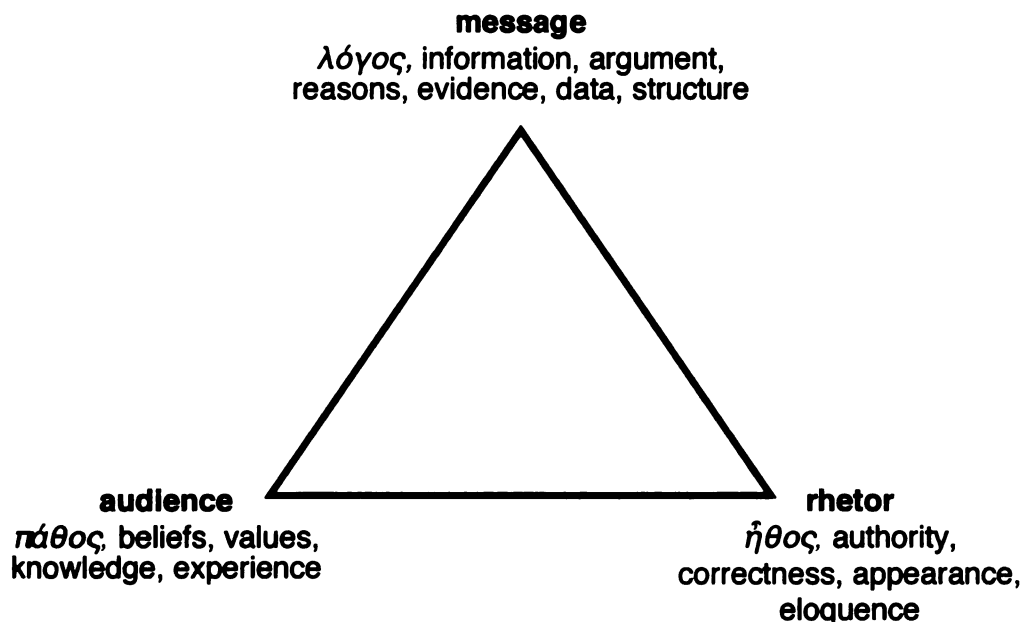
“sustainable development” as it holds unique rhetorical dimensions that get lost under the overarching term of sustainability. Moreover, “sustainable development,” as a term, harbors several divergent meanings, which cut across various political interests as it “promises to promote a philosophical unity that could streamline implementation of specific environmental policies” (Peterson, 1997: p 2). Still, due to my disciplinary orientation, I find her approach problematic in that her cases are rhetorical analysis of texts, which is completely divorced from people who produce or receive the texts themselves. What Peterson offers is a textualized account of a rhetoric of sustainable development. Furthermore, these cases present another shortcoming in that they fail to address what I see as the intersubjective and intercultural nature of rhetoric. Rhetorics are situated among dynamic ecologies of influence where people and institutions exert influence upon how they look. This is to say that a rhetoric might not always manifest in texts; in fact, it may be embodied or both. Nevertheless, building a rhetoric of sustainable development from texts only provides information for half of an account. People are still needed to fill in the gaps. Though she says that she is interested in local occurrences of sustainable development, her accounts do not deal with the complexity of how green knowledge travels within and outside of local communities to make a rhetoric; instead, her attention is focused more toward immediate generalizability rather than dwelling in a situated locale. While I do not want to recount everything that Owens and Peterson have done in their scholarship, I do want to say that their work opens the doors for researchers to investigate how local cultures interpret, employ, and circulate green knowledge that travels within and beyond imaginary boundaries. It seems in this case that we cannot

truly understand the whole (environmental rhetoric) until we can account for its parts (sustainability) and how they mean to local communities.

In this thesis, I am concerned with environmental rhetoric and its peculiar methodological predicament. Most scholarship on environmental rhetoric builds rhetoric via textual interpretation of things produced by individuals and groups. Scholars have been all too comfortable to study texts in isolation as the foundations of environmental rhetoric, which is comprised of a lengthy list of scholarly accounts (Oravec, 1984; Short, 1991; Killingsworth & Palmer, 1992; Lange, 1993; Waddell, 1994; Buell, 1995; Clark, Halloran, & Woodford; Killingsworth, 1996; Killingsworth & Palmer, 1996a; Killingsworth & Palmer, 1996b; Slovic, 1996; Ulman, 1996; Killingsworth, 1998; Roorda, 1998; DeLuca, 1999; Frost, 2000; Glover, 2000; Schlenz, 2000; Waddell, 2000; McMurry, 2003; Philippon, 2005). While the method of rhetorical analysis is valid in producing a certain kind of knowledge, it is limited in that it sees texts as the central locus of the rhetorical situation. This is not to say that texts do not have agency, but we should be willing to recognize that centering our focus in one direction limits our understanding of the complexity of writing situations—or how things get made. By making this statement, I am trying to work outside of the phenomenon of building rhetoric through literary hermeneutics. The movement toward seeing texts as guides to building rhetoric limits our possibilities in that we fail to see texts as only minute echoes—traces within a larger network. My analysis proposes a way of examining environmental rhetoric to where what we know as green rhetoric or green knowledge becomes more complex.

Essentially, rhetorical inquiry of this nature is concerned with the production, circulation and reception of texts. It is Connor's (2008) presentation of intercultural rhetoric methodology via applied linguistics, which has come to influence how I think about rhetorical inquiry. We must look at texts, interrogate their producers and potential readers about their practices and then make claims about environmental rhetoric or how help people assemble a working model of sustainability via devices such as: definitions, opinions, figures, institutions, organizations and texts. Ultimately, methods of this kind impel us to develop situated accounts of practice whereby we inquire into how things get made in locales and overtime move toward generalizability with enough accounts.

Figure 1
Rhetorical Triangle



In regards to how information is constructed and travels, the rhetorical triangle (also known as the hermeneutic triangle) has served as a heuristic that aids in how we think of appeals in rhetoric [see Figure 1]. The rhetor, audience, and message are linked within a triad, which binds a rhetor's credibility (*ῥηθoς*) with knowledge constructed and supported within their text (*λόγoς*) and an audience's sense of emotion and ability to use that text (*πάθoς*). As neat as this form may seem, the division of the artistic proofs into individual domains in pursuit of the art of persuasion presents a problem for how we may perceive local knowledge construction. I am wondering whether it is possible to collapse the roles of rhetor and audience or whether the distinction between these roles becomes blurry. Therein when thinking about messages of environmental sustainability constructed for a local community, the audience's authority and appearance is equal in comparison to the rhetor's and the rhetor's experience and values matters as much as her counterparts. In saying this, I am not trying to invalidate the rhetorical triangle with my statements; quite to the contrary, I am merely implying that we may need to alter how we apply it to certain writing situations. This work is not dedicated to talking about the rhetorical triangle or how we may refigure it; however, a possible implication could arise concerning its role in rhetoric/composition theory. This is something for future study.

With these things having been said, this is a work of rhetorical theory. It is a contribution that occurs twofold: 1) a method as a means of building a rhetoric and 2) an emergent rhetoric of sustainability. With these two deliverables in mind, I am primarily assembling a careful look of how sustainability is practiced in a particular locale, thus this project can best be seen as a working model derived from practice as it occurs at the Michigan State University Office of Campus Sustainability. I differentiate my work from

that of others on environmental rhetoric because it develops theory from practices leading to claims about a rhetoric rather than claims arising from the arbitrary interpretation of texts.

Towards a Sustainable Method: Reaching to Intercultural Rhetoric

The organism is no aggregate of parts but a system of functions that are mutually dependent on each other. In the “blueprint” of every animal we are able to read off immediately the nature of this interconnection. “The theory of the living being,” according to Uexküll, “is a pure natural science and has only one goal—the research into the blueprint of living beings, their origin and their results.” No organism can be thought of as existing for itself, isolated from its “environment.”

—Ernest Cassirer from *The Logic of the Cultural Sciences*

Several researchers have offered in their scholarship the idea that all discourse and writing practices are socially situated within the very environments in which they are produced (Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Gee, 1999; Barton, Hamilton & Ivanič, 2000; Hyland, 2000; Barton & Stygall, 2002; Bazerman, 2004). This raises the idea that researchers inclined to conduct textual analyses should adopt culturally sensitive methodologies and methods that move to consider the contextual settings in which writers produce and circulate their texts. The problem with most close-textual analysis methodologies and methods is that they have a tendency to ignore entirely the social contexts wherein texts find themselves saturated (Berkenkotter, 2002; Blythe, 2007). I make this comment primarily on the basis that these practices themselves are indicative of larger discursive operations that direct our attention to the fact that individuals use texts not only for communicative purposes but also rely upon social structures (artifacts, institutions, positions-of-power, etc.) and various social processes when constructing their texts (Cooper, 1986: p 366). I find that there exists a pressing need to focus upon contexts when researching writing practices as such a focus may help us to understand textual production and circulation as a cultural process that involves not only the writer but also many of the same social apparatuses I mentioned above in a complex network. The embracing context as an approach is distinguished among other methods in that it is

multidimensional as it focuses on multiple part of a textual ecology rather than just the text. My adoption of this research stance derives primarily from an area of research that lies at the intersection of Rhetoric/Composition studies and Applied Linguistics called Intercultural Rhetoric (IR), formerly known as Contrastive Rhetorics (CR). As a methodological approach to textual analysis, Intercultural Rhetoric pays close attention to the contextual surroundings that influence textual production, while still focusing upon the writer and the text as part of the analysis. Yet, before I can talk more at length about the benefits of the intercultural scholarly project to researching writing practices, I want to provide a brief history of CR. Telling this story will provide an idea of what CR tried to accomplish with certain questions involving writing and culture and also illuminate what led to the emergence of IR.

A Short History of Contrastive Rhetorics

As stated earlier, CR lies at the disciplinary crossroads of Rhetoric/ Composition studies and Applied Linguistics, which is an area of research that encompasses English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English For Academic Purposes (EAP). CR researchers focus mainly upon the writing situations that second language (L2) writers experience while relying upon rhetorical strategies from their primary language (L1). Kaplan (1966), who has served principal researcher within this area for over thirty years, initially pioneered contrastive rhetorics (CR) as a valid area of research. His initial inquiry into the complex interaction occurring during any given writing situation not only affirmed the rhetorical dimensions unique to each language, but also verified that the rhetorical dimensions of L1 hinder L2 writing. Kaplan's work was primarily established by the

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis—or Whorfian hypothesis—that languages structure consciousness and actions in differing ways. This hypothesis positions L1 as a powerful heuristic that virtually makes it impossible for fluent acquisition of L2 (Whorf, 1956; Sapir, 1983). Since the publication of Kaplan’s work, many researchers have discredited this stance with evidence that clearly demonstrates that a large number of multilingual speakers experience very little difficulty when switching languages. Kaplan, however, remained unmoved by these criticisms. He believed that the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis was indeed valid since these critiques followed from analysis of spoken language rather than focusing on the entrenched rhetorics and logics contained within languages and how the differences between L1 and L2 affect L2 writing situations. In testing his neo-Whorfian hypothesis, Kaplan noted:

Logic (in the popular rather than the logician’s sense of the word) which is the basis of rhetoric, is evolved out of culture; it is not universal. Rhetoric, then, is not universal either, but varies from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture. It is affected by canons of taste within a given culture at a given time (1966: p 2).

These logic/rhetorical dimensions create exigencies where L2 readers/writers need to recognize that comprehensive acquisition can occur only through understanding the rhetoric and logic embedded within each language—elements that are culturally specific. Kaplan’s work has been beneficial in that it help to establish CR and the important body of research on situated intercultural writing practices. Accordingly, CR has been “the first serious attempt by applied linguists in the United States to explain second language writing” (Connor, 1996: p 5). This endeavor was an attempt to understand writing within a complex cultural frame stemming primarily from issues of language. What followed was a change within applied linguistics that called for interdisciplinary methodological

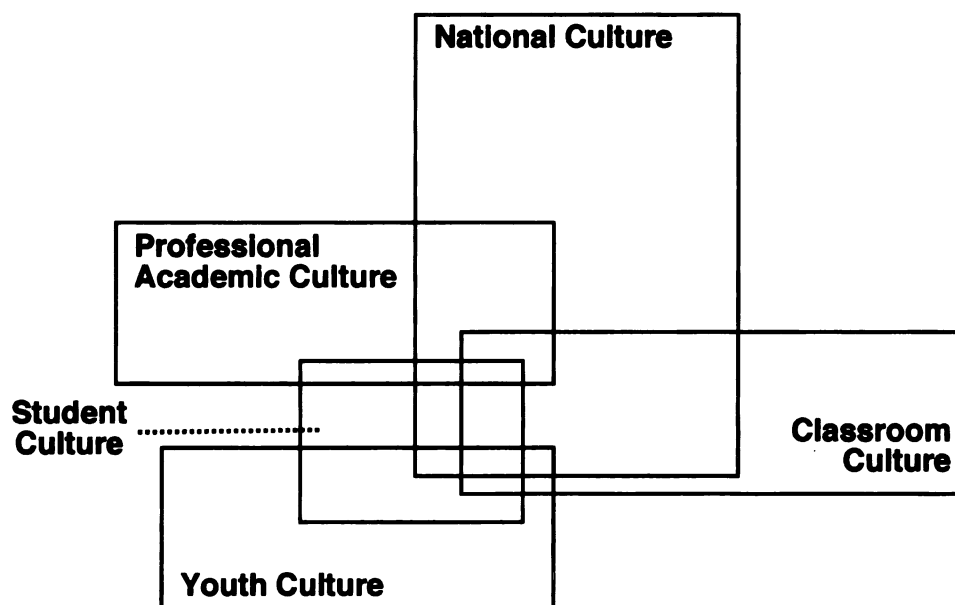
approaches by way of Rhetoric/Composition, Education, and Anthropology. CR, stemming from a mixture of varied approaches, has been beneficial to rhetoric/composition studies since it has increased writing teachers knowledge and recognition of individual language learners' desires to develop effective writing and reading ability in L2.

Understanding Culture/Revising Methodologies: New Directions in CR

There has been a recent push in EFL/EAP/CR to develop methodological considerations that focus less on writers and their texts by directing their attention to environments and agents who sponsor textual production. This step would offer a deeper understanding of texts via their writers and the small and larger cultures enveloping textual production. This movement has arisen from disconnect within the contrastive rhetoric research community over new definitions of culture and the need for more generalizable methodologies that are responsive to these new definitions. For the past twenty years, Connor (2004, 2008) has been transformational in her research as she argues to position contrastive rhetorics under the new name of intercultural rhetoric. Specifically she writes, "Changing definitions of written discourse analysis—from text-based to context sensitive—and of culture—from static to dynamic—contribute to the changing focus of intercultural rhetoric research, a new term that better reflects the dynamic nature of the area of study. Text analyses, genre analyses, and corpus analyses are necessary tools for the intercultural rhetoric researcher. Yet, we need to consider the small cultures interacting with the overarching national culture as we collect, analyze, and interpret the data" (Connor, 2004: p 302). This predicament of culture poses particular interest to the intercultural rhetoric researcher who tries to make sense of data

acquired from textual artifacts. In her discussion of small cultures, Connor invokes Holliday (1994, 1999) whose work positions culture as an often misunderstood and conflated concept where large culture assumes representation and domination over small cultures in the discussion of intercultural issues. Holliday provides a complication that describes culture as that of a “Russian doll or onion-skin” where there is complexity within as well as between small and large cultures.

Figure 2
Atkinson's Rendering of
Complex Interaction



In a similar article that builds upon Holliday's work, Atkinson (2004) depicts how classroom, disciplinary, and student cultures interact with national culture [see Figure 2]. The purpose of such an approach is to demonstrate the intricacy that small cultures (i.e. institutional culture) contain within themselves especially in relation to big cultures (i.e.

national culture). What I find particularly interesting is the big culture versus small culture dichotomy especially in relation to Atkinson's diagram because it not only raises the issue of appropriate methodology (since it takes into account the various overlapping social institutions and forces that influence textual production) but also provides a clear map that illustrates the interactions within as well as between cultures. In her most recent publication, Connor (2008) makes a push toward mapping these multi-dimensional aspects of research in favor of intercultural rhetoric (opposed to contrastive rhetoric) by providing a series of research demands that arise from the adoption of an intercultural rhetoric methodology—the need to understand speakers, writers, and readers; the need to know what went into the process of writing and the historical contexts that affected the writing process—as well as focusing on the multimodal aspects of texts (photographs, videos, graphics, etc.) rather than just language.

If we, in Rhetoric/Composition, commit our thoughts and research practices toward seeing writing as occurring within a complex system that involves the interaction of individuals, groups, institutions, languages, cultures, etc. then we need to develop enhanced methodological approaches that move beyond the writer as a subject and focus more upon the writer as being a small node in a network (Dobrin, 2009). In short we need to develop approaches that seek to answer the issues Connor raises. This networked view of production is a bend toward seeing writing under an ecological framework, which is something that rhetoric/composition scholars within the post-process movement of ecocomposition have embraced wholeheartedly.

Ecocomposition and Its Preoccupation with Ecology

Ecocomposition continues to raise issues of social construction and interaction that compel us to look at individual writers as being participants in larger systems. With this having been said, we rhetoricians/compositionists should think about how discourses map, shape, and construct our understanding of our identities, corporeal forms, and the environments in which we dwell. This theoretical underpinning follows from Cooper's (1986) "The Ecology of Writing," which has been monumental in sustaining the viability of ecocomposition and the post-process movement by moving us toward thinking about writing as being more than a cognitive process ("process, not products"), but in fact situated within social environments. Dobrin and Weisser (2002) defined ecocomposition as "the study between relationships and environments (and by that we mean natural constructed and even imagined places) and discourse (speaking, writing, thinking). Ecocomposition draws primarily from disciplines that study discourse (chiefly composition, but also including literary studies, communication, cultural studies, linguistics, and philosophy) and merges the perspectives of them with work in disciplines that examine environment (these include ecology, environmental studies, sociobiology, and other 'hard' science). As a result, ecocomposition attempts to provide a more holistic, encompassing framework for studies of the relationship between discourse and environment" (Dobrin and Weisser, 2002: p 6). In this sense, ecocomposition itself mirrors ecology (the scientific study of interactions between organisms and their natural environment) since it propels us to inquire into of the spaces in which discourse transpires, as most inquiries into these relationships do not explore how discourse and writing are influenced by place.

Despite their understanding of the complexity of writing, however, ecocompositionists still fall prey to the aforementioned critique of composition studies in that they still look at the individual and his/her text in relation to the system rather than the system itself (Weisser, 2009). In moving this preoccupation with the individual toward the center of our field, it is entirely plausible that our focus on the "situated literacies" of groups as collections of individuals has reduced our ability to understand the composite nature of writing. Unfortunately since Weisser and Dobrin collaborated almost seven years ago, no one has moved to study the ecology of writing as a complex system that features the individual as one of the many gears within an industrial unit rather than the sole determining mechanism. In part, the disinclination to do so is a result of our methodological approaches. Accordingly, Sanchez has noted (2005) that the reluctance of composition to examine writing as networked stems from our resistance against moving beyond hermeneutical approaches in textual interpretation, which is a direct result of our location within English departments. Our faulty reading of cultural theory through the literary/hermeneutic paradigm via cultural studies has produced a cultural theory of reading and not writing. This approach to writing research fails to account for complexity; instead, it traps us within a system where meaning is embedded within texts rather than generating throughout the network that influenced the writing situation. Currently, I am thinking of people, institutions, and social apparatuses as part of this invoked system.

We have to move beyond hermeneutics as a means of unpacking concepts and understanding writing, especially as "globalization and the proliferation of technology make it imperative that compositionists develop a new kind of [rhetoric and] composition

theory, one that understands its object of study very broadly and is conscious of its methodologies” (Sanchez, 2005: p 72).¹ A methodology based upon intercultural rhetoric could be insightful toward approaching texts outside of the contrastive rhetoric research community, as it would allow for another layer of inquiry toward understanding the functioning of writing within networked systems of small and large cultures. This would position our research toward examining and answering how individuals within institutions make decisions in response to overlapping social forces within and beyond institutional boundaries when constructing their texts. The goal of this project is to demonstrate how such a method can account for the degrees of perceived pressures from various audiences placed upon authors within any given rhetorical situation.

Intercultural Rhetoric as Heuristic for Research Writing

My initial interest with intercultural rhetoric as a methodology stems from my preoccupation with “environmental sustainability” and the ideas that define and sustain its progress. These ideas, which I have come to understand as conceptual tools, work in such a way that they structure progress on the basis of location; however, there has been very little movement to theorize or quantify how these “things” mean to those who employ them as they try to communicate messages and build communities with environmental change as a *modus operandi*. Without this vital information, producers cannot understand the effectiveness of their messages upon local audiences and theorists dwell in *habitus dubitationis* concerning the rhetorical nature of sustainability. In raising the notion of location, meaning, and value, I’m curious about how terms like “global,”

¹ I purposefully tender the “rhetoric” addendum to Sanchez’s work because I see the “camps” of rhetoric and composition as linked and inseparable as all forms of writing are cultural in dimension. Rather than seeing them separate, this work moves to proffer a theory of cultural composition that traverses these seemingly detached disciplinary fortifications.

“local,” and “national” function as they permeate between large and small cultures in writing situations. This itself is a fundamental speculation into the question of how people use and value these conceptual tools in relation to themselves, others and extra cultural influences in order to communicate meaning. Consider this: The logic of sustainability establishes the need for a balance between human and ecological systems whereby the ability of a given environment to support biodiversity and ecological processes remains relatively unadulterated. *Local* has been a buzzword for sustainability wherein more recent pushes toward sustainability call for the development of local conservation practices that are deemed less invasive to local and global environments. For example, if we look at food cooperatives working to build sustainable agriculture via changes in food initiatives and consumption lifestyles, we see pushes toward favoring the purchasing of locally/regionally grown produce as opposed to items shipped from around the world. Buying locally has direct economic benefits for *local* community farmers, but also *global* environmental benefits in that it cuts down on the amount of energy (and preservatives) used to ship food around the world. The motivation is overtly local, but there is still an underlying global focus. So with local, you can see more direct benefits rather than with global. You see farmers making money from their crops. What you may not see is the immediate benefits in fuel economy or reduction of environmental stressors.

Therefore, institutions (offices, organizations, etc.) that embrace the ideology of environmental sustainability are positioned within a framework wherein they must define themselves and their efforts as *local* while still competing with the directives of external larger cultures. This tension would seemingly manifest in the texts produced and circulated by the institutions. It should be possible to see instances of the local and global

compete. In itself, this is a return to Atkinson's conception of culture, where we see the same complex interaction that occurs within the classroom encompassing the environmental movement. We could easily substitute terms like *local*, *national*, and *global* for labels like *Professional-Academic Culture*, *Classroom Culture*, and *Student Culture*. This could be used as a guiding mechanism for researching situated episodes of advocates writing about sustainability and how structures within and between large and small cultures influence the writing process.

The following research questions arise from the view of complex cultural interaction concerning environmental sustainability and how messages are relayed:

- How does an organization define the message of sustainability in relation to competing directives within culture?
- Do audiences within institutional community settings readily distinguish between local and global indicators that call for various actions?
- Furthermore, if they do recognize local messages, then how do we know that these messages are as effective as their producers intend?
- And finally, what can a localized representation of sustainability tell us about sustainability in general in a broader cultural context?

While I recognize that sustainability advocates may have scattered local and global indicators throughout their texts, I am more concerned with how local messages function (especially in portion to others), since the mantra of sustainability emphasizes local actions above all others. The guiding assumption, which might follow, is that it is very likely we can equate more local as encouraging more action whereas more global means more knowledge acquisition or greater ideological paradigm shift. This could be the underlying logic emanating from the messages of sustainability advocates. Previously, I raised the idea that we need to move toward understanding writing as networked through my concentration upon the term "ecology" via ecomposition. What follows in the ensuing sections is an attempt toward investigating how place, institutions, organization and

people through a series of complex interlocking relationships come to impinge on the writing process. In short, this is an attempt to produce a situated account of writing that is conscious of context *and* culture.

Methods: Procedures and Vital Definitions

The design of study was based upon intercultural rhetoric as a heuristic for investigating the complexity of concepts like *global*, *local* and *national* manifesting in texts. Since sustainability remains a guiding principle of this study, the Office of Campus Sustainability (OCS) at Michigan State University (MSU) served at the location of the current study. The office, which has existed since 1999, is responsible for coordinating most of MSU's efforts toward creating a greener campus. My choice for selecting this as the site of research was based upon proximity and the fact that the office advocates on behalf of sustainability. MSU is one of a few colleges or universities in the country to have an environmental stewardship office. This alone made OCS a compelling site-of-study. In light of these two aspects, I posited that it would be interesting to focus on OCS since it addresses university audiences, but also audiences of the East/greater-Lansing, MI area and others within the state, country and (possibly) world. This provided an ideal setting wherein I could locate a text and concentrate on the aforementioned conceptual tools as OCS related to and writes about sustainability.

In regards to texts produced by OCS, I found the office's website to be a particularly interesting artifact for several reasons. First, it is a digital text that has existed since the creation of the office. As the office has grown and expanded throughout the years, so too have the features and content on the site. Second, the website is a unique digital tool purposed used as a form of communication and organization with multiple audiences within the MSU community. The site serves as a central hub where information about sustainability and events pertaining to the subject are maintained and stored for potential audiences. Site visitors encounter an assortment of videos, blogs,

links to external organizations, and institutional documents for consumption. Finally, both the office and the website best fit Atkinson's model of the complex interaction in the classroom with overlapping disciplinary, student and national culture spheres of influence. The office works within the institutional framework of MSU and the local community while catering to national and global cultures; thus the tensions Atkinson discusses may arise in the texts it produces.

The study's procedure occurred in three phases: data collection, two data-passes (an interpretive pass and an analytical pass), and a series of production and reception interviews. It was necessary to establish specific parameters in order to determine what might constitute data types for this project. I developed a coding scheme that binds units of analysis in the form of rhetorical units that I call *messages*. A rhetorical unit can be understood as a segment of information that consists of a combination of author choice, intended audience, and purpose (Blythe, 2007). These units of measurement can vary in length wherein they could consist of entire websites or segments of those sites (documents, blogs, links etc.). For the purposes of this study, I defined a *message* as a rhetorical unit geographically positioned within digital documents for particular audiences [see Appendix for examples of messages]. In terms of *messages*, I had planned to select textual and visual elements on the site that may include but are not limited to documents, blog posts, banners, colors, videos, etc. Screen capture software was the primary tool used to collect material from the site that appropriately fit the criteria of a message. This was a systematic process in which I moved from the top-to-bottom and left to right as I methodically captured, labeled, and stored each message in a folder. One aspect concerning messages on the website is that they may lead visitors

through a series of messages via hyperlinks until they arrive at the intended content. In order to account for this likelihood, I developed a classification system that labeled the first message collected as *message 11* and a secondary message relating to the primary as *message 11b*. All of the data collected during this phase of the project was stored on a password-protected computer where only I had access. Though I did not anticipate there being any problems with storage, I also saved the data as a .zip file and sent a copy of this file to my email as a means of precaution.

The first pass of the data, which can be described as interpretive, was framed by the question of whether these collected *messages* served as indicators on the site that suggest some of these messages are intended to fit the definition of specific topoi associated with environmental sustainability—*local* and *global*. I chose *global* as a term because of its roots within political economies as promoting the idea of all humanity belonging to a single moral community. Moreover, my use of the term protracted a long-standing practice within the environmental movement to invoke such terms in advocating on behalf of sustainability practices (e.g. “think globally, act locally”). These terms served as a means for nominally coding the data, which I collected during the first analytical phase.

In order to illustrate the relationship among these terms, I have decided to construct an area conceptual map, which would account for the complexity of the messages found on the site. Originally, I drafted a rather simplistic continuum that placed both *local* and *global* as categories on opposite extremes whereas *national* resided equidistant between the other two [see **Figure 2**]. I did not necessarily have *national* in mind when I selected the terms, but I thought that it would be good to have an indicator

that would account for messages that could easily occur between the two extremes. Yet, the continuum presented a problem because it required double-coding certain messages. For example, messages existed on the website that ask for local solutions to global problems, but reside outside of the influence of a national culture. A conceptual map was able to account for this complexity in a way that a continuum cannot [see **Figure 3**]. In short, while both tools are useful, one allowed for easier classification and ordering of data than the other.

Figure 3
Continuum

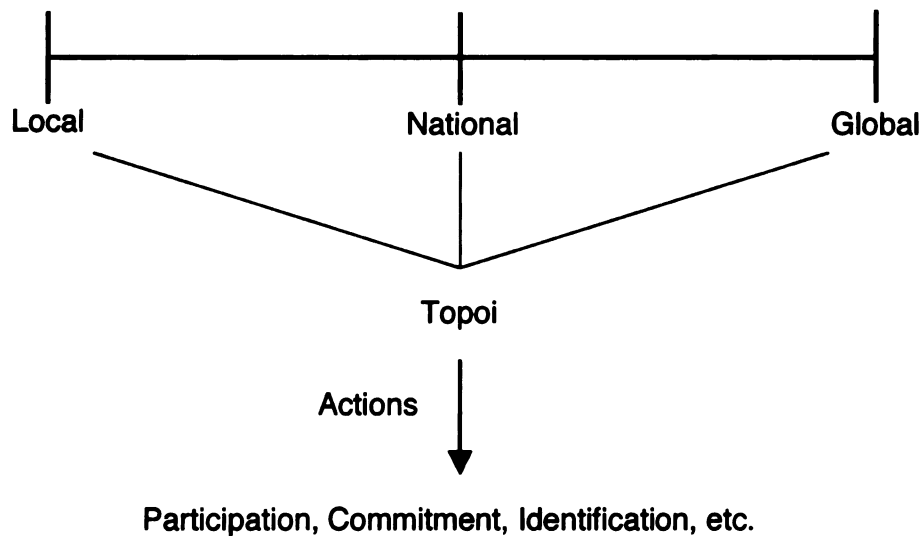
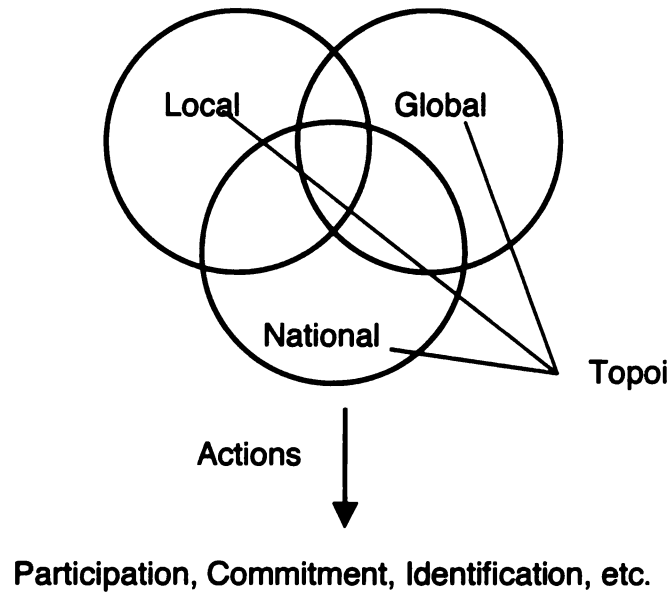


Figure 4
Conceptual Map



This phase of the analysis required the development of criteria that strictly defined the difference between messages considered *local*, *national*, or *global*. I understood the defining feature of a message as the action/s that it would invoke among its intended audiences. These actions are restricted to the locales defined by the three topoi. I defined each as follows:

Local: All forms of sustainability are by definition local in the same way that *all politics is local politics* (Whitehead, 2007). There has been much debate as to what we can consider as local when locating geographies of sustainability. When thinking of environmental issues, local can delineate your body, home, neighborhood, community or city. What we essentially have are *localities*, which make it hard to determine what exactly might constitute a local public. Within the scope of this project, I regard *local* as messages that are not broad in scope and are not intended to venture beyond the small culture of the community (MSU) in which they are produced, because they are designed to have a direct impact upon local conditions.

National: Jamison's (2001) research into the production of green knowledge within cultural spheres offers a way of understanding green initiatives that assume a national character. *National* messages are those that may pertain to

local/regional issues, but reach outside community boundaries and have an impact upon the larger culture of the US. Texts may be deemed national if they invoke strong allegiances along the lines of national character or identity. Jamison raises images of twentieth century European totalitarian regimes (e.g. Hitler and Stalin) as he discusses national consciousness, but I don't go that far in my push to develop a stable definition. To a certain extent, these texts may contain messages that align with certain political ideologies within US cultural politics (e.g. Greens) or they may connect to national organizations whose influence and action reside mainly within the US.

Global: In contrast to the other categories, *global* messages are those that permeate outside of local and national boundaries and attempt to connect with a larger culture comprised of several large and small cultures around the world. Killingsworth and Palmer (1992) provide an insightful heuristic toward understanding *global* as a categorical distinction by locating a definition within the circles of economists and social ecologists. Accordingly, globally effective discourse promotes “universally acceptable values” has “strong inducements to constructive action” and always targets what would benefit the “global ecosystem” (Killingsworth & Palmer: 1992: p 240). Therefore, text may be considered *global* if it's tailored to connect to projects and efforts around the world (e.g. Think globally, act locally).

One thing to note about these definitions is that they put a heavy emphasis upon action within a specific place. While this may be true, in some instances the topoi acted less as *locations* and more like *ideas* wherein readers are compelled to construct their identities in relation to the message. Identification works as possible rhetorical action, since visitors to the site relate to the messages on emotional or intellectual levels that do not call for them to venture away from the site and enact change on local, national, and/or global levels. Instead, producers of certain messages possibly attempt to engage in acts of character building or paradigm shifts that seek to alter how readers view themselves and their physical spaces. Of course there was the possibility that identification could lead readers to act physically; however, I felt that there should be a separation and a need to account for both material and non-material rhetorical action. Having appropriately established the criteria, I sorted messages onto the map according to their classification.

Messages appeared that feature a combination of more-than-one topoi. When this happened I classified a message based upon all of its features, thus it did not matter that the national indicators in *message 11b* are stronger than the global indicators; I still classified the message as national-global. In regards to the coding scheme, it was determined that there was no need for inter-rater reliability.

Data Collection from Participants

The second pass was analytical where I conducted production and reception interviews. These are a series of individual interviews where I questioned producers and potential receivers of each message. Since it was not immediately clear sometimes who was responsible for writing certain messages on the site, it was necessary that I conduct an interview with the Terry Link, who had served as director of the office, in order to find producers of some of the site's messages. After the interview, I contacted three producers, two of whom were named during the interview and another whose name was clearly visible on the site, in order to schedule face-to-face production interviews. Although the intended visitors to the site that reside within East/Lansing and Michigan, in terms of this study, a local audience would be the population of students, faculty and staff on the MSU campus that would have direct access to the site and would come in contact with material around campus that would direct their attention to the site itself. Therefore, I sent out an email notification to various departments on campus and asked if they would relay a recruitment email regarding this study to their students, faculty and staff [see **Appendix**]. In terms of how I selected participants for this study, I chose the first and the last email that I received within 72 hours of my posting. It is important to note that I gave preference to respondents who were unfamiliar to me and had no knowledge of my study.

An Internet random number generator with a range of 1 to 10 determined the selection of two readers. I initially selected three messages that I deemed to be exclusively local for individual case studies, in which I tested them to see whether they were rhetorically effective enough to insight individuals toward action. The selected messages ranged from text-only, textual/visual, visual-only, and multimodal in form. It is also important to note that all of the chosen messages with the exception of one were single-authored. This was a limitation of the study that I hope to further elaborate on in the implications section. I tightly defined each case as containing a single message with one producer and two readers. The process for selecting the number of messages for each case was based upon the same criteria I used for selecting the participants. I transcribed the interview with the office's director in addition to each production and reception interview in order to ensure that I could accurately interpret the data in the final stages of the study [see **Appendix**].

After selecting each message, I conducted the production interviews wherein I first asked each producer to review the messages and offer opinions as to the desired response from the intended audience as well as to answer to other elements that possibly influenced the writing decisions they made regarding sustainability. Thereafter, I conducted individual reception interviews with members of the MSU community, who provided answers as to how they would respond to the messages. In addition, I conducted pre/post-surveys that inquired into their knowledge of environmental sustainability [see **Appendix**]. My purpose for administering these surveys was to measure whether exposure to these messages would effect change in participants' knowledge of environmental sustainability or potential inclination toward action. The data gathered from the producers and the receivers of the messages were then compared with my initial

coding of the data to gauge whether the messages were rhetorically effective to insight people to act people to act or identify on a local level. These interviews were audio recorded and lasted approximately a half-an-hour.

Introduction to Cases and Summary of Findings

What I first would like to introduce at this time is several features that characterize this study, restate the broader research questions that frame each of the ensuing cases and explain their significance. Doing so helps to better connect constituents from my methodology with data presented by each of the cases. Some preliminary findings initially surfaced from a quick glance of the items coded by readers. First (and probably the most obvious), the use of the word local had an enormous impact upon whether portions of a message were coded as local or not [see Table 1]. Phrases like “locally grown food” and “vote local first” appeared to place heavy emphasis upon locally-oriented actions. Readers felt that this was a strategy on the part of the producers to increase chances that audience members would act. Another element closely related to this was that direct references to physical spaces where sustainability occurred influenced what readers deemed as local. They considered references to local places within texts provided audiences with information on how they could participate in sustainable activities on campus, thus increasing the likelihood for action. For example, Hanna and Michael coded the “student organic farm,” “office of campus sustainability,” and the “EcoFoot website” as local. On the other side of the coin, this suggests that if specificity augments the chance for action then general information is less action-oriented and more directed toward encouraging changes in how one thinks about environmental issues. The latter of the corollary is evidenced by their coding terms such as “racism,” “recycling,” and “the world of purchasing” as global rather than local. When asked as to why they made their choices, each stated that these words were not used in ways in which they felt exactly related to the MSU community.

I deal with each of these findings in varying capacity throughout each case. In thinking about the local dimensions of sustainability, however, a single finding cuts across the data from all the cases. What we have come to know as “local” operates at a level of abstraction that may not be as immediately clear. This is evident from the coding choices each reader made as they reviewed the messages; for instance, Hanna coded “community engagement” as being local, national and global in scope. Her reason for doing so stemmed from her belief that on some level all communities are linked under the movement of environmental sustainability. What she sees as action stemming from “community engagement” benefits not only the local community, but also people in the US and around the world. While Michael coded “community engagement” as local because he saw the reference as inspiring immediately local actions, he initially marked the phrase as global but changed his mind saying it was difficult to separate the two when everything seems interconnected. If anything this is the most important finding from the results mostly because it connects to Atkinson and Connor through complex interaction and the intercultural nature of rhetoric, respectively. The fact of the matter is, it is not always immediately easy to separate spheres of influence. To some extent all indicators seem to have influence upon how certain things mean. This is not to say that local, national, and global share equal influence upon aspects of rhetoric as the readers were able judged each texts as local. What this does suggest is that both national and global have influence on shaping how local dimensions are understood to make a rhetoric of sustainability. This is highlighted in throughout each case.

Table 1
Descriptive Summary of Coded indicators found in Cases II-IV

Indicator	Reader 1 Hanna	Reader 2 Michael
Global	"Community engagement" "pays not to think" "prices 'not possible'" "connect people back to food" "who's losing?" "grower's cooperative/fair trade" "travels less distance" "stay in local economy" "producing art from other peoples waste, and offers an example of what surrounding ourselves with our passions can look like" "how to get things done in a bureaucracy" "There will always be issues with the system" "the world of purchasing" "A reminder and voice of reason in an often unsustainable world"	"land" "racism" "waste" "pollution" "sustainability" "social justice" "economic vitality" "fair trade" "recycling" "recycling programs" "sustainability" "environmental issues"
National	"enamored of high-tech solutions" "community engagement" "environmental engineering" "questions outside economics" "limited income" "travels less distance" "vote with your actions" "everyone have access" "forced to throw away" "quick to become a commodity masking the real issues" "e-newsletter, which has become a fixture on MSU's campus, and most recently made it as far as California, riding the waves of cyberspace" "shape the future of purchasing"	"improved efficiencies" "animal welfare" "unlimited income" "purchasing" "unsustainable world" "recycling" "sustainability" "greener products"
Local	"relationships to ecosystems" "personal life decisions" "worked on it" ([Rich's] car) "community engagement" "link between problems and sources" "hugging chickens" ¹ Ecofoot website (displayed at end)	"community engagement" "student organic farm" "vote local first" "locally grown food" "local farmers" "transportation"

Table 1 continued...

BeSpartanGreen (website)	"farmer's markets"
"student organic farm"	"locally owned businesses"
"vote locally"	"grassroot campaigns"
"vote local first"	"on-campus recycling facility"
"fun"	"Office of Campus Sustainability"
"stay in local economy"	"Office of Campus Sustainability"
image of plant life ²	
"grassroots campaigns, rooted in her involvement with the student environmental group ECO"	
"a new on-campus recycling facility"	
"own efforts at sustainability at home"	
"reduce the inputs"	

Note: ¹ It is unclear whether Hanna is referring to either the image of a woman hugging chickens in Sarah's video or the verbalized statement of "hugging chickens."

² Represents the only image coded among all the cases.

Case I focuses on definitions and the role such ideas have upon local manifestations of a rhetoric of sustainability. I would like to note that it was not my original intention to focus on definitions, but I began to see the level of importance definitions held as I interviewed each participant. In each interview, I asked participants not only how they would define sustainability but also from where their definition originated. Such inquiry is important because green knowledge is not always simply a local occurrence, which means that people ultimately have to tap into external sources of knowledge. In Case I, I pay close attention to the culture of writers and readers as comprising a local culture and the local as an integral part of sustainability's definition. This section starts to answer questions about how communities define the message of sustainability in relation to competing directives within a local culture. A rather alluring claim arises in Case II, which proposes that there are aesthetic elements that constitute the local and subsequently a local definition of sustainability. This case was interesting because the producer and I spent a lot of time looking at other messages he constructed

and the design process behind them. It was important that Case II follow Case I in that they both deal with infrastructural issues concerning the office. This was an attempt to closely follow the model that Connor outlines with intercultural rhetoric as a methodology by moving from the most integral and central parts within an organizational structure to the periphery.

Case III expands the boundaries of what we consider as the local in regards to sustainability as it raises three major claims: 1) The local is seen only in relation to global as it radiates outward in a complex networked; 2) The local may not have a set location even within a community as environmental issues cross divides that are personal, private and public; and 3) Local appeals in texts most often appeal to a community's sense of pride or esteem. The final case drives home the idea that local manifestations of sustainability can be embodied in community representatives and are built through community deliberation. Cases II, III, and IV are principally concerned with answering the latter three research questions guiding this study. Through my interviews of both producers and readers, I have woven together a narrative that at its heart answers whether audiences within communities differentiate between local and global indicators within texts that call for various actions. Furthermore, producers' discussions of their writing process and their expectations from readers along with the corroborated opinions of readers help to determine whether local messages are as effective as their producers intend? What unites all of these cases is that together they answer the final research question regarding what can a localized representation of sustainability tell us about sustainability in general in a broader cultural context. I believe that above all this proves to be the most important research question of all three because it is the driving force

behind this project. As you read through each case, you will notice a series of numbered claims that trace throughout each case and often reoccur. These claims are what I use to build what I describe as an emergent rhetoric of sustainability. They are useful in that they help to trace the rhetorical dimensions of sustainability as defined by the local to global paradigm. Furthermore, these claims help to promote rhetoric itself as an intercultural and intersubjective communicative enterprise.

How a Grant Made an Office Sustainable

Before I list specifics for each case, I need to provide some background on my relation to OCS and the story behind its creation. My connection to OCS stemmed from an email that Dr. Jeff Grabill forwarded to my departmental listserve. The email originally came from Terry Link, who served as the director of the office. Terry was looking for undergraduate and graduate students to write articles for a university alumni publication that focused on environmental sustainability here at MSU. At the time, I was unaware of the office's mission statement or any of its activities. I, however, did have some level of familiarity with OCS and also I was interested in environmental writing. My decision to contact Terry was prompted by the fact that just a couple months prior to receiving the email, I completed a final project in my research methods course that incorporated the office's website as my object of inquiry. At that time, I had not had a thesis idea set in my mind, but I felt that getting to know Terry and the office might allow the possibility for this course project to materialize into an actual research project.

Terry responded to my query with a list of several different topics on which I could write. I cannot remember all of the topics that were in the email, but I do remember saying that I was most interested in writing on the Community Climate Change Forum. Part of the article involved both watching a recording of the actual forum and interviewing Terry about both the forum and the office. What I remember most about my first meeting with Terry was how much it did not seem like an interview, but more of a dialogue about his background and our mutual interest in the environment and green politics. It was during this time that I share with him my project idea involving OCS. I outlined the scope of what I was hoping to do along with the questions that were coursing

through my mind. Though at that time, my thought process was incredibly scattered, Terry responded enthusiastically, saying that he would be willing to participate and help out with such a project. I remember leaving his office feeling overwhelmed with the amount of information he^f provided for the article; nevertheless, I was excited and eager over the prospects of developing an actual research project that focused on the office as a site. Unfortunately, the article was placed on the back burner by the university and I never got the chance to finish it. I, however, was able to stay in contact with Terry over the next couple of months either through email or while waiting in line for coffee at the library. No matter how brief our conversations were, Terry would often remind me that he was still interested in being a part of the study. This was something that I never forgot. Moreover, he was the first person I decided to interview as a part of this study. I needed to interview Terry before anyone, because there is no one who knows the story of the office better than he does. In fact, one can say that Terry is a sort of fixture or an institution when anyone references sustainability here on campus.

Terry is originally from Michigan; in fact, he grew up in Detroit where he went to high school and college at Wayne State for his undergraduate degree. He left the area for a couple of years, but ultimately return to work on a Master's degree in Library Science. A lot of Terry's life has been defined by a passion for the environment. When he first thought about environmental issues, it was when he was pursuing a geography degree in the early 70s. During this period, he got involved with a public policy group/consumer-based group that organized around a number of environmental issues. It was after this experience that he "just became more and more engrossed in policy and [the environment]," which led to his focus on environmental issues as a librarian. It was not

until 1992 that he came to work at the MSU library after working at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. After three years, he was elected to what was then at the time known as the Academic Council. This allowed Terry the opportunity “to become more involved in university-wide issues.” Around the same time that he held his position on the Academic Council, he simultaneously worked with the American Library Association to start the Task force on the Environment, which was designed to promote awareness of environmental issues. He described his activities with the MSU library as allowing him the opportunity to create a bridge between his activist work and his professional life. Still, I was curious as to how Terry made the transition from working in the library and serving on Academic Council to being the director of OCS.

It was during the first year as a member on the council that the university “was about to put to sleep a committee call the University Committee for an Academic Environment because there wasn’t much business coming that was important.” Terry proposed that rather than disbanding the committee, the university should repurpose it so that it focused “more broadly on sustainability and the environment.” Ultimately, Terry and other members of the Academic Council lost the debate with the university, but his raising the idea led to a series of conversations, which in turn led to the creation of the University Committee in January of 1999. This committee subsequently led to the creation of OCS:

We knew that the university wasn’t going to find money in their pockets to do this because it wasn’t high on their priority. So, we found a grant opportunity that we explored and were actually successful—1 of 27 out of a thousand proposals to get funded—and that created the office in September of 2000. And the rest as they say is history. As the prime mover of this from the beginning and because I was ready to leave my profession anyway—I made that decision a few years before, but was not going to make a gross change because I had kids in school and I was

taking care of my mother-in-law—I took on this new job. Then I’ve been doing that until this upcoming Friday.

I should first note that this interview is a little bittersweet, as it is the last interview that Terry conducted as director of the office. The movement on his and the committee’s part to seek a grant was driven entirely by the fact that the university did not see a need for an environmental stewardship program. The grant was part of the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program, which “strongly encourages community members, business and government entities to work cooperatively to develop flexible, locally-oriented approaches that link place-based environmental management and quality of life activities with sustainable development and revitalization” (“Sustainable Development”, 1999). This was a three-year grant; as a result, the University Committee had enough funds to do what it originally desired without having to worry about the university controlling its mission. So, it created an environmental stewardship office with Terry as the director. This did establish a uncertain position about what would happen to the office after three years. Terry, however, remarked that by that time “the university thought that there was enough value coming forward on what [members of the University Committee] were doing” that they took on the initiative to fund the office entirely since 2003. Part of turning the office into something that the university would value was dependent upon several years of networking with other campuses with similar environmental stewardship programs. This network of support is something that Terry has come to value during his tenure in the office.

Our conversation next turned toward the central artifact of this study—the website. According to Terry, the site is actually as old as the office itself. He could not

remember an exact date, but he does know it originated sometime in 1999. The initial purpose of the site was to 1) let people know there was a University Committee and 2) serve as an avenue to share information and connect interested people on campus. This original emphasis to “let people know, share, and connect” on campus has changed slightly as the site has shifted toward more external audiences:

The office, especially over the last number of years again directed by the University Committee, has done a lot more outreach both in terms of the local community but even nationally by getting our stories out almost as a PR piece, if you will, so that we get recognized for the things that we’re kinda doing. Which in turn when we get recognized gives us more support when we go internal to the institution saying, “Look we’re getting recognized here because we’re doing good things. Keep supporting us, let move it further.” So we see it as a feedback loop that was missing before and that we think has been useful and I imagine in my mind it’s totally been very effective that we’ve been recognized nationally a few times with awards.

National recognition has been exceptionally helpful in order to justify the office’s existence to university administration. So, the change in the scope of the website has been beneficial; however, it is important to note that Ecofoot still primarily maintains a local focus. Much of the other changes to the site’s design and layout have been more driven by changes in technology rather than research on the environment. Absent from the original site was the blog feature and the newsletter formatted in .html, which moved from an occasional to a bimonthly to a biweekly serial sent via hyperlinks. Furthermore, there are a lot more multimedia items present on the page like videos and flash banners, which “is a combination of media done here on campus...or videos done elsewhere.” Terry indicated that all of the material found on the site was either by students directly working for OCS or student course projects that he thinks the local and external communities would benefit from.

My discussion with Terry led me to three individuals who had contributed to the development of the site—Sarah, Chris, and Rich. Sarah is a former MSU graduate student with an educational background in the sciences. As an undergraduate at Reed College, she majored in biology with a focus on molecular biology. Her graduate work at the MSU involved science and nature writing through the Knight Center for Environmental Journalism. Currently, she lives in Washington, D.C. where she does a combination of science writing, web design, and podcasting for the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Unlike the other producers, I had to interview Sarah via Skype since she was not immediately available for face-to-face communication. During the course of the interview, she indicated that her primary contributions to Ecofoot were a series of videos one of which focused exclusively upon sustainability at MSU. Chris is a former undergraduate major in professional writing who matriculated into graduate program in Digital Rhetoric and Professional Writing. Before I interviewed Terry, Chris' was actually referred to me by two of my committee members (Dánielle Devoss and Bill Hart-Davidson, respectively.). He still contributes to the site on a regular basis through his role as webmaster; however, Terry sometimes assigns tasks to Chris that involve designing flyers for circulation around campus. So, Chris' job often involves more than just maintaining Ecofoot. The final name that Terry put forward was Rich, a doctoral student in the Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies. A majority of Rich's production involves articles that Terry commissions him to write. Currently, he is working to complete a series titled "Stories of Sustainability," which puts forward anecdotes of individuals on campus who are practicing sustainability in their everyday lives. It was these messages that Rich and I spent the entirety of our interview

discussing. Each of these writers (when fixed to a set of readers) are important because their work helps to create and protract a culture of sustainability here at MSU. While they are not the only writers who contribute content to the site (as Terry often contributes as well), they do stand as representatives for other producers and the processes, networks and knowledge they rely during textual production. Though this is a limited study, their definitions, opinions of their texts and writing process provides a snapshot of what sustainability looks like in a local culture.

Case I—Definitions of Sustainability

A statement expressing the essential nature of something.

—Dictionary entry on “definition” from *Merriam-Webster*

I focus on definitions because they are heuristic and drive writing situations. Writing does not begin on paper but within the mind and is linked to a series of cognitive processes that involve the retrieval, encoding and decoding of knowledge. We cannot begin to understand textual production until we move to unlocked the explicit and tacit “calculating devices” that writers depend upon to transmit knowledge to their audiences. Situated accounts of writing practice are driven by these definitions and only by understanding them can we move towards building a rhetoric of sustainability. Within this case, I am principally concerned with two things: 1) the culture of writers and readers as comprising a local culture and 2) the local as an integral part of sustainability’s definition. I wrote a series of questions in my methodology that drive this project. This section especially helps me to begin to answer questions regarding how does an organization define the message of sustainability in relation to competing directives within a local culture; and a little concerning what can a localized representation of sustainability tell us about sustainability in general in a broader cultural context. It is not my intention to talk about each definitions in isolation. Instead, I wish to travel through these definitions, dealing with them on their own accord and afterward weaving together a story from the differences and commonalities amongst the producers and readers. It is paramount that I treat each definition in relation to each other rather than in isolation because the complex cultural model via intercultural rhetoric makes it virtually impossible to treat these as such.

Director

If I can characterize Terry's definition of sustainability, I will say that he holds a very broad definition of what the term itself encompasses. Specifically, he had this to say about sustainability:

Well I don't talk about environmental sustainability. I talk about sustain-ability. And sustainability is, in my mind, the nurturing of mutually reinforcing relationships between social and economic justice and ecological integrity and the process by which we balance those with is open, transparent and democratic.

Furthermore, he indicated that his definition is comprised of short-term and long-term goals. He did note that this wasn't always a definition that he held. In fact, the definition was incredibly different from when the Office first proposed the idea to the university. Originally, it was just environmental—solid waste, water and energy, because they were writing to a specific audience within the university. When the university decided that they would not move on the proposal, Terry and others found latitude to expand their definition of sustainability because they were being funded by external dollars. Furthermore, he noted that there has been a change in the Offices' definition, which is evidenced by the 2003 sustainability report that the office produces. To this he writes:

When you look at our 2003 sustainability report, which is an offshoot and promised product from the grant proposal, you'll see that we have indicators that deal with diversity, wages, sickness and injuries, drug use, as well as the solid waste, water, and energy management. And so we broadened that back out again.

I consider Terry's definition as the guiding definition of how the Office views sustainability from an institutional standpoint [see Claim No. 4]. Yet, nothing in particular about this definition seems to suggest anything local. In fact, this definition is actually more global in scope because it operates at a high level of abstraction. These things that he's talking about can be easily transposed from one locale to another, since

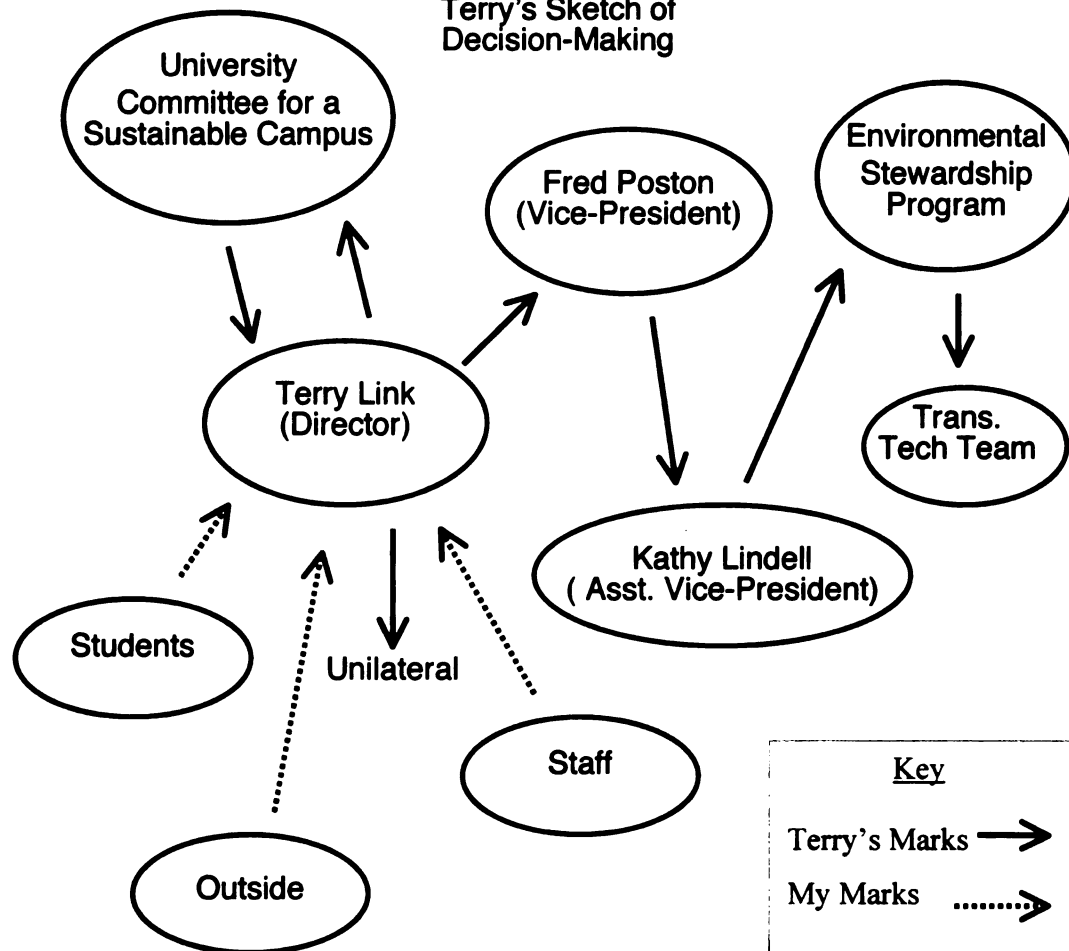
there is nothing that directly indicates any type of MSU branding. I do realize that this is a personal definition that Terry offers. Yet since he is the sole arbiter of most of decision-making that takes place in the office, his definition becomes the offices definition [see **Figure 5**]. Another thing that I think that we cannot overlook is the change in dimension that the definition took, based upon where the funds were coming from. External monies allowed for a broader definition, while the initial desire for internal recognition forced Terry and others to define sustainability more locally in environmental terms. In his own words, the committee made this decision because they felt that these were things that university administration would more readily understand. I should mention that part of this change has occurred not only because of the grant but also because as university administration becomes more interested in sustainability, “and put[s] emphasis on other things, that [the Office] use to put more energy into [itself, that] frees [the Office] to consider other things that are not being addressed within that big umbrella of sustainability” at the university.

What’s interesting is that despite the broad description of sustainability that Terry provides, he still describes all efforts of the Office to be immediately local. In fact, he described a tension that has arisen between both the way that the office views sustainability and the university’s future/immediate focus. Specifically, the office’s focus on economic justice has been a point of contention since in it’s last report it “raised some flags about was the growing gap between the lowest paid employee in the university and the average.” This is something that Terry has indicated as a difference between how the Office and university administration sees sustainability in broader terms as the Office moves beyond the environment. There are, however, differences in vision when we

follow a more environmental approach to sustainability as evidenced by university administration's desire to be the world's largest land grant university. Terry pointed out that while the office is more focused on issues locally such as "purchasing" that directly affect what happens here at the university, there has been more of an immediate emphasis from the university on "sustainable development in the third world" via the Rwanda coffee plantations. Furthermore, he noted that may not necessarily be motivated by sustainability in the broad definition I mention above; in fact, while there is an environmental sustainability component present, they're more likely motivated by a push to economic development.

Terry did see a connection between the two competing directives within his overarching definition, since the Office sees sustainability within a "big picture" model that visualizes everything as related [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]. While the university directs its attention to Rwanda, thus, insuring the livelihood of farmer's, the Office locally endorses and organizes around fair trade issues through educating the university community about their coffee consumption practices. This results in a relationship between the Rwanda cooperatives and MSU where coffee purchases on campus directly benefit farmers in another community. Terry's revisiting his definition highlights a complex web, in which action on the local level radiates to the global. So, an issue such as the coffee we buy here in East Lansing, has a direct impact upon sustainable progress in the developing world. It is important to note, however, that the Office's endorsement of fair trade is not entirely dedicated to Rwanda. Terry merely offered this example as a means of reconciling the difference in vision between the Office and the university.

Figure 5
Terry's Sketch of
Decision-Making



Note: I asked Terry if he could provide a sketchy how decisions are made in the office on a day-to-day basis. What he provided confirmed my speculation that he occupied a fairly important position within the network of the office. Without Terry (or the position of the director) the network would essentially collapse. The office would not function as efficiently. This presents a variety of problems relating to the office itself. Earlier, I noted that Terry's definition of sustainability becomes the office's definition by default. Terry's position serves a mediating function in regards to definitions and ideas embedded within texts distributed by the office. His absence creates a scenario where there is con congruity between definitions.

Producer 1

So, “environmental sustainability” I think succinctly means something along the lines of making sure that you don’t do damage or use up things that future generations need and you think about the consequences of your actions along a network not just in your local area.

Sarah had never heard of the phrase “environmental sustainability” before coming to MSU. Although she worked with Terry, she quickly indicated that she had always held that definition prior to coming to MSU. What she lacked was a term under which she could label and categorize her thoughts. Much of what facilitated her thinking occurred during a four-year period organizing within activist communities in Oregon. Sarah commented that her experience during this time was defined by “expos[sure] to a lot of sustainability issues and progressive politics” as a result of living in cooperative housing:

I lived in big group housing and everyone there was recycling and working for peace and justice and vegetarian at the same time. And so, it was kind of—just a coalescing of circumstances in my house in most cases...I worked on more political stuff than I did environmental stuff at that time; but it was all connected. I worked for the “police accountability” campaign in Portland, Oregon, working on like basically making the police accountable to the public. You know, there had been a series of beatings, police brutality and that kind of stuff. And I think that the people that I was connected with in that venue really were like you know they were recycling; they were gardening; they were eating organic and doing all this other stuff. And so that was were I first got exposed to it.

Sarah actively chooses not to demarcate a line between environmental and social justice issues as “social justice goes hand-in-hand with environmental justice” in her view of sustainability. Furthermore, if we return to her definition, we get the sense that Sarah does not necessarily see sustainable activities as exclusively benefiting a local community. This is commonality to note between Sara and Terry, since they both embraced the ecological metaphor and choose to see all actions as connected through a network [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]. I wrote earlier about Terry’s influence on Sarah

thinking process. As the director of OCS, Terry provided her with a phrase that describes what she had been looking for but was unable to find within Oregon activist communities—“that connection between people’s lives—political and social justice and the environmental movement.” This was exceptionally important for Sarah since it heavily influence how her composing process.

Producer 2

Chris’ observation was that “there’s not definition of sustainability that is exacted through the website or through its documents.” For him, everything on the site presented a nebulous definition of sustainability at MSU, which he felt ultimately made it harder to connect with both local and national audiences. Like Sara, Chris was relatively unaware of sustainability as a concept before he entered the office. Furthermore, he did not have a particular definition of sustainability that drove his practice. I must admit that before I interviewed Chris, I only knew that he was the webmaster. I had no idea what content on the site he was responsible for. As he detailed his contributions to the office, our conversation naturally developed into a discussion on definitions. Much of his comments concerning definitions resulted from his referencing the definitions of others who had direct contact with the office (i.e. Terry). This is not to say that Chris’ lack of a definition correlates to ignorance or disinterest in sustainability; instead, as a producer I see him as uniquely positioned in the occasional role of critic. I find Chris interesting because unlike the other producers, he has more control and access to the website as he serves as Ecofoot’s webmaster. Ironically, he indirectly provided, what I deem to be, a component of a localized definition based upon functionality, aesthetics and consistency of content.

From what I have gathered, this lack of cohesion is a direct result of the site's design aesthetic and much of the content appearing on the site as well as in print that radiates out of the office [see Claim No. 4].

Accordingly, he stated, "It's not a very cohesive site—different pages are done different ways." This lack of cohesion, which brings about Chris' frustration, resulted from design he perceived as not very user-friendly. The collection of information in the form of multiple PDFs presented a nightmare for visitors querying for information. Some pages are entirely textual with no visuals, while others have layouts that vary drastically from the standard presented on the main page. The biggest reason for this lack of cohesion is the different site managers who have passed through the office over the years. Terry provided a list of at least four different students aside from Chris who were responsible for the maintenance of the site. Each of these webmasters were of varying skill level, which is something that Chris cited as a major difference between he and his most recent predecessor. Chris, however, noted there were some pages that he was able to rebuild into html format in order to "bring everything together," but this revision process has been slowed by the fact that "Terry doesn't see the need for it." As he offered a critique of the site's design, I wondered whether he had any particular conversations with Terry concerning a particular definition of sustainability that should be present on the website or in any of the documents he himself designed. He answered, "No;" in fact, he cited this as the fundamental problem with the website and the office itself.

Despite this problem, he has been busy deliberating about how he can redesign the site to allow for a more unified definition of sustainability that radiates beyond OCS toward other on-campus environmental initiatives. Along with Lauren, another office

employee, He envisioned a redesign of the site in Wordpress format. This would make the website more of a “database” rather than a “static” site with a collection of “linked pages” and PDFs. This redesign would transform Ecofoot into a “repository that [could] be one place for people to go and find out what’s happening here,” but “at the same time [be] global because people [could] see what Michigan State is doing” and replicate sustainability in their own locale. It is very important that the information on the site retain the “MSU brand” as the its primary audience is students, faculty and staff. Yet, the need to connect to an external audience presents the opportunity where we can immediately see a local to global framework associated with sustainability. It is very likely that we can see Chris definition from a designer/editor’s standpoint as trying to streamline content in a way that we can simultaneously sustain a definition that is immediately vital to the functioning of a culture of sustainability here at MSU and serve the larger principle of connecting our local actions to larger global situations [see **Claim Nos. 1 & 4**].

Producer 3

Rich stated that he had heard of the term before but he “had sort of failed to link the other pieces of sustainability together.” Instead, he was more “myopically” focused upon the environment without connecting to the broader concept of sustainability that Terry and Sarah raised in their definitions. Unlike the other producers, Rich did have some formal education concerning environmental issues since he minored in Environmental Science as an undergraduate student at Wake Forest. Yet, he didn’t begin to alter his view of sustainability until he arrived at MSU and met Terry. This was a transformational meeting for Rich as it helped him to alter how he thought about

sustainability or in his own words, “that sort of turned my thinking more towards the broader concept of sustainability.” In a way, we should see Terry through the lens of what Brandt (2001) has termed as a “literacy sponsor,” or someone who helps to prompt the acquisition of knowledge and heuristics for organizing knowledge for the purposes of future application; I shall discuss this at length in a moment. When I asked Rich if there was anything in particular from his conversations with Terry that expanded his definition, he followed suit saying:

I think that I’ve always been interested in issues of—I mean—economic sustainability or what I consider to be economic sustainability or you can call it the first bottom-line. Is something that I was schooled in because I had a business major—I was—I took accounting classes. I understand what balance is according to dollars and cents. I also was interested in issues of social justice from a very kind of armchair expertise way...So, I guess long story short, Terry kind of helped me put them all together into one kind of concept [saying], “Hey there’s this thing; We’re calling it sustainability. It looks at these three components. And let’s you think about them within one kind of conceptual framework.”

One difference between Rich and other producers was that he was able to articulate his definition in a way in which he could recall how all of his varied interests came together to make a distinct whole under the banner of sustainability. His knowledge of economics and organizational management served as a guiding frame, in which he could draw on his prior educational and employment experiences to build a definition of sustainability.

When asked to provide a definition, he answered:

I think that when I think about the word “sustainability” to me it means the ability to perpetuate some type of operation. I have to think about it in terms of organization first and then move up toward the environment. The ability—[So if you think about] a corporation, the ability to perpetuate that entity indefinitely, so that you’re not drawing down any of the resources that that you need for future—we’ll call it—production or future operation. Yeah. So, in terms of the environment...we should be using our environment and our natural resources in a way that we can’t imagine a time when it would end.

The “organization” metaphor was something that Rich frequently revisited during the interview. He conceptualizes sustainability as a well-oiled machine that depends upon all of its parts in order to function properly. Although he speaks in the abstract, I see a trace of local dimensions inside his definition. I extract from his view an utterance of the local as he perceives an organization as part of a larger network that utilizes resources, but must do so not only to sustain itself but also the world. The “operation” he speaks of is more like a chain reaction that reverberates outward toward another system that might encompass the organization. All things considered, Rich’s definition fits the local to global model of sustainability’s ecological dimensions [see Claim No. 1]. A commonality shared between Rich and Terry is that the term “environment” is absent from their definitions. Terry vehemently stated that he “do[esn’t] talk about environmental sustainability;” instead, he talks about “sustainability,” choosing to live under a broader framework of a philosophy that includes environmental, social justice, and economic components. Thinking about sustainability in terms of a continual operation within an organization did allow Rich to think more holistically in terms of the “positives and negatives” associated with sustainability. The negative aspects of sustainability as a concept arise from definitions too rigid in composition that they do not allow for change:

If I look at the sustainability of other things, of an organization for example, there are innovations that may cause them to use their resources in a different way ten years from now then they are today. So, sustainability helps us to focus on present as it’s leading to the future. But I think we always have to fold in this notion of change and be flexible and adaptable as we think, so that tomorrow’s sustainability may look much different than today’s sustainability.

For Rich, “a fluid definition” is a necessity as time and the depletion of natural resources may cause use to rethink our production and consumption practices. While Terry was

influential in facilitating Rich's understanding of sustainability, he did not add the "organization" component, as it was something Rich brought to MSU. Rich did, however, state that he was sure that Terry would be receptive to his definition though they had no conversations regarding his perspective. Still, there was something particularly insightful that rose during our interview. Rich offered that his definition influences his composing process as he writes about sustainability at MSU. As we examined a message he produced for the OCS website, Rich discussed how he applied a heuristic from organizational theory and behavior refer to as the "street-level bureaucrat." I shall more extensively treat this later in the discussion of the respective case, but I wanted to raise this as an example of how individual definitions of sustainability travel from external locations/experiences and tacitly influence textual production.

I want to return to Brandt's notion of "literacy sponsor" that I raised earlier with Rich. His definition fits a schema that cuts across the paths of understanding sustainability among the producers—Terry's influence or what I would call sponsorship. In her literacy study, Brandt (2001) views sponsors as "embod[ing] the resource management systems of literacy" and important lenses for tracking literacy since they "appeared all over people's memories of how they learned to read and write" (p. 26-27). In this way, Terry, as a sponsor, acts as an agent who encourages/discourages the formation of definitions and serves as a point from which we can trace the formation of definitions and subsequently texts [see **Claim No. 5**]. Though Sara, Rich and even Chris come to understand sustainability from different paths, their definitions are constellated in that they are organized around Terry as a central node within a network. For example, Terry was able to extend Rich's definition by allowing him to realize how he could draw

on his knowledge and background of organizational management and economics in order to generate his own unique definition of sustainability that still fits the heuristic of the broad definition of the “three ring” model, which Terry uses to discuss sustainability. People come with their own values and Terry helps to shape them into ideas that are both easily translatable and fit within the broader conception of environmental sustainability that the office was originally founded upon. In spite of that, Terry is unaware of how Rich directly applies principles from organizational theory and management to the texts he produces for OCS. This is significant since it validates the claim that Chris mentions above—there is not a consistent definition of sustainability tracing throughout documents produced by the office. While Terry may be open to this application, it is another story altogether whether readers of the message are able to recognize this and treat it as part of a (or their) definition of sustainability.

The Readers

What we have at present is a tale of two readers—one who is “very” knowledgeable about environmental issues; and another who is a recent adopter of green-thinking. I presented the readers with pre/post-interview survey questions that attempted to isolate their opinions and orientation toward environmentalism. Although their answers are not direct manifestations of definitions regarding environmental sustainability, to some extent we can see these answers as contributing to a working definition from each reader. At the time of our interview, Hanna did not have a definition of sustainability formed in her head, but all of her pre/post-test survey responses indicated that she is very much involved in the environmental movement. Hanna rates environmental issues as being “extremely important” to her personal values. Moreover,

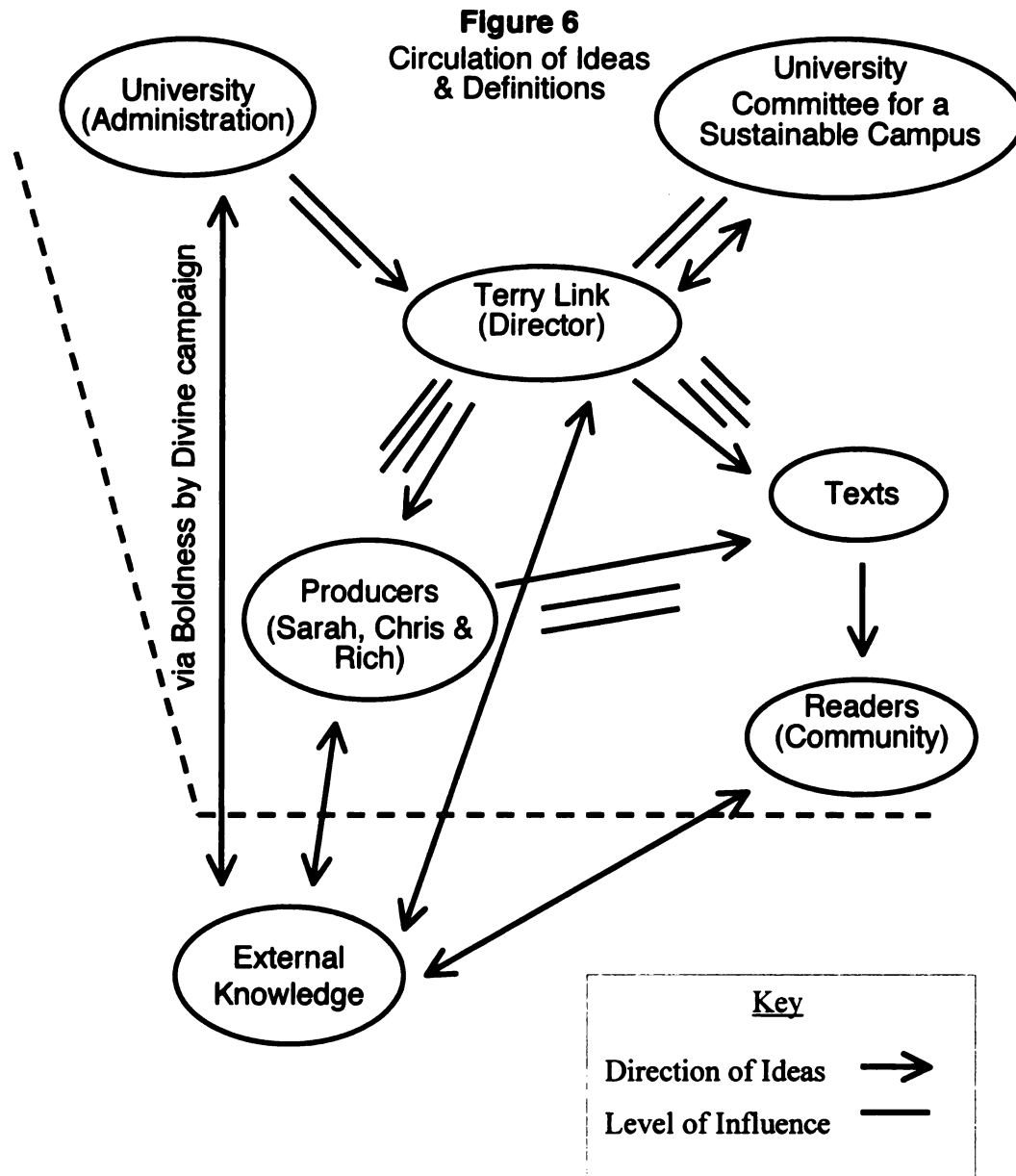
she indicated that she has changed her behavior in the past three years “quite a lot” in order to lessen her impact on the environment. These preceding statements are supported primarily by her regular recycling of most products she uses as well as opting to pay higher prices for items that are considered environmentally friendly. Hanna is extremely familiar with many of MSU’s environmental stewardship initiatives as she is familiar with UCSC and has visited Ecofoot.

In many respects, Michael is the direct opposite of Hanna; however, this is not to say that he does not care for the environment. Michael simply does not have the level of awareness or connection to environmental issues in the way Hanna does. He did have a definition of sustainability, which he recently formed after attending a public forum on sustainability. He offered this definition as “preserving the environment or creating communities that would be self-sufficient that people children and their children can live and thrive in that community.” While he noted that environmental issues were “quite important” to his everyday life, he indicated that he “hardly at all” made any moves in the past three years to reduce his impact on the environment. Furthermore, he had never heard of OCS, the website or about anything related to the environment at MSU until our interview. Still, Michael marked that he finds it “very important” that individual people should alter their behavior to reduce impact on the environment. This statement from Michael leads to an interesting point of contrast between he and Hanna. I asked them to rate on a five-point scale “who they felt was most responsible for protecting the environment.” Whereas Michael cited that he believed the responsibility fell mainly on the shoulders of private individuals, Hanna rank “local communities,” “companies and organizations,” “private individuals,” “states,” and “US government,” respectively.

Michael's response is extremely representative of most of the information he provides in the other three cases regarding how sustainability functions in each message.

For him, sustainability starts with actions on the local level that radiate outward to the larger whole; therefore, personal responsibility and actions become extremely important for getting things done [see Claim No. 1]. I am not too sure on how to characterize Hanna's response. In fact, sometimes her answers are not immediately clear; but a single cohesive thread that may explain her view on responsibility is that Hanna looks at environmental sustainability through what I would term an anti-globalization/Marxist lens. Corporate accountability and community action rather than personal responsibility appear to be very important toward ensuring environmental preservation. Yet, there were items in the post-interview that seem to suggest that she still places heavy emphasis on local actions toward affecting change [see Claim No. 6].

Hanna and Michael agree that each message they viewed generated "local" knowledge for audience members. They also agree that messages that are "local" provide more opportunities for action than "global" messages [see Claim Nos. 1 & 6]. In reaction to this, Michael stated, "People are generally interested in what effects them, so they will be more inclined to respond to local issues. Characterizing environmental sustainability as a global problem has not seemed to work in the past." Hanna had a similar response as she said, "I suppose because most people tend to operate from (sic) an out of sight out of mind sort of perspective. If something seems relevant to immediate concerns and livelihoods, the chance for an active response may increase as opposed to a distant more abstract concern." Her concentration on corporate and group responsibility returned, as she believes global messages are more



Note: I was curious as to how information circulates based upon information provided during my interview. This figure is directly comparable to Terry's sketch in many ways as it displays who is answerable to Terry and to whom Terry remains answerable. The difference between the two figures arises with the level of influence that comes with the circulation of information. Obviously as the director of the office, Terry has more influence upon the producers and subsequently the texts. Yet, the difference is that this figure shows that producers do not entirely develop their texts under Terry's guidance. Like the readers during consumption, each producer in their interview notes that they tap into external knowledge sources during the writing process in order to make meaning. This figure is vital in that it attempts to plot the complex interaction that occurs during production and reception of textual artifacts.

convincing toward inciting a change in attitude. Specifically, she wrote, “If people were able to picture the health of the planet in terms of tangible commonality, then they might realize that attempts at a capitalist status quo typically involves the exploitation of peoples via the breakdown of sustainable resource management.” From this, we can build a definition of sustainability for Hanna, which includes the necessity for local actions to affect change within communities, but also the push for the circulation of more global knowledge in order to affect change around the world. These elements closely coincide with what I characterized as her “anti-globalization/ Marxist” stance in that they run off of a working social justice model that takes power out of the hands of corporate entities and restores autonomy to communities.

In the beginning, I stated that definitions are important because they are heuristic and drive writing situations. This was an initial claim I held before I deployed my study. Yet, what I found in the course of my interviews validated my claim. The local gets made through definitions in ways that are explicit and (to some extent) implicit; however, there needs to be the presence of a mediating body who can take seemingly divergent views and find ways to converge them into a unified whole. The readers were able to pick up on several aspects of each producer’s definition when discussing their own definitions of sustainability and reviewing each message. I do not want to belabor the point here, but as we move through each of the following cases, you will see how a trend develops where both Hanna and Michael agree with Sarah, Chris, Rich and even Terry regarding dimensions of the local within messages. Writing about sustainability at MSU entails producers working from definitions of sustainability based upon the local in order to attract and hearten readers toward action within the community [see Claim No. 6].

Case II—“Vote Local First”

Only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world justified.

—Friedrich Nietzsche from *The Birth of Tragedy*

This case is slightly limited in that data was gathered differently from Chris in comparison to other producers. Yet, what makes this case so interesting is its centering upon whether there is a specified look to local dimensions of sustainability. In many respects, this focus on design conventions associated with the local highlights the pressures that producers undergo during the writer process as they determine what rhetorical appeal would have enough sway upon potential readers. As stated earlier, Chris serves as the webmaster for EcoFoot. This position involves many projects such as formatting the newsletter in .html form, designing banners for the site, and streamlining page content so that it fits a single unifying aesthetic. Terry also commissions Chris to design flyers and other types of media that advertise OCS events and programs. The primary message that defines this case was a flyer that Chris produced with other students in a professional writing course. According to Chris, Terry initially started the project, which was a series of posters titled “Vote with Your Actions.” This project was actually Chris’ entry point into OCS and introduction to the concept of sustainability. While the originally appeared in print, the posters have found their way online as part of the website, which features .pdf versions of the original posters with and without local content. The posters “specifically targeted students at Michigan State University,” but Chris noted that there were some initial problems in the beginning of the design process. First, he noted that “it was a push-and-pull throughout the whole class of how [they] should target those students because...[they] had a lot of different personalities.” Some

students in the class were politically liberal and more inclined toward environmentalism while others were conservative and more skeptical of the environmental movement. The second problem the class faced regarding the design process was a disparity of knowledge amongst each member of the design team. There were those “[who] had interest in sustainability” and those “[who] had no clue about sustainability.” And finally, they were generally unsure about how they would attract students on campus to the message of sustainability. To this point he stated:

So, how do you really—sustainability is so large and it’s not like you can donate twenty dollars and we’re going to be like, “Ok, we’re going to be sustainable is everybody donates twenty dollars!” It’s about behavioral change. And in our estimation the majority of students either didn’t care, wouldn’t care, or did not want to make sacrifices. And so to them, it would just fall into the white noise of global warming. So, we didn’t know how to target those students; and I’m not sure we did the greatest job in the world.

His remarks seem to hone on a particularly insightful problem. As a group of writers charged with the mission of talking about sustainability, there is an immediate dilemma in how they can represent such a concept in a way that it holds true to their individual values and those of OCS and the MSU community [see Claim No. 7]. Working across what can be described as different orientations to sustainability, the class decided to frame the project around old political saying that mesh with environmental issues that students care about. For example, they remixed the phrase “no new taxes” from President George H. Bush’s 1988 Republican National Convention nomination acceptance speech and transformed it into “no new bottled water.” They also adopted slogans from other political campaigns (e.g. “I like Ike” to “I like Bike”) as well as the Black Power movement (“Power to the People” to “Wind power to the people”). The move to use these slogans was a saavy approach toward solving the many problems they faced as a

design team as these messages tap into an American political consciousness that would allow readers to easily receive messages regarding the environment. In spite of this, Chris expressed disappointment in the excerpt above. This discontent stems from his belief that he and his classmates were unable to connect directly to a local audience. He did, however, state that the final products “look[ed] really sharp” but most of this was the result of the visual design, which was drafted by three design students in another class. Chris felt as if in most of the posters, the information was too general and so they did not go far enough to make the content matter to members of the community. It was at this point that we turned to the message that primarily defines this case.

The phrase “vote local first” sits toward the top of the message, which helps to define the general tone and theme. In terms of color, it is composed of shades of dark green and white. In the background is an image of an indistinguishable plant that spans from the bottom to the top of the flyer on the left side. The term “local” repeats several times in the text below, for example: “locally grown food,” “local farmers,” “locally owned businesses,” “local economy.” These phrase when coupled with “vote with your actions” and the url addresses for the office and Capital Area Local First’s (CALF) websites suggest that readers of this message should engage in actions that occur within their own locality by making conscious decisions to purchase goods and services produced and sold in the communities rather than purchasing externally produced and trafficked goods [see Claim No. 6]. For me, it seemed especially important to talk about the “vote local first” poster because it seems as if the content itself would suggest immediate connection to a local audience. This, in fact, would be an immediate

contradiction to his original feeling of not being able to connect to his audience. As we surveyed the features of the message in question, his feelings changed:

This one it says “vote local first,” but we weren’t necessarily targeting directly at this locality. We thought about doing that a lot, but—you know—we wanted to include local information—we researched local businesses that was—you know—this one was probably the most local of them all. We wanted to put information out there about local businesses; but then at the same time, we didn’t feel we had enough reliable information and know-how in ourselves to kind of be able to tell people, “These places are good! You should use these” cause we didn’t have any background to put our stamp on it and...say, “these places are good,” because they might not be. We’ve found research that says their good, but we haven’t gone there; we haven’t done an independent study. We were very leery of statistics. I was the strongest opposer of statistics, because I feel they’re over done...I’ve been bludgeoned with statistics my whole life; at least that’s what I feel like. And they always contradict themselves. People can always use another statistic to combat another statistic. We ended up using them; but not to the extent they wanted to. But it was tough.

The statistics in question were kept minimal. Chris and his group opted not to use numbers, but instead simple descriptive phrases that showed the benefits local actions have on both communities and the environment. Yet, in his description of the flyer itself, Chris stated that their reasons for keeping the statistics at a minimum was their lack of faith in research conducted on local businesses and also they wanted to “make them look like something that [students would] want to hang up on their dorm-room wall.” The latter was also another reason as to why he felt that this message did not necessarily work, since to his knowledge he had only seen one person display the flyer on their door. It was after this statement that I directed him to my computer desktop to show him one of his flyers that I had used as a background image. Still, I was interested in whether the readers would be able to look at the flyer and proffer the same reaction as Chris. Michael’s immediate reaction was that the repetition of the term “local” made it “obvious” what action the producers desired from their audience. By noting that “local”

was a very important with its repetition throughout the message, Michael felt that it was important to sort of have this distinct language in making a message local. He articulated his feelings saying, “I mean there’s not that many ways that they could say it. There not that many synonyms for the word “local,” but you do want to drive home—you know—eat food grown in your—in your area...or support your community businesses—I guess they could have said “community-owned businesses”—but yeah, it’s necessary.” Moreover, Michael had a similar feeling toward this message in comparison to others we looked at because it had the same ripple effect where all the varied indicators position it as being local but still moving towards national and global in action [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]. It was his opinion that the message could travel beyond MSU “if you took out the websites down at the bottom;” however, even if one were to do that, “the message lends itself to just kind of stay in the local category”:

You would have to like think—well you know—my local impact would have something—you know—or like what I do locally would have impact on the nation or on the globe. But the average person is not—I don’t think is going to think about it like that. But it’s not necessary for them to think about it like that. Cause thinking about it—for some people thinking about it in terms of the nation or the globe becomes too big. So, I think this message is like—you know—in saying, “vote local first”—think about your own...get your local community—you know—[to produce] it’s own food and transportation et cetera.

Like Michael, Hanna was able to pick up on the intent behind the message stating that the “obvious focus is like for local actions and interactions.” She, like Michael, was able to find other indicators within this message—namely national, due to the general mention of “voting” throughout the text. It was, however, her feeling that the non-specified attachment of the term to any locality made it national, but it was still local as she sees the abstract uses of term inspiring actions that branch out [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]:

I guess because like the “local” thing—you know—obviously made me think, “Oh ok, local.” You know it was just the same word association. But, I guess “vote with your actions”—cause I think a lot of the times—you know—our national identity and thinking—people are thinking, “Oh how am I involved—in like—this democracy.” A lot of the time people just think, “I vote”—you know—so I guess like I just feel like that’s sort of like a common language nationally—you know—is voting. So—you know—obviously it would be individuals so therefore a sort of local bent to it, but with your actions but I feel like just—as just the scope of a phrase like that it makes me think nationally just because—you know like I said—the association with democracy is so often voting.

Although Hanna associates the use of voting with national participation in democracy, I still think that her thoughts are in concordance with Michael and Chris’ feeling that the message is more local in that the immediate action happens within a local community and its effects branch outward when concatenated with the actions of others. This was evidence by Hanna’s double-coding of the phrase “stay in the local economy” as both local and global because of the presence of “local economies around the world” and the need for such change to occur in order to maintain individual community sovereignty.

It was Hanna’s insights on another aspect of the message that I found interesting because it connected with comments that Chris and Michael put forth in their interviews. During our interview, she specifically coded the background image (or “plant life”) as local. I thought this was interesting because it points to aesthetic dimensions of a local definition of sustainability [see **Claim No. # 4**]. When I asked her why she made this decision, she simply responded saying, “that’s what we see where we’re at...like MSU or wherever you happen to stay—it’s like you know—you’re able to stay their saved by the grace of oxygen.” Accordingly, certain graphical elements of a message can work to influence local actions or what may be considered as local. For instance, when I asked Hanna if we were to replace the image of “plant life” with something else, she expressed that if it were “an image of the Earth...certainly that would be...global or if it had the

States...it would be national.” I was happy that Hanna raised this as an important element of what made this message local because it confirmed an initial claim that arose during my interview with Chris—aesthetic dimensions of the local. I wrote earlier that Chris’ interview differed slightly from those of other producers because I was not immediately sure what material on the site he was responsible for creating. As he navigated throughout Ecofoot, Chris presented several documents available on the site itself and some archived in his online portfolio. The message that initially built this claim was a .jpeg version of a flyer Terry asked him to create for a week of special campus programs titled, “Journeys to Sustainability,” which was part of a larger nationally syndicated event. This flyer was actually the first job Chris had when he started working for OCS.

An image of a red wheelbarrow sits in the middle of the flyer with the adjacent slanting title, “Journeys to Sustainability.” Beneath the red wheelbarrow is an oddly placed poem by William Carlos Williams that reads, “some much depends on a red wheelbarrow glazed with rainwater beside the white chickens” and another set of text, which seems to be more of a description of the event: “Sustainability is a journey. It happens within bodies and across nations. It is personal, philosophical, and practical. Journey with us beyond the classroom and into a sustainable future.” The bulk of the text is in either red or black on a neutral white background. When Chris opened this image I thought it would be interesting to discuss how he attempted to design this for a local audience because his choice of color and the image in the background entirely deviates from what most people would associate with the environmental movement or the concept of sustainability. Naturally, this was the first thing that Chris addressed when we looked at the flyer:

{

This was going to go out to students; this was for students mostly. And I realize that it was going to be posted on the bulletin boards all-around campus. So, I wanted to have a really dominant visual that would catch the eyes of students walking past it, cause I know when I walk past those things I notice a blur unless there's something that absolutely stands out. And the theme of this week of events was this red wheelbarrow from a poem of William Carlos Williams, which is included right there down there. That's just an excerpt from the poem. Actually that's the entire poem, it's just a very short thing. So, I imagined this this big red wheelbarrow and I imagined that people wouldn't know what the hell this big red wheelbarrow was. Plus I liked the color red for the theme once I got working with it. But—so that's where the giant visual came from.

In his own words, his use of the image is completely unrelated to the event and is necessary only as a strategy to attract a local audience. As odd as this may sound, both Terry and the UCSC were completely on board with the design as they served as reviewers for the final product. I wanted us to play around with the message a little and test the limits of what make it local. The first question that I asked Chris was whether he would still consider the flyer a local message if we took out all of the event information at the bottom, which features the dates, times, and places. This became important as Chris responded by saying he would not consider it to be a local message because “everything local here (MSU) and with sustainability seems to be focused on the color green.” The idea that color, typeface and images could come together to build a local composition of sustainability was something that I had not considered while planning this study. It does, however, make sense that one would have to think about how these elements might work to induce particular responses and actions from readers as they relate to the content. Yet, producers of content need to be aware of these elements and also realize that there is some risk associated with deviation from expected design standards, which Chris himself realized:

The “Spartan” branding there always seems to be something there. That's something I never actually considered, making it (“Journeys to Sustainability”

flyer) appear visually local. In fact in a lot of the work I've done—not all of it—I've tried to avoid the color green as a dominant element—use it but not use it dominantly because—you know—sustainability is “the green movement,” but at Michigan State everything is green. So, I've always tried to kinda work around that to make everything standout; but it's kind of a catch-22. You can't abandon green entirely, but if you don't...it's going to look like—you know—a sporting event poster.

At MSU, everything is, in fact, green and this does present challenges for producers trying to represent the environmental movement in a local where everything seems to revolve around the color green. Though Chris as a writer is aware of this, he chooses to diverge from accept standards that would make his message more local in favor of what he feels would enhance his chances of connecting to a local audience. Still, I wanted to talk about this message in relation to the “vote local first” flyer because they are both connected in the sense that they raise the importance of how much attention should be placed into crafting a local aesthetic. Making a message local is not just about writing sufficient content or repeating the word “local.” A local message is a combination of the aforementioned elements and other graphical ornamentations. Therefore, to effectively craft a local message, writers need to make careful aesthetic choices that create connections between a community's character and the mission of sustainability to attract local audiences and induce desired response.

Case III—“Sustainability @ MSU”

I was always looking for environmental stories in Michigan and that one was a little passed by...But I think it's definitely one of the best examples we have.

—Sarah describing “Sustainability @ MSU”

Messages found on the site can be in the form of texts, images, and sometimes video. Video is interesting in the sense that it is an amalgamation of text, image, color and various other things that cannot quite be captured in an image or on paper (e.g. emotions). Attention to the functioning of such messages of sustainability found on websites expands our understanding of how writers creatively and tenuously fashion distinctive local appeals. Before I discuss this case any further, I would like to underscore some shortcomings that make this case less robust than others. First, one of the readers scheduled another appointment during our interview and had to leave early. We were able to discuss all of messages at length except the video; however, I was able to get some brief comments about the material she coded for the video. The final problem concerning this case occurred in my last reception interview. There were some technology problems that occurred throughout. While most of them were minor and appeared as slight inconveniences and deviation from protocol, there was a major problem in that the audio stopped recording before we discussed the message. I receive some feedback from a friend and tried to piece together as much as I could from my notes and additional communication with the reader; but I remain dissatisfied. Nevertheless, I chose not to discard the data from any of my interviews. I feel as if there was material present that might extend how we could possibly understand the local in relation to sustainability.

In this case, I chose to focus on a video produced by Sarah, which discusses the concept of sustainability through the voices of various people affiliated with the

university. Within this case, I am principally concerned with the geographical distinctions of the local and how geography plays vital roles in building community. As stated earlier, Sarah came to MSU to specifically pursue a specialized graduate degree in environmental journalism through the Knight Center. Although they are not the focus of this case, Sarah made several videos during her time as a student, which are also located on the website. One video that she seemed rather keen to talk about was something she created while enrolled in a course on environmental film. The purpose of the short film was to debunk the myth of whether allowing engine idling was a good or bad thing. This was not a topic assigned to her; instead, it was something that randomly popped into her head as she described that she was “a jeewiz kind of person.” Still, Sarah felt this topic had value to the people around her. If not beyond MSU, because “this [was] the kind of question people fight about all the time” and answering it “also [had] environmental implications.” We did not discuss the content of the video in-depth, but Sarah noted that the final product was received well by both her classmates and her professor who “had really strong opinions” that were ultimately transformed. Terry was so impressed by the quality of Sarah and her classmates’ work on other videos like this that he asked that they be linked to the site. These videos were not necessarily produced with MSU students in mind; however, Terry thought they had enough value for the local community that it would expand knowledge about an issue and encourage changes in behavior [see **Claim No. 6**]. This is something Terry indicated earlier when discussing his litmus test for loading student generated content onto the website. Material placed on the site has to be immediately useful for the community. Though this example is peripheral to the main video I shall discuss shortly, in a way, it illustrates how local messages, which help to

define sustainability at MSU, are often produced with little to no connection to OCS or knowledge of on campus initiatives.

The primary message that defines this case is titled, “Sustainability @ MSU.” This was not a course project. Instead, this was a joint venture between OCS and UCSC to produce a short documentary piece to present during summer orientation for incoming MSU freshmen. The purpose of the project was to help students expand their definition of what it means to be interested in the environment, to bring in other aspects of sustainability beyond the environment, and to talk about how MSU participates in that. It was the necessity to describe how MSU participates in sustainability that primarily drove our interview. One of the first elements that a reader encounters upon view the message is the opening sequence, which features an array of words converging together. Some of these words included “water,” “social justice,” “pollution,” “health,” “economic justice,” “land,” “racism,” “war,” “food,” “waste.” Sarah expressed that her decision to open the video in this matter grew from her desire to “represent the fact that there’s a lot of interconnected problems” when thinking about environmental sustainability. These terms, according to Sarah, are a conglomeration of issues that “people don’t consider as part of sustainability or environmentalism” but should be “brought into the picture.” Literally, the converging of the terms in the video stands as a metaphor for how these issues are interconnected. Moreover, when I think of her discussion of this portion of the message, I think about the broad definition of sustainability that Sarah offered in the first case [see **Claim Nos. 1 & 2**]. Choosing to see all these terms as working together rather than separate retains the idea, for example, that problems with water are environmental and social justice issues or disputes on land use/development issues are environmental and

social justice issues. Sarah notes that thinking about things in this way can be “intimidating,” but these are serious problems that need real solutions and the solutions may be as complicated as the problems.

Michael was the only reader to have made a reference to the opening segment as he coded. While he felt that the overall message was local, he coded the content of the opening sequence as global because he saw them as abstract concepts that were not grounded in anything particular thing. He placed terms like “community engagement” and “student organic farm” as local. For Michael, the difference between these two categories is the type of action they encourage. The words he highlighted as global indicators work to “make you think more about sustainability” and the local indicators “actually put a face on the issue by providing information on how to act and participate” [see Claim Nos. 1 & 6]. The latter point was an area of common ground between Michael and Hanna. They each intimated what made the video local was seeing people, who were affiliated with the university, talking about and participating in environmentally sustainable activities. Sarah felt that it was requisite to feature people within the institution as representatives of sustainability rather than people from the Greater East/Lansing area. When I asked her about this she said that she felt “representing what goes on at Michigan State [was] pretty important” and thus this called for interviewing staff, students and professors. Though there are people within the Greater East/Lansing area, who could talk about environmental sustainability with greater expertise, using their personalities in this video would lessen the local appeal by making the content more broad, thus increasing the range of audience members. The presence of community members is important because they literally put a local face on sustainability

by just being visible in the community [see **Claim Nos. 5**]. This is an aspect of sustainability that I shall talk about at length in the final case.

The UCSC and Terry served as the editorial board and to some extent they acted as producers providing Sarah with content and people to talk to. “Yeah. We had some committee meetings after the first draft and they said, ‘Shorter. More kids,’” Sarah said discussing the production process. “More people that were not professors or staff. They wanted more young people. They really wanted another undergrad or two.” Featuring more students and less “old people” was a step toward heightening the local appeal. There was one comment, however, that completely altered the feel of the first cut. Sarah said that after looking at the video for the first time, aside from desiring younger representation, the committee felt that the way sustainability was being discussed was far too general. So, they opted for a “cartoon” as an addendum that would best illustrate how sustainability works at MSU. The cartoon occurs at the end of the video as a final summation of all the items discussed. It is a quick synopsis of the relationship between coffee consumption here at the university and East African coffee plantations in Rwanda. It was at this time that I started to notice how important this relationship between MSU and African growers was to not only the office, but also the university. This was a shining example of sustainability that seemed to crop up a lot either throughout my interviews as each producer and reader occasionally discussed the importance of reputation toward fortifying a local definition of sustainability. In these instances, participants would highlight in some way the significance of MSU defining itself against other regional and national institutions [see **Claim No. 4**]. For example, Hanna herself said that MSU’s reputation as the “leading land grant university” and everything that it has done to

establish itself as an environmental leader among higher-ed institutions is what influenced her decision to attend school here. In many ways, our discussions led to the idea that prestige may play a pivotal role in delimiting the local, which lead to the creation of two interconnected claims.

First, if this is true, then it holds that the local may not have a set geographic location or the local is always seen in reference to another location [see **Claim No. 2**]. This is important because part of building an identity or a reputation means making moves toward defining yourself in reference to other localities. Following along the lines of this logic, the local sometimes operates in the abstract, which is not always immediately clear. The local can be a person's body (as sometimes environmental issues are framed as dire situations if there is a perceived threat to an individual's health), a community and regional, but these are never separate from the whole and are always connected in a network that extends outward. For example, Sarah uses the cartoon as a model for discussing sustainability here at MSU. She has to use another entity that's global in order to define and place into perspective local actions here on campus. Such references make the message less general and help to ground it more so that audiences can realistically see the effect of their local actions, which is why the committee suggested the addition of the cartoon. This writing strategy can lead to encouraging a host of actions ranging from altering the way one thinks about an issue to actually changing consumption and purchasing practices. The second claim regards prestige and how the local is often defined in respect to other entities in order to build a community's sense of identity [see **Claim No. 3**]. What I suggest is that local indicators scattered throughout texts sometimes as an appeal to a community's character and esteem. This most often

occurs in the form of praise that makes direct comparisons to other regional or global entities and the referencing of recognition from various persons or institutions. I think that the cartoon in this video works because it provides a model for how sustainability works on the local level, but it also serves as a public relations piece for the university. This is a message for community members as well as those outside the community that says, "Look how sustainable we are here at MSU." Its presence on the website aids in the delivery of its content to ensure that people will recognize the institution for its efforts. Therefore, it might be useful for writers to mention any type of recognition a community has received in order to possibly increase the likeliness of action from a particular message.

Case IV—“Stories of Sustainability”

Behind every action, every change, there is a story to be told. These are the tales that tell the story of how sustainability happens.

—Opening epigraph to “Stories on the way to Sustainability”

This case focused specifically on messages that Rich constructed for OCS that were only available on the website. More than any of the other cases, I find Case IV to be incredibly robust in that it supports many of the claims from stated in other cases. In this case, I highlight how local manifestations of sustainability can be embodied in community representatives and are built through community deliberation. While this is somewhat implied in the other cases, it become explicit through Rich, Hanna, and Michael’s discussion of the messages. I decided to use two messages, because these were the only messages immediately present on the site that we comparable to each other and had the same author (“Gateway Drug” and “The Squeaky Wheel”). I also thought that this presented a unique opportunity where I could test whether readers would still be able to rate comparables messages as local depending upon the various indicators embedded within each. In a sense, this case was merely another stab at testing the reliability of my coding scheme. These messages are a part of a series that OCS has in syndication titled, “Stories on the way to Sustainability.” Rich had no idea we would be talking about these pieces during the interview. Instead, while we were discussing his background in the environmental movement as well as his relationship with Terry, he revealed to me that he was currently working on some “green stories,” which would look at sustainability among different individuals on campus. The University Committee for a Sustainable Campus originally commissioned the series. Committee members decided early in Fall 2008 that they needed to set a series of goals that would allow greater visibility for both

the committee and sustainable initiatives on campus. Rich, who has served as a committee member for the past two years, said, “So, one way to do that we thought was to sort of do some very informal sort of journalism style interviews with people who are both on the committee and not on the committee—mostly Operations people—and ask them about...how they did sustainability at work.” Originally, Rich was commissioned to write fifteen stories, but due to time commitments he has only been able to finish the two that are currently on the website.

In the first message, titled, “The Gateway Drug,” Rich interviewed Lauren Olson, an alumna of MSU and OCS employee. The article focuses exclusively upon Lauren’s efforts as an undergraduate to institute an adequate and accessible on campus recycling program as well as her opinions on the importance of recycling. My initial analysis of this message coded it as being exclusively local though I did find national and global indicators present. Most of the indicators point to actions that are immediately local. Furthermore, I felt each indicator worked to goad readers toward not only believing that it is possible for them to do the things that Lauren did as an undergraduate but also encourage them to engage in these activist activities and recycle as well. Aside from Lauren, the defining characteristic of the piece is the repetition of the phrase “gateway drug,” which positions recycling as a step toward sustainability. I had heard the term before, but I was unsure of how to code it. Part of me wanted to code it as local, because the activity attached to the phrase (recycling) is an immediately local action; however, the phrase “gateway drug” seems to be more of a national indicator as it is deeply tied to discussion of the habitual use of marijuana leading to the use of more dangerous drugs. As he discussed his writing process, Rich relayed how he came up with the phrase

“gateway drug” (acquired from Lauren during his interview) and its significance to the message *in toto*:

So, I’ve got all these stories kind of in my head and somebody will say something or I’ll re-read a manuscript and see kind of a snippet of something that’s kind of cool. And that would usually—the rest of the story kind of follows...So...she used that word “gateway drug” and I thought that was such a cool thing because it’s sort of carrying on the philosophy...which is that need for extension—sort of outreach. That to me seemed like a term that was both humorous in thinking about sustainability and also kind of would draw people in without being cheesy and hipstery.

The use of this phrase was strategic for two reasons. First, it taps into the definition of sustainability, which Rich provided earlier. This definition sees sustainability as both broad and networked wherein a series of local actions can lead to changes throughout the system [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]. Second, his use of the phrase “gateway drug” taps into a national consciousness via shared terminology in order to draw readers into the subject. I shall cover the importance of local actions in relation to Rich’s opinion regarding desired responses from an audience reading the message and the reader’s reactions shortly in this case. I, however, would like to discuss the latter of the two first because it points to the intersubjective nature of Rich’s writing process as it was heavily dependent upon community for construction [see Claim No. 7]. Rich corroborated my initial analysis saying that his use of “gateway drug” was an attempt to tap into a national narrative that resonated with people. In fact, the use of the phrase when coupled with Lauren’s activities becomes “sort of a microcosm of the American story.” In Rich’s mind and for most of us who have sat through a US history course, the “American story” is deeply defined by the ordeal of a single individual, who against all odds is able to win against forces more powerful and influential than himself. Lauren stands as an archetype for this narrative, which makes it easier for readers to relate to the message’s content and subtext

[see Claim No. 5]. Naturally, Rich's assertion that the message evoked a sense of nationalism led us to discuss audience as it related to the construction of the message. At first, I was surprised to learn that what I had coded as being exclusively local was actually written for a primarily national audience; but that started to unravel as Rich further explained the intent behind the message as multi-tiered. Although "gateway drug" operates on a high level of abstraction that could easily travel to audiences beyond MSU, Rich conveyed that while he was writing more of a "national" message, he was primarily thinking of MSU community members:

When I said, "US" earlier that was in terms of like the kind of the underlying philosophy of the story...I mean this is also a quintessential MSU story because I mean first of all the setting is at MSU and secondly it involves her as a student, which I think speaks to what is possible among the student population here on campus.

Once I again, I would like to note that there is no evidence on Rich's or the office's end that would suggest that this document traveled beyond MSU as there are no statistics to track delivery. The explication of his thought process, however, highlights the complexity of his rhetorical situation as he finds himself communicating with multiple people in different parts of the country as well as on campus [see Claim Nos. 1 & 2]. What further complicates this discussion of audience and writing community is Rich's editorial process, which surprisingly does not feature Terry alone. "I go back to my participants with the actual story and ask them if they thought I had accurately represented what they thought, and what they did, and did they want to make any changes. The next move is to send it to Terry," he said. In a sense, the community is valuable to Rich, because it helps him write his stories through providing content that better helps to frame the subject (e.g. Lauren, "gateway drug" and Laurie "squeaky wheel"), checking the accuracy of his

statements and comparing these statements with the overall mission of OCS. These people within the community represent a marshalling of knowledge that helps to create sustainability here at MSU [see Claim No. 7].

I would like to return to the first reason I found the use of “gateway drug” to be strategic as it directly connects to the desired actions Rich would like to see from his participants. I wrote earlier that I thought that this was a strong candidate for encouraging action because of its incredibly local focus and strong connection to Rich’s definition of sustainability. Despite the presence of some national and global markers, these indicators work to enhance the local references for the purposes of inciting participation in efforts to ensure sustainability at MSU. In fact, when describing his message along the three indicators listed, he stated that he would use all three but that “the story itself is very local” since “it’s about MSU; it’s about a campus program; it’s a case study; it’s not generalized...it takes a special person; it takes a special context.” As I thought about this statement coupled with his statements on national indicators within each message, what I gathered from Rich’s analysis of his writing was a connection between “specific” knowledge and the local and “general” knowledge with the global [see Claim Nos. 1 & 6]. When presented with information that is increasingly abstract and does not immediately relate to them, readers are placed in positions in which they are unable to act. Providing more specific information that relates issues of environmental sustainability to the community presents guides that facilitate involvement, participation and action. The latter of this corollary is a traceable dimension of the local within environmental sustainability. This claim is further augmented by Rich’s report of what he would like to see from an audience encountering this message:

I would be disappointed if someone read this story and got really involved in the recycling movement. I would be excited if they read this story and were compelled to recycle. But I kind of feel like this has been dealt—like now it's time for you to think about—you know—what else needs to be tackled... And not that everything ever been done, but I just kind of like this is probably something that—you know—this is something that Lauren did and she owned it and now she's kind of doing something else and recycling is a very important issue and I want to get that across, but at the same time I would like them to absorb it a little deeply than that and say, "Ok What am I passionate about? What am I interested in? How could I do—maybe I can go meet with the Board of Trustees"—obviously that's valued at this university. So I think that that's how I would hope that people would read it and not just—not just freshman. I mean I think that it can be applicable to anybody who has a little bit of time and some—and is willing to put in some effort.

Rich's level of approval regarding action is tendered by the degree of participation from his audience. He expressed disappointment over "involve[ment] in the recycling movement" because that would indicate only a change in mindset without physical participation. His working model of sustainability is driven by his definition, which calls for small action-oriented steps that would work to change the whole. It is not enough that someone expresses an interest in recycling or feels more inclined toward doing so. Rich's expectation is that his audience not only recycle but use that act as a stepping stone toward other actions related to sustainability. Rich's use of Lauren as an archetype for the "American story" and the highlighting of specific local activities establishes an atmosphere for action, something that is not necessarily as possible with more general information because ambiguities would circulate as to what role audience members could play [see Claim Nos. 5 & 6]. When I asked each reader about this message, they responded with an avowal that the message itself encourages local actions. Michael asserted that the "immediate purpose [of the article] is to really push recycling" as it encourages "actual action" that would "definitely [cause him] to recycle more on campus." Though all of the words he coded seemed to be local in my opinion, Michael

initially coded them as global. Specifically, he coded the phrase “recycling is a gateway drug for sustainability” as global because “[he] also put sustainability in global. And since recycling is a key component of sustainability, to [him] that is also a global issue.” His choosing global as an indicator connects back to what I initially noted about the phrase “gateway drug” connecting to a broad and networked definition of sustainability. Rich, Michael and myself all coded the phrase differently; however, our responses each connected back to local action as the driving force behind the metaphor. For example, despite initially coding all but a single indicator (i.e. “Office of Campus Sustainability”) as global, Michael had a change in which he moved everything into the local category. “Well, I might actually put all of these in the local because like I said if I focused on what this particular message is talking about, it seems to focus more on the MSU community,” he said. He further discussed at length why he opted for the change:

I would describe it as highlighting one person’s effort in—in—I’ll use the word “sustainability—I’ll use the word “movement.”—So, it shows that one person can make an impact in this movement. Where it be—yeah, and it would be an impact that would not only affect the local but also the national as it would have an effect on the environment.

Accordingly, Michael understands this message as taking a “bottoms-up approach” to sustainability—seeing the local affecting the national and subsequently the global. Hanna chose to highlight an equal number of indicators as local, national or global, but like Michael, she believed the overall purpose to encourage local action. In describing her reaction to the message, however, Hanna expressed difficulty in choosing between the categories saying, “It’s hard for me to separate the local from the global” [see **Claim No. 1**]. The reason behind is that she was more inclined to think about the global as composed of several localities because people are “local wherever they are.” Her rationalization

arose from the logic of globalization, which moves to organize several different areas under a single streamlined banner for the purposes of better communication and strategy. She does make a stark demarcation between market-driven understandings of globalization and how she would like to understand the global in terms of social justice. For Hanna, it is more of a question of autonomy. “My tendency is to try and like resist the thought of like “globalization,” she said. “Like this—you know—nice word for sort of like imperialist capitalism versus like thinking of local as all these sort of local people—you know—people who are having trouble living on the land that they’re on.” Accordingly, thinking of the global as a specific entity composed of many localities rather than an abstraction places power back in the hands of local people. In a way this supports my claim regarding both specific and general knowledge in regards to sustainability. Part of that specific knowledge includes community self-recognition and self-determination [see Claim Nos. 1, 3 & 6]. Communities that lack specific knowledge or the ability to think of themselves as separate entities unto themselves rather than indistinguishable parts of a large system may find it difficult to marshal resources toward action. As a matter of fact, an increased focus on general knowledge may inhibit a community from recognizing problems occurring at home. Any attempts toward investigating the local dimensions of environmental sustainability must take into account the ratio between general and specific knowledge toward influencing audience reaction.

I won't discuss the second message (“The Squeaky Wheel”) in great of detail, since many of the findings echo those from the first message. Instead, I would like to focus on a connection that arose between “The Squeaky Wheel” and “Gateway Drug,” which helps to fix a claim about the local. Each of the readers and Rich rated the message

as exclusively national. Yet, in speaking of why they coded it as such, they began to reveal insights of the local that I began to realize. Within these stories, agents become particularly powerful in the sense that they take on the representative function of sustainability on campus [see **Claim No. 5**]. When comparing both Lauren to Laurie, the focus of “The Squeaky Wheel,” Rich offered that both present different approaches to sustainability for readers to embrace:

I think Lauren’s view of change is much more “in your face” and kind of going about it that way. Laurie’s path is much more—I’m going to use kind of a funny analogy but you’re going to have to stick with me—it’s more of the kind of “Dick Cheney approach. Like, I’m just going to hang around and keep doing what I’m doing and eventually I will be the winner. Eventually I will beat you, because every day I’m going to come in and put forth what I think is right. And then it’s gonna get there and then I’ll say, “Well that’s the way it should have been.” And I think both—there’s value to both approaches. So, I had to make this story reflect the fact that she doesn’t want to come out and put it in your face that she’s sustainability.

It was Rich’s last two words that made me think of an element of sustainability and the local that cut across both messages—the idea that someone can become a personification of sustainability on the local level. Obviously, if we return to the material presented from the first case, we can presume that Terry himself in some way functions as an embodied figure of sustainability at MSU since his definition of sustainability and his position within the office powerfully shapes what sustainability looks like on a local level.

Like Terry, Lauren and Laurie embody the local values of sustainability that OCS and members of the UCSC would like to see and offer solutions to community members on how they too can live sustainable lives. When I ask the readers whether Laurie’s personality or her presence was a factor in coding the message as local, Michael responded saying, “It makes it local in the sense that that’s her like that’s kind of her own grassroots campaign. But it’s still kind of give that insinuation where—you know—if she

can do, other around—others period can do it anywhere.” Hanna highlighted the phrase “a reminder and voice of reason in an often unsustainable world” as a global indicator due to Rich’s use of “world.” She, however, found that as a person, Laurie, adds a dimension of the local that traces through this phrase and throughout the entire message:

I mean clearly cause it’s—you know—highlighting the story of this particular woman at MSU, that’s the local bent to it. But I feel like the sort of details of it—you know—point to that sort of expanded awareness of like—you know—how it’s more like the “squeaky wheel” is the metaphor you know like the ripple effect how someone can just get you thinking—you know—beyond sort of your one spot, which is—you know—the benefit of it I suppose, thinking about your own spot as it is.

One interesting matter to note is that each message contains a picture of Lauren and Laurie; however, neither the readers nor Rich chose to code the picture as part of the message. In fact, Hanna was the only one to refer to them in her discussion of the message, saying that she thought one was “cute” (Lauren) and the other related to the story, as it shows “[Laurie] happy and actively recycling.” In this case, appeals to the local can be in the form of a community member in which people can witness and model the practice of sustainability. The presence of this person (or group of people) provides community members with a sense of possibility regarding their own actions. Therefore, it is likely that producers writing about sustainability must trace their networks and find local personalities who embody the values of sustainability most representative of the community, so that others within the community have a sense that they can realistically act.

“Drawing Things Together”—Claims & Conclusions

I made a series of claims based upon the data collected. These claims work to build a working definition of what sustainability looks like at MSU, but also what it might look like in other communities. As I stated in my introduction, this work seeks to build rhetoric from the ground by looking at how a series of practices lead to a series of claims and subsequently a rhetoric. In my explication of these claims, what I see is the unfolding of a rhetoric of sustainability as understood by way of the local. I have divided each claim into four parts the first being a corollary or what I consider a contribution to rhetorical theory in a common topoi. The statement that follows is how that such a corollary plays out in individual texts. I have provided specific examples in some claims that do not seem immediately clear. The third part is advice that I offer to producers who write messages concerning environmental sustainability, which is chiefly based upon the preceding content. The final portion of each claim is a recommendation to producers of environmental rhetoric. I felt that it was important to have this addendum in the sense that both Rhetoric/Composition scholars and environmental stewardship practitioners could have something useful to take away from this project. At length, there is no real order into how these claims are established; however, you will notice that some claims are interconnected. I have done my best to position these in relation to each other, showing how the presence of a single claim leads to the existence of another.

Claims

1. **Claim:** Local is seen by producers and readers only in relation to global as it radiates outward in a complex system of strong/weak relationships that is networked. This indicates that on some level local and global are never separate and have influence upon each other.

- a. **Enacted Claim:** Appeals to the local branch out in a network that influences behavior in other locations. The delivery of text via the web works twofold: 1) to inspire a local/national/global audience in that order and 2) Maintain identity and a community's character.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make a local appeal, producers rely upon some general or global information, which may overwhelm but doesn't necessarily influence the intent of the message. For example, in their definitions of sustainability, Rich and Terry both opted not to use the term environment in connection with sustainability. Their decision to do so was in part due to their belief that all issues are connected be they local or global in scope. Another example comes with Hanna's decision to code "voting" as national rather local. Although, the message appeared to indicate that voting occurs with the place a person resides, both the lack of "local" as a modifying adjective and her belief that all actions are interconnected to serve a larger purpose influenced Hanna's decision-making. This suggests that on some level local is always connected to national and global no matter how situated the act may seem.
 - c. **Advice:** If the intent is to connect to an immediately local audience, then there is no such things as too many local indicators. To increase the level of appeal, it is important to have as many local indicators as possible. This means that producers should not worry that texts appear exceptionally local because no matter what the cost-benefit of such writing is that it will to some extent have influence upon external locales. For example, while repeating the phrase "vote locally" has a tremendous amount of local influence, to some extents readers encountering this message via the web from other areas may be inspired to adopt this mantra for their own communities.
2. **Claim:** Local may not have a set geographic location.
- a. **Enacted Claim:** To some extent, the local operates in the abstract which is not always as clear as some may think. Sometimes local can be: regional, your body (my observations of participants & texts), or community, but these are all still connected in a network.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make an effective local appeal, producers make explicit references to geography to increase the likelihood of action and paradigm shift from their respective audiences. In the third case, Hanna talked about MSU's reputation as the "leading land grant university" which influenced her choices during the coding of the video. The university's has to compare itself to other institutions in order to establish a reputation. Therefore, national and global stand as important markers in relation to the local. Another aspect of this claim not immediately addressed in the cases was the degree to which environmental issues become personally local in respect to the self. While most of the claims focused on the local as being communities or neighborhoods, there is some room to consider that appeals to the local in a rhetoric of sustainability often highlight personal health as a persuasive strategy.

- c. **Advice:** Referring to physical spaces creates images within the minds of readers of places where they can venture to be sustainable. Producers should consider how using a phrase such as “buy locally-grown produce here in East Lansing” is more effective than “buy locally-grown produce.”

Therefore:

3. **Claim:** Local is often defined in respect to regional entities and may reflect prestige.
 - a. **Enacted Claim:** Local indicators scattered throughout texts sometime appeal to a community’s character and esteem. This most often occurs in the form of praise that may be: 1) direct comparisons to other regional/global entities and/or 2) the referencing of accolades and reviews from national and/or international institutions.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make an effective local appeal, producers mention recognition their community has received in order to possibly increase the likeliness of action from a particular message. This is best represented in the example I gave regarding Hanna in **Claim No. 2**. Accordingly, the need to compare oneself to others has the effects of boosting reputation and inspiring community members to act.
 - c. **Advice:** As a recommendation to producers, it is a good practice to keep a log of any type of recognition or statistics necessary for distinguishing their community from others. Making references to these accolades and points of distinction serves as an effective way of encouraging people to engage in sustainable activities.

4. **Claim:** Local representations of sustainability have aesthetic dimensions.
 - a. **Enacted Claim:** Appeals to the local can be in the form of color, images and typefaces that have come to characterize a community over a period of time.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make a local appeal, producers make careful aesthetic choices that entice rather than exclude local audiences. This results in a particular “branding campaign” in which producers seek to create connections between a community’s character and the mission of sustainability. For example, color is a very important aspect of sustainability here at MSU. The BeSpartanGreen campaign is a primary example of this. Chris talks about in his interview that when he designed a flyer for the office, he consciously chose not to use green because he was familiar with other on campus environmental initiatives that embraced the color as identity. What he did realize was that there are some perils present that come with moving outside of community aesthetics. This may be unique to other universities/localities in different ways as they try to mesh their identities with sustainable desires.
 - c. **Advice:** Producers need to think about how their campaign on sustainability meshes with characteristics that have come to define their community. Think about elements like color and images and how they

represent the look and feel of a community and how these elements would potentially blend with an environmentalist agenda. Doing this allows for community members to better visualize how sustainability matters on a local level rather than seeing them as separate.

5. **Claim:** Local may manifest/be represented in a person or figurehead.
 - a. **Enacted Claim:** Appeals to the local can be in the form of a community member or figure in which people can directly see sustainability practiced and thus have a sense of possibility regarding action.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make an effective local appeal, producers trace their networks and find local personalities who embody the values of sustainability, so that others within the community have a sense that they too can realistically adhere and act. Sarah chose to increase the local breadth of her video by following the UCSC's call for "more kids" and including community practitioners of sustainable living. The most obvious incidence of this occurs in Case IV where Rich offers both Laurie and Lauren as representatives of sustainability at MSU. Their roles as agents within texts and on campus present realistic behaviors and activities for local audiences to model.
 - c. **Advice:** Producers should scan their communities for individuals who embody their values of sustainability and use them within messages directed to their communities. Whether their practices are textualized or seen, the presence of representatives powerfully help to influence action within local communities.
6. **Claim:** Local appeals in texts incite individuals within a community toward action.
 - a. **Enacted Claim:** Appeals to the local most often want audiences to move beyond changing their attitudes regarding the environment. In fact, these appeals often are designed to encourage action in personal habits, which in theory will radiate outward on a global scale.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make an effective local appeal, producers make explicit and implicit statements that provide their audiences with information on how they can participate in sustainability initiatives as individuals. This is something that is apparent in all of the cases except the first. When I asked them why they chose to code certain items as local, each reader intimated they saw local references as action-oriented. This is what Michael alludes to in the second case as he discusses why he chose to code "student organic farm" as local. Items he coded as global, such as "land," "war," "recycling," and "racism," he felt were less likely to encourage action because they were too general and did not provide any specific direction for audiences other than to sit and think.
 - c. **Advice:** In their effort to martial action within their community, Producers need to provide their audiences with specific information on how they can act. Speaking too generally about a subject alienates readers from action and does not guarantee that they will venture off the site and change their

behaviors. For example, it's better to say, "bring your recyclable material to the MSU recycling facility in order to reduce community contribution to the granger landfill" rather than "recycling effectively reduces community contributions to landfills."

Action can occur by means of...

7. **Claim:** Appeals to the local involve community feedback or participation in preparing documents or statements on sustainability.
 - a. **Enacted Claim:** Appeals to the local are intersubjective in nature where communication with members of a community is paramount for any idea of sustainability to take root. We see this take place in definitions of sustainability visible in print and by means of deliberative forums where people engage in consensus-building on what certain principles might mean for a particular local. This ultimately revisits claim No. 5.
 - b. **Example:** In order to make an effective local appeal, producers make themselves answerable to their community either through polling, public forums, and/or directly receiving feedback community members. On the other side, community members (readers) must actively participate in deliberation in order to create a working local definition of sustainability. If you recall, Rich, as a writer, felt that it was important to involve the people he interviewed in the writing process. This was his way of making sure that what he had written accurately portrayed the culture of sustainability that OCS would like to see at MSU. Another means for intersubjectivity to take place would be allowing community members to openly write and contribute material that help to define sustainability and other initiatives on campus. When discussing definitions in the first case, Terry noted that members of the MSU community generated much of the content appearing on the site. This claim is quite possibly the most important because without community participation, a rhetoric of sustainability cannot exist. While it may seem that the producers exert an enormous amount of control over how things mean, their production is rendered inconsequential without the existence of a responsive, adaptive and somewhat productive community.
 - c. **Advice:** It is imperative that producers think about how community members can participate in the process of designing and promoting sustainable initiatives within the community. An environmental stewardship initiative that ignores its community cannot thrive and is subject to being deemed irrelevant and non-representative. An example of open participation would be to allow community members to write and documents that best suit the goals of the initiative. Furthermore, public deliberation forums can serve as particularly useful sites for building consensus and meanings about how a community envisions sustainability in relation to their collective goals. Opening the process to community members contributions increases the local feel of sustainability as messages become more robust.

Once again, I would like to say that this is a working model of sustainability from a practice as it occurs at MSU. This is not to say that it is impossible to generalize to an overarching whole that would generally account for a rhetoric of sustainability, but I am committed in my conviction that more situated accounts are required for generalizability. These claims, however, do hold affordances for the field in some capacity. Claim Nos. 1, 2, 4 & 5 speak to the rhetorical dimensions of sustainability and the local. These can be seen as general contributions to the field of Rhetoric/Composition. Claim Nos. 3, 6 & 7 focus exclusively on how sustainability is practiced at MSU. This is not to say that these claims would not surface as part of a rhetoric of sustainability at other institutions, but the information used to generate these claims can only be supported with data from MSU.

Conclusion

Earlier, I made the call for us to work outside of the phenomenon of building rhetoric through literary hermeneutics and move beyond the writer as a subject and focus more upon the writer and texts as being small nodes in a complex network. This was an attempt to think about rhetorical methodology in a new way that accounts for the complexity of writing situations. This is what I achieve through my study involving the Office of Campus Sustainability. If one attempted to do what I have called for us to do as a field, I am confident that the method would yield comparable results when applied to another site. My preoccupation with methodology arises from my displeasure with how certain accounts of environmental rhetoric have been assembled in rhetoric/composition research. Too many of these accounts seek to place texts at the center of rhetorical inquiry as if they exist in a vacuum onto themselves. In truth, while they offer good insight into how things possibly mean, they are far from reliable in that they present a

limiting view of rhetoric by ignoring various forces enacted upon textual production. In my opinion, there can be no rhetoric until we trace and map these forces of influence. I talk about the methodology and the rhetoric as being constituent parts of this study that I offer to the field, because I see them as important and inseparable parts. I guess this is why I found Connor's intercultural rhetoric model interesting. Although, she writes with linguistics in mind, Connor's research methodology is meticulous in light of research demands arising from the need to know what went into the process of writing and the historical contexts that affected the writing process opposed to just relying on rhetorical analysis of language. My view is that intercultural rhetoric methodology is important because it challenges our ways of thinking about writing research, as it requires the development of a series complex questions that seek to answer phenomena from a variety of angles.

One deliverable of this rhetoric, which is not discussed in the beginning but makes its way into the claims section, is the advice that I recommend to practitioners. Specifically when I look at this project, I am moved to think about rhetoric as a tool for helping organizations solve problems and achieve goals. My opinion rests with the idea that rhetorical work is useful outside the endeavor of canon building and should not just inform what we do as a field, but also benefit the communities whose practices we study. This is a something that is not always available in most accounts of rhetorics. It seems that accounts have been mostly assembled for rhetoric/composition scholars interested in theory of how the world works rather than for the people whose practices inform rhetorical inquiry and theory. For me, there needs to be some sort of reciprocity in the work that we do. We can expand our disciplinary boundaries and offer advice to

producers of rhetoric. For example, it is my hope that someone similar to Terry could take up this paper, read it, and find useful solutions that might improve how they operate within their organizations and communities. The advice works to improve local environmental stewardship initiatives by providing information in the form of best practices for stewards to model. If there were one recommendation based upon this study that I could recommend to OCS, I would recommend thinking more about a singular message of sustainability that is representative of the community and the people working in the office. This is not to say that a definition does not exist as Terry's moderating role implicitly creates a working definition. Comments from my interview with Chris, however, indicated that a more definitive definition may be needed in order to create a more cohesive identity reflected throughout the website and documents produced by OCS. Furthermore, now that Terry has left the office, it may be more important now than ever to have that definition. It is possible that community deliberation in a public forum featuring representatives from students, staff, faculty, university administration, members of the office and UCSC may bring about a feasible solution to this predicament.

One thing that I am reminded of as I reflect upon this study is the short list of limitations, because I feel that they open avenues for future research. I was interested in a particular methodological way of approaching rhetoric that would allow toward moving in the direction of generalizability via situated accounts of production, circulation and reception. Although I tried to be as thorough as possible, there were some methodological issues that arose during the research process. There were two texts in the study that were not entirely single-authored, but this information was not revealed until I conducted the interviews. In the second case, Sarah relayed that the University Committee for a

Sustainable Campus (UCSC) played a role in the construction of the videos contents. I made no attempt to interview members of the board and gather information on the production of the video. Moreover, the flyer discussed in the third case was not single-authored as it was constructed by a group of people with Chris as a member. I admit that the guidelines outlined in my methodology require that I completely trace all of the influences enacted upon the construction of a message in order to provide a deep descriptive account. A limitation of this kind can only be solved with more time and focus on a single artifact. Another limitation on this study was time, which subsequently relates to the amount of readers that I interviewed. I was never quite felt comfortable with just interviewing two readers. There was always a part of me that wanted to use a larger sample population. Yet, a representative sample population was deemed impossible due to the relatively short period for research. I wrote earlier that a deliverable from an intercultural method would be the ability to detect the pressures enacted upon a given writing situation. The ability to investigate perceived pressures is somewhat limited in this study; however, a more definitive understanding of pressure would require a more representative population of readers. The results of this study, when coupled with these limitations, are promising in that they describe an emerging rhetoric of sustainability that can only be confirmed (or reaffirmed) with a larger study at MSU or other institutions.

While I realize that it is important to think about the shortcomings of a study, I admit that I am more interested in seeing how this rhetoric took shape, which is what I proposed initially as a deliverable. Sometimes I felt as if the research process was a black box where I was relatively unsure what type of result I would have, but I was surprised and sometimes shocked by the level of agreement between producers and readers that

supported the local dimensions of a rhetoric of sustainability. One aspect of the rhetoric that I was unsure about was whether more local equates to more action. Both the readers and the producers corroborated this claim as their coding of the data and explanations of why they made their choices indicated that it seemed as if local indicators called for specified actions within situated communities, while global indicators worked to make readers think about the issue rather than act physically. Furthermore, I was curious as to the relationship between the local and the global as both concepts were expressed throughout texts. My interest stemmed from whether these indicators competed with each other. My immediate assumption was that they in fact they did; however, the data in the cases proved instead that they are dependant upon each other and not quite separate no matter how local a text may appear. It seems that in order for readers to become more aware of what is going on in their local contexts, to some extent they need to be reminded of what is going on in the world that surrounds them. In this regard, local and global can never be seen separate but networked. This gives me cause to think about the other end of the spectrum or how global might mean culturally in relation to local. Such an inquiry would ask whether a focus on the global would support many of the claims indirectly raised while investigating the local. This seems like a fruitful area of future research.

Appendix

Appendix A Recruitment Email

Greetings!

I am a graduate student in the Critical Studies in Literacy & Pedagogy program here at Michigan State University. Currently, I am conducting a study that investigates audience perception and intended response to messages concerning environmental sustainability. As part of this study you are being asked to participate in an interview.

The interview will last about a half an hour to an hour. The information that you provide will not only aid in the completion of my Master Thesis, but also contribute greatly to research on rhetoric and the environment. Please response as to whether you are willing to participate in the study and the times when you are available.

Sincerely,

Donnie J. Sackey

Appendix B

Interview Protocol (production)

OVERVIEW/ORIENTATION

- Introduce myself and describe the purpose of the interview.
- Read the “Consent Script.”
- Inquiry as to whether they understand or have any questions about the study; thereafter, I ask if they are willing to provide consent to participate.
- Ask permission to use an audio-recording device and disclose why I am choosing to use the device as part of the study.

PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND

- Where are you from?
- What is your current level of education? What’s your major?

PARTICIPANT KNOWLEDGE AND ORIENTATION TOWARD ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Do you have any background knowledge or involvement concerning the environment movements?
- Are you familiar with the phrase environmental sustainability?
 - If so, how would you define it?
- What do you know about environmentally-oriented programs or activities that take place on campus?
 - Where / When did you learn or see these activities taking place?
 - Do you participate in any of these activities/events?
- Are you familiar with Michigan State University’s Office of Campus Sustainability?
 - Are you familiar with the Office’s website?

RESEARCH SPECIFIC QUESTIONS (RESPONSES TO THE PRODUCTION OF MESSAGES)

I’m going to turn toward the secondary portion of the interview. During this period, I would like to present materials from the site and ask that you provide a response as to what desired action you expect from your intended audience.

- What was the purpose for this message?
- Can you tell me a little about your composing process (Step-by-Step from outline to final product; even the people you consulted).
- What key elements help to draw out this purpose?
- What would a desired response be for someone who interprets this message?

Interview Protocol (reception)

OVERVIEW/ORIENTATION

- Introduce myself and describe the purpose of the interview.
- Read the “Consent Script.”
- Inquiry as to whether they understand or have any questions about the study; thereafter, I ask if they are willing to provide consent to participate.
- Ask permission to use an audio-recording device and disclose why I am choosing to use the device as part of the study.

PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND

- Where are you from?
- What is your current level of education? What’s your major?

PARTICIPANT KNOWLEDGE AND ORIENTATION TOWARD ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Do you have any background knowledge or involvement concerning the environment movements?
- Are you familiar with the phrase environmental sustainability?
 - If so, how would you define it?
- What do you know about environmentally-oriented programs or activities that take place on campus?
 - Where / When did you learn or see these activities taking place?
 - Do you participate in any of these activities/events?
- Are you familiar with Michigan State University’s Office of Campus Sustainability?
 - Are you familiar with the Office’s website?

RESEARCH SPECIFIC QUESTIONS (RESPONSES TO MESSAGES)

I’m going to turn toward the secondary portion of the interview. During this period, I would like to present materials from the site and ask that you provide a response as to what you perceive would be your intended upon encountering the message. I will ask you to point out certain elements of the message that you believe to influence your decision making.

- Read this message carefully.
- What do you think is the purpose for this message?
- What would your response be upon encountering this message?
- What key elements help to draw out this purpose?
- Would you say that the language is more local, national, or global in scope.
- Could you please highlight the features of this text that point at that purpose?
 - Blue = local
 - Yellow = national
 - Green = global

Appendix C
Pre-Interview Survey Questions

1. How important are environmental issues to you personally?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

2. How much have you changed you behavior in the last 3 years to reduce your impact on the environment?

A great deal
Quite a lot
A little bit
Hardly at all
Not at all

3. Which of the following do you recycle?

Paper
Cardboard Regularly
Plastics
Glass
Metal/cans

4. How important do you think it is for individual people to change their behavior to reduce their impact on the environment?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

5. Which do you think should be responsible for protecting the environment? Please put in order with the MOST responsible first.

Private Individuals
Local Communities
US Government
Companies and Organizations
States

6. Are you prepared to pay extra for items you buy if they are environmentally friendly?

Yes
Uncertain
No

7. Would you spend an extra \$100 on a new appliance if it would save \$200 over the next three years?

Yes
Uncertain
No

8. How important is it to you that MSU is a leader in campus environmental stewardship?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

9. What is the most important environmental issue on campus?

Trash/litter
Recycling
Water quality
Air Pollution
Energy Issues
Unsure

10. How convenient are the recycling facilities around MSU?

Extremely convenient
Slightly convenient
Not convenient at all
Unsure

11. Do you feel that recycling in the dorms is convenient?

Extremely convenient
Slightly convenient
Not convenient at all
Unsure

12. How important to you is it that MSU use 100% recycled paper or tree-free paper?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

13. How important to you is it that MSU consider using fuel-efficient vehicles and alternative fuels to run its vehicles?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

14. Should MSU stop using herbicides and pesticides on campus lawns on campus lawns even if it means an increase in weeds and insects?

Yes
Uncertain
No

15. How important is it that MSU consider renewable energy sources for campus energy needs?

Extremely important
Very important
Quite important
Slightly important
Not important at all

16. Would you be willing to support such a measure even if it would result in a slight increase in your cost to attend the university?

Extremely willing
Very willing
Slightly willing
Unwilling

17. Have you ever heard of/had interaction with EcoFoot?

Yes
Uncertain

No

18. If yes, where?

Visited Website

Volunteered at an event where it was mentioned

Attended a meeting where it was mentioned

Seen articles

Seen a poster

Other

Other (please specify)

19. Have you ever heard of/had interaction with the University Committee for a Sustainable Campus?

Yes

Uncertain

No

20. If yes, where?

Visited Website

Volunteered at an event where it was mentioned

Attended a meeting where it was mentioned

Seen articles

Seen a poster

Other

Other (please specify)

21. Have you ever heard of/had interaction with ECO?

Yes

Uncertain

No

22. If yes, where?

Visited Website

Volunteered at an event

Attended a meeting

Seen articles

Seen a poster

Other

Other (please specify)

Post-Interview Survey Questions

1. After viewing these messages, you feel more inclined to become more environmentally involved and/or conscious?

Disagree strongly
Disagree somewhat
Neutral
Agree somewhat
Agree strongly

2. Did these messages expand your knowledge of the environment?

Yes
No
Unsure

3. How would you characterize the knowledge "possibly" generated from these messages?

Global
National
Local
Other
Other (please specify)

4. If a message is more local, do you feel that you have more of a chance to act then say if it were global?

Yes
No
Unsure

5. If a message is more global, do you feel that you have more of a chance to act then say if it were local?

Yes
No
Unsure

6. If a message is more national, do you feel that you have more of a chance to act then say if it were local?

Yes
No
Unsure

7. If a message is more global, do you feel that you have more of a chance to act then say if it were national?

Yes
No
Unsure

8. What type of message do you find more convincing toward inciting physical action?

Global
National
Local
Please specify why.

9. What message do you find more convincing toward inciting a change in attitude?

Global
National
Local
Please specify why.

Appendix D
Sample Messages Used in the Study

September 15 - 19, 2008

JOURNEYS TO SUSTAINABILITY



*"so much depends upon
a red wheel barrow
glazed with rain water
beside the white chickens." William Carlos Williams*

Sustainability is a journey. It happens within bodies and across nations. It is personal, philosophical, and practical. Journey with us beyond the classroom and into a sustainable future.


visit ecofest.msu.edu or dial 1(517) 255-6761 for full event information

Mon. 15th	Tue. 16th	Wed. 17th	Thur. 18th	Fri. 19th
Nature Tour 12:00 PM Eastwood Natural Area Alternative Movement Tel-Git 12:10 to 12:50 PM 210 IM Circle	Journeys to Sustainability Resource Fair 11:30 - 1:00 PM IM Wood, Tort Arena Dance Class: Personal Life Journeys 6:00-7:20 PM Location TBA	Bella Vita 12:10 - 12:50 PM Eastwood Theater Williams Center Birthday Poetry Reading 2:00 PM Snyder/Phillips WELL 2:00 PM Auditorium Arena Theatre	Walk Chalk Poetry 3:00 PM Outside Snyder Pocket Journeys Bookmaking Workshop 1:30 - 3:00 PM EPHJ Snyder Hall WELL 7:30 PM Auditorium Arena Theatre	Student Organic Farm 11:30 - 5:30 PM Farm Market One Book, One Community 7:00 - 8:30 PM Rensselaer Community Center WELL 8:00 PM Auditorium Arena Theatre
				Alternative Movement Bridal Yoga 12:30 - 12:50 PM IM Circle Dance Studio WELL 8:00 PM Auditorium Arena Theatre

sponsored by: **Health 4 U** • **Office of campus sustainability**
ecoli poetry center • **intramural sports** • **housing and food services**



Eat locally grown food. Support restaurants that serve products by local farmers. Locally grown food travels less distance, reducing transportation impacts and costs. The food should be fresher and the money you spend helps local farmers and economies. And farmers' markets are just plain fun. Also, support locally owned businesses. In doing so, more of every dollar you spend stays in your local economy.

 **Vote** with your actions

www.ecofootprintsu.edu
www.capitalarealocalfirst.com

The Gateway Drug

2/23/09

by Rich Grogan

Recycling is a “gateway drug” for sustainability, at least according to Lauren Olson, an alumna of MSU and the first person you see when you visit the University’s Office of Campus Sustainability. But if recycling is a funeral for the products we consume, Lauren sees it as more of a jazz funeral; more celebration than consternation. She has been featured in the State News for producing art from other people’s waste, and offers an example of what surrounding ourselves with our passions can look like.

Lauren’s recycling odyssey began with grassroots campaigns, rooted in her involvement with the student environmental group ECO as an undergraduate. Through various efforts, including a ruckus campaign, Lauren and her recycling crusaders realized that while other campuses in Michigan had comprehensive recycling programs, MSU was lacking one – and that was the reason they felt that MSU wasn’t doing as good a job recycling as it could have.

The students came up with a list of demands that included plastics, metals and cardboard – because the office paper and newspaper recycling available at the time wasn’t enough. In particular, it was important that everyone have access to recycling. And with the demands the campaigns became more sophisticated; while the ruckus brigade had banged on recyclables and literally made noise about the issue, this new effort included soliciting administrative support, as well as more coordinated actions. It was Lauren’s Senior year in 2005 when students having class in Wells Hall might have peered into the courtyard and seen 206 pounds of recycling materials lying about; they had been dumped there by Lauren’s pickup truck – a very public display of individual waste, as 206 pounds was an MSU estimate of the amount of recyclables each student was forced to throw away per semester due to inadequate recycling facilities.

While this was happening, planning was underway for a presentation to the MSU Board of Trustees. Lauren and others were able to secure a small 5 minute block at the end of the Trustees’ meeting to make a recycling presentation; it was a realization about how to get things done in a bureaucracy, and a lesson Lauren didn’t forget: “we...had our suits on, and we tried to act professional because we realized that the ruckus brigade wasn’t going to fly anymore.”

Fast forward to today, and MSU has approved a new on-campus recycling facility, and the types of materials accepted on campus has increased dramatically – even beyond those initial student demands. Now students can even recycle the carpet from their dorm rooms at the end of the academic year.

But Lauren isn’t done – she has spread her passion and enthusiasm to other aspects of sustainability on campus. Is she still a recycler? Of course. Does she still advocate for

recycling issues? Yes. But as she says, recycling is only a gateway drug for other sustainability issues – there are so many more. And if it isn't recycling, it will be something else. As she says: "There will always be issues with the system."

For Lauren, recycling has sustained her thus far, but it seems that she wants us to remember that recycling is not robotic – it is people who recycle, and people often ignore the deeper issues related to recycling and sustainability. Recycling, like many environmental issues, is quick to become a commodity, masking the real issues, such as why we need to have anything to recycle in the first place. As long as these issues are out there, as long as there are "issues with the system," Lauren will be thinking about them, and they will be sustaining her.²

² This is not the original formatting of this article. The formatting was changed in order to comply with the MSU Graduate School thesis formatting guidelines. To read the article in its original form, please visit http://ecofoot.msu.edu/stories/st_2_23_09.htm.

The Squeaky Wheel

12/16/08

by Rich Grogan

Laurie Barnhart is a modest person. She won't tell you what to do, but after listening to her patient, common sense approach, you will likely want to listen to her advice. Laurie has also always been a recycler – an old school recycler, when she used to cart it all to Meijer to load it onto a semi-trailer dedicated to recycling; this is how it starts for a lot of people – some dedication to recycling from an early age, or a war story about their own efforts at sustainability at home. What sets Laurie apart is not what she does at home, but how she is helping to change the her world at work – the world of purchasing – from the inside-out.

In her words, she wanted to “start with things that were division related...what we could do here, what resources are available to us...one of them was about what we could recycle.” Of course, sustainability is a journey, and once you start, it can be hard to stop. One of Laurie's colleagues at MSU, now a mainstay in the Office of Campus Sustainability, has called recycling the “gateway drug” for sustainability. And so it was for Laurie. After tackling recycling in her office, she decided to concentrate on inputs. Purchasing involves a behavior that we're all familiar with – shopping. And with shopping comes catalogs. According to Laurie, there could be as many as five people in the same office receiving the same catalog, something that she felt needed addressing: “We are trying to reduce the inputs so we don't have to deal with it as a trash issue or a recycling issue. It would become a non-issue.”

But why stop at catalogs? It is one thing to reduce office wastes, but yet another to publicize it. As any good marketer will tell you, when you have a good thing going, the next step is to talk about it. Hence, the birth of the Green Tip for the Day e-newsletter, which has become a fixture on MSU's campus, and most recently made it as far as California, riding the waves of cyberspace. She comes at this, not as a political activist, but as a “squeaky wheel,” as she often describes herself, that reminder voice in your inbox that lets you know that it is easy to make greener choices. In her words: “It has been a mix to inform yourself about what other people are doing, what the university is doing, and also the little tips here and there about how you can change your behavior for the better, both here and at home.”

Perhaps the biggest change on Laurie's plate is one that won't come easy – far from changing office behaviors, she wants to help to shape the future of purchasing. Laurie is helping to lead the way in working with vendors of materials procured through the purchasing department to help them to specify the green products they offer. On the other end of the transaction, she is working with departments on campus to raise awareness of the possibility of greener products that they can purchase. Even if they don't choose the green option (there are, after all, a lot of constraints within the university, especially if the green product is more expensive), she feels that they are at the very least aware that greener options exist: “...these things evolve.”

And so they do. As sustainability has evolved for Laurie, she has helped to introduce the concept to others all across campus (and across the country). Who knows which green tip will start someone on their own journey to sustainability? Who knows which vendor might decide to produce their own line of greener products because a major university is now asking for it? Perhaps it is as simple as being a squeaky wheel – a reminder and voice of reason in an often unsustainable world.³

³ This is not the original formatting of this article. The formatting was changed in order to comply with the MSU Graduate School thesis formatting guidelines. To read the article in its original form, please visit http://www.ecofoot.msu.edu/stories/st_12_16_08.htm.

Appendix E

Transcripts

Speaker **Interview: Terry (Director). Monday, April 9, 2009 @ 2:00PM**

Donnie: You don't have to swear on a bible or anything, but I'm going to be recording it for my own notes.

Terry: Yeah.

Donnie: I'm going to transcribe it, but I just want you to know that any data is going to be secured on a computer password protected and all that stuff.

Terry: That's nothing I'm worried about.

Donnie: Ok. So, one of the reasons why I wanted to speak to you today was mostly because you're the Director of the Office of Campus Sustainability.

Terry: For a couple more days.

Donnie: For a couple more days. And you've been associated with the office since it's inception.

Terry: That's right.

Donnie: So one of the things that I want to do was just ask you some particular background information like where your from and how you got started with the office here.

Terry: Ok.

Donnie: So, where are you from?

Terry: And how I got started?

Donnie: Yeah.

Terry: From Detroit. Grew up in Detroit. Went to high school in Detroit. Moved out of Detroit when I went to college, and came back to Detroit when I was in college. Went away from Detroit, Michigan for a couple years. Came back and got an undergraduate degree from Wayne State and went off out of state and came back and got my master's degree in library science. And my wife and I got married. And then we moved to Grand Rapids. And then I took a job at Aquinas. And then I came here in 1992 to do library work at MSU. And the movement from the library to here was probably precipitated somewhat by I was elected to Academic Council

here probably after my third year here, so I started to become more involved with university-wide issues. And simultaneous to that, I help start with the American Library Association something called the “Task Force of the Environment,” so I was using activist approaches in my professional life and here in my academic life. Come 1997, the university was about to put to sleep a committee called the “University Committee for an Academic Environment” because it wasn’t getting much business coming that was important.

I got elected to Academic Council in the fall of 97” and it was the first item on the agenda. And I proposed that rather than do away with the committee; we needed the committee to focus more broadly on sustainability and the environment. I lost that debate in that meeting, but it led to conversations, which ultimately led to the creation of the University Committee in January of 1999. And then that committee, of which I was chair, determined in a relatively short while that we weren’t going to make much progress on the many fronts if we didn’t have some sort of full time staff and we knew that the university wasn’t going to find money in their pockets to do this because it wasn’t high on their priority. So, we found a grant opportunity that we explored and were actually successful—1 of 27 out of a thousand proposals to get funded—and that created the office in September of 2000. And the rest as they say is history. As the prime mover of this from the beginning and because I was ready to leave my profession anyway (I made that decision a few years before, but was not going to make a gross change because I had kids in school and I was taking care of my mother-in-law), I took on this new job. Then I’ve been doing that until this upcoming Friday.

Donnie: Cool. Now I wanted to ask two follow-up questions to that, one was focused on the Taskforce on the Environment and one of the things I would like to know is have you always been interested in environmental issues or is this something that had just came up?

Terry: That came up for me, initially, when I first even thought about it was when I was pursuing a geography degree in the early 70s. That’s when I first thought about it. When I moved to Grand Rapids in the late 70s and into the early 80s, before I came here, I got involved with a public policy group and a number of their, they were broader than that they’re consumer-based, but a number of their issues were environmental. And so I just became more and more engrossed in policy and environmental. That’s part of what I did when I came here as a librarian was focus on areas like that. And so that all nurtured that whole emergence into this field.

Donnie: And the next follow-up question deals with the grant opportunity. Where did that grant come from and how did you find out about it?

Terry: It was a US Department of Environmental Protection Agency grant—sustainable development challenge grant is what they were called. I don't remember if I was the first person to spot the opportunity or if somebody else on the committee did. I cannot say that I remember that. I know that I was pursuing grant opportunities when other people [inaudible] “well we could kind of shake this and maybe they'll take it.” [inaudible] And that was the last year that they actually funded that program. So, we were among the last recipients under that environmental sustainability challenge grant.

Donnie: Now, coming back to what you were talking about back in January of 1999 when you first proposed the idea to the university. You said that there were folks who were too hot about it or there wasn't a lot of groundswell toward promoting an office like this. Has there always been a conflict with other folks in the university as far as the existence of the office?

Terry: I don't know so much about. Once the office was founded by outside dollars the university found that, it was a three year grant so it was funded to run for three years then the money ran out, well after that three years the university thought that there was enough value coming forward on what we were doing that it made sense to fund it themselves. So they've been funding it since 2003.

Donnie: So, 2003?

Terry: Yes.

Donnie: Some one of the things I was going to ask, an entity like this, do you guys see yourself in relation to other offices like this at other universities?

Terry: We been—I've been connected actually even before this office was created at that time with pretty nascent higher ed involvement [inaudible]. I know I went to some meetings around 2000 or maybe 99', I know I went to a meeting in 99', where there was not too many people from colleges attending. This last fall they had 2200 people at the meeting. So I mean it's. And there's all kinds of networks and groups of thousand of people involve with that, but back then it was no that many. So, I was getting support and learning from other people's experiences from other campuses. So that's kind of how this mostly works, which happens a lot in civil society when you see this garden program looks really good here in Oakland. I wonder if we could adapt that here in my city Ishspring or Pewter City. And so it's that kind of cooperative network that goes on and it's been useful to me and hopefully I've been useful back.

Donnie: So a lot of the stuff you got from them has helped to make this office

grow?

Terry: Oh yeah one of the things that helps is that you can show that a program is working somewhere else. A lot of what I would do is say, “Hey look at the cool program at that Syracuse University, University of Florida, Texas A&M” whatever that school was doing I’d pass it on to that area of campus. [inaudible]. So that people would see that what we were suggesting through the committee wasn’t just stuff we were dreaming up out of ether—that they were the basis of people at other places trying it and seeing it had particular value to it.

Donnie: So for you—you would say that that network of connection between other institutions in higher ed basically is the only other source that fuels ideas about what happens in the office?

Terry: No that’s internal to the institution especially now. I mean there so many people on campus who are into these ideas. So, it’s mutually reinforced by ideas coming from people at all levels here at the institution and find their way into the network and sometimes they play out and sometimes they don’t for any number of reasons. Why do some ideas germinate and other don’t? Who knows; there are probably volumes waiting to be writing about that. But yet, they find there way in and come from all places.

Donnie: Cool. Well, we gauged from your history and everything, even before being a librarian here and your earlier degree in geology—geography I’m sorry—, that you have a general familiarity with environmental movements or the environmental movement. So, one of the things that I want to ask you that I guess is getting more specifically pointed within this study is to gauge what is your definition of environmental sustainability is.

Terry: Well I don’t talk about environmental sustainability. I talk about sustainability. And sustainability is, in my mind, the nurturing of mutually reinforcing relationships between social and economic justice and ecological integrity and the process by which we balance those with is open, transparent and democratic. And then with long-term horizons; so we can talk about what going to happen in six weeks and what’s the long term impact. What’s the long-term impact of the choices we’re thinking about? What’s the long-term impact of economic justice or ecological integrity? That’s why the short-terms and the long-terms might be different.

Donnie: Ok.

Terry: So the long-term got to be part of that to. But that’s how I see it. Now admittedly, based on my history—or part of my history—I gave you the environmental part because it was the environmental part where the

emphasis was when we went through with this. Our initial—back in 1997 when my proposal had been defeated, we actually submitted a proposal—I can't remember if it was that proposal of another proposal—but we had sixteen areas of interest. Most of those were environmental; but there were some then that were economic and social. But the agreement to come forward and form this committee was that we would focus our—we would focus on three areas: solid waste, water and energy. So by that we were constrained in that way.

But when we wrote the grant proposal we used language that was broad. So when you look at our 2003 sustainability report, which is an offshoot and promised product from the grant proposal, you'll see that we have indicators that deal with diversity, wages, sickness and injuries, drug use, as well as the solid waste, water, and energy management. And so we broadened that back out again and so I think that a lot of us then moved a lot of people who were positioned on committee I think that were looking at this more environmentally, so we broadened that idea of sustainability. I think personally, I have broadened my idea of sustainability because of what the group that has created the office has brought. But I don't think it's done. I think if you go forward 10 years from now and interview whoever is coming out of this position, I think you'll find a richer, deeper, more complex view of what this is. Because I think that we're relatively infantile in trying to figure out: "what is this and how do we do it in a way that is sustainable?"

Donnie: As some follow-up questions to that, you sort of said, "We." Who does the "we" encompass? It's not just the office.

Terry: The University Committee for a Sustainable Campus, which founded the office, still is the advisory and driving piece of what the office does. So in a sense the position reports for, we have to have a position to report—a supervisor. So I currently report to the Vice President of Finance and Operations. A few years ago I used to report to the Vice President of Research in Graduate Studies. The committee doesn't report to anybody. It's broad-based. And it really sets out the agenda year-by-year of what it is that we should be focusing our efforts on. And as the university continues to shift and put emphasis on other things, that we use to put more energy into ourselves, frees us to consider other things that are not being addressed within that big umbrella of sustainability.

Donnie: So within your definition of sustainability, within the umbrella definition of sustainability, has there sort of been historically a difference between how the university wanted to look at sustainability in contrast to how the committee views sustainability?

Terry: There has been a tension. It's hard to say, "the University" because I don't know who that represents. But in some ways when I say that I'm referring to a couple of people who are key as opposed to saying, "What are the Board of Trustees saying about this are they the voices of the President? Is she [the President] the voice?" It's hard to say. I would say that there is a tension there between the breadth that we see and what those that looks at use much closely think we should be doing. But that's softening too; in terms of people's understanding of issues that they previously thought were not relevant are maybe now somewhat more relevant. And I think that's partly in response to efforts that we've made to try and help make that stuff more visible.

Donnie: So most of the tensions—I don't know this is me just stabbing in the dark—did the surround the more social justice elements?

Terry: I think there's been. The university has had a long-term commitment to diversity on the operations side, the recruitment side. So, when we talk social justice we have to make sure in terms of both race and gender, specifically, ethnicity they've already had that on-going program. It's a high-level commitment. But there are some other things. And I think more of the abrupt is in the economic justice part of this. So one of the issues that was in our last report that we raised some flags about was the growing gap between the lowest paid employee in the university and the average. There was a gap growing there. And we kind of highlighted that as one of ten areas that we thought people should look at. That wasn't a trend that we thought was a good trend. That doesn't even take in the top. [inaudible] But more or less it was a concern.

And I don't think the institution has that as a high priority. I don't think the institution is, people at the institution are, I don't think the institution as a whole—I don't see anywhere in the boldness by design or anything other leading things out there is talking about ending world poverty. Whereas many of us think that ending world poverty is as crucial as ecological integrity and that the two are intricately link. But, I don't know. I'm its gonna be kind of hazy for you. But it is hazy.

Donnie: Ok. So this actually—What you said actually gets to another question. And so one of the things that I'm looking at is the efforts of the office and even the efforts of the committee as you were describing. Would you say that the efforts are tailored more toward a local focus or a global focus?

Terry: I would say that the committee and the office has been more focused on the local. The university has a huge amount of people invested in focusing on sustainable development in the third world. A lot of faculty, some of which you already know, are there right now working on projects. You know the story on the Rwanda coffee plantations coming out of research,

and efforts and outreach through MSU's signal and that work and that intention. [inaudible] But I'd say the office clearly—I think we've thought that our focus is more local. Not that we don't have a global responsibility, so that we look at those issues about our purchasing—where's it coming from and under what condition. Therefore, the support for fair trade and those kinds of things.

Donnie: Is this something that has come out of your definitional understanding of sustainability?

Terry: Yeah, I think so, I think that's fair.

Donnie: And then maybe—because I'm trying to understand this in the sense that—would you say that the university's focus on the global maybe is their own? Or I shouldn't say the university, but certain people in the university are focused on the global within their own particular perception of how sustainability operates?

Terry: Yeah. They might not even be thinking about it in sustainability terms with the large view that I gave you. They might be thinking about the scene of the economic development for people that ain't got squat. Or even community development if they're working on bringing the whole community up. Or just involving appropriate technology. So they might not be thinking of it as this whole world view thing I think there is something that we bring to the table. When I say we again—the office and the university committee. Is that we try to bring the big picture because we think that everything is related, which of course makes everything more complicated when you want to try and figure out a response and who your going to invite to the table and the table has to be bigger. All of those things kinda go part and parcel with that. But the university is structured so that people are responsible for certain areas or they study certain disciplines. And so were kind of a counterbalance to that that says we need them all because these things are all interrelated in a complex web. And only when we bring in other people do we get a better sense of making decisions that are moving the general welfare of people on the planet forward collectively than otherwise.

Donnie: So now time to focus more specifically on I guess what I would say is the central sort of focus—artifact of the study and that revolves around the website. And so I wanted to ask more pointed questions about the website. How long has the website existed.

Terry: I think the website actually exists from some time in 99.

Donnie: And what was the purpose behind creating the site.

Terry: I think first of all it was to let people know A) there was a university committee and that we had some interest in it that it became an avenue by which we could share information and connect interested folks. I think that is the original intention I realized that we didn't have a lot of programs going on necessarily so the website clearly isn't the same as the website now.

Donnie: And so you said, "let people know, share, and connect," like who were you targeting?

Terry: Everybody on campus.

Donnie: Everyone on campus?

Terry: It was internal; it wasn't external focused at that time all.

Donnie: Has that focus changed?

Terry: It's shifted a little bit more and we and the office specially over the last number of years again directed by the university committee has done a lot more outreach both in terms of the local community but even nationally by getting our stories out almost as a pr piece, if you will, so that we get recognized for the things that we're kinda doing. Which in turn when we get recognized gives us more support when we go internal to the institution saying, "Look we're getting recognized here because were doing good things. Keep supporting us, let move it further." So we see it as a feedback loop that was missing before and that we think has been useful and I imagine in my mind it's totally been very effective that we've been recognized nationally a few times with awards. Wherever the sustainability award is; that thing on the door. And a couple of other things we've been recognized for partly because we've gotten word out to people who are unaware that we exist. Even if they have an incomplete or distorted view, I willing to bet they think they're better than we are. In the same way I'd grade us the same way as other people outside grade us.

Donnie: Cool. Now one of the things you talked about is that you said that the website has obviously changed since like 1999. Can you talk a little bit about some of the changes that you or the office has made to the website.

Terry: Not in a very coherent way, but I'll throughout bits and pieces. It's always been done by a student. The initial—I think the initial mock-up was done by a faculty member or staff person, but then we turned it over to students to do updates on everything. The students we'd get for a while were graduate students, but it's been both graduate and undergraduate students. So we give them some freedom of creativity so it shifts a little by just the person whose doing it. And then different things come up and

there's a body of stuff that didn't exist before. So now we have a tag on there for example for "media," which is a combination of media that's been done here on campus whether it's an event we've sponsored like a speaker series or other little media projects that students have done that somehow relate to some components sustainability that we've kind of captured. Or in some cases there videos done elsewhere that we think talk about sustainability pretty good and we've just got them in links and you kinda go to them. So that didn't exist when we started in 1999 for example.

Donnie: So would you say that the changes in the sorta like the layout or elements that are on the site are they more technologically-driven or are they more environmentally-driven?

Terry: I would say they were more driven by the activities and focus of the office at the time and to some extent by technological stuff. But we don't have a lot of flash stuff or anything going on there now. But I think [banner for] the earth charter website has a little action on it but most of it's pretty simple. Straightforward. Text-based. Photos. The newsletter, which I don't know how many years the newsletters been running, but that's changed. Initially it was occasional. Then it went to bimonthly. And then we tried to make it monthly and within the last year we've tried be biweekly. Still based on the time of one person to throw it together and the student editor to massage it around so it fits. So that's been more of a vehicle to collect and disseminate information from a variety of external and internal [entities]. Keep things a buzz. It's a nice thing to have electronically and nationally as well as internally.

Donnie: And where do you send it out electronically actually?

Terry: People that I know that are doing this work at other institutions some listserves from people who do this. There's a few websites that I send them to that sometimes pick up pieces. Some of the organizations that are involved in higher-ed. I've got people that are on my list who are on the other list. I send it out to EnviroMich—a listserve in Michigan for everybody who's interested in environmental stuff. So we send it out through a lot of networks.

Donnie: Now when people come to this site, what expectations do you have for them?

Terry: Well people come to the site through a lot of different ways. One, they just Googled and looked for something and that something just happens to be something found on our website. So I mean that's one possibility right there. Other than that we sometimes direct people specifically to look at a project or a study or the campus sustainability report. Or we direct them

their when they want more information about a speak series that's coming up. Or to direct them there to see the newsletter. But I don't send out the newsletter embedded in an html document. I send them out as a link to the webpage. Specifically to the page that's got the newsletter on it, but—so they're coming at it from different angles. And until we moved the webpage over to the server here we used to be able to get a count. They don't have a counter on the one upstairs, so I don't know how many hits we're getting. But years ago we would get you know a thousands hits-per-month or so. I supposed that it would be even higher now if we were counting, but I really don't know.

Donnie: So the office no longer collects any statistical data?

Terry: We have no data on how many hits—as that's not possible at the moment.

Donnie: And so you would say that most of the— Well, I guess from the way it sounds—is like most of the expectations—that you would say—from users who come to the site are mostly to be informed about what's going on here on campus as it relates to?

Terry: Or interested in something that relates to campus sustainability that we have from which we have something that can help them. So, one of the things, when you go back to one of your earlier questions Donnie that we talked about the connections with people around the country, since we're one of the older programs and relatively well-known people will say, "We should go check out MSU's project cause they do a bunch of things." So people will probably come. And I get emails from people both students and faculty and operations people from around the country saying that they were directed to the website and wanting to know whether I have this or that and if I can answer—the same questions your asking me—how did the office evolve?—blah blah blah—So, I mean they're finding there way to us perhaps by way of some referral directly by talking to somebody who says you should [visit the sites of] Harvard and Emory and Tufts and Yale. So that kind of stuff goes on.

Donnie: And two more questions, this last one relates back to the content of the site. Can you name three or four individuals who currently write the content for this site now that are available?

Terry: I write the content for the most part. Well Chris [surname deleted] is the student whose been editing the newsletter and managing the website. And Chris is in WIDE, I think. Chris [surname deleted] was doing it before him. And Nick [surname deleted] was doing it before him. And Alyssa [surname deleted] was doing it before him.

Donnie: Who writes the “Stories of Sustainability?”

Terry: The story pieces are being written by Rich [surname deleted]. And Rich is a PhD candidate in CARS—And he would be good to talk to about the stories; he’s got more coming. He was doing that as part of a project. And he’s writing it for this kind of media, if you will, this kind of audience. Because he’s doing what your kind of doing in a narrative style a little bit. And I think he’s done sixteen; there’s been two so far. Ultimately when we get enough, we’ll rotate them like we [playing with computer].

Donnie: Alright and so basically, would you say that you’re maybe like the review board for all these pieces that come in that aren’t written by you?

Terry: Yeah. Yeah. That’s true. I mean there are some reports that have been done outside my office, but we’ve been aware of them and supported them, so when they’re done I would typically read every page of the report before I post it. If it well-written and useful, we’ll put it up there. The same thing for student projects. Even if the student projects really aren’t top-notch, if they’re somewhat useful then [I’ll put them up there]. But I don’t write the student projects, because they’re done by the students.

Donnie: And I guess the very very last question—it’s not even on here but I thought about it—it involves drawing. It’s not elaborate drawing. It just involves diagrams. I’m really interested in sort of how decisions are made with the office, maybe how they are funneled and that sort of thing. And you don’t have to do this if you don’t want to, but I was wondering if you would draw a diagram of possibly how decision-making happens within the university and the office?

Terry: [Begins drawing]

Ok. So we’ll put the director here. And we’ve got the UCSC here. [inaudible] So, some decisions are made unilaterally here. A lot of decisions get made because they [UCSC] decide that something needs to happen and they send it to me. I sometimes send something back to them or I initiate an idea and say “What do you think?” The idea might even come from students. They may come from staff. They can come from outside the university. So then an idea is generated—it can be generated—from our earlier discussion from anywhere. It comes to me; I will not move on it if it affected the campus without bouncing it back to UCSC. Or I would say, “What do you guys think? Is this a good idea?” And then that conversation might say, “Go ahead and do it.” Or it might say, “You probably should go check with Fred.” Ok. There are something that I would probably check with Fred. Now subsuming that—subsuming’s not quite the right word—there is now in place an environmental stewardship

program that's come into place over the last few years and it's got a whole lot of people in it.

And Kathy is kind of the lead on that. So, I'm also on the steering-committee of that. And so there are some of these relationships that get kind of fuzzy. So, like everything that we do regarding transportation is really not going this way [directs away from Environmental Stewardship Program], other than—you know—if we might come here for just some general feedback and direction, but it's coming back to—in this case it would be the transportation technical team. [inaudible] There's a lot of committees that come out of that. And on the steering committee I relate to that and have some general direction of it. I'm not just a member of it—I'm not chair of the steering committee. It's a communication avenue where we can give input and message discussions but they go separately. And this is in a sense true more and more this is pretty simplistic. When we started this office there wasn't for example an Office of Environmental Health and Safety. So Environmental Health and Safety is now an office with quite a few people in it. And one of the things they do among many others is—besides dealing with compliance issues on the environmental side—they're also doing what called environmental management systems. Environmental management systems are at the heart of things we wanted to do before. But we don't want to direct them at all because it's a new set of folks. They have their own direction. And they go. And their professionals. And they know how the systems work. And through various places we come together and have conversation. But it might not be here [points to UCSC] though one of the environmental health people does sit on UCS[C]. They might come over here to environmental stewardship.

Donnie: Cool.

Terry: Is that at all useful?

Donnie: That is totally useful.

Terry: It continues to be—the layers of complexity are continuing to be added as we become more aware of relationships. Who's not at the table who should be. I've been doing some outreach to student government in the last month or two to try and get student government more engaged with UCSC. And now I have someone from COGS specifically assigned on UCSC. [Before] we had graduate students, but they weren't connected to COGS. But now we have somebody connected to COGS. We've had discussions with ASMSU but that did—hadn't gone forward, but that was probably conflicting schedules. I got to make sure [inaudible]. So there's more of the student stuff. We do a little more with the student life side of campus.

Donnie: Alright cool.

Speaker **Interview: Sarah (Producer 1). Wednesday April 14, 2009 @ 5:15 via Skype.**

Donnie: You being able to participate in the study and all for a variety of reasons more or less because I think that the work that you're doing or the work that you did for this site will be both helpful in that regard toward building an analysis of what I'm trying to build and understand in relation to sustainability and writing practices. And so did you get an email from me to your Gmail account.

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: In that email there are I think three different documents. One is a link. One is the actual video that you produced for the office of campus sustainability. And the other one is a consent script. And so more or less the first part of it is like a procedural sort of thing. And so one of the things I have to do is read through the consent script just to sort of make sure that everything is clear with IRB and that sort of thing. If you can open it and just more or less read along with me and afterwards if you have any questions I can answer some of your questions based upon the script or based upon the consent for or anything else related to the study.

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: Is that cool?

Sarah: Alright. Ok.

Donnie: Alright. So, You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ability of writers and readers to agree upon the intent imbedded within messages related to environmental sustainability.

You have been asked to participate because you are a member of the MSU community and you fit within the criteria of what constitutes a potential reader of the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability Web Site.

You have been invited to provide your thoughts and opinions regarding messages acquired from the website of the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability. The interview will first start by asking a series of background questions related to your familiarity with environmental issues. Thereafter, the researcher, myself, will present a series of messages acquired from the Office of Campus Sustainability's website and ask you to provide a response to each message. And so in this case since you are a producer and not a reader I will just more or less be asking you questions pertaining to the product that you produced rather than showing you a

series of messages. After the interview, the researcher will answer any questions you may have regarding the purpose of this study.

While highly unlikely, the only perceived risk in this study regards the fact that you may be asked to provide your opinions concerning a potentially controversial issue—environmental sustainability. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. There are no perceived benefits to research participants. Direct benefit of this study will potentially assist the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability since this study has the potential to generate knowledge about its website.

Your identity will be protected to the extent allowed by the law. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications that may result from this study. While this is not an anonymous study, all information gained will be considered confidential. The researcher will retain your data from this study for no longer than three years. And the three years is a federally-mandated provision but what will happen is after three years I'll destroy it. So only me and Professor Bill Hart-Davidson will have access to the data.

There will be no cost to you nor will you be compensated for participating in this research study. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from this project at anytime without penalty. If the study design or use of data is to be changed, you will be so informed and your consent re-obtained. You will be told of any significant new findings developed during the course of this study that may relate to your willingness to continue participation.

If you have any questions, please ask us. If you have additional questions later, please either contact Dr. Hart-Davidson or myself. And the contact information is listed below. And another thing if you have any complaints or concerns about the study itself. Please do complain to the human subjects research protection program here or IRB program here. And you can do so anonymously. And I wouldn't know who did it or didn't do it.

But the first thing that I'm going to ask is, "Are you willing to participate or volunteer as part of this study?"

Sarah: Yes.

Donnie: And do I have—Do you provide me with the permission to record this interview for transcription?

Sarah: Yes.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. Awesome. So one of the things if you can do it. You can

either. I think I sent it as a .doc form you can just sign your name into the blanks and then send it back to me. And then maybe type something in a confirmation email and I'll attach that to that. Or if you want you can actually sign the form and scan it and send it back to me. Either or is fine. But it's just more or less to keep for records and that sort of thing so I can document that I did obtain consent.

Sarah: Great. Can you see me on the video?

Donnie: I see a picture on the video

Sarah: I see you like full action. I just want you to know.

Donnie: Yeah Yeah I see like a picture. It's no big deal it's no biggie.

Sarah: Ok.

Donnie: Alright so the first thing I want to do is just tell you a little about myself. My name is Donnie Sackey and I'm a second year masters student here in the critical studies in literacy and pedagogy program, which is also a part of the Rhetoric & Writing program. I'm about to start my PhD here in the fall I just made my decision a couple of days ago in the Rhetoric & Writing program. One of the things that I've been sort of interested in recently has been the concept of environmental sustainability and sort of environmental rhetorics and how people sort of write within green movements and some of the choices they make in relation to there audiences—and various audiences. Whether it's local community audiences or even very very sort of broad global audiences. So one of the things that I've done is that I've sort of set-up a study where I sort of looking at a particular institution and a particular institutional website and sort of looking at messages that are written. And so what I want to do is I want to talk to people who are producing the messages and try and figure out what types of moves that you guys are making when your actually writing these messages for audiences. So that's just basically the general frame of the study itself. So, do you have any questions so far?

Sarah: No. No, I'm good.

Donnie: You're good? Ok. So, just some general background information. Where are you from in relation to MSU?

Sarah: Well I grew up in upstate New York actually near Binghamton, which just made the news recently. And then I went to Reed College for my undergraduate. Michigan State for my master's degree. And now I'm in Washington, D.C.

Donnie: And so, is there anything particular that brought you to Michigan?

Sarah: Well, actually my partner, he's an acupuncturist and he was offered a position there at a nearby clinic. And so I was in town for a year working for the University of Michigan before I started looking for programs that were offered at Michigan State. So, it was kind of coincidental.

Donnie: What was your program again at Michigan State?

Sarah: It was Journalism.

Donnie: Did you have a specific focus within journalism?

Sarah: Science and environmental writing.

Donnie: Science and environmental writing. Have you always been interested in science and environmental writing?

Sarah: I've always been more science focused. I did my undergraduate degree in Biology with a focus in Molecular Biology. And I was in Oregon for four years and it's a very progressive state. And so I ended up being exposed to a lot of sustainability issues and progressive politics there. And so, I carried that with me all the way, you know, to Philadelphia, which is the short story. But I was there for a while and then on to Michigan. And so it made sense that I would participate in that—you know Michigan State actually has a really strong environmental journalism program. And so, it fit really well with what I was already doing with science writing.

Donnie: That's really cool. And so, and so, have you found yourself after leaving Michigan State have you found yourself still involved in science writing or—.

Sarah: No. Not really. I'm sorry. I just—I took a job at the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; and so, I do science writing, web design, and podcasting for them and that's pretty much "all cell" biology. And I don't really have a chance to do environmental stuff for them.

Donnie: Does that make you sad?

Sarah: A little bit, yeah. Although environmental stuff is really hard.

Donnie: Why would you say that?

Sarah: Well you know it's just that—it seems to be more—people are more

easily distracted, I guess, from paying attention to environmentalism. It seems to make the headlines and then disappear without anything else of some kind of report coming up. You know where as science is always at the same level with popular interest with a certain group of people. To me it seems like environmentalism is something that gets left out of the headlines very often.

Donnie: Yeah. I can definitely see that. That's been something that I've been noticing a lot more of. Do you know or can you like—do you think there's a reason why environmentalism is left out of the headlines?

Sarah: I think that it's considered a luxury?

Donnie: Is it a luxury like for a class issue or is it a luxury for a certain group of people?

Sarah: I think—I don't think of it as a luxury, but putting on the hat of mass media here, I guess, and saying that I think that for them environmentalism is a luxury item that can be presented when circumstances are right but not necessarily as a pressing issue that needs to be addressed over and over again.

Donnie: Is that—Is that notion of a luxury issue something that you thought about when you were sort of writing environmental topics?

Sarah: No. It's something I think about when I'm really poor. [Laughter] And I can't do what I want to do and, you know, be more sustainable.

Donnie: Cool. Now one of the things I want to do is I want to get more specifically at your background knowledge of environmental sustainability. And so, one of the things that I was going to ask is that you said that you participated in green organizations or green movements out in Oregon. Can you talk a little bit about that sort of work or sort of participation you may have done?

Sarah: It was just more of a lifestyle. I lived in big group housing and everyone there was recycling and working for peace and justice and vegetarian at the same time. And so, it was kind of—just a coalescing of circumstances in my house in most cases. You know I worked on more political stuff than I did environmental stuff at that time; but it was all connected. I worked for the “police accountability” campaign in Portland, Oregon, working on like basically making the police accountable to the public. You know, there had been a series of beatings, police brutality and that kind of stuff. And I think that the people that I was connected with in that venue really were like you know they were recycling, they were

gardening, they were eating organic and doing all this other stuff. And so that was where I first got exposed to it.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. And particularly with the term environmental sustainability, have you ever heard that phrase before coming to MSU?

Sarah: Before MSU?

Donnie: [Affirmative response]

Sarah: No.

Donnie: You hadn't?

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: So, is that something that you just learned when you came here?

Sarah: Yeah.

Donnie: And so, like, in thinking about that term, how would you define environmental sustainability.

Sarah: [Break in interview; Goes to answer phone] Hi! Sorry about that.

Donnie: That's ok. That's ok.

Sarah: So, environmental sustainability I think succinctly means something along the lines of making sure that you don't do damage or use up things that future generations need and you think about the consequences of your actions along a network not just in your local area.

Donnie: So, it's something that radiates outwards, you would say?

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: So, in that sense, when you think about your definition of sustainability, you don't necessarily see it as just being situated within what you're doing right here and there just benefiting your local community, but just sort of think about how your actions have a ripple effect?

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: Is that a definition that you find yourself pulling from anyone in particular here?

Sarah: Well you know I did that video. And I worked with Terry Link for a year. You between those two things I really got a big picture of all the different kinds of takes there are on sustainability. And those are the things that really stuck with me even though I haven't in the loop for like eight months.

Donnie: And so outside of that working with Terry, because I know that he runs the office, has there ever been a point where I guess you perceived it definitionally has been different from how he perceived it definitionally?

Sarah: I'm sure that that's true. Yeah. He's a different person than me.

Donnie: Yeah. I understand. I understand. Is there anything in particular that you would think about like a component of a sustainability definition? I know that the office is very broad, because they think in terms beyond environment.

Sarah: And that's my preference as well.

Donnie: Ok. So you lean in that direction.

Sarah: I'm more of a social justice goes hand-in-hand with environmental justice.

Donnie: So in a way would you say that ties in a lot of the work that you've done in Oregon as far as like accountability and things of that nature.

Sarah: It was really nice actually to meet Terry. I work the summer between my three years of school at this magazine called Sustainable Industries. It was more of a business-oriented magazine, but it was kind of my entry into it after two years of the master's program. And then when I came back I met Terry and I was talking to him about this grad position. And he wanted someone to make stuff for the office and also help organize and all that kind of thing. And he started telling me what his view of it [the office] was and all the people he had read and what I needed to know about.

And I was really waiting for that connection between people's lives—political and social justice and the environmental movement. Because a lot of times I saw them as held apart. As like in Oregon there are people who spike trees and blow up labs. And those are people who have very targeted agendas and I don't agree with them and in terms of people trying to save these small tracks of land and vast wastelands of treecuts it seems reasonable, but—I don't feel like—it never really moved me they way that bring it back to human beings moves me.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. And so now that we've talked about the definitional aspects.

Do you—when you were here, besides the office of campus sustainability, when were you involved with any environmental organizations here at MSU?

Sarah: No.

Donnie: So your only connection to the environment was maybe your own personal practices and the office of campus sustainability?

Sarah: Well, I was also in the Knight Center—for like—so I was usually taking one environmental writing class or workshoppy thing while I was doing my master's.

Donnie: And was there a lot of action between the Knight Center and the Office of Campus Sustainability?

Sarah: Somewhat. I mean one of the things that Terry and I worked on was—the journalism program has web design classes and we shared back and forth. Some of the Knight Center students did web design—I did one on engine idling. And one of my friends Jessica [surname deleted] did one on perfumes and toxins and cosmetics and stuff like that. And we linked them up with Terry's website and then he actually asked the Knight Center to follow up with another website design project where they help out with the cafeteria revamping thing that fell through. So there was some back and forth. But I think that the every year the Knight Center has a barbeque like sorta outside thing. I'm totally blanking. You know like before a football game?

Donnie: A tailgate?

Sarah: A green tailgate. And I think they worked with some people from the sustainability board. Well I mean also, some of the faculty for the Knight Center are on the board of the office of campus sustainability. Jim [surname deleted] is also on the office of campus sustainability board and he's also the director of the Knight Center.

Donnie: So, there's a lot of interaction going on between the office of campus sustainability and the Knight Center.

Sarah: Yeah and we always have for like two or three years there's a grade student who always works on the newsletter that's run out of Mya's office. You know Mya? What her last name? She does agricultural environmental stuff and there's a grad student from the Knight Center who actually works for her and the newsletter too. So there's that level of communication as well.

Donnie: Ok. So.

Sarah: One more. There's also a class on environmental film that's taught every semester. And they tend to recruit from the types of people [who] come from the science side of sustainability and bring them in and talk to them about various environmental issues and follow them up with a documentary.

Donnie: Well the videos, you were talking about the videos earlier like the ones on engine idling and I think there was another one on cosmetics. You said that you guys or Terry had asked that these videos be uploaded on the website for the office.

Sarah: Linked together. There actually whole free-standing sites, but they're probably gone by now.

Donnie: Ok, so, well the question about that is, when he asked you to do that or when you produce them—when you guys initially produced them, who were you actually producing those videos for?

Sarah: Well the engine idling one was kind of a funny thing cause like—just kind of like—I'm kind of a jeewiz kind or person. So I was like “a-ha!” this is the kind of question people fight about all the time and I want to answer this question and it also has environmental implications that I think that a lot of people will be drawn into the environmental aspect of it because it is solving this minor puzzle that they think about all the time so it's kind if a popular topic. So my kind of audience was general. And I did that for a class and I did find that a lot of people like my professor had really strong opinions. And they kinda like the fact that it was kinda contrary to their opinions.

Donnie: Do you think that when Terry asked for them to be linked to this site do you think his perception of audience changed—changed from the way you personally saw your audience?

Sarah: I don't know. I don't know much about who goes on the MSU eco website. So I don't know what his perception of the audience was. I know that the site was maintained by what's his name—I'm having a bad name day—it was maintained by someone besides Terry.

Donnie: Was it Chris Bell?

Sarah: Yeah. The film guy?

Donnie: [affirmative response]

Sarah: Yeah. So, I don't know exactly. It's definitely changed a lot since I left.

Donnie: Alright so let's talk about the video. In speaking specifically about the website, have you ever—have you been to the website before?

Sarah: Yeah, but not since I left the office. I did investigate the whole thing when I worked there.

Donnie: And so, what do you mean by “investigate”? What type of Investigating were you doing?

Sarah: Well you know since I was working for Terry and taking web design classes, I wanted to see what was going on. So you know I looked at—I'd open every link and tried to follow the different navigation schemes that were going on and it was kind of broken. So—I don't really know what to say. It didn't have a lot of up-to-date content and there were some areas that were lacking in content.

Donnie: In speaking of the content that was on the website, just a general sense of that content, could you get a sense of who that audience was that would be reading that document?

Sarah: I'm pretty sure it's supposed to reach out to people who are familiar with environmentalism but don't know much about sustainability.

Donnie: Ok.

Sarah: Mostly like students or people in other areas of the university.

Donnie: Ok. Alright. And so, your contribution to the website has been—like when you were there—researching the website a little and following the links to see what was broken and what wasn't broken and the videos that you produced directly and indirectly?

Sarah: Affirmative response

Donnie: Ok. Let's talk about the video, specifically, the one titled “Sustainability @ MSU.” Was that a film—was that a video that was produced specifically for the website?

Sarah: No. It was actually intended to be given as part of orientation materials

Donnie: Orientation for?

Sarah: In-coming students.

Donnie: At AOP?

Sarah: What is AOP?

Donnie: I think that's like the sort of over the summer—welcome to MSU for freshman undergrads.

Sarah: Possibly.

Donnie: Alright, so it was produced more or less for an orientation session. Now when you—and this is moving away from that direct benefit or that audience benefit—when you constructed that video what was the purpose behind that video?

Sarah: I think it was to kind of help students expand their definition of what it means to be interested in the environment. To kind of bring in other aspects. To talk about how Michigan State participates in that. How different people think about it and make it more interesting.

Donnie: Now in thinking about how Michigan State thinks about it and how other people outside Michigan State think about it. Would you say that one or the other was more important in the crafting of the video.

Sarah: Well, I think representing what goes on at Michigan State is pretty important considering that we interviewed staff and students and professors. You know it was really just a perspective of people inside the institution.

Donnie: Here's one question that I have to sort of shake things up. Would you have considered interviewing someone from the Lansing/East Lansing area?

Sarah: For that video. I guess so. I mean I don't really know if that would—I don't know. I didn't think about it. I really had my hands full trying to get all of those people into that video.

Donnie: Yeah . No, I understand—do you think it's safe to say or would you think that choosing someone from outside the university would affect the way that you intended the message to go as far as directing it toward students here on campus?

Sarah: I think it. Yeah. Yeah. Also, I think it depends on who you talk to .

Donnie: Ok.

Sarah: I mean I interviewed—I did a story on some kind of green award show

out in Lansing and I talked to people out there for that on video actually. And I did another thing on the café—that greenish café out there in East Lansing. So I mean I have interviewed on camera people, about environmental issues, off campus; but you know I think that our purpose was more of an orientation and a definitional video than it was kind of direct out into the greater world.

Donnie: Ok. How did you—Was there a specific selection process for deciding who you would interview and who you wouldn't or was it just proximity.

Sarah: No, actually I used the board. I solicited suggestions from them.

Donnie: Is that the University Committee for a Sustainable Campus?

Sarah: Right.

Donnie: Ok. Alright so they gave you suggestions?

Sarah: Yeah. All of them.

Donnie: So one of the things that I do want to do—and I know that I sent you a copy of the film just in case you had a copy or not—I wanted to ask some more specific questions about the video itself.

Sarah: Ok. [laughter] Sorry. Have you made a lot of video?

Donnie: I suck at making videos.

Sarah: I'm not so good either.

Donnie: Yours is perfect. [laughter]

Sarah: It a—that's a second or third cut.

Donnie: Oh really?

Sarah: Yeah.

Donnie: Well, that's interesting. Let talk about—

Sarah: People and a—it's very short.

Donnie: Oh—no no no. It's fine. But you said that this is the third cut. What's the difference between—I mean structurally or content wise—what's the difference between the third cut and the other two cuts that came before it? If you could just think off the top of your head?

Sarah: Well one of the guys is missing!

Donnie: Really?

Sarah: What's his name he's a professor. Dude, I can't even remember his name. Man. See this is also a very long and drawn-out editing process. And I just—it took me so long. I think there's one or two people missing.

Donnie: Was it for time constraints? Or was it like—

Sarah: Yeah. Yeah. We had some committee meetings after the first draft and they said, "Shorter. More kids."

Donnie: Oh more kids? What do you mean by more kids?

Sarah: More people that were not professors or staff. They wanted more young people. They really wanted another undergrad or two, but I was just like, "Summer's almost here can't help ya anymore."

Donnie: Now did you have undergrads in this film?

Sarah: Yeah one guy's an undergrad.

Donnie: One guy's an undergrad? Cause I saw also—I'm going to kick myself for not remembering—Lauren is in the film. Was she an undergrad at the time?

Sarah: No, she was in the master's program at that point. The other kid is an undergrad, but he's just about to graduate.

Donnie: Ok. And then so you have—so so you have—they told you to have more kids in there, so that's the main difference between the three films, but their whole—is it safe for me to say that there move toward asking for more kids in the film was to broaden the appeal to the MSU community?

Sarah: I would say that yes that they wanted it to appeal to incoming students. And so, they wanted them to see a mirror of themselves talking to themselves about this topic.

Donnie: Ok. Alright.

Sarah: But I think it's also much shorter and the storyline—at the request of the committee I added in that cartoon. So, I watched this before we talked on the phone so I would know what the heck I'm talking about. And that was another thing; they wanted that cartoon in there as an example of

sustainability. It was too abstract; they wanted to ground it into something more—you know—understandable.

Donnie: And by cartoon you're talking about the whole Rwanda—?

Sarah: Yep.

Donnie: Yeah. And so, I mean—because—this is really interesting because this was sort of—when I interviewed Terry—this was—it seems to be like a very very shining example that seems to crop up a lot between the office, the university, and even some of the documents that try to position how we sort of think about sustainability as a campus—a definition of sustainability as a campus. Did you like that addition to the film?

Sarah: Your talking to someone who's kind of the artist and also like the advocate, so it's hard. I didn't like it as an artist, cause it was hard and ugly. I like it as—and I was also uncomfortable talking on camera.

Donnie: Ok.

Sarah: Sorry. There's a lot going on here, so I'm sorry.

Donnie: No it's fine. It's fine.

Sarah: Now I'm much more comfortable, but it's too late. But yeah, I think it made sense to add it in there for sure. But I mean I kinda sense in your question like this idea that Michigan State hasn't done very much since then. Is that something that your getting at?

Donnie: Well, since—since you made the video?

Sarah: Since the Rwanda coffee deal.

Donnie: Well, well—I wouldn't like—I just came to Michigan within the past two years. So, I don't know if I would say that. But I think that there's something interesting because like that's been sort of pushed up or heighten as like one of the shining examples of how sustainability works here at MSU. Like that's been something that's been marketed to students. Also when you go to the sort of MSU library you see—you see like the whole gist—the whole spiel on the coffee plantations in Rwanda. This sort of a PR campaign for the university. One of the things that terry talked about was that whole effort itself was a great thing for the university because it says—you know we can do sort of local things here but also—tying back to what you were saying about the network thing—we can help a war-torn region out—you know with our consumption practices. And

that was something that was echoing throughout your video. At least that's the way that I saw it. I was just wondering—

Sarah: Ok. I was just curious.

Donnie: No, no—no. I was just wondering if that was just something that that you have seen maybe in like writing or seeing people discussing sustainability on campus. As that being sort of an example that you've heard time and time again. Cause I think it's a cool example.

Sarah: Yeah. I think it's really interesting and I was always looking for environmental stories in Michigan and that one was a little—you know—passed by when I was doing my journalism stuff. But I think—you know—it's definitely one of the best examples we—you know—talked about a lot of different things—you know—and I kinda knew usually what was going into the newsletter and I knew what people were writing about—you know—in a bunch of different classes and you know I kinda knew what was going on you know and that was definitely the top part regardless of what came after.

Donnie: Alright. And then getting more specific to some content that was in the video as well. You started out with a lot of terms. Like terms like “water,” “social justice,” “pollution,” “health,” “economic justice,” “land,” “racism,” “war,” “food,” “waste.” And so one of the things that I want to ask is like so why did you start out with these words?

Sarah: Because I feel like I really wanted to represent the fact that there's a lot of interconnected problems. And so, I kinda took those words both from conversations with Terry and also from some of my interviews that I did. And some of the readings that I've done kind of—You know—All things that maybe people don't consider as part of sustainability or environmentalism, but should kind of be brought into the picture. And so they're kind of brought into the picture right at the beginning. Like we're talking about big issues lots of issues at the same time. Sorry to be intimidating, but—you know—we're going to get to—next we're going to get to solutions and how those solutions are more complex then maybe you would think about.

Donnie: So—so moving from left to right, you have that sort of phrase “connecting problems.” So, someone who is sort of reading that video or looking at that video, how are they to connect the problems within their understanding or their day-to-day lives or that sort of thing?

Sarah: So how are they to connect it?

Donnie: Yeah. Yeah. How—how would you intend for them to sort of connect

those—or to connect the dots? Is there something that they should be thinking about or doing or—changing the way they think.

Sarah: I guess so.

Donnie: I can give you an example. A little bit later you have Rich Grogan speaking and you have two phrases that go by. You have “paradigm shift” and “community engagement.” And so would you consider those terms as being like ways at connecting the problems of the various terms you sort of throw out—that you present in the beginning of the video?

Sarah: Yeah.

Donnie: So, “paradigm shift”—And by “paradigm shift” you mean—?

Sarah: Well I think that really described what Rich was experiencing in that moment—kind of culminating moment of that speech was that he’d never had this feeling or thought before—just completely—And that’s the kinda definition of “paradigm shift.”

Donnie: Ok.

Sarah: Things from a new perspective.

Donnie: And “community engagement?”

Sarah: And that kind of came out of—I mean the conversation that I had with Rich was really long—we talked for about an hour and a half—and he really built himself into a community and it all started with the car. You know he does mention it in the clip I have of him with the idea that your more than just your nuclear family. You know that kind of—I don’t know if that comes across in the video? But I think it’s something that people need to consider when they’re making decisions. I hope I—is Sarah in there—Sarah [surname deleted] still in there?

Donnie: I think so.

Sarah: She’s also an undergrad. She talks a lot about decision-making. I don’t know if that made it in there either.

Donnie: Yeah. I think that she was one of the folks towards the beginning of the film.

Sarah: Yeah.

Donnie: And I think she might have gotten just maybe a couple—yeah she got like a couple of seconds.

Sarah: Yeah.

Donnie: Ok. And so, those terms sort of definitely kinda connect back to what you said earlier about the whole living in a network radiating from the local to the global.

Sarah: [Affirmative response]

Donnie: Ok. So—so that’s cool. One of the other questions that I had about the film itself were the locations. So, the locations were very sort of—like they were ambiguous—like if you were a viewer you wouldn’t necessarily know where they were. Did you pick those locations deliberately?

Sarah: My only real motive there was to have it in different places and I asked that the interviewees select the place.

Donnie: Cool. Cool. So, what kind of locations were they picking?

Sarah: Well Sarah [surname deleted] just picked here dorm for convenience sake. But it was also on campus, so I thought it was nice. Lauren [surname deleted] picked the recycling center, which was interesting because it was noisy. And I thought that was cool because it was an interesting background. It’s where she spends a lot of her time I’m pretty sure. And then that professor—what’s her name—Laurie picked that chicken coop on the organic farm, which was really fun and wet. I had a great—I really enjoyed that shoot. It was my favorite; there were chickens everywhere—and even on the tripod.

Donnie: And where is the recycling center located?

Sarah: It’s—do you know where the Amtrak station is?

Donnie: Oh Yeah.

Sarah: It’s next to that. They are building a new one though right?

Donnie: [Affirmative response]

Sarah: Is the new one done? The new one might be done.

Donnie: I think it is done.

Sarah: So, that was an old one next to Amtrak.

Donnie: So, is that considered a part of campus or is it?

Sarah: Yep.

Donnie: It is? Ok. And so, here's one question, I'm going to try and ask you to get into the head of an audience. Would you say an audience or a person in the audience that watched that video would sort of—without you saying anything or without you moving to mention that these are sort of places on campus—do you think that they would sort of assume that those were facilities on campus?

Sarah: Yeah. I don't know. I mean everyone—their placard said something like “student” or like “at Michigan State” or “student” or “professor” or whatever. So yeah I guess I would assume that they were somewhere associated with their name, but I guess not for sure.

Donnie: That's a very sort of fair assumption, cause that's one of the things that I was thinking about—if like—with like location. Say if you changed the location of where you were shooting the site. Like, if you decided to shoot someone in front of the capital building would that have sort of affected the aesthetic. Do you think that that would have affected it in any way?

Sarah: Yeah. I think so. I think that if you put a big symbol in the background then I think your definitely gonna have some impact on your message. You know there's some more neutral territory. I think—I did—one of them was just in a conference room in Olds. And then one was in an office. Oh man you know—a couple were in offices, but those had some personality.

Donnie: I think that Steve [surname deleted] I think that—it looked as if he was in the office that Terry used to occupy—or Terry's office I think.

Sarah: No. Steve's actually in his own office.

Donnie: Oh that's his own?

Sarah: Yeah. Sorry one more phone call! Sorry. [Break in interview; goes to answer phone] Hello!

Donnie: Hello!

Sarah: I'm sorry.

Donnie: So, Steve's actually in his own office. Is that in Olds Hall?

Sarah: No.

Donnie: It's not?

Sarah: He works for grounds, so he's over—where's that—they have their own little building with trucks parked outside.

Donnie: That's so weird. I feel like institutional—like the background—like—I used to have an office in Olds and it reminds me so much of Olds. Like—the stone wall in the back—the cement blocks. But alright. So, the whole big symbol—put a big symbol in the background and that will definitely sort of affect—no I think that that is like spot on—spot on. Let's see. I think that I've pretty much—I think that you pretty much answered all the questions I had about the video and then some. Is there anything else that you would like to sort of add?

Sarah: No. If you want to see the other cuts, I can send you them if I find them?

Donnie: Oh, If you can find them and send them those would be pretty cool to see and compare and look at them.

Sarah: I'll have to dig around a little bit.

Donnie: That's fine.

Sarah: Yeah. You know, I pretty much happy—like I haven't watched it in six—eight months.

Donnie: [Affirmative response]

Sarah: Ten months? You know I kind of have this weird attitude about stuff that I make. Like I enjoy it. Then I'm miserable. Then I'm happy to be done. And then six months later, I'm really glad [laughter] that I made it. I don't know, because I have to make stuff for work all the time and it's kind of challenging all the time for me. I do know so—

Donnie: It looks good.

Sarah: Thank you.

Donnie: Alrighty then. Well, I think that that is pretty much—pretty much it then.

Sarah: Great! I hope—I hope I helped out a little bit?

Donnie: You helped out a ton! You helped out a ton! The way that I am about this study is that I—I go into weird moments of panic where things to me

make no sense at al. And then I'm sitting someplace and I'm like "Oh my, this makes total sense." And so, And so—

Sarah: I feel your pain.

Donnie: Like, the part of it is like I can't wait till this is done. I'm ready to have a summer break.

Sarah: So, are you doing this for class or for the office or for what?

Donnie: Oh, this is for my MA thesis.

Sarah: Oh—man! Well, you know, I haven't—I didn't have to write a thesis let me tell you that right off the bat.

Donnie: It's been—well at first I was like, "I don't know how I'm going to write a paper that long" And then I sat down and wrote my method and methodology section and it's already right now twenty-two pages.

Sarah: Awesome!

Donnie: And I'm not supposed to go over fifty pages. So, I'm holding myself to that.

Sarah: I had to do one for my undergrad—a thesis a yearlong thesis. So, I was like, "Heck no! I'm not doing that for my master's!"

Donnie: Oh—man.

Sarah: Yeah. Well cool. If you have any else for me just let me know. I have done a lot of studies, so I feel your pain about people not answering, not setting up, not—[laughter]

Donnie: But you were great. One of the things that I'm going to do is I'm going to send you a copy of the interview for your records. And when I do a final write-up, I will send you the final write-up of the project.

Sarah: Ok. That sounds great.

Donnie: Awesome.

Sarah: Cool.

Donnie: Alright.

Sarah: Have a good week!

Donnie: You too!

Sarah: Bye!

Donnie: Bye!

Speaker **Interview: Chris (Producer 2). Friday April 17, 2009 @ 10:00 AM**

Donnie: So the first thing that I wanted to do—I actually wanted to sort of talk about—I wanted to get consent before we did anything.

Chris: Sure.

Donnie: Cause I realize this is sort of a preliminary thing. And so the first thing that I want to do is sort of read through the consent script. And you have a copy there if you want to read it as well.

Chris: Ok.

Donnie: I'm going to modify some of it as I read along, but since it's going to be recorded it's pretty much the same thing.

Chris: Sure.

Donnie: But—You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ability of writers and readers to agree upon the intent imbedded within messages related to environmental sustainability.

You have been asked to participate because you are a member of the MSU community and you fit within the criteria of what constitutes a potential reader of the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability Web Site.

And so, this is one area—like you're actually being contacted because you're a writer rather than a reader, but you're still a possible reader for the website.

Chris: Sure.

Donnie: You have been invited to provide your thoughts and opinions regarding messages acquired from the website of the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability. The interview will first start by asking a series of background questions related to your familiarity with environmental issues. Thereafter, the researcher will present a series of messages acquired from the Office of Campus Sustainability's website and ask you to provide a response to each message. And so in this case since you are a producer and not a reader I will just more or less be asking you questions pertaining to the product that you produced rather than showing you a series of messages. After the interview, the researcher will answer any questions you may have regarding the purpose of this study.

And so, what I'm going to do—since it's going to be a little bit different for you—we're just going to move around the site and you're just going to point out things that maybe you're done for the site.

Chris: Ok.

Donnie: And then, I'll sort of ask you questions about those and you can probably give me some sort of historical responses about them as well.

Chris: Sure.

Donnie: And some aesthetic responses as well.

While highly unlikely, the only perceived risk in this study regards the fact that you may be asked to provide your opinions concerning a potentially controversial issue—environmental sustainability. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. There are no perceived benefits to research participants. Direct benefit of this study will potentially assist the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability since this study has the potential to generate knowledge about its website.

Your identity will be protected to the extent allowed by the law. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications that may result from this study. While this is not an anonymous study, all information gained will be considered confidential. The researcher will retain your data from this study for no longer than three years. And that's more or less a federally—sort of—mandated provision, and then afterwards I'll destroy it. happen is after three years I'll destroy it.

There will be no cost to you nor will you be compensated for participating in this research study. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from this project at anytime without penalty. If the study design or use of data is to be changed, you will be so informed and your consent re-obtained. You will be told of any significant new findings developed during the course of this study that may relate to your willingness to continue participation.

And so, If you have any questions beyond what we do today, you can you can contact Dr. Hart-Davidson, you know Bill?

Chris: Yeah.

Donnie: And—or you can contact me. If there are any problems that come up with this, one of the things that I do want to says is that you can anonymously report to the Human Subjects—or Human Research Protection Program—.

Chris: Alright.

Donnie: Which is upstairs. And their contact information is below here as well.

Chris: Ok.

Donnie: But the first thing want to ask is, “Are you willing to participate or volunteer as part of this study?”

Chris: Yes.

Donnie: Ok. If I can get you to sign that.

Chris: What is the date?

Donnie: Today is the—.

Chris: Seventeenth?

Donnie: I think so, yeah. And do you agree to have your voice recorded for this research study in order for transcription to be possible?

Chris: Yes.

Donnie: Ok. Thank you.

Chris: But my voice sounds terrible on recording.

Donnie: Oh—I’ve been transcribing and I’ve been listening to my voice and I absolutely hate my voice. Alright. If you can—I’ll make a copy of that.

Chris: Alright.

Donnie: If you can—just double-click on the spacebar.

Chris: Sure.

Donnie: Double-click. Ok. So, walk me through the site? What have you done or been responsible for that’s on the site?

Chris: That’s a complicated question.

Donnie: Ok.

Chris: But I’ll kinda preface it with—In my opinion when I first came across this site—when I got the job—a lot if it is a mess.

Donnie:

Ok.

Chris:

My boss—my former boss Terry, who's since left, I'm sure you know kind of agrees with that. And we've tried to go through and jumble-out what we could. But as far as what I've done with the site—I maintain this front page, which is basically kind of a blog format where we post happenings. Before I got here they didn't use visuals whatsoever it was just kinda—just text. Text upon—text upon—text. And they like it to go down and keep record of everything, but I mean this page was probably—you know—ten times as long you'd go down to two years ago. They don't—It's a static website, which is a shame because you have to go through and manipulate code to add anything.

Donnie:

So tell me, what do you mean by static?

Chris:

By static, like when you—if you have a blog—I don't know if you have a blog like Wordpress or Blogger—you know you have the interface where you can go through and create a new page and you can take that page and at anytime you can re-link it to change that hierarchy. It's under “this” setting or you can change it and put it under “that” category. You can link them in different ways, but with this it's all just a jumble of html pages. So, everything you see has to be it's own separate file rather than entries in a database. So, if I want to—like we had to create this [clicks “FootPrints” link] kinda “Footprints” archive for all the newsletters. You know this is it's own html page. I had to create create this page. You know—Instead of just clicking a button or making a new database entry—but this could be called up. It's “footprints.htm.” It's not—you know just you see a couple numbers there, which [aside] makes it slightly more difficult to maintain, but also as you keep adding and adding pages you look at your folder and it's confusing, which is a shame. But I mean, this was made six or seven years ago so I didn't really have that much access.

Donnie:

Now, when you were moving to make some of the changes to the site itself were you thinking about people who went to the sight particularly?

Chris:

Definitely. The problem is with that—with this site where opposed to a “BeSpartanGreen” site—is it's such a diversified community of people who are potentially visiting this site. It's intended for students on campus. It's also intended for faculty on campus. But it's also intended for—maybe not an international audience—but definitely a national audience. Terry did a lot of work with several organizations. For instance, this “Earth Charter,” which we put up just a couple of weeks before Terry left, is more of a national initiative. And—you know—he works with them and he wanted to put this presence and here and this redirects you to this site [clicks link to the “Earth Charter” site]. So there's just a lot of different scenarios for use of this site. And part of that I'm sure has led to the

problem. It's interesting because he hires student webmasters obviously and the turnover rate is pretty high; it's usually a year and you're gone. And each student has different levels of web-work and experience with html and css. So, with each student, this has been done a different way, so it's not a very cohesive site—different pages are done different ways. And I've tried to go through and—trying as best as I could and bring everything together, but—

Donnie: And your talking about aesthetics or content or—?

Chris: Aesthetics.

Donnie: Aesthetics. Ok.

Chris: It's—you know—this archive section [clicks link to the archive section] I have not touched because Terry doesn't see the need for it. You know—it's got these different fonts—these different things, whereas you click on the page [clicks link to the "Calendar" section] that I would take care of and it's done completely differently—you know—in the way that Terry kind of wanted it to be.

Donnie: So for you—and the difference is like—cause I'm looking at what you just showed. And you were in "archives" and you compared that to the "links" section—is it?

Chris: This was in the "calendar." And this is an event they put on.

Donnie: So, this is something that you designed for the site?

Chris: Yeah. I just—I didn't spend too much time. This is just a calendar section, so it was just get the information in there and it would be redirected from—at the time the homepage had a blog entry style that would direct them to this page to get more. And then this flyer here [clicks link to the "Journeys to Sustainability" flyer]—I'm not sure if it'll open up or if it's a .jpeg. Ok yeah. This is what I designed for the week. And this was posted all-around campus.

Donnie: So you designed the flyer?

Chris: Yeah.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. And so, let me ask you this question. You said before that it was a mess before because there wasn't much sort of visuals or that were on the site?

Chris: Yeah. Christopher [surname deleted] was the webmaster before me. He was in the PW program the same time that I was, which is where I did my undergraduate; so, he kind of got me to the job when he left. But the only experience he had with html and css was the 210 class in the PW program, which I've taken and—you know—and I actually didn't learn anything new because I had access to computers all throughout my life and Windows 95 and I got on the web immediately and kept playing with it until I learned it. But so, he couldn't necessarily—if he put a picture in he could put it in but he didn't really know how to manipulate it to where you can change the size a certain way; you can add borders; you can pad it; you can add margins to include it on the page rather than put it to the side of the page. So he didn't—he chose not to use a lot of pictures. And back then—now the newsletter is in html format, so it's hyperlinked, which is what Terry wanted. But Chris couldn't do that. But before this, Chris couldn't do that—none of his webmasters could do this—so it was just a pdf newsletter. So, it was much—kind of a different approach to things not integrated---you know, I'm a little off-track—but—but yeah, there weren't a lot of images—it wasn't a lot of design. It was—“take text, put text here.”

Donnie: Now the use of—cause I like where you were going with that—the use of links, why did you guys feel that it was important to add links to the newsletter?

Chris: Well, especially with the newsletter—as far as I can kind of estimate—the newsletter, Terry sends out to a large audience. He sends it out to several listserves that are nationally syndicated. And before the pdf newsletter, it was kind of a terminating spot; you send them the newsletter, they read, and that's all they get.. But when he sends this out, first of all it's easier to read because it's not a large pdf file—some of the pdf files that I noticed were several megabytes which is not optimal for an email message that he would send out. You'd have to download it and—. But they can get to the information. So instead of posting these big-long kinda newspaper stories, they've been condensed kinda to blurbs where you can find information from the source rather than kind of a regurgitation. And—And then it also gives us the opportunity to link back to are site, which is important; we do that a lot. A lot of the events which would go on on campus, we put a blurb about it in the newsletter, which would link back directly to the “calendar” section, which is barren right now cause nothing's really going on. But it was a good way—you know—to incorporate the site with the newsletter rather than all-these people who were getting the newsletter, they might never visit the site. So, that's what we were going for though.

Donnie: What other image work have you done with the site in particular?

Chris: Well, let me navigate [navigates away from OCS website and visits online portfolio] away from here, cause I've got it in one spot where I can refresh. So—obviously the “Footprints” newsletter; I created all—the header for that, the design for that. This “Journey's to Sustainability” poster; this is something that's not on the site yet, but Terry—are you able to open pdfs on this computer?

Donnie: Yeah.

Chris: Terry—They just began this new sustainability specialization on campus, so they're working with a couple classes on campus and his class came up with the ideas for this. And they were each four groups—or so of five students were assigned to create a pamphlet for traveling MSU students and faculty. And this is what they came up with [opens pdf copy of pamphlet]. It wasn't designed well. I still don't think it's the best design, but it's more visually appealing then what they had cause that did it in—you know—Microsoft Word.

Donnie: Can you tell me why you don't think it appealing?

Chris: It's just—as far as the pamphlet goes, I'm big on white space and minimizing information. They have a lot of information in paragraph form. So, I think it works. It's just—I wasn't at liberty to condense any information or remove anything, so I had to cram everything in there as best as I could.

Donnie: What about the image [plane in the sky among clouds] were you responsible for this one?

Chris: This image?

Donnie: Yeah.

Chris: They initially—What Terry did was he gave me one student design, who design it pretty well, and he wanted me to kinda use their images; and one student design with the content. So take those together. Initially, the students with the design had a picture of an airplane—you know just a rectangular picture stabbed in the center of the folder. And I thought it was a good picture because the smoke coming out of—whatever that is—coming out of the engine. So, I took that picture and I went out and took a picture of the sky and superimposed that on there to make it the dominant element of the front. So, it was their idea, I just expanded it. And then Terry said that they were a big fan of this picture [picture of hand holding a green Earth], so I had to include it.

Donnie: Is there a reason why they were a big fan of it?

- Chris:** They just kind of liked—you know I'm not sure what level students these are whether they are—you know—sophomores, juniors, seniors. But they just really liked the hands holding the world. You know the whole "I got the whole world in my hand thing."
- Donnie:** Now like I think like visually—If you were to take this to an MSU student does this like evoke like—like would you say that this is a very MSU kind of message or do you think it like a more external outside of MSU message?
- Chris:** It's for inside MSU, but we didn't brand it as Michigan State cause we wanted it to have the opportunity to be picked up and used. It says—you know—, "for the traveling MSU employee" right there on the front, but that's the only mention of MSU in the whole thing. So, we wanted it to be able to be picked up by anyone who wanted to use it really because there's—I mean these tips are not specific to MSU whatsoever. So, it is for employees, so we were kind of going for—cause we assumed that would mean adult faculty or graduate students—so we wanted to go =for more kind of non-flashy this is solid kind of look. Kinda put ethos of professionalism to it. So keep it simple. Just the spot color with the green all throughout, and then the dominant visual, and then the bookend visual. Didn't want to—Plus—you know—from my own point-of-view, regardless of what Terry wanted, there was so much information there wasn't a lot I could do. Just to get the information in there I couldn't add much of anything. I had to shrink down the font size several times just to fit it all in there. But it was fun.
- Donnie:** Can you open up that—I saw you had another—that wheelbarrow image—that flyer that you did. What was it—"Journeys to Sustainability?"
- Chris:** Yeah. [opens pdf of "Journey's to Sustainability"] This was probably—the first—the first job I had when I entered was redoing the newsletter in html format, but this was the first kinda design job I had to make something that was going to be printed rather than just digital.
- Donnie:** Can you walk me through like—I guess like if you remember your design process and how you approached to design this.
- Chris:** This was going to go out to students; this was for students mostly. And I realize that it was going to be posted on the bulletin boards all-around campus. So, I wanted to have a really dominant visual that would catch the eyes of students walking past it, cause I know when I walk past those things I notice a blur unless there's something that absolutely stands out. And the theme of this week of events was this red wheelbarrow from a

poem of William Carlos Williams, which is included right there down there. That's just an excerpt from the poem. Actually that's the entire poem, it's just a very short thing. So, I imagined this this big red wheelbarrow and I imagined that people wouldn't know what the hell this big red wheelbarrow was. Plus I liked the color red for the theme once I got working with it. But—so that's where the giant visual came from. The information putting this in was difficult. Again, there's always an over amount—too much information. And the way Terry operates as opposed to Lauren—Have you met Lauren?

Donnie: [Affirmative Response]

Chris: Terry sends me information as he gets it? So, as I'm designing this this flyer, these are all the events down here and I set up this box that was cutting them out per day. And then that middle box you see—you know—a week later he sends me three more events for the middle box and he sent me another event for Thursday so without redesigning it I had to scrunch everything in and rebalance. So, there was much more white space down there originally. The-didn't have any sponsors at first. So, the read bar that was there was skinnier and it didn't have text on it. We went through several—we had—at one point we had "Journey's to Sustainability" [title] horizontally and the date down here; but we did two versions with it kind of slanting. Because this particular—because of the sponsors and how the event was put on it had to go through committee review with the—oh the committee for sustainability there a actual name for it.

Donnie: University Office for a Sustainable Campus?

Chris: Yeah. Yeah. So it went through that committee. There's a couple students on there and then faculty; so they had to approve it. And they ultimately went with this slanted version cause they felt it was better for whatever reasons they had. So, that was just how the text kind of came onto—It's been a while since I've worked on this one. But—This kind of explanatory text, sustainability as a journey, came from Terry I believe.

Donnie: Did Terry—Did you consult with Terry or have discussions with Terry about that text on sustainability or definitions of sorts?

Chris: The text right under the wheelbarrow?

Donnie: [Affirmative Response]

Chris: You know—He sent it to me and I usually go by what Terry says. What I did tell him before hand—and I'm not sure what my influences were—was that it needed to be concise and not drag on.

Donnie: Ok.

Chris: But I didn't mess with that.

Donnie: What did you mean by concise and drag on?

Chris: Well, sustainability is such a broad topic and if you visit some sustainability website, they have a whole page that defines sustainability. And you can go on and write a book about sustainability. And Terry loves what he does; and I knew from a design standpoint it couldn't be long, because there's no place to put that kind of information on a poster. So, I just wanted to make sure that he understood we needed as sound byte as opposed to an explanation.

Donnie: Was that more of a constraint—was that more of a thought of the audience on your part—or?

Chris: That was both. It was—Initially for me, it was “I have to design this; I can't have this big block of text.” But that initial reaction is influenced by the fact that, on a poster like this, most people aren't going to stop and read this big block of text. It's all about—you know—posters are kind like a webpage where—or a newspaper lead—where, you know, you probably get their attention initially and they probably give it eight seconds at the most. So you can't have them have to sit there and read cause this text is probably similar to the size of this text. And—you know—in a poster format, they're probably not going to get up and really get in especially if they're on their way to class or—you know—on their way to something else on campus.

Donnie: Awesome. Let's talk about this picture. Could you open? I guess I could drag it out. Now, if you take out—let's say—everything from here below and just had here up here or maybe even let's say you got rid of the “September 15, 2008” and got rid of this black text and everything down here, would you still consider that to be a local message—a local campus message?

Chris: No. Not at all. Especially cause everything local here and with sustainability seems to be focused on the color green.

Donnie: Ok.

Chris: And the “Spartan” branding there always seems to be something there. That's something I never actually considered, making it appear visually local. In fact in a lot of the work I've done—not all of it—I've tried to avoid the color green as a dominant element—use it but not use it dominantly because—you know—sustainability is “the green movement,”

but at Michigan State everything is green. So, I've always tried to kinda work around that to make everything standout; but it's kind of a catch-22. You can't abandon green entirely, but if you don't—but if you do—or if you don't it's going to look like—you know—a sporting event poster.

Donnie: So, in a way, like would you say, because this was something that that I was sort of tacking on even before when you were talking about the use of the image and how people weren't just going to look at it and say, "What is this" and stop and read.

Chris: Yeah.

Donnie: Like I see that—like well do you see that as a local appeal? Like your conscious effort not to use green, but to use red instead? Is that a conscious effort to attract a local public?

Chris: It's—it's—you know—using the word "local" I wouldn't—I was trying to attract students.

Donnie: Students?

Chris: Who were walking by it. I guess in my head I wasn't thinking of them in terms of local; Just in terms of an audience who would need to be enticed to look at this information in a sea of information. So, I was really going for a dominant kinda bold approach. Yeah. I never. For this one, I never considered—you know—MSU audience as the audience. The audience for me was students not just MSU students—you know.

Donnie: Do you know much about the title, "Journeys to Sustainability?"

Chris: I don't know much about that. This was—I'm pretty sure this was a coordinated effort across lots of different cities and states. Each responsible entity or party set their own schedule; provided their own events; but it was an initiative for this September 15th—19th chunk. I did look at it. They had a web presence for the kinda overarching "Journeys to Sustainability" thing that I did look at for inspiration and what-not. I'd be damned if I could remember anything about it specific to why it's called "Journey's to Sustainability."

Donnie: Alright and one more. I saw that you had the banner on your—

Chris: Banner.

Donnie: For "FootPrints" I think.

Chris: Yeah. This is just the entire “FootPrints.” You just click on that and it brings us to the latest issue.

Donnie: So, that image that you have on the top of there, where did you get that image from?

Chris: When he—It was my first project so first of all I was excited—couple that with I just got a new digital camera. So, I went on campus and just took pictures of everything that I thought would fit kinda of the ethos of “FootPrints” and “Ecofoot” and sustainability. And so, I was looking to capture kind of—you know—the environment of campus. And so, I don’t know where specifically—this is in the northern part of campus.

Donnie: It almost looks like it’s like across the street.

Chris: I mean it is very close to here. It’s close to the bell tower for sure. Cause that’s where I started and it was the first image that I took. But I kind of—I was thinking back to the poem—you know—“two paths diverge in a wood.” And I just really liked the image. This wasn’t—I mocked up probably ten different headers. This is the one that he chose; this is the one I would have chose too. You know—I got pictures, it was a beautiful day when I went out shooting. I got—you know—pictures of a nice tree juxtaposed against a blue sky. I went to the International Center and got—where all those flowers are?—the flowers with the sky with also the entrance of the International Center. So in a lot of those images I was trying to convey nature with some kind of building.

Donnie: Ok.

Chris: To kind of—you know—that’s what sustainability is—it’s working with everything to be sustainable.

Donnie: Now when you were taking pictures of the buildings were the names visible?

Chris: No.

Donnie: They weren’t? So, were you trying to minimize the appearance of the buildings in relation to the nature shots—or?

Chris: No. I was trying to make them work together. You know to kind of show—especially with that International Center. I spent a lot of time crawling in the bushes trying to get the perfect angle to where it would be very apparent that this nature is working with this building. They’re not separate; they are part of the same when put into a complete scenario. You know these trees are designed with this building in order to just create

kind of a really beautiful thing. Because that's what a lot of—I mean not all of it—but this campus, they really do seem to think about where every tree is; where every bush is; what flower gets planted—different—you know—how much grass is here. It's a very beautiful campus. Upstairs where Terry's office used to be, on the top floor, there's a man named Jeff and he works in the office. He's the—he maintains the server amongst other things. But they had this—they were doing a project where they were mapping out every single tree that's on campus and keeping tabs on it. And so, it just showed me that everything was very planned. And so, I wanted to kind of capture that. And I also just took straight pictures of this. I took pictures of the Union cause there's—that's just a beautiful place when you step back and look at it.

Donnie: Now was recognition like an important part when you selected this image? Like recognition like when someone would go to look at this newsletter they would look at that and would immediately think of campus?

Chris: No. That wasn't it. It might have been more recognizable had we used one of the pictures with a building in it—especially the International Center. But really I just wanted to get pictures; it could have been anywhere to be honest with you that kind of went with the appeal of what a sustainability newsletter might be. But I didn't want to use any stock photos. I wanted to use something that was on campus; but didn't necessarily have to be acquainted with campus necessarily. You know, students who look at this newsletter might recognize this scene, but it's also going out there to lots of different people.

Donnie: Now—now with Terry, have you guys—and this might be a two-tiered question—but have you guys like specifically talked about any particular definitions of sustainability he would like to see come out of the documents you design?

Chris: See that's probably hitting on the fundamental problem with the Office of Campus Sustainability as it was and now is and something Lauren and I were talking about just last week—is that there's not definition of sustainability that is exacted through the website or through documents. And to broaden that, the “Be Spartan Green” initiative—you know—the “Environmental Stewardship” and all these other initiatives on campus, there's no cohesion to it whatsoever, so we've never talked about that. Terry has shared with me his kinda view of sustainability; sustainability is always kind of showed as this three-pronged circle—economic, environmental, and political. But he wanted to add in this kinda fourth overarching thing that he didn't even have a name for. So we did—he did want to work on a visual representation of what sustainability meant; but as far as influence the design of anything, it never happened.

Unfortunately, because Terry is so busy. He gets a thousand emails a day and I'm not sure that that's an overestimation. And you know we never really had time to sit down because—I mean the site was already so piecemeal and cluttered with information that's outdated and never touched. You know, we just never had time to really kind of—for design or for even the office completely—to set out that kind of mission statement. So where this is what you kinda want to do, it was really—you know kind of a—you know you're in the bunker taking shells and you're just dealing with each one as it comes. So, that's a shame and you know talking with Lauren, she really wants to create that purposeful cohesive web presence, design presence, print presence cause she's got her feet both now in the Office of Campus Sustainability and she's also very much involved with "Be Spartan Green." So she wants to kind of take a message and have it—you know—be the entire—the message can be seen in everything. It's just unfortunate that we never got to that point with Terry.

Donnie: Now, these discussions that you're having with Lauren—are you guys looking at the definitions as being like more exclusively local and then generating outwards towards a network or being more global or—how are you guys characterizing it?

Chris: The way I see it Lauren coming at it—and I could be wrong, we've only talked a few times and we have some much to talk about every time we never get into it on a really deep level—but she is worried that we are doing all of these things local—the initiatives like the you know—the—I always say it wrong—"pack-up-pitch in" or "pitch-in-pack-up" that just happened and happens at the end of every semester really. The original research that's being done by—you know—doctors here—the initiatives, the events we put on—we have all this information and it's local to us, but it's in all these different places and it's hard to find. So, think she really wants to brand what Michigan State is doing and have that repository that can be one place for people to go and find out what's happening here. At the same time it's global because people can see what Michigan State is doing but at the time somebody at Michigan State can come and see what we're doing and how we can continue to do it and included in that—so that's as far as we've gotten. I' which her supervisor has apparently put the kibosh on, but kind of redoing the Office of Campus Sustainability website using a Wordpress format where we can kind of more easily create the warehouse of database information rather than all these arbitrary pages with static links to arbitrary file names—things people aren't able to find or are unable to identify with. I just went off on a—

Donnie: Oh no! It's fine. That was good and one last question. Were you familiar with the concept of sustainability before you came to the office?

Chris: No. My entry point to the office—I took—my last semester of undergrad in the PW program—I took—I’m blanking on the number but it was kind of managing publication projects. John [surname deleted] was teaching it. I don’t know if you know John [surname deleted]; I think he’s an adjunct. And so, it was kind of a service learning class. We were doing this one project and it turned out to be for Terry. And it was—let’s see if I can—it should still be on the main page actually [clicks the flash link with the archive posters]. It was these “vote with your action” posters online. And this was specifically targeted at students at Michigan State University. And it was a push-and-pull throughout the whole class of how we should target those students because we realized—and this was where great discussions came up because we had a lot of different personalities; we had “conservative,” we had “liberal,” we had “interest in sustainability,” we had “no clue about sustainability.” So, how do you really—sustainability is so large and it’s not like you can donate twenty dollars and we’re going to be like, “Ok, we’re going to be sustainable is everybody donates twenty dollars!” It’s about behavioral change. And in our estimation the majority of students either didn’t care, wouldn’t care, or did not want to make sacrifices. And so to them, it would just fall into the white noise of global warming. So, we didn’t know how to target those students; and I’m not sure we did the greatest job in the world. They’re [posters] really sharp. We didn’t actually visually design these. We came up with the content and the overall slogans and the kind of ideas for it. And then we worked cooperatively with people in the design school—three students who actually designed them. And what we came down on was kind of taking these old political sayings and making them “I like bike” as opposed to “I like Ike.” [The instructor] was really into that. You know, “No new bottled water,” “No new taxes.” “Wind power to the people.”

Donnie: And which one did you more have a hand on? Did you have a hand on all of them?

Chris: Yeah. We all came up with—you know—collaboratively we work out kind of the sayings that we were gonna go with in small groups and then into large groups. And then the text, we all did research to find statistics for the text. Which each text is basically “did you know that you could do this.” And it says for the “bottled water” [poster], did you know that it takes more water to make a bottle than it does to fill it with clean water? And so we came up with that. No one person really had influence on anyone. It was very collaborative and very slow-going. A lot of us even questioned the process for a little bit, but it came out looking good. I’m not sure we were necessarily on target. I think they’re beautiful. The designers did a great job. I think the theme is solid. But I don’t think—you know—

Donnie: Even the vote “local first” [poster]?

Chris: “Vote Local First,” why do you mention that one?

Donnie: Well—well you had said that you felt they didn’t directly targeted students. But like what about that one?

Chris: This one and actually this one—not so much this one, but mainly this one—Yeah. I mean you click on this and—these are the background images I created because we wanted these students to take these up and use them. That was are whole ploy. We wanted them to make them look like something that they’d want to hang up on their dorm-room wall. That was the whole kind of appeal. I’m not sure that that worked cause I’m not sure I say any hanging up outside of Lauren door.

Donnie: Or of you move the web—move the screen. Not the screen but the window.

Chris: Oh.

Donnie: Wo-oh. [looking at desktop background image of “Windpower to the People” flyer].

Chris: There you go! Well, we got one! We got one who was already researching sustainability. But—good, I’m actually glad that worked. But yeah, this one it says “vote local first,” but we weren’t necessarily targeting directly at this locality. We thought about doing that a lot, but—you know—we wanted to include local information—we researched local businesses that was—you know—this one was probably the most local of them all. We wanted to put information out there about local businesses; but then at the same time, we didn’t feel we had enough reliable information and know-how in ourselves to kind of be able to tell people, “These places are good! You should use these;” cause we didn’t have any background to put our stamp on it—and say—you know—with all-knowing power—you know—say, “these places are good,” because they might not be. We’ve found research that says their good, but we haven’t gone there; we haven’t done and independent study. We were very leery of statistics. I was the strongest opposer of statistics, because I feel they’re over done. Especially—I’m going to assume that you’re close to my generation; I’m twenty-six.

Donnie: I’m twenty-four.

Chris: Ok. So—you know—I can never tell some people in this program I think are twenty-five and they turn out to be thirty-five. But I’ve been bludgeoned with statistics my whole life; at least that’s what I feel like.

And they always contradict themselves. People can always use another statistic to combat another statistic. We ended up using them; but not to the extent they wanted to. But it was tough. And it was interesting in that class to see—after we all kind of got on the same level of understanding what sustainability and what it is trying to do and different places—how many different opinions in a class of thirteen students people had about what is the right way to approach this from a design standpoint and from a message standpoint. Because there were thirteen of us and at least ten different viewpoints. And that's when I realized that I wanted to work with Terry, because I kinda want to try and figure this out but I'd be damned if I had any ideas at this point.

Donnie: Perfect. Alright, if you go ahead and open and—scroll down I guess and open up.

Chris: Right here.

Donnie: All the way to the end. Click on that

Chris: Guitar? GarageBand.

Donnie: Yeah. GarageBand. I guess you can hit “play” and it should stop.

Speaker **Interview: Rich (Producer 3). Friday April 29, 2009 @ 10:30 AM**

Donnie: Ok. Good morning! If you see right here—yeah—what we have is the consent form. I’m just gonna go ahead and read aloud the consent form.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Basically, that just more or less so I can prove to the Institutional Review Board that I talked to you beforehand and I informed you about the study and all the complications that come with the study and such. It’s gonna be slightly different from what is on that because that consent for was written for producers—not producers but for readers.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: But the parts that I did change, I’m going to more or less going to read them to you and sort of talk about why they’re changed a little bit.

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: And so, I going to actually read from the language that I used with another person who was a producer. So if you could just follow along.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Alright. So, You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ability of writers and readers to agree upon the intent imbedded within messages related to environmental sustainability.

 You have been asked to participate because you are a member of the MSU community and you fit within the criteria of what constitutes a potential reader of the Office of Campus Sustainability Web Site.

 You have been invited to provide your thoughts and opinions regarding messages acquired from the website of the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability. The interview will first start by asking a series of background questions related to your familiarity with environmental issues. Thereafter, the researcher, myself, will present a series of messages acquired from the Office of Campus Sustainability’s website and ask you to provide a response to each message. And so in this case since you are a producer and not a reader I will just more or less be asking you questions pertaining to the product that you produced rather than showing you a series of messages.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: After the interview, the researcher will answer any questions you may have regarding the purpose of this study.

While highly unlikely, the only perceived risk in this study regards the fact that you may be asked to provide your opinions concerning a potentially controversial issue—environmental sustainability. You are free to decline to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. There are no perceived benefits to research participants. Direct benefit of this study will potentially assist the MSU Office of Campus Sustainability since this study has the potential to generate knowledge about its website.

Your identity will be protected to the extent allowed by the law. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications that may result from this study. While this is not an anonymous study, all information gained will be considered confidential. The researcher will retain your data from this study for no longer than three years. And the three years is a federally-mandated provision

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: But what will happen is after three years I'll destroy it. So only me and Professor Bill Hart-Davidson will have access to your data.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: There will be no cost to you nor will you be compensated for participating in this research study. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from this project at anytime without penalty. If the study design or use of data is to be changed, you will be so informed and your consent re-obtained. You will be told of any significant new findings developed during the course of this study that may relate to your willingness to continue participation.

If you have any questions, please ask us. If you have additional questions later, please contact either—please either contact Dr. Hart-Davidson or myself. And the contact information is listed below. And another thing if you have any complaints or concerns about the study itself. Please do complain to the human subjects research protection program here or IRB program here. And you can do so anonymously. And I wouldn't know who did it or didn't do it.

But the first thing that I want to ask is, "Are you willing to participate or volunteer as part of this study?"

Rich: [Affirmative Response]

Donnie: Alright. So if you can go ahead and sign that part.

Rich: I'm gonna go ahead and sign "recording too."

Donnie: Yeah go ahead.

Rich: I'm a grad student too, so I've done these before.

Donnie: Alright. Cool.

Rich: I mean I appreciate you going through the whole thing. Today's the 24th right?

Donnie: [Affirmative Response]

Rich: Ok. Cool.

Donnie: Awesome. Alright. So, Richard, let me introduce myself—

Rich: I go by "Rich."

Donnie: Rich?

Rich: Yep.

Donnie: Ok. Cool, I'm sorry about that.

Rich: That's ok.

Donnie: Alright. So, I am—Currently, I am a master's student here in the Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy program. I started school here in the fall of 07" and moved up from Chattanooga, Tennessee where I was doing my undergrad work. And so—

Rich: Are you from Tennessee?

Donnie: No. I'm actually originally from the Virgin Islands.

Rich: Oh. Cool.

Donnie: Yeah, but Tennessee is the longest place that I've lived in the States.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: So—.

Rich: Oh—I'm from North Carolina.

Donnie: Oh. What part?

Rich: Winston-Salem.

Donnie: Winston-Salem. My dad, who his family is actually from the States, he's from Raleigh. His family grew up, born and raised in the Raleigh-Durham area.

Rich: Awesome.

Donnie: And now I'm at the tailend of my master's and I just a couple weeks ago decided that I was going to stick on for the PhD program—

Rich: Oh great.

Donnie: So I'll be here for another four or five years.

Rich: I'm finishing year three of a PhD program so it—

Donnie: Oh yeah? So what you're program?

Rich: I'm in CARS.

Donnie: In CARS? Is that?—

Rich: Do you know CARS?

Donnie: I've heard about it.

Rich: It's a long jumbled name. Basically my PhD will end up being in something in something I'm calling organizational sustainability.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: So, I'm interested in looking at both organizational reporting about sustainability and also strategic decision-making about sustainability.

Donnie: That's interesting cause I see that our research interests actually coincide—.

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: Because what I do—what I do is that I look at sort of environmental rhetorics, but I'm really interested in sustainability and how people sort of understand those concepts. So that's really cool.

Rich: Maybe we can work together sometime?

Donnie: We—it would be fantastic to collaborate with you. I wish I had know that you were into that because I proposed an article last summer for the Community Literacy Journal, which was looking at sustainability and organizations—but not organizations—but sustainability and community literacy. And I was coming at it from an institutional-organizational understanding and they did not accept my proposal and I was very very surprised by that. But I mean I can understand that because I wasn't talking about literacy, I was talking about institutions. But that's really cool. That's really cool.

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: And so, after you finish, what are you planning on doing?

Rich: I don't know man. My wife's getting a PhD here too. We're on the same time schedule. So, I don't know—We're both sort of undecided about whether we want to be faculty or not. I think—I came from a small college; I went to Wake Forest for my undergrad. And I think that—I kind of see myself in a place like that. Because I'm really interested in both teaching and research; and sometimes it seems that MSU is out of balance towards the research. So, I kind want a place that couples both parts of my brain. Cause I really really enjoy teaching and I want to dedicate a lot of my time and resources to that; but I also really want to dedicate some resources to that. So, if I can date a university that lets me get both things, I'd be super happy. But I can see myself in a lot of different roles. I worked in New York City for a major investment bank for a long time too. I would do sustainability work at a corporate level and do it at a government level. I have a Master's in Public Administration. So, I guess I'm kind of a gypsy in that regard. And so there's a lot of things that I can do that would make me happy.

Donnie: Now CARS—Is that a journalism program or?—

Rich: No, It's Community Agriculture and Resource Studies.

Donnie: Ok. Cool.

Rich: It's an interdisciplinary program. I started off in communications.

Donnie: Ok. Cause I was like—I think someone I talked to said something—I don't know if that they were in sort of the journalism program, but they were taking classes through the CARS program. I don't know but for some reason I've always made that association between CARS and

journalism. Alright and so, your undergrad and master's was in communications?

Rich: No. My undergrad was in business. My master's was in public administration. I ended up doing communications and communications strategy work for five years in the private sector before I came back to grad school.

Donnie: Oh—wow.

Rich: And when I came back to grad school and got a master's, I was convinced that I was going to be a communications director for somebody and then I got really interested in environmental communication and that turned into sustainability. And now I'm settled in my new home. So—

Donnie: So is that—so, would you say that you didn't take an interest in sustainability until you came to MSU?

Rich: Yeah because I wasn't—I had sort of failed to link the other pieces of sustainability together. So I was kinda myopically focused on the environment and I hadn't—I did an environmental science minor at Wake Forest and it had always been an interest, so I was focused on the environment—a piece of it and then when I got here I met with—I started talking with Terry [surname deleted]; I don't know if you knew him—people like that. And so he kind of—that sort of turned my thinking more towards the broader concept of sustainability, which is [inaudible]—cause it's—you know—the flexibility and the broadness of it is both good and bad I think. Which is probably part of what you're interested in is whether—.

Donnie: Yeah.

Rich: How people understand that such a broad concept and how they can—but I don't mean to take up some much time for your study—.

Donnie: No, no, no. Actually you're answering the question.

Rich: Good, well I'm glad I'm being a good subject.

Donnie: Yeah, this is a good—this is a good interview, because like I'm thinking in my head all of the questions that I have to ask you and you've been answering them—.

Rich: Good.

Donnie: Very very good ways, so we've been actually making a lot of progress.

Rich: Great.

Donnie: One of the things that I want to ask is that is there anything particular from your conversations with Terry, in which you guys were talking about sustainability like components he had added to your understanding of it?

Rich: Sorry. I'm just trying to get off of your cords. Yeah. I think—Here's what I think. I think that I've always been interested in issues of—I mean—economic sustainability or what I consider to be economic sustainability or you can call it the first bottom-line. Is something that I was schooled in because I had a business major—I was—I took accounting classes. I understand what balance is according to dollars and cents. I also was interested in issues of social justice from a very kind of armchair expertise way I mean just in terms of a follower of current events in the news, I'm a thinking kind of person. I don't really see how—I don't really see how someone liked that can't be interested in issues—the social sustainability piece. And the environmental piece was a natural fit as well. So, I guess long story short, Terry kind of helped me put them all together into one kind of concept, “Hey there's this thing; We're calling it sustainability. It looks at these three components. And let's you think about them within one kind of conceptual framework.” And so I guess—as any scholar—I mean, as anybody who's interested in pursuing a career of the mind, you—I think we often start off with a lot of scattered pieces and things we're interested in and are constantly searching to put them in some kind of mechanism for understanding for ourselves. And often times I think that harmful or hurtful. It's hurtful because when you try to take that into the world a lot of people aren't receptive to it. Like you talked about the article that you put out that they didn't like what you were saying even though concept was probably very analogous to something the would be interested in publishing. The way of presenting it—the way you had conceptualized it wasn't complimentary to the way they had conceptualized it. So we almost kind of—I think there's a real tension in kind of putting those scattered pieces together and then putting them together some much that no one can be conversant with other people. And then what would be good?

If that makes any sense. So, I think Terry would—Terry was always really good at understanding that tension and being able to talk about that concept in a way that was understandable for people.

Donnie: And by “understandable” for people, what people do you think he's speaking to?

Rich: You know I think that—I think that Terry's audience—I think that Terry was very adaptable to his audience. I think that he could sit down with

someone who had studied sustainability for years and still be able to use some of the jargon and language to talk to them. But I also think that he made it a point to be able to be accessible to people who weren't aware of these concepts at all.

Donnie: And these people would be located—?

Rich: I think these people would be located all over; but in his role of campus sustainability coordinator, I think there's a lot of students who come in, for example, undergraduate and graduate, faculty and staff, who for whatever reason are unaware. It's not that they're not educated or something like that, it's just that they've spent their time learning other things and they're not aware of these kinds of issues. So, I think by doing things like the speaker series he did—his other awareness events, think that was a real to reach out to these people who hadn't thought about these concepts—who may not even know—who may not even think about basic environmental concepts like pollution and recycling. Who only think about it as something in the background that they don't pay attention to. I think that outreach component was so important to him. You know—I think—I personally think you have—In politics I guess you would call it keeping your base happy—I think you have to preach to the choir to some extent—keep those people fired up. But there's this huge other component that he was go at with talking to people. You know—I guess if I was task with operationalizing who those people are they would just be people who for whatever reason were aware of any of the concepts inherent in sustainability—who hadn't thought about the need for some kind of social sustainability—who hadn't thought about the need for environmental protection. All within the context of making sustainability responsible.

Donnie: So now, here's the hard part. If you were—

Rich: It's all hard.

Donnie: Ok, so everything that you've said now, what I want—and see if it's possible—could you provide me with a definition of environmental sustainability?

Rich: I didn't think that that was going to be part of the interview. No, I'm just kidding. No actually this is interesting because I did work last semester on how people define sustainability, so it's something I think about a lot. I actually think—I think there—let me talk—I think I'm going to have to talk for a couple minutes.

Donnie: Ok. That's fine.

Rich: I think that there's some elements of it that are very clear to me. I think

sustainability can be good or bad.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: I don't think that it's necessarily a positive thing. I think that when I think about the word "sustainability" to me it means the ability to perpetuate some type of operation. I have to think about it in terms of organization first and then move up toward the environment. The ability—[So if you think about] a corporation, the ability to perpetuate that entity indefinitely, so that you're not drawing down any of the resources that that you need for future—we'll call it—production or future operation. Yeah. So, in terms of the environment, I think there have been some people who have said—you know a lot of times we're referred back to this sort of seventh generation concept—you know think about how people will be affected seven generations from now with our environment—they way we treat our natural resources. I actually would take a little bit of a stronger definition to that and say it's not—we shouldn't put a timeline on it. We should be using our environment and our natural resources in a way that we can't imagine a time when it would end. One thing that I think sustainability sort of leaves out, as it's sort of theorized by the Brundlant Commission definition, is innovation—proactively addressing new problems and new challenges in new ways. And that's not to say, let's not rely upon—it's very dangerous to go down that path because there are people who say, "Well we shouldn't worry about managing our natural resources in an unsustainable way because technology will say us—you—know this sort of technocentric viewpoint.

But I do think—if I look at the sustainability of other things, of an organization for example, there are innovations that may cause them to use their resources in a different way ten years from now then they are today. So, sustainability helps us to focus on present as it's leading to the future. But I think we always have to fold in this notion of change and be flexible and adaptable as we think, so that tomorrow's sustainability may look much different than today's sustainability and our concept of sustainability may look much different from sustainability—So it can't be—it has to be a fluid definition. So through the six minutes of tape that I just talked about that I hope you can pull out something that's useful about environmental sustainability; but my caveat will be that if you ask me a year from now I will probably answer it differently because I don't know how things would—you know—if suddenly we used up all of the fish in the ocean, our definition of sustainability would have to be very different I guess.

Donnie: So let me ask you a question about this cause you were talking about the positives and the negatives and you also sort of came at it more or less like

from an organizational standpoint, is this something that you've discussed with Terry before?

Rich: I don't think I've discussed—No, I haven't discussed these. I mean we've talked about sustainability a lot, but I don't think that I've necessarily talked to him about these broader notions of it because I mean I think a lot of it is time. Terry's one person. I mean you knew him, so he was—when he was at the university he was doing a lot—a million different things. And I think that I was just trying to be very sensitive to his time, so I wasn't constantly pushing for can we meet and talk about these things.

Donnie: Do you think that he would have been receptive to a definition like that?

Rich: I think that he would have been receptive to it, because I think Terry understands that it's not—I think one thing he was always very good at with me—and he still sits on my committee, I don't mean to talk about him posthumously—he he—he's very good at pushing back and challenging you to continue developing your definition. So, I'm sure out of what I've just told you, he would have picked out a couple of things and said, "Well I would encourage you to read this and think about that and how that might change you thinking somewhat." So I don't think he would ever agree or disagree or say this is wrong or this is right. I think that he would say that some people might say that this is x, y or z and perhaps you might want to think about that. But I think he's a very genuine person and I think he's able to tell if you're genuine and have been thinking about this issue or if you're, for example, interested in kind of just the greenwashing-marketing aspect of it. In that case, I think he might be a little more impatient. I would be. Maybe I'm transposing that on him.

Donnie: No—no. That's fine. That's fine. I was just wondering whether like you in your—because you said that he has sort of helped you develop your understanding of it—especially expanding your definition. I wasn't sure base upon—I mean—your background and how you've come to think about it whether that was something you've share with him or disagreed with aspects of it.

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: But no, that's—this is good. This is good. One question I want to ask—Well I don't know if this is a question or more or less just a confirmation. It's pretty safe to say that you're familiar with like a lot of the green activities that are going on—?

Rich: On campus?

Donnie: Yeah.

Rich: [Affirmative response]. That's actually what pays part of my tuition. I'm working on a project through the Vice-President for Finance and Operations. My advisor—It's actually his project, I'm just a grad assistant—

Donnie: And his name is?

Rich: Joe [surname deleted].

Donnie: Joe [surname deleted]. Ok. And you a research assistant. What project are you working on?

Rich: We're working on—Joe is a Decision Sciences scholar—so we're working on a structured decision making approach for thinking about the future of Michigan State's power generation. So it's one piece of the kind of, are you're familiar with—I guess you're familiar with like the environmental systems team-environmental stewardship movement and all that kind of stuff. It's clicked in through that by an initiative through the Vice President of Finance and Operations' office.

Donnie: And that's Kathy [surname deleted]?

Rich: [surname deleted]

Donnie: [surname deleted]. Ok. [surname deleted]?

Rich: [surname deleted].

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: She works—She's the Assistant Vice President for Finance and Operations and Fred [surname deleted]—Dr. Fred [surname deleted] is the Vice President for Finance and Operations. So it ultimately his—I think his money and child and I think she's probably attached with administering a lot of this stuff. And then it kind of trickles down from there.

Donnie: Did you meet Terry through this?

Rich: [Nod no.] I met Terry because when I was in Communications I was sort of fanning out all throughout the university. Because I was—I'm in CARS now—because I was ultimately unhappy with the Communications program that I was in. So, as I was kind of getting interested in environmental things, I took a course on sustainability through another thing I'm involved in, which is Environmental Science and Policy

specialization, which I'm finishing this semester. But I took a course that was offered through ESPP with a great guy whose no longer here—he's in Australia now. But I took a course with him and got really interested in this concept and he directed me to Terry. And that's how I met him.

Donnie: What's his name?

Rich: Richard [surname deleted].

Donnie: [surname deleted]?

Rich: [Spells out surname]. He—I want to say that he's at Queensland, but I'm not sure. He's at one of the universities in Australia. I think he's probably part-time now because he was close to retirement

Donnie: When you met Terry was it a specific project that you were working on—or?

Rich: No. It was just kind of getting connected, thinking about things, seeing what—you know—just to kind of chat and see what was going on at the university. Maybe how I could plug in. Through that I got involved with the University Committee for a Sustainable Campus, which I still sit on. I've been on that for two calendar years now—so for a little while. And yes, think kind of cascaded from there. Now I'm on like too many committees because it's like once you like open the door you're—But I've also talked to Terry about possibly being interested in doing what he does now when I'm done—or what he did when I'm done with school. So, to some extent I would call him somewhat of a mentor as well. I feel like I can go to him with career questions or things like that and be comfortable. I mean you're a graduate student and you know that sometimes there certain people that you feel comfortable with and that you don't feel comfortable with talking about career explorations. Some people expect you to do one thing, some people expect you to do something else, some people would be disappointed if you did something. With Terry I feel like I can lay it out on the table—some days I want to be a brewer and some days I want—you know—so I think that's—Yeah but we didn't me out of any particular project or anything else; it was kind of get to know you.

Donnie: Good. I guess—I guess one of the last questions that I have of like the background is are you familiar with the website of the Office of Campus Sustainability?

Rich: [Affirmative Response]

Donnie: And what is your level of familiarity with it?

Rich: I've actually done some writing for it. I have these actual couple of stories. I don't know if they're archived or not, but one of them should be linked now on the left side of the page I think. So—I think they're called "The Green Stories" or something like that.

Donnie: Oh—"Stories of Sustainability."

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: Can you tell me a little bit about "Stories of Sustainability?"

Rich: Yeah. That was a project that got started out of a—The University Committee for a Sustainable Campus decided that we needed—that we wanted to do—when we set our goals for last year and this would have been a year ago because we were setting them for the spring and fall semesters. We wanted—Part of what we wanted to do was sort of up the visibility any to become more visible on campus. So, one way to do that we thought was to sort of do some very informal sort of journalism style interviews with people who are both on the committee and not on the committee—mostly Operations people—and ask them about—what they—kind of how they did sustainability at work. Like what do you do. I mean these are people who—Like the first story we did was Laurie [surname deleted; reference to message used in study], who works in Purchasing. She's really spearheaded a lot of effort on green purchasing. So, thinking about how she can order materials without packaging; how she can reduce materials and shipment; how people, when they redesign an office and they order materials, can they—you know—use—you know—Michigan manufactured chairs to reduce the miles traveled—things like that. So these are the kind of stories like what—The story that's up there right now Lauren [surname deleted; reference to message used in study] who is the Office of Campus Sustainability now. And this story is about her effort to get recycling to be a big initiative at MSU. I interviewed a guy in Landscaping, who has reduced the salt usage at MSU because of a new product that he has come up with that doesn't waste as much salt. You know—On-and-on-and-on. There are like fifteen stories and I've just been slow at getting them out. Because I'm a grad student and I have nine hundred other things to do so that—Yeah. That's—so yeah. That's—And then the other piece of the website that I find extremely useful is the newsletter—the EcoFoot newsletter that Terry puts out. He even provided a link to the site.

Donnie: Do you write for the newsletter?

Rich: I haven't. I wouldn't be surprised if at some point I was asked while I'm here. But I think that I haven't written anything for it yet.

Donnie: Now here's the interesting part.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Cause we're actually going to talk about those "Stories of Sustainability."

Rich: Oh ok.

Donnie: So if you click on—You see on the top you see on the top where it say GarageBand up at the top of the banner.

Rich: Yep.

Donnie: Go ahead and double-click on the banner.

Rich: How do you?

Donnie: Just click the—

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: With this down—there you go. Now go to the extreme right and your going to see one that says "squeaky"—

Rich: On the bottom?

Donnie: "Squeaky_[surname deleted]" and then another one that says "Gateway_[surname deleted]."

Rich: Yep.

Donnie: Can you click on both of those? Double-click on that. There you go. Alright now. I guess we're going to do "Gateway" first.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: So, if you want, you see where it is that plus sign that says, "zoom."

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: Go ahead and hit "+" until you feel comfortable reading.

Rich: Ok. Can I expand this out?

Donnie: Yeah. Totally. Go down to the bottom. And you see that right there?

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: Drag it. There you go.

Rich: Excellent. Ok.

Donnie: Ok. Do you need some time to read over this or are you pretty—?

Rich: I'm pretty familiar with it.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. Well tell me a little bit about how your got started writing about Lauren's piece?

Rich: Yeah. I mean I know Lauren anyway and Lauren is one of the people that I interviewed for the initiative. So, I'm a writer anyway, I'm actually working on a—sometimes I'm working on a fiction book and I do a—I just write constantly. So, if you've—you're a grad student, so you're a writer too, so I think things at times pop into your head for no real reason at all. So, I've got all these stories kind of in my head and somebody will say something or I'll re-read a manuscript and see kind of a snippet of something that's kind of cool. And that would usually—the rest of the story kind of follows. I mean the whole trick it getting the story to—So this you know, she used that word “Gateway drug” and I thought that was such a cool thing because it's sort of carrying on the philosophy that I think I was talking to you earlier about, which is that need for extension—sort of outreach. That to me seemed like a term that was both humorous in thinking about sustainability and also kind of would draw people in without being cheesy and hipstery.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: If that makes any sense. I mean “gateway drug” is kind of a funny thing that my father knows what it means and I know what it means and I don't feel uncomfortable using it. There's too many dialectical terms—you know—if you hear Jim Lehrer say that “someone got dissed” or something, it's very awkward, it's very uncomfortable, it's sort of like, “I don't know why he said that.” But “gateway drug is kind of laughable; I think we all get that. So I just thought it was a good way to—I'm really into sort of drawing people into the idea. I mean if you—So if I was reading something and I saw that “recycling was a gateway drug for sustainability,” that to me—I would want to read on I guess. That would compel me to read this story. Which is actually a nice story about someone who wasn't getting paid for her efforts, took it upon herself to basically create from the ground up a recycling program at Michigan State because she was unhappy with it. And I think that that narrative also resonates with a lot of people. I mean so, I'm think primarily of a United States audience

who's reading this. And that's sort of a microcosm of the American story. You know, you see something you doing like and you have the motivation and the talent but you also have the opportunity to be able to do something with that. There's an outlet for you—you can you can—I mean for all of democracy's faults and failures this is one good thing, that you can speak out and you can get angry; you can go to the Board of Trustees; and you can do what you need to do and protests. You can do all this stuff and that is what she did and something happened out of it. And to the extent that you can put something like that in—what is that—seven paragraphs, I think that that's kind of powerful. So, that was my thinking behind that one.

Donnie: Ok and then you said that the audience—Like you were writing more towards the US audience.

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: So when you were writing this did you like consult Terry at all when you were writing it?

Rich: One thing I always do whenever I interview someone, I go back to my participants with the actually story and ask them if they thought I had accurately represented what they thought, and what they did, and did they want to make any changes. The next move is to send it to Terry and then he could say, “No, I don't like this” or whatever. This one and the other one he made a couple of minor corrections on because I had stated something incorrectly or something. But he didn't disagree with any of the philosophy behind it or anything.

Donnie: Has this document—do you know, has the document moved beyond MSU?

Rich: Oh. I have no idea.

Donnie: In regards to like—in regards to like audience were you thinking at all of sort of the MSU community when you were writing it?

Rich: Yeah. I mean—because I mean, when I said, “US” earlier that was in terms of like the kind of the underlying philosophy of the story. I mean what I just talked about in terms of that kind of you know making some element of change because there's something you want to do that was really the intent behind that. I mean this is also a quintessential MSU story because I mean first of all the setting is at MSU and secondly it involves her as a students, which I think speaks to what is possible among the student population here on campus. One thing that I think is really hard for freshman when they come to college or new graduate students—it's

well less difficult for graduate students because I think we're pushed so heavily into our program when we get here. I mean—you know—you've got all these responsibilities. And for a lot of people it's very overwhelming and you know you have to spend some time sorting that stuff out. For freshman though—I mean undergrad I think part of your freshman year a lot of it's just feeling what available and what can we do. I mean let's be honest a lot of freshman have a lot of free time, so it can be overwhelming and I think that if you can see you know—if a freshman read this they would say, "Oh! Well this person spent three years dedicated to this issue" that that is something that's possible. If I find something that's that's that I'm passionate about—that I'm interested in. It may not be sustainability. I mean I would think if they were on the website, they'd probably have some interest in sustainability. But this could easily be transposed onto some—onto some other issue. I mean I—you know—name your issue; some type of academic governance issue, something that they think is unfair; something they wished the university engaged more with the Lansing community—you know—any number of things that a student can be passionate about. They wish that there were better financial aid packages, more scholarships, why are—you know—underprivileged students able to go abroad. I mean anything—you know—I think that that—it just shows kind of if you get your stuff together you can do something—you know—, as a student, cause you've got some time to do it here. I mean you've got—four years is a long time. And yeah—.

Donnie: Good. And so, I guess that answers that question or like let me ask this more directly then.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: What would be a desired response from someone who read this thing?

Rich: Well, I mean the desired response would be I think everything that I just said. I don't mean—I wouldn't mean for someone to read this story—I would be disappointed if someone read this story and got really involved in the recycling movement. I would be excited if they read this story and were compelled to recycle. But I kind of feel like this has been dealt—like now it's time for you to think about—you know—what else needs to be tackled.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: And not that everything ever been done, but I just kind of like this is probably something that—you know—this is something that Lauren did and she owned it and now she's kind of doing something else and recycling is a very important issue and I want to get that across, but at the same time I would like them to absorb it a little deeply than that and say,

"Ok What am I passionate about? What am I interested in? How could I do—maybe I can go meet with the Board of Trustees—obviously that's valued at this university. So I think that that's how I would hope that people would read it and not just—not just freshman. I mean I think that it can be applicable to anybody who has a little bit of time and some—and is willing to put in some effort.

Donnie: Ok. And if you were to describe—There are three terms that I'm going to throw out.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: And you have to choose one of those terms or you can choose to mix them—.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: "Global," "local," and "national." If you were to characterize this text that you wrote, how would you characterize it based on these three terms?

Rich: Well, I would use—I'd hate to say that I would use all three cause that's gonna like kind of screw up your data. But I think if you have—I would use all three but I would use them on different levels. The story itself is very local.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: It's—I mean the story is about MSU; it's about a campus program; it's a case study; it's not generalized across—you know—any university can do this. Because it takes a special person; it takes a special context. It's both national and global though because it's in the "Great Pantheon of Waste and Materials and Everything else," this is making some small difference in that global stream—in that national stream. I also think—you know—I would be contradictory if I didn't say it was also national in scope because of the narrative. I mean I'm born and raised in the United States and to some extent that experience has indoctrinated me into writing this kind of tale of someone who overcomes adversity. And these are all things that we exposed to from ESPN to—you know—the most serious publications of writing. So, that would be my answer.

Donnie: And let's—I've got two final questions about this story.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Where's it at?—Alright, do you see that second paragraph?

Rich: Yes.

Donnie: Where it says—and I'm looking at the second sentence where it says, "Through various efforts, including a ruckus campaign, Lauren and her recycling crusaders realized that while other campuses in Michigan had comprehensive recycling programs, MSU was lacking one." I'm not going to read the rest. Where you used "Michigan," would you have considered using state?

Rich: What do you mean? "The state" like something generic and not just "Michigan?"

Donnie: Yeah. Not just "Michigan."

Rich: That's an interesting question, let me think about it for a minute. [reading to himself] No because this—No. Not unless "MSU" was not in there either. I think that you would have to make both "MSU" and "Michigan" generic or you can insert another state. But I think it's important that—MSU is—I don't know—I think the largest or the second largest university in the state and that it didn't have a comprehensive recycling program, I thought was somewhat unique.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: And interesting point in-and-of itself. So, those dynamics I think are really interesting. It wasn't necessarily—I think that this could easily be—It would have to be carefully transposed to another state. So, for example, you could—say my home state—realize—You could say, "While other campuses in North Carolina had comprehensive recycling programs UNC was lacking one." Because UNC is the flagship university of the state. It would be really odd if they didn't have a program in comparison to other universities in the state. So that dynamic is important and I don't necessarily think that you can just make it generic.

Donnie: Would your—would your opinion—and I think that I already know the answer to that but I just want to confirm it—would your opinion be the same if we were to change "Michigan" to "US" or "United States?"

Rich: Only if there was that element of status. That's very important. So you would have to know the dynamics of what MSU's equivalent would be on a national scale that that university didn't have a recycling program. Something like that.

Donnie: Alright. Now, in the first paragraph where you say, "She has been featured in the State News for producing art from other people's waste, and offers an example of what surrounding ourselves with our passions can look like.

When you say “State News” would you have considered “in the local paper?”

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: You would’ve?

Rich: Because there the—you know—the proper noun isn’t as—isn’t as important. I mean I think because that—you know—I don’t feel like that—you know—in your previous question you were asking about “Michigan” and “MSU” and that dynamic was very important; it was a comparative dynamic; it was important. This could be the Lansing State Journal; It could be The Washington Post; it could be The US—whatever. I don’t think that it would have been all that different.—you know—A national paper, drawing on your question before, could’ve made a status difference I guess, but “the local paper” wouldn’t have been a problem except that—except that it would have taken away from—you know earlier you asked about local, global and national, and I think that taking the “State News” out would have been one way to start to pull out some of that local—you know because it’s like, “Why not name it?” But I guess if pressed you could take it out.

Donnie: Towards the bottom—where you have that last paragraph. That last sentence that says, “As long as these issues are out there, as long as there are ‘issues with the system,’ Lauren will be thinking about them, and they will be sustaining her.” Would you have considered taking out that phrase “issues with the system?”

Rich: No.

Donnie: Why not?

Rich: Because that’s a very value laden statement.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: The system, in the context of what—ok cause you see above she says, “There will always be issues with the system” in the paragraph before that. Much like “gateway drug,” “the system” is a—is a phrase that is sort of across society. When you say, “the system,” people understand it’s more than just, it’s my opinion that people understand that it’s more than just a organization—a something. The system it implies some type of old guard mechanism that is holding back something that you want to progress on—some issue. So as long you—so I’m—you know—I’m saying and using her words again at the end to let the reader know that she was saying this was a system that was keeping recycling out and that there will always be

this kind of system. I think it speaks—I think it really brings home the story in the sense that—When I told you earlier that I was looking for people to come away with this and to think a little deeper about it—about how they can translate this type of issue to an issue they're passionate about—she's kind of saying or I'm allowing her to say that there will always be this kind of system out there pushing—holding back your ideas. And it's important for you—you know—to keep that spirit alive. You know, we're not done; everything's not finished. There's plenty to do. So, yeah that that is very important to me that that would remain.

Donnie: Ok. And now, just sort of a point of clarity—

Rich: Yeah.

Donnie: With the system. When you were writing about this and when Lauren was talking about this did—was it sort of assumed that that she was along the lines that all of us are a part of this system or was it seen as like sort of an abstraction beyond—beyond us as individuals or beyond her as an individual?

Rich: Beyond.

Donnie: Beyond?

Rich: Definitely an abstract issue. I mean I think—I wouldn't have written that if I didn't get the sense of what I just explained to you from her. I think that that would be a little disingenuous because it's not my—It's my purpose as a writer to try and make the story translatable to other people's passions. I think that ok that that's my agenda, but it can't be my agenda to put a word or concept in her mouth that isn't there.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: So, I think—Yeah. I mean I definitely think I felt after talking with her that she was seeing this as an abstract system—it's not just the MSU system; it's not just you and I in the system.

Donnie: Cool. Are there any last things that you would like to say about this piece?

Rich: I mean I just had a lot of fun writing it. But no, I don't. No I don't have anything—I don't have anything else to say—sitting wishing—you know—knowing that I've got fifteen others of these that I've got to write. Fourteen are finished in all of them. Makes me excited to write the rest of them this summer.

Donnie: Awesome. So you can go ahead and x out of that. And then I guess the last one we'll look at is the "Squeaky Wheel."

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Can you tell me a little bit about this piece?

Rich: Yeah. I mean this piece—you know—Well, first of all I'll say that the people that are the subjects of these pieces are two very different people. You know—Lauren is much more—she's younger and I'm don't know if that's a generational thing—but she's much more confrontational—in a good way. Laurie is—she approaches sustainability a little differently. So, I think that that's—you know—I think she's much more modest about her own efforts and she's also—you know—I think there's a few different ways to view change. I think Lauren's view of change is much more "in your face" and kind of going about it that way. Laurie's path is much more—I'm going to use kind of a funny analogy but you're going to have to stick with me—it's more of the kind of "Dick Cheney approach. Like, I'm just going to hang around and keep doing what I'm doing and eventually I will be the winner. Eventually I will beat you, because every day I'm going to come in and put forth what I think is right. And then it's gonna get there and then I'll say, "Well that's the way it should have been." And I think both—there's value to both approaches. Laurie's approach is—I'm not trying to say that she subversive or evil or wants to start a war or anything like that; but I see those—those—I see that as two different approaches to sustainability. So, I had to make this story reflect the fact that she doesn't want to come out and put it in your face that she's sustainability. But she thinks that there are some things that are very obviously broken that we can change and she wants to work to effect those things. So that's what I was trying to put across here. So, "the squeaky wheel" was something she said. That title is something she said—being a "squeaky wheel." And I thought that it was so perfectly Midwestern. Just so like—you know—cause I'm from the South, a very different place. I lived in Manhattan for four years, a very different place. I come out here and this place I'm still trying to figure out. But every now and then I get little snippets of things that make a lot of sense to me about what the Midwest is about. And I think Michigan State is a reflection of the Midwest. And the "squeaky wheel" is perfect Midwestern—spot on—because it's like—just that kind of like "I'm in the background. I'm doing my thing. I'm very modest." And that's what—again and that's not a value judgment of whether that's good or bad—it's just that I wanted to get across that she was a different person. And then you see the first line of the story, she's "a modest person. She won't tell you what to do...but after listening to her commonsense approach, you'll want to listen to her advise." I mean that really sums it up right there. And that's a very

different approach from somebody talking about “gateway drugs,” “the system,” “ruckus brigades.” It’s a totally different approach.

Donnie: And I didn’t ask this about the last question but does the picture matter—between these two?

Rich: You know I don’t think that—I’m not a very—I’m a very visual person; but to me when you put writing next to a picture, to me it’s the words.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: You know—I—This was a picture I had of her. The picture of Lauren is one I think Terry took. I think that they’re great and it show them doing something that’s somewhat related to this. But I have never been someone who thinks in terms of being able to create a visual image that says all that I—I don’t know if that makes any sense? I know it when I see it, but that’s not the way my brain works. My brain works in words. To me this is where the real art is in the story and then that is just kind of on the side. To someone else, they might look at that and not be drawn in because they would say that’s a really boring picture I’m not reading this story. It’s just two different ways of approaching it I think.

Donnie: So, I’ll break protocol a little bit. Some actual data that has come forth in the interviews that I have done is all the readers, who’ve read the documents, completely glossed over the pictures.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Didn’t even notice the pictures at all.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: So exactly what you saying. So, I’ll asked them, “Did the picture matter?” and they’re like, “Oh I didn’t even think that that was a part of it.”

Rich: Oh. Ok. Well, no, I mean it’s also part of the way the page is laid out. I mean—you know—you’ve got—well I can’t—well if you scroll over there’s the link to the video, there stuff going on up here. I mean that could even be a layout issue. I mean I could see how someone could think it’s just like something that was off kilter. So—But I’m happy to hear that people are reading the story.

Donnie: Now if I were—now was your process like the same in constructing this with the last one—the one with Lauren?

Rich: Yeah. I mean I had this idea. I kind of thought that like—again this is

something that came out of the transcript again something that—the same way that the “gateway drug” thing jumped out at me. I mean you’re doing an interview now, you’ve done interviews before—you know—when you transcribe it—you know you end up highlighting some things that like really you either want to use as like a hook later or you—it just seems really interesting or maybe you want some more detail or whatever reason it just sort of jumps out at you. So, the stories that get done first out of this lot of data I have are the stories where I had something highlight in green or something—you know—that said like—and this was something in the story “The Squeaky Wheel.” I just chewed on it for a couple days and then—And that’s how I’m about to talk about it now in terms of that Midwestern sensibility. I mean when I was interviewing her I hadn’t thought about it that deeply. But—you know—I run a lot and that’s when I do a lot of my thinking. And I’m running and this is just churning in my head and “Oh! You know what? That’s actually very emblematic of what she’s kind of about and what she’s doing.” I mean I think it’s very obvious that probably from talking to me that these are not—these are not just simple vignettes about someone’s—you know—I want it to be much more purposeful.

Donnie: And so the intended response or desired response from someone who reads this?

Rich: Yeah. This is—This is much different I think. I mean this is someone who’s going to read this and think from an operations perspective and probably identify with Laurie. I think that I put it in pretty early. [reading text to himself] “She’s always been a recycler.” Actually I didn’t put it in very early. Well fairly early. “Purchasing involves”—You learn very early that Laurie is a purchasing person basically and so, she works with the university. And I think that someone could read this story and see that there’s a lot of latitude for them at Michigan State to do something that’s—I mean that that’s really the essence of what I was interested in. I mean I was in the process of applying a theory—I applied a little theory to this later, which is some theory that comes of organizational theory and behavior, which is about sort of—it’s called “the street-level bureaucrat.” I don’t know if you ever heard of it or not. But it’s basically about how people who are at the front lines of an organization that are given some kind of bureaucratic latitude to do things, so they can do—he has a little noun that he calls “discretion” that you can kind of have in your job. So, I wanted people to read this and say, “I have some of that discretion in my job”—you know—“I may be some ‘Joe Schmo’ on the frontlines mowing grass at Michigan State” or whatever “I can turn-off my lawnmower when I’m not working. I can—you know—just start thinking about little things that I can do that are kind of—you know—that can kind of push this issue forward a little bit and kind of think differently about how I’m doing things.” So, a little bit—you know different—intended audience. I mean,

it's certainly not going to be at the top of the page that this is for operations people and this is for students cause different people—different things inspire people in different ways, but I would hope that someone could read this story, see that she's not—this isn't about Louana K. Simon—This is about a person who has just worked her for a long time. And that's not anything against Laurie it's just I wanted this to be kind of an everyday employee at Michigan State that another everyday employee at Michigan State could read. And so often we read things about—you know if I have to read one more story about some CEO that isn't really great I mean, well that's fine, but there's like what a handful of these people in the world. Where's the story for the rest of us, what we can do? And I think that that's part of the intent behind that.

Donnie: Awesome. Now the last question. Those three terms: global, local, and national.

Rich: Oh yeah. As applied to this story?

Donnie: As applied to this story. Yeah.

Rich: This story, yeah. This story I think—This story I think is much more translatable on a national scale. I'll have to say that I don't think that this one has much of a national component. Because, I would say that it has the same sort of component that Lauren's story had in terms of—you know—what Laurie's reducing in the great scheme of waste of the universe this is helping. But in terms of translation to a global setting. I don't know enough about bureaucracies of other countries to really say that this has any mean to—I don't know what a university bureaucracy looks like in Germany, in Canada, in Mexico. So, I don't know if this would work. I think that it is very translatable on a national scale, because I think anyone who's—I mean large universities are bureaucracies. They're big, hulking, titanic-size bureaucracies. There's people like this at all facets of the university. And what she did was test the waters in a very non-threatening way. Putting a recycling box in the office. You know I did the same thing at my job when I worked in North Carolina for a corporation. They were going to throughout they were going to throughout thirty boxes of old catalogues and I volunteered to take them home, recycle the cardboard [and] recycle the catalogues. Well that was a little nudge on the boundary to kind of—you know—to say—you know—I would like to implement this. But it was very non-threatening. And that's the same thing that she did. And I think—I think that that would be—I think anybody could read this and say, "Well that—She didn't go and put her finger in the bosses face and say I'm going to do this and you're going to do that." I mean she just put up a recycling box and she started working with other people. I think it's very translatable to a national scale. As far as local, I mean the audience—again the context

is MSU—the and it's an MSU story—and I think that other people at MSU can relate to her; some of them may even know her. She's been here for twenty-five years I think.

But before I leave the national piece completely I think it's really—one of the coolest things in here is this piece about the “Green Tip for the Day e-Newsletter, that most recently made it's way all the way to California riding the waves of cyberspace.” I think that that is a really really a cool national piece that's in here because you know, it's not only that it's—I just flew back from California last week. How far is it? Like 1300 miles or something? It's not that it's 1300 miles away. It's that it's California; it's like totally different from Michigan. I mean I think that California probably blows people from Michigan's mind. And so I think—you know—all that it is—you know—from Muscle Beach to everything and I think that that's important from a national perspective. That someone from California can relate to something that's going on at MSU. Cause that something else that is so Midwestern is that, “Well, we have our own thing here and we're very unique, we're this and that, probably no one else wants to listen to us.” That kind of modesty that keeps coming out. And I think that someone from California, who came up to me at a conference and asked for the newsletter and that's why it's gotten to California—I think that's just kind of an important national translation bit so—.

Donnie: Ok.

Rich: That wasn't your question but it tied in.

Donnie: Actually, that was the question.

Rich: Ok.

Donnie: Alright. Anything else that you want to say about this piece? Or you're pretty good?

Rich: Again, I just enjoyed writing it. And I obviously enjoyed talking to her and I knew her. She used to sit on the University Committee for a Sustainable Campus with me.

Donnie: Alright now if you go—scroll down to down here.

Rich: Oh. Ok.

Donnie: Yeah. And then open up GarageBand again. Right there. And then go ahead and hit the red button.

Speaker **Interview: Hanna (Reader 1). Friday April 17, 2009 @ 10:00 PM**

Donnie: Alright, so now go ahead and get out of that

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: Now let's—we're going to talk through some of the things that you marked up. So if you go back down down towards here, and then just open up—yeah yeah—open up that document, open up that document, and open up that document. Ok. Let's look at this one, "Gateway Drug to Sustainability."

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: Now, I've noticed that you have sort of highlighted a couple of things here that I want to talk about.

Hanna: Ok. Donnie So, the first thing up here that you have in green, "Producing art," why did you choose to highlight that as a global indicator?

Hanna: I guess because I feel like some places make so much trash without thinking about it. For example, our country and it seems like for that to even you know—begin to be addressed there needs to be like a multitude of ideas or—you know—plans toward finding a way to convert these things that are just useless and everywhere and—you know—maybe something like artwork or something like—who knows what people might come up with for different needs. But it seems like—you know—the more you're thinking about it the better and it seems like a problem pretty much everywhere so.

Donnie: Is there any particular way that that could have been altered to get you to think about it as being a more local message?

Hanna: Maybe if I just didn't over think everything because I'm a PhD student. I mean I guess it's hard for me to like in some ways discern like which I'm going to call global and which local because in a lot of ways I just feel like ultimately the problem is that there's profit—you know—that has been made from taking people's autonomy out of their own hands all across the world and—you know—it's like—you know there's a good example of it in this country but it like sort of keep—you know—it's continually going on. And—you know—like with subsidies or like IMF loans and this-and—that that turn people away from just their sort of like their local sustainable agriculture into these huge—you know what I mean—like ways to be on this like big capitalist-consumer scale. So, it's like—you know I—it's hard for me to separate the local from the global because when I think of the

global, my tendency is to try and like resist the thought of like “globalization;” like this—you know—nice word for sort of like imperialist capitalism versus like thinking of local as all these sort of local people—you know—people who are having trouble living on the land that they’re on. It’s—you know—they’re local wherever they are. So it’s like—you know what I mean—feeling like—more like populations are sort of being exploited and sort of plays in what I consider—want to consider the global more so. You know.

Donnie: Did the “State News” not factor into how you were coding that part of the—.

Hanna: The “State News?” Yeah, I mean I guess it did. It just is—you know—like I said, part of the thing is I just tend to over think things. But—you know—I can see that and it made me think very much of an article that I saw in the City Pulse of like the contest for—you know—recycling—you know—doing like recycled artwork. So, it definitely made me think of it like happening here but it’s like when I think about trash, I’m just—you know—like overwhelmed by the scope of it, so I always tend to think of it as—you know—it’s the world; it’s the world. But I mean yeah, It’s clearly like—It’s clearly like locally; that’s going to locally happen, like people doing something with their hands—you know. So, I guess it’s like envisioning that sort of like—you know—people’s hands into some sort of solution. It’s like I envision it being necessary on like a global scale.

Donnie: Now the next one in the blue, you coded that as being local. What was your decision behind making that?

Hanna: “Grassroots,” “Student groups,” things like that.

Donnie: Ok. And then you have—you highlighted—There are three things that you have highlighted as being national messages. One is “everyone has access”; the other is “forced to throw away”; and the third is “quick to become a commodity making real issues—”

Hanna: “Masking.”

Donnie: Or “masking,” I’m sorry. Can you explain to me why you decided to code each of those as being national?

Hanna: I guess thinking about recycling seems like a pretty good idea to have it be like a normal process that that’s going to be something like as easy as it is like it’s all city-wide—like you know like sort of like—you know—governmentally monitored with trash pick-up. It’s like it should be just as easy I think or sort of like a priority or something included in tax dollars that —you know—would be sort of an easy way for people to—you

know—not just throw away—something just beyond those bags. I guess—I think that you know “quick to become a commodity, masking the real issues,” just the way that our politics is they’re so tied up with with an economic—you know that—you know—for example, like in that video, how it was saying “the real costs are sort of masked.” You know—and so obviously—you know—our president now is more willing than many men to try and say things in a way that just doesn’t privilege—you know—the bottom line of profit or what have you. So—you know—I feel like just — you know—a national identity and inspires that to be less of a commodity and more of like a responsibility.

Donnie: Ok. And the last thing that I want to ask about this particular message is— You have highlighted “how to get things done in a bureaucracy” and “there will always be issues with the system.” You highlighted those both as global indicators. Can you talk about that in particular?

Hanna: I guess I was sort of—you know—thinking of how there’s just that summit—you know—G-20 and this-and-that. And thinking about that there’s all these—it seems to me like there’s all these meetings and all these processes and this-and-that—you know—in the system the way it is—like you know—just sort of privileging and trying to encourage everyone to have like just some sort of free market or something—you know—that sort of thing. But I don’t know, it just seems like sort of a sketchy thing to hold up to hold onto so much—you know cause it’s like—if the system, —you know—how it is, is getting us into these pretty dire straits, it’s like why why try to hold to it so tight. You know and like have that be like what the vision is of how like the world interacts with one another—you know— versus something else.

Donnie: Did the picture factor into your decision-making at all?

Hanna: This one? No, I just thought it was cute.

Donnie: Alright and last about this message, how would you—if you were to sit down and think about this message as a whole would you classify it a local, global or national?

Hanna: I’d say that it would be local.

Donnie: Local? Okay. Now you can go ahead and “x” out of that.

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: Now, we can look at this one.

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: Ok. This is the sort of flyer.

Hanna: Right.

Donnie: “Local First,” I guess. “Vote Local First.” So tell me about this, you coded “the plant life” or “plant life” as local. Why did you choose to do s?

Hanna: I guess—you know—that’s what we see where we’re at.

Donnie: Like here at MSU?

Hanna: Yeah, like MSU or wherever you happen to stay—it’s like you know—you’re able to stay their saved by the grace of oxygen.

Donnie: Do you think that like moving away from plants like looking at having another image there—Do you think that would have changed whether you would have coded that as being local or not.

Hanna: Well, I mean yeah. It’s like if there was like —you know—like—you know—an image of the Earth—you know I would be like, “Ok—you know—certainly that would be like global or if it had the States—or have you—it would be national. But you know I think that the plant it’s just where you’re at.

Donnie: Ok. And you highlighted “vote local first” as being local.

Hanna: Yeah.

Donnie: Ok.

Hanna: Cause that’s the word.

Donnie: Ok and then let’s look at—you took note of some of the fine—the sort of fine print things. And so I see you have “travel less distance” and you coded that as a national/global message. Is there a sort of reason as to why you did that?

Hanna: Yeah just cause food does come so far so often—you know—like from California or Chile or what have you—you know—China—all those things.

Donnie: Is there a way that—if that—is there a way that the author of that could have changed it to make it more local rather than national?

Hanna: No, I mean they did great it says, “Locally grown food travels less

distance;”—you know—so obviously it is referring to—it’s not locally grown food—you know—but I just think like the matter of thinking about those distances expands it out.

Donnie: Ok. And you highlighted fun as being local.

Hanna: Yeah. It’s—you know—you interact with people there, so—you know—it’s different than the internet or whatever where you can interact with people nationally or whatever but it’s really not that fun.

Donnie: Ok.

Hanna: I have fun at the farmer’s market.

Donnie: And so, this one you say, “stay in local economy” you coded that as local and global, what was your reasoning behind that?

Hanna: I guess similar to what I mentioned before—you know—cause there’s lots of different local economies around the world—you know—that I’m sure people could figure out how to have their families cared for and not have that taken out of their hands.

Donnie: Ok. Alright and this last one, which I think is interesting in comparison to the one that you coded before. The one that says, “vote with your actions,” you highlighted that as being national. Why did you highlight this as national and the other and the other as being—“Vote Local First”—local?

Hanna: I guess because like the “local” thing—you know—obviously made me think, “Oh ok, local.” You know it was just the same word association. But, I guess “vote with your actions”—cause I think a lot of the times—you know—our national identity and thinking—people are thinking, “Oh how am I involved—in like—this democracy.” A lot of the time people just think, “I vote”—you know—so I guess like I just feel like that’s sort of like a common language nationally—you know—is voting. So—you know—obviously it would be individuals so therefore a sort of local bent to it, but with your actions but I feel like just—as just the scope of a phrase like that it makes me think nationally just because—you know like I said—the association with democracy is so often voting.

Donnie: Ok, Now how would you. If you were to frame this entire message as being local, global, or national, how would you sort of understand this message?

Hanna: Oh, local.

Donnie: Local? Exclusively local?

Hanna: Well, I don't know about exclusively—you know—I have a few other things on there. But it makes me think of—you know—the connections and everything But I mean—I would say that the obvious focus is like for local actions and interactions.

Donnie: Ok. You can go ahead and “x” out of that.

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: Alright, we have this one message about the “Squeaky Wheel.”

Hanna: Ok.

Donnie: So tell me about this and we can make this like the last one because I know you have to leave.

Hanna: Yeah. Hopefully she'll stick around.

Donnie: Ok. Ok. So, I'm looking at this right here and I'm seeing that you have on here—that you have coded some things as global, some things as local, and some things as national. So, let's look specifically at the things you have as local. You say, “own efforts at sustainability at home.” And so, can you tell me as to why you chose to use that?

Hanna: “Own effort”—“at home.”

Donnie: “Own effort”—“at home.” Ok. And then “reduce the inputs,” why is that coming across as local?

Hanna: Cause the people who see all of that coming in are going to be aware of what's there.

Donnie: Now that sentence before where it says, “One of Laurie's colleagues at MSU now a mainstay in the Office of Campus Sustainability,” did you read that as being local at all?

Hanna: Well, sure since I'm here at MSU.

Donnie: Alright, let's look at where you say the eNewsletter. Now you coded that as being national, why did you choose that as national?

Hanna: Well because it says here that it made it as fair as California and like just “riding the waves of cyberspace,” and just thinking about how there's that—you know—base of readers more nationally, who may be sort of privy to those—you know—that sort of information.

Donnie: Ok. And then “shape the future of purchasing.”

Hanna: Yeah. I guess more so thinking about sort of governmental policy and like—you know—where the sort of subsidies are, where the—you know—profit is in the way things are set up. Has a lot to do—you know—with why it seems like sort of an ok idea—you know—to do things in a pretty slipshod way. So, it’s like—you know—if it was like ok the people who are going to be rewarded are those who—you know—make their purchases from farmers who are small—you know what I mean—like trying to help with the watershed or like all these different things—you know—It would be a lot different than I mean like the ones who buy all these different chemicals and get all this equipment and just do more and more might end up broke anyways. So—yeah.

Donnie: And the last thing, well I guess you say, “the world of purchasing.” We can understand that as global because you say, “the world?”

Hanna: “The world,” yeah.

Donnie: And then you have “a reminder and voices of reason in an often unsustainable world” we understand that as global because it mentions the world—that sort of thing?

Hanna: Yeah.

Donnie: So now, in tandem, in the way that you’ve classified all of these things, would you—have would you classify this message? Is it global, local, or national?

Hanna: I mean—I feel—I mean clearly cause it’s—you know—highlighting the story of this particular women at MSU, that’s the local bent to it. But I feel like the sort of details of it—you know—point to that sort of expanded awareness of like—you know—how it’s more like the “squeaky wheel” is the metaphor you know like the ripple effect how someone can just get you thinking—you know—beyond sort of your one spot, which is—you know—the benefit of it I suppose, thinking about your own spot as it is.

Donnie: Now, did the picture factor in to how you understand this message?

Hanna: You know, she’s happy and actively recycling. So—you know—it seems definitely related.

Donnie: Alright, cool—cool. Well, I know that you have to leave and I was going to ask you if there’s anything that you wanted to point out about the video itself? Was it local, global or national?

Hanna: Let's see—I mean like I said I don't know if I over think things—you know—but I—you know what I mean I tend to go to a center way of thinking. But I mean, I think it was—you know—obviously like indicative of a lot of the things going on locally that people—a lot of people probably don't know about like the organic farm and then the different websites and everything, so I mean I think that that was really helpful—you know—you see the things I have as far as national is just a matter of “high tech solutions,—you know—thinking about engineering and where that is, putting question outside of this like just sort of economic bottom line, thinking about how many people are in poverty. You know I just sort of feel like a lot of this is national in scope in a lot of ways. And then global of course like how prices can't—aren't possible—the prices cheap the way they are—you know—thinking about sweatshops and this-and-that and like the jobs—so many jobs being put elsewhere.

Donnie: And these were a collection of comments that we said from the video?

Hanna: Yeah. Obviously.

Donnie: And so, you would more or less say that that video is an amalgamation of a lot of things.

Hanna: Yeah. Definitely.

Donnie: But nothing screams out as being exclusively one of the other?

Hanna: Let's see—I guess—you know—a lot of it—I guess pretty much local cause even like the global that I have here is like talking about “fair trade”—you know—“grower's cooperative”—It's like well fair trade that means you know part of that sort of exchange is right here—you know—right where you're at. Yeah it would definitely be [inaudible] local.

Donnie: Alright. Cool. Well thank you for participating.

Hanna: You're welcome.

Donnie: One of the things I was going to say is that I noticed during the pretest questions like you were sort of answering in a way like that was sort of like orienting you towards being very environmentally focused or environmentally involved.

Hanna: Yeah. Yeah.

Donnie: Have you always been interested in the environment?

Hanna: You know, I sort of really have. I remember being little and like thinking about it and being alarmed and like I thought to myself, “I want to be and environmentalist.” It was sort of a foreign word at that point but now it’s like—it’s nice because it is spoken about. You know and really out in the open in a way it definitely hasn’t been before—you know—So yeah, certainly so.

Donnie: And then this is a copy of your—[hands signed copy of consent script]

Hanna: Oh, Thank you.

Donnie: And then is that something that influenced you coming to MSU or—?

Hanna: Yeah, I think so. There’s the—you know—agricultural focus—you know—and that—I feel like that could be—you know—I think that we could really lead the way—you know—in showing how a focus on having things really like change for the better that way can just help everyone concerned—you know? Like cause think about like we’re so close to Lansing, which has so much poverty. I’m sure we can like think of ways like, what if all the dorms would like get off the sewage grid or get off the—you know—what I mean these different grids. It takes a lot of work and it’s like there are all these unemployed people in Lansing who would probably be willing to probably come and do some [end transcription].

Speaker **Interview: Michael (Reader 2). Tuesday April 28, 2009 @ 10:30 AM**

Donnie: You finished. Alright. Do you mind if I look at your data really quickly? Just to take a look at it, cause normally we have it on the screen but I have to do it differently now. Alright, so—Ok let's go ahead and look at the first one. Now in looking at this, you highlighted sort of local and global indicators in it. Let me ask you this question, what do you think this the immediate purpose of this message as you can describe it?

Michael: It seems like the immediate purpose is to really push recycling.

Donnie: Ok. And so what would your response be upon reading this?

Michael: Yeah, I would be in agreement. Definitely to recycle more on campus and I would say generally around the globe, but—which is why I put global.

Donnie: Do you think that it's just trying to change what's going on in your mind or is it trying to get you to do an actual action?

Michael: I would say do an actual action.

Donnie: Actual action?

Michael: Yeah.

Donnie: Alright. And so, if we could take a look at some of the elements you highlighted as far as this message is concerned. Under the local, you highlight "grassroots campaigns," why did you highlight that as being a local indicator in this message.

Michael: Because it seems like to me each community would have to determine their own needs and then start their own campaign for whatever they feel they need—like if it's recycling or if it's specifically recycling paper or recycling bottles and cans.

Donnie: Ok. And then you have "on-campus recycling facilities," as sort of a local message. Why did you highlight that?

Michael: Yeah. It's either going to be between local and national because I feel like there should be an on-campus facility, so it should be local in term of—you know—particularly campus, but I feel like that could be each particular type of campus around the nation. But I went ahead and put local.

Donnie: Local, ok. So you feel that it was more local than national?

Michael: Yeah—Yeah.

Donnie: Ok. And now I see that you have more global indicators in this message than anything. So, let's just go through it. You highlighted recycling. Now, is there any particular place where you see recycling on here.

Michael: Well, in the first paragraph, “recycling is a gateway drug for sustainability”—.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: That right there made me put it in global.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: Cause I also put sustainability in global. And since recycling is a key component of sustainability, to me that is also a global issue.

Donnie: Alright awesome.

Michael: Recycling and recycling programs, which—[searching the screen]—I don't know.

Donnie: It's somewhere in here. Ok. And then you also have—you put sustainability as global and you touched on that. Can you talk a little bit more about why you highlighted sustainability as being a global indicator in this message?

Michael: You know—Yeah, I just realized that I probably should have focused more on what the message was saying in terms of my own—instead of my own opinions.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: Yeah, that would have made this turn out a little bit differently. Cause this message is not—to me it focuses more local more on what's going on—on campus. If I can remember where sustainability is—well the first thing—[searching the screen]—

Donnie: You can use the mouse.

Michael: Oh yeah. “the office of campus sustainability” would be local.

Donnie: Ok. Do you want to write that down?

Michael: I guess I'll put it down.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: Yeah. I'll probably have to change it.

Donnie: Ok. So, what would you be changing now? You can just scratch out the things that you don't want in any column.

Michael: Well, I might actually put all of these in the local because like I said if I focused on what this particular message is talking about, it seems to focus more on the MSU community.

Donnie: So—so, go ahead and draw a line or an arrow towards there. Now why is it that you were all thinking about of those as being global indicators though?

Michael: From my personal opinion?

Donnie: Yeah.

Michael: Because to me those are global issues.

Donnie: Ok. They're global issues. Ok.

Michael: Yeah.

Donnie: So, what makes them local though?

Michael: In this—in this context, it's talking about these issues particularly focused on MSU.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: So, in this context they're talking about recycling as a local need.

Donnie: So, let's look at this then. Now, if they had taken out all of the references to MSU, would you—would it be safe to say that you would still sort of read that as being a global message then? Is that what you're saying?

Michael: Yeah. Yeah.

Donnie: Ok. So it's very very important that the "MSU" indicators are in there right?

Michael: Right. Yes.

Donnie: Alright. Is there anything—Now, if we were to look at this message as a whole, how would you describe it? And you can mix-and-match local, global, and national together, if need be.

Michael: Let me see, how would I describe it. I would describe it as highlighting one person's effort in—in—I'll use the word "sustainability—I'll use the word "movement."—So, it shows that one person can make an impact in this movement. Where it be—yeah, and it would be an impact that would not only affect the local but also the national as it would have an effect on the environment.

Donnie: Ok. So—so, you're saying local and then national?

Michael: And then global.

Donnie: And then global. So, it kind of like, it starts here and then moves up.

Michael: Yeah.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: It's like a bottoms-up approach.

Donnie: Ok. Is there anything else that you'd like to say about this message that you think we might have left out? Does it matter that the pictures here?

Michael: No. I didn't focus on the picture.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: No.

Donnie: Ok. Alright. Let's look at this next one, "The Squeaky Wheel." Ok. Now one of the things that you did was you had no local indicators, but you had "purchasing" as a national indicator, then as a global indicator you had "recycling," "sustainability," and "greener products."

Michael: Yeah. Well, first of all it was talking about office culture and it was like—and it uses the phrase "world of purchasing"—so I thought that it was—I put that in national because of and not global cause that office culture, that's not something that you find everywhere. Like our—all of these catalogs that we get and use—to me that didn't necessarily seem global, so I put that "purchasing" in the national—mentally associated it with our capitalist society.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: And in terms of “recycling” and “sustainability,” once again that was my own personal opinion that they are global

Donnie: But would those change now?

Michael: I would probably move them—in the context of this message—I would move them to national. And I would not say local because it emphasizes how—how what she has done has moved beyond the local context and is—you know—has even moved to California or cyberspace.

Donnie: Ok. So you would say that there is absolutely no local indicators in this message at all?

Michael: Other than—[searching the screen]—I think I saw—“Office of Campus Sustainability.”

Donnie: Now that you’re writing that down, is that something that that you thought of before-hand or is that something you’re just thinking of now?

Michael: I’m thinking of it now. I just kind of breezed over it before-hand because that’s the vehicle that this message is coming through.

Donnie: Ok. But there’s not a lot of like sort of direct references to MSU or the Office of Campus Sustainability. Like it seems as if they are talking about this in a more abstract way?

Michael: Yeah—more about—Yeah, I would says so more about offices, which could really be anywhere.

Donnie: So, if we took out things like “Office of Campus Sustainability,” which is right here, and we took out other references to MSU, you would say that this message would be exclusively national?

Michael: Yeah. I guess I would well—I mean except for the fact that it’s one person, so obviously that person is situated in whatever her local context is, but if we took out the “MSU,” if we took out the “Office of Campus Sustainability” we wouldn’t necessarily get her local context so we’d think about it to me in more of a national way.

Donnie: More of a national way. But with that other stuff then ok—so then if she’s still in here, is she—her personality, her person Laurie Barnhardt—does that make it local?

Michael: I guess it makes it local in the sense that that’s her like that’s kind of her own grassroots campaign. But it’s still kind of give that insinuation

where—you know—if she can do, other around—others period can do it anywhere. So—.

Donnie: What about this concept of “the squeaky wheel?” How did you see that as it resonated throughout the message?

Michael: To me that put her—that sit—well to me that—but I don’t know—I that kind of takes her out of just a local context because to me it situates her—you know—a wheel is just one aspect of a larger vehicle.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: So, to me it kind of puts her—well it says the world, so I guess—so I guess in the end they’re probably trying to situate her in a larger global context.

Donnie: Ok. Alright. And just one last question about this. After reading this and thinking about it and all of you reconsiderations and stuff, how would you describe this message along these three terms?

Michael: I would still describe it as a “bottom’s up” impact because we have one person, who located a problem and then is seeking to resolve this problem. But it’s not something that just like particular or specific to her. Like—you know—offices exist around the country and—you know—catalogues are obviously shipped everywhere so it’s still kind of like this one person is making a change that we all can make. So, I’m going to say kind of a local to national and then depending on various other countries—somewhat global.

Donnie: Is there one within that—is the ratio balanced between local, national and global? Or is there more of one than the other?

Michael: I would say more—I would say more local because we have this one person—obviously most likely in this area. And I would say global would be like the least. To me that’s just thrown in at the end. Maybe I shouldn’t use the word “thrown in” but I’d say, “added in.”

Donnie: Ok. Is there anything else that you’d want to note about this one?

Michael: No, I don’t believe so.

Donnie: Ok. Cool. Alright. Let’s go ahead. I supposed we’ll keep with the print ones. Now this is the flyer. And with the flyer you noted everything fell within the local. Can you talk about that a little bit?

Michael: Other than the obvious that it repeated the word local.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: And actually I forgot to write the title [writing the title to the column of local] “vote local first.”

Donnie: And the title definitely matters and factors into there?

Michael: Yes.

Donnie: Do you see this—this—this sort of message traveling beyond MSU? Or do you think it’s just created for MSU?

Michael: I mean it would fit in every particular community. Like you know—I mean if you took out the websites down at the bottom, you could have this message about every community. And then if every community deals with their own local situations first then—you know—we’ll get into other realms.

Donnie: Now you noted that local was very important in the sense that they just kept repeating the word throughout. So you would say—do you think that in making a message local it’s important to sort of have this distinct language?

Michael: Yeah. I mean there’s not that many ways that they could say it. There not that many synonyms for the word “local,” but you do want to drive home—you know—eat food grown in your—in your area—you know—or support your community businesses—I guess they could have said “community-owned businesses”—but yeah, it’s necessary.

Donnie: Now, does this message differ from the other two messages that we looked at because one of the things you said was that these sort of things have a ripple effect where although they still had all these indicators in them, you still saw them as being local, but still moving towards national and global? Do you have that same feeling about this message right here?

Michael: I think that the message lends itself to just kind of stay in the local category.

Donnie: Ok.

Michael: You would have to like think—well you know—“My local impact would have something—you know—or like what I do locally would have impact on the nation or on the globe. But the average person is not—I don’t think is going to think about it like that. But it’s not necessary for them to think about it like that. Cause thinking about it—for some people thinking about

it in terms of the nation or the globe becomes too big. So, I think this message is like—you know—in saying, “vote local first”—think about your own—if you get you local community—you know—to produce—you know—produce it’s own food and transportation et cetera and if every [audio stopped recording].

References

References

- Atkinson, D. (2004). Contrasting rhetorics/contrasting cultures. Why contrastive rhetoric needs a better conceptualization of culture. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 3, 277-290.
- Barton, D., Hamilton, M., & Ivanič, R. (2000). *Situated literacies: Reading and writing in context*. London: Routledge.
- Barton, E.L., & Stygall, G. (Eds.). (2002). *Discourse studies in composition*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Bazerman, C. (2004). Speech acts, genres, and activity systems: How texts organize activity and people. In C. Bazerman, & P. Prior (Eds.), *What writing does and how it does it: An introduction to analyzing texts and textual practices* (pp. 309–339). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Berkenkotter, C. (2002). Analyzing everyday texts in organizational settings. In Laura J. Gurak & Mary M. Lay (Eds.), *Research in technical communication* (pp. 47-66). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Blythe, S. (2007) Coding digital texts and multimedia. In Heidi A McKee and Dánielle Nicole DeVoss (Eds.), *Digital writing research: Technologies, methodologies, and ethical issues* (pp. 203-227). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Brandt, D. (2001). *Literacy in American lives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Buell, L. (1995). *The environmental imagination: Thoreau, nature writing, and the formation of American culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Clark, G., Halloran, S. M., & Woodford, A. (1996). Thomas Cole's vision of "nature" and the conquest theme in American culture. In Carl Herndl & Stuart Brown (Eds.), *Green culture: Environmental rhetoric in contemporary America* (pp. 261-280). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Connor, U. (1996.). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second-language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Connor, U. (2002). Contrastive rhetoric and academic writing: Multiple texts, multiple identities. *Forum: Applied Linguistics Newsletter*, 23(1), 1, 6.
- Connor, U. (2004). Intercultural rhetoric research: Beyond texts. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 3, 291–304.

- Connor, U., (2008). Mapping multidimensional aspects of research: Reaching to intercultural rhetoric. In Ulla Connor, Ed Nagelhout, and William V. Rozycki (Eds), *Contrastive rhetoric: Reaching to intercultural rhetoric* (299-316). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cooper, M. M. (1986). The ecology of writing. *College English*, 48(4), 364-375.
- DeLuca, K. M. (1999). *Image politics: The new rhetoric of environmental activism*. New York, Guilford.
- Dobrin, S. I. (2009). *Post-/Ecocomposition*. Paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, San Francisco, CA.
- Dobrin S. I., & Wiesser, C. R. (2002). *Natural discourse: Toward ecocomposition*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Environmental Protection Agency. (July 1,1999). Sustainable development challenge grant program. *Federal Register* 64 (126). Retrieved May 2, 2009 from <http://www.epa.gov/EPAGENERAL/1999/July/Day-01/g16773.htm>
- Frost, J. (2000). Modernism and the new picturesque. In Nancy W. Coppola and Bill Karis (Eds), *Technical communication, deliberative rhetoric, and environmental discourse: Connections and directions* (pp. 113-38). Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Gee, J. P. (2005). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Glover, K. (2000). Environmental discourse and Bakhtinian dialogue: Toward a dialogic rhetoric of diversity. In Nancy W. Coppola & Bill Karis (Eds.), *Technical communication, deliberative rhetoric, and environmental discourse: Connections and directions* (pp. 37-54). Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Holliday, A. (1994). *Appropriate methodology and social context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Holliday, A. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics*, 20, 237-264.
- Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Jamison, A. (2001). *The making of green knowledge: Environmental politics and cultural transformation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language learning*, 16, 1-20.

- Killingsworth, M. J. (1998). Ecopolitics and the literature of the borderlands: The frontiers of environmental justice in Latina and Native American writing. In Richard Kerridge and Neil Samuells (Eds.), *Writing the environment: ecocriticism and literature* (196-207). New York: Zed Books.
- Killingsworth, M. J., & Palmer, J. S. (1992). *Ecospeak: Rhetoric and environmental politics in America*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Killingsworth, M. J., & Palmer, J. S. (1996a). Liberal and pragmatic trends in the discourse of green consumerism. In James G. Cantrill & Christine L. Oravec (Eds.), *The symbolic Earth: discourse and our creation of the environment* (pp. 219-240). Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Killingsworth, M. J., & Palmer, J. S. (1996b). Millennial ecology: The apocalyptic narrative from *Silent Spring* to global warming. In C. Herndl & S. Brown (Eds.), *Green culture: Environmental rhetoric in contemporary America* (pp. 21-45). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Lange, J. I. (1998). The logic of competing information campaigns: Conflict over old growth and the spotted owl. In Craig Waddell (Ed.), Rpt in *Landmark essays on rhetoric and the environment* (125-144). 1998 Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Reprinted from *Communication Monographs*, 60, 239-257, 1993.)
- McMurray, A. (2003). *Environmental Renaissance: Emerson, Thoreau, & the Systems of Nature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Owens, D. (2001). *Composition and Sustainability: Teaching for a Threatened Generation*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Oravec C. (1998). Conservationism vs. Preservationism: The "Public Interest" in the Hetch Hetchy Controversy. In Craig Waddell (Ed.), Rpt in *Landmark essays on rhetoric and the environment* (17-34). 1998 Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Reprinted from *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 444-458, 1984.)
- Peterson, T. (1997). *Sharing the Earth: The Rhetoric of Sustainable Development*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Philippon, D. J. (2005). *Conserving Words: How American Nature Writers Shaped the Environmental Movement*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Roorda, (1998). *Dramas of Solitude: Narratives of Retreat in American Nature Writing*. Albany: SUNY Press.

- Sanchez, R. (2005). *The Function of Theory in Composition Studies*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Sapir, E. (1983). David G. Mandelbaum. (Ed.), *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Schlenz, M. (2000). Greening "Gray Literature": Reconceiving Rhetorical Models for Environmental Discourse. In Nancy W. Coppola & Bill Karis (Eds.), *Technical Communication, Deliberative Rhetoric, and Environmental Discourse: Connections and Directions* (pp. 55-76). Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. W. (1995). *Intercultural communication: a discourse approach*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Short, B. (1998). Earth First! and the Rhetoric of Moral Confrontation. In Craig Waddell (Ed.), *Landmark essays on rhetoric and the environment* (107-124). 1998 Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Reprinted from *Communication Studies*, 42, 172-178, 1991.)
- Slovic, S. (1996). Epistemology and Politics in American Nature Writing: Embedded Rhetoric and Discrete Rhetoric. In Carl Herndl & Stuart Brown (Eds.), *Green Culture: Environmental Rhetoric in Contemporary America* (pp. 82-110). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Smith, K. (2008). The population problem. *Nature*, 2, 72-74.
doi:10.1038/climate.2008.44
- Ulman, H. L. (1996). "Thinking Like a Mountain": Persona, Ethos, and Judgment in American Nature Writing. In C. Herndl & S. Brown (Eds.), *Green culture: Environmental rhetoric in contemporary America* (pp. 46-81). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Waddell, C. (1998). Perils of a Modern Cassandra: Rhetoric Aspects of Public Indifference to the Population Explosion. In Craig Waddell (Ed.), *Rpt in Landmark essays on rhetoric and the environment* (17-34). 1998 Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Reprinted from *Social Epistemology: A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy*, 8[3], 221-237, 1994.)
- Waddell, C. (Ed.). (2000). *"And no birds sing": The rhetoric of Rachel Carson*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Wiesser, C. (2009). *Toward the ecology of writing*. Paper presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, San Francisco, CA.
- Whitehead, M. (2007). *Spaces of sustainability: Geographical perspectives on the sustainable society*. New York: Routledge.

Whorf, B. (1956). John B. Carroll (Ed.), *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge: MIT Press.