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EXPERIENCE AND EVERYDAY ENVIRONMENT:

A GROUP REFLECTIVE STRATEGY

ABSTRACT:

The distinctiveness of this thesis lies in its use of Group and Researcher Reflection. It is a responsive and experiential study, which has two main aims: to explore the phenomenon, experience in the everyday environment, and to develop an appropriate method. The study centres round Group Reflection, which consists of a small group of local residents (in Ushaw Moor, Co Durham), who met regularly over a year, to reflect together. They met to explicate and explore their experience, particularly heightened experience, of their everyday environment, and together to recognise themes, and so reveal, develop and share their understanding. The group collected their themes under three general headings: nature, buildings and people. A report summarising this Group Reflection was produced with the group. The whole of the Group Reflection forms the basis for subsequent Researcher Reflection. This seeks alternative orderings and interpretations of the material explicated, themes and experiences, and considers their relationship to the wider literature on environmental experience. A number of alternative themes, or gatherings, are suggested: looking language, social concept, ordering regimes, person-environment engagement. Then, the concepts experience, place and dwelling are explored in the context of everyday environment, and a number of speculations are made about the possible changing nature of dwelling. The study is inspired by Phenomenology, and therefore seeks to allow the phenomenon to speak of itself through those who have direct experience of it, and it hopes to take into account the essential entanglement of what is studied with those who study. Finally, it seeks to encourage readers to continue the reflective journey into their own exploration of experience in the everyday environment.

EXPERIENCE AND EVERYDAY ENVIRONMENT:

A GROUP REFLECTIVE STRATEGY

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DIAGRAMS & TABLES

SECTION 1

EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCE

1.0   PROLOGUE [1]

"Had our perceptions no connection with pleasures we
should soon close our eyes on this world" (Santayana
1955).

It is strange how some environments linger in the memory as a
kind of vague haze. I returned to Staithes, a coastal village in the
northeast of England, after over 15 years. It was like returning home.
Yet the place was totally changed according to my parents. I had only
had a single week's holiday there as a child, and it had been a wet
one; much of the time had been spent in the car and the cottage. Yet I
remembered the steep street down to the tight cove and the houses
clinging to the narrow valley. Somewhere in my childhood mind it had
captured my imagination. The wet cove no doubt had that sense of
mystery and adventure. Maybe someone had told me tales of pirates and
the like, yet strangely I had little recollection of the water's edge
itself and the coast. Rather, my environmental experience focused on
the steep street and the houses gathered about it, confined by the
narrow valley [2].

I never realised how much I valued the countryside of childhood
and where I went to school until I had spent almost four years away.

It was Easter, my last university vacation, and the last break before my finals. On arriving home I felt the joy and beauty of the area. It was green of course, but there was also the smell of the pig farm and the noise of the two donkeys in the field at the bottom. I seemed to see it all for the first time, even though I was familiar with those fields and lanes, houses and streets, from my school days. I suppose I was feeling the last grains of sand sliding through the egg-timer. Time was running out, not in a negative way, but in an exciting, expectant and positive way. My university days were almost over; I would soon be leaving that town for good as well as this place, my old home.

In contrast, coming to the place for the first time was equally attention taking. We moved to Halifax in 1965, when I was about to start primary school. Moving and having a new house to explore so excited me that I ran down the stairs and straight through the plate-glass front door at the bottom. I landed in a heap of broken glass in the front garden with just one small cut on my finger. I'd forgotten all about the more immediate practicalities of walking down stairs.

Early one morning in late October 1983, I was driving from near Rannoch Moor, in the Scottish Highlands, to St Andrews on the east coast. It was a beautifully crisp morning. There was a sharp frost on everything - trees, mountains and sky all were as crystal as the clear, icy waters of the burn by the hotel. It was about six in the morning and the only sound was the music of singing birds and dancing

and tumbling water, under a rapidly brightening sky. I had spent the previous summer working at this hotel by Loch Tulla, and I had climbed almost every mountain in sight, bathed in many of the burns and the loch. It had been home, yet also like a fairytale. Driving down the empty road I put on some beautiful music on the car-stereo. Everything seemed just right. Then the wheels lost grip. The car was going all over the road. I could do nothing about it. In seconds I felt the whole vehicle lifting, turning, and flying off the road. I was upside down. The car slid down the embankment and faced the opposite direction to the way I had been going. And then it stopped. The music continued to play and the engine to run. I switched them off and got out by the left-side front door, for the other was blocked by a bush or rock. The trees and bushes held the upside down car just above the icy waters of a river down at the bottom of a steep sided valley. It was still a beautiful day. The car like a tortoise on its back, mud everywhere, axles broken, corners bent, roof bellied. The car looked dead, yet I was not sad about it. I was full of excitement, for there was something exhilarating about flying through the air and climbing out into the beautiful landscape around. As I trekked back to Crianlarich, to find a telephone, I began to appreciate the cold freshness of the morning. I was in one piece with not a scratch, the car was a write-off, and I knew I would not now get to my destination on time. It no longer mattered. It was a beautiful day and beautiful place to be.

From the previous summer, I recall a far less dramatic experience in the environment, but one of the more contemplative kind. It was a

hot sunny afternoon in late August. Too hot. The sky was so blue that a haze could be seen in the distance. This afternoon I had decided not to climb or bathe; instead I had walked down the low hill dividing the two valleys above Loch Tulla. By this stage in the summer I knew these valleys and the surrounding mountains like close friends. Passing through the remains of a former crofting village, my imagination was alive. After awhile exploring and thinking, I turned and headed down towards the grassy flatland by the meandering Alt Tolaghan. Most of the year this would be too boggy but now it was dry and warm, in fact hot, on my bare feet and legs. I dropped down into the grass and fell asleep. As I came awake, with a slight cool and refreshing breeze beginning to stir, my ears became attentive. I kept my eyes closed and just lay there feeling totally content and without a care in the world. The first sounds were of the breeze in among the long grass; this gradually was superseded by the singing of crickets and the distant songs of birds. Then, gradually I began to realise that some sheep were close by, tearing and chewing grass, tramping and shuffling about their business. Then, they seemed to be forgotten as I became suddenly aware, nearby, of a symphony of birds. For awhile I was mesmerised by the intricacies of the polyphony of many 'melodies', with differing rhythms and pitch intervals. It was more than a song, more than a conversation, but a whole 'civilisation' of busy individuals - a community blended together. Then, quite imperceptibly, this 'noisy' symphony seemed to drift away, rather than stop, and gradually fell to the odd sound here, and then there, and further into the distance. As this subsided, the stream seemed to march towards me and tumbling, gurgling and running created a whole new episode of its

own. Up until this point I had been oblivious to the sound of the river. It was about five or six feet away and yet it was as if someone had now 'turned on' the stream right beside me. The apparent suddenness and nearness of this beautiful interweaving and flowing of watery sounds led me to open my eyes and I stared up into the blue. After a short while the cool breeze returned that bit cooler and firmer, and I began to feel a strong sense that quite some time had past and I was some way from where I had set off. I rose, and within only fifteen minutes I was back home and early too. [3].

We all have many rich experiences in which the environment is a part. So often we think of 'environmental experience' as stopping to look at a scene. Yet more often the environment is enmeshed within a myriad of other experiential dimensions, or activities. Further that environment is not merely seen, it is heard, smelt, felt, and sensed in much less immediately tangible ways. From my own experience, the times the environment becomes a concern vary from a casual few minutes pondering - staring into space almost - to situations or events dominated by the environment in which they are situated. It may come forward in our attention or we may deliberately stop to contemplate it. Yet the environment is always about us, and we are always experiencing it, even if we often do not acknowledge it or dwell upon it. The more everyday or familiar environment is sometimes noticed for no apparent reason, other times events or situations bring it to our attention. Returning after a period away, such as a holiday, seems to highlight it - maybe - it looks drab in comparison to the holiday place, or rich with the familiarity and security of being home.

Extreme weather conditions can also draw our attention to the local
environment. Always, I have had a particular delight in looking at and
exploring my everyday environment after a heavy fall of snow. The
sunshine and pale blue sky, the fresh, thick white covering that
rounds everything and turns the most drab corner into something bright
and clean, all turn it into something special and like another world.
Sometimes these experiences are an escape from the mundane and
practical concerns of everyday life, yet other times they are integral
to that life.

The everyday environment seems as capable as any other to excite
those treasured experiences. In searching for a research field I
became intrigued by the nature of this experience in the everyday
environment, and specifically those more heightened experiences that
punctuate our memories of the places where we live our day-to-day
lives.

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(1) This section is deliberately informal. It 'sets the scene', by a
collage of my own experiences of environments, special and more
everyday. It represents part of my own self-reflection on environmental
experience, but I do not enter into extensive analysis of these for
they are not part of the Group Reflection. Justification for this kind
of reflection is found in Phenomenology (see 1.4).
(2) I remembered this first experience after reading Hart's
reflections on his own childhood images of place (see Hart 1979,
appendix F). See also, Eyles (1985 ch2) who reflects on his own sense
of place as the first stage in his study of the 'senses of place'.
(3) This is one of my most treasured and intimate experiences with the
environment, all the more treasured because of its link to my interest
in sound and music. (See Personality 3.5).

1.1   STRATEGY

This thesis focuses on both the development of an experiential research strategy - *Group Reflection* - and an exploration of environmental experience - specifically *heightened experience in the everyday environment*. In the following pages I quite often and deliberately shift between formal and more informal styles of writing. This is most clearly evident in the contrasts between the reviews (*1.2, 2.1, 2.3*), the 'self-reflections' (*1.0, 2.5, 3.5*), the group record (*2.4*) and the researcher reflections '(*3.1, 3.2, 3.3*). In particular, I frequently use the pronouns '*I*' and '*You*'. In this I seek to avoid setting the research at some hypothetical and safe distance in consciousness, but to bring the reader into more immediate 'participation' with the reflective process, and so to share in the research. I hope by this more direct communication between researcher and reader, to encourage you to gain a deeper insight into group and researcher reflections and to continue reflection into your own experience of personal everyday environments, and beyond to the products of the academic and the artist.

The underlying philosophy is *phenomenology*. Therefore, I have sought to allow the method of research, and the style of report, to

develop in response to the phenomenon under study and with respect to those participating in it, including the group and myself (see Relph 1985b, Seamon 1983b, Rowles 1978b). The thesis text is divided into three main sections:

1) Exploring Environmental Experience

This forms the main background of the study, and includes the main review of the topic area, a summary of the underlying philosophy and a statement of the initial thesis.

2) Group Reflection

This focuses on the fieldwork and presents the specific method used and empirical material generated.

3) Significance

This is a kind of analysis and synthesis, or more accurately the researcher reflections on and beyond the fieldwork. It does not seek firm conclusions but aims to stimulate yet further reflection [1].

It might seem a somewhat complex structure, and in a sense it is a thesis within a thesis. The group reflection, and group record, are a study in their own right, which in turn are situated within a wider, more academic methodological and substantive study. The traditional ingredients - review, method, data, analysis and synthesis, and findings - essentially remain but are not contained neatly within the confines of chapters. Instead, these materials are spread across the thesis and considered in various degrees in the numerous sub-sections.

This attempts to respect the nature and development of the research as it unfolded. It tends, by necessity, to lead to some inevitable repetition, and the continuity may at times seem to be less than certain. However, overall it appears to be a more appropriate and effective structure than the usual broad chapters. Each section seeks to be a whole in itself, separating the background, fieldwork, and retrospective researcher reflection and speculations. The various subsections differ in scope and depth, but within a section they should naturally lead on from one to the other as a single reflective movement, the three main sections forming the main divides, or 'changes in gear'.

This first section consists of a preliminary exploration of the research 'problem'. The research grew out of a specific interest in environmental aesthetics and its methodological problems. The review of environmental aesthetics (*1.2*) led me to consider the basic components, or presuppositions, of the field - aesthetics and environment (*1.3*). From these it became clear that a phenomenological epistemology (*1.4*) might offer an effective access to one of the key issues of recent environmental aesthetics, that is the significance of aesthetic experience in the everyday context. From these reflections, I formulated an 'open' research statement, or focus, indicating an interest in heightened experience in the everyday environment as significant to local residents (*1.5*). In tune with phenomenology, this thesis statement is not offered as an hypothesis to be tested, but as a starting point for a reflective journey.

Running throughout the thesis is a general atmosphere or, more accurately, an ethos of *sensitivity, understanding and sharing*. This process has been neatly summarised by Nan Fairbrother (1974, p53) in a criticism of the practices of the modern Landscape Architect, who in manipulating and imposing his designs and technologies on nature, can be likened to someone "... conducting a choir of animal voices - with sufficient labour and ill-treatment they can be trained to make the special noises we want, but a far more reasonable way is to choose animals with suitable natural voices and *simply let them sing.*"

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(1) Here, I seem in contrast with the position held by David Seamon, who has done much to promote phenomenology in environmental research. In personal correspondence (14/4/87) he writes: "I must say that your comment, 'I refuse to have a clear conclusion...' dismays me. I feel strongly that the kind of work we do must provide some sort of *closure* - this is our main aim: to provide intellectual order to everydayness. Not to do this, from my point of view, is an escape from responsibility (and a certain amount of laziness). We only arrive at phenomenology when this larger order appears." I accept this point but also feel that the researcher cannot claim any superiority in his conclusions or ordering, and, though bringing a particular research task to completion, he should encourage the continuation of the reflective process. In other words we complete one journey only to begin another (see 3.0). See also Zimmerman (1985) in reference to phenomenology, the question of 'applicability' and 'spiritual discipline'.

1.2   ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS

This thesis grew out of an exploration of a wide body of literature which has been most frequently labelled 'landscape aesthetics' (Leopold 1969b, 1970, Appleton 1979a, Punter 1982, Dearden 1985a). It is multifarious and somewhat amorphous, including research in architecture and design, planning and resource management, psychology (specifically environmental psychology), and physical and human geography. Porteous (1982a) sees this as a major problem for the field, yet Dearden (1985a p263) argues that "such diversity is healthy. Landscape quality is not a simple concept. It cannot be fully appreciated through the application of one universal approach or technique...". The continued growth of the field seems to support an optimistic position, yet concern is justified when we stop to consider the quality of this work and the limited progress in theory and more significantly in understanding. Interestingly, much recent work has been concentrated within psychology and geography.

I have chosen the label 'environmental aesthetics' (Wohlwill 1976, Carlson & Sadler 1982, Porteous 1982a/b) since it most accurately represents the work done in the field, its strong links with environmental perception and behaviour research (see Saarinen et al 1984), and the overall trend in research towards broader concepts

of 'landscape' and 'aesthetic' [1].

Origin

Concern with an aesthetic of environment, as a question of natural beauty, the cultivation of taste and sensitivity, and the linking of the appearance of environments with human psychological and social well-being can be traced back to the natural philosophy of the Greeks. The term 'aesthetics', from the Greek aisthanesthai, referred to perception, particularly of nature and art (Saw & Osborne 1968), and the discernment of beauty (see 1.3). Modern interest in environmental aesthetics has been closely linked to attitudes to art, and grew out of the writings of landscape gardeners and growth of Romantic attitudes to nature (Appleton 1975a, Relph 1981, also Seamon 1984b). The separation of art and society, and aesthetic and everyday life, with the rise of 'scientific humanism', was crucial in the formulation of the modern field of environmental aesthetics, yet such a distinction would have been alien to Greek philosophers.

By the beginning of the twentieth century there was a recognised concern with natural beauty, or scenery, which with hindsight might be labelled 'environmental aesthetics'. Natural environments were treated in similar manner to works of art - objects to be looked at. Since then the field has gradually grown, and from 1960 almost exponentially. This may have been encouraged by the rise in outdoor leisure, particularly walking and climbing, sightseeing and photography, and an increased concern with environmental quality, the impact of industrial development on natural environments and the pace

of change on historic urban settings.

In geography, the earliest reference to an 'aesthetic' task is found in Younghusband's (1920) call for us to "compare the beauty of one region with the beauty of another so that we may realise the beauty of each with a greater intensity and clearness." However, credit for the introduction and development of an *aesthetic geography* must go to Vaughan Cornish. His interests included the 'cult of scenery' (1935), the scenic heritage of Britain (1930, 1932), the beauty of natural form and contemplative perception (1928, 1931, 1934, 1935). Probably Cornish's best work is *'Scenery and the Sense of Sight'* (1935) which considers tone, colour and texture, following loosely the analogy of art, but going onto speculate about the nature of vision. His work has affinity with much modern environmental aesthetics, particularly the interest in perception, beauty, natural scenery, enjoyment of landscape for its own sake, and the linking of environmental quality with cultural and personal well-being.

Definition

"Questions of landscape aesthetics have rarely been approached directly by those concerned with environmental values. Rather, researchers have prefered to discuss questions of preference, taste, perception, interpretation, evaluation, management and modification as more tangible surrogates or indicators of aesthetic experience" (Punter 1982 p100). This ambivalence has contributed to the lack of a rigorous attempt to define environmental aesthetics. No generally

agreed definition exists for the subject matter and methods. This is not surprising considering the field's broad and interdisciplinary nature, with major contributions from architecture and design, planning and resource management, psychology, and geography, which have radically different traditions and purposes. Environmental Aesthetics has been a loose collection of numerous subfields, often restricted for much of the time within a particular discipline, as in the case of environmental psychology and psychological aesthetics (Craik 1970; Berlyne 1960,1970; Wohlwill 1966, 1976, 1978). There have been limited coalitions, as in the case of landscape evaluation which linked geography, geology and planning, though much work remained within planning; and to a lesser extent landscape preference studies brought together psychology, geography, planning and design, though at a more theoretical level. However, rather than common research themes and methods, it is differences which seem to be most significant. In particular, the tension between academic research and design and planning application; and between positivist and humanist research philosophies. Carlson & Sadler (1982a) suggest that it is a "practical imperative more than anything else, which unifies the field". This may be so, but what of a definition of environmental aesthetics?

It is difficult to find ready definitions for the field as a *whole* due to its breadth of interests and approaches, and its peculiar nature. This is dominated by the relative absence of basic exploration of the ground concept of an 'environmental aesthetic' and the predominantly pragmatic or empirical attitude of much research. Porteous (1982a) describes the field as 'rampantly empirical', and a

consequence of this has been an overreliance on a gut feeling for 'working definitions', generally restricted to particular sub-fields - such as landscape evaluation and landscape preference. Many researchers have recognised that this threatens to undermine the field in the long term, and several have made limited attempts to provide definitions and frameworks to describe the field (eg Carlson & Sadler 1982, Porteous 1982a/b).

The working definition has generally been on the lines of: environmental aesthetics is concerned with visual quality of the environment and environmental values. Only rarely have researchers stopped to consider the grounding of the field (eg Appleton 1975a). There is a general failure to grapple with the actual problem of definition, many restricting it to a statement of research aims. In the case of landscape evaluation and preference studies, this is to develop an objective technique to measure scenic value or environmental preferences (eg Robinson et al 1976). Basic statements have acted as simple and narrow 'definitions', for instance Linton's 'landscape as a scenic resource' (Linton 1968, Leopold 1969b, Zube 1973b) and the phrase environmental values or preferences (Zube 1979, Punter 1982).

Appleton (1975a) offers a more extended consideration of the aims of his research, exploring the nature of an environmental aesthetics, and offers a degree of definition. A basic question is recognised: "What is it that we like about landscape, and why do we like it?"(1975a p1). This is a general concern behind much envirdmental aesthetics, and most clearly was the immediate inspiration of Cornish

in his 'aesthetic geography' (1928, 1935) and Linton in his attempt to map the scenic quality of Scotland (1968). The question of 'whose environmental values?' has also been considered, particularly in landscape preference research and recreational studies (Shuttleworth 1984, Brush 1976, Peterson 1976). However, as Zube (1979) admits for planning orientated studies: "I have used 'landscape aesthetics' and 'scenic value' interchangeably ... the terms are used here to refer to the value individual or group places on the combined perceived visual attributes of the landscape." This nevertheless broadly covers most 'evaluative' research, but cannot be a definition for the field as a whole. An alternative definition might be: environmental aesthetics is concerned with "whether the common visual element in real and imagined landscapes is also a common aesthetic one" (Appleton 1979b p16). This also seems inadequate, in part because it does not enlighten us about what an 'aesthetic one' might be and recognises only the 'visual element'.

The origins and subsequent development of environmental aesthetics suggest that any definition of the field must accommodate both academic studies, including positivist and humanist perspectives, and practical applications, including planning, design and education. Further, it needs to include a dynamic component, namely the interaction of person and environment, as well as the attributes of the environment and the values held by people - visitors, users and local inhabitants. Environmental aesthetics is not merely description, though this is important, but also seeks explanation and understanding, as is attempted in the theoretical perspectives

(Appleton 1975a, Smith 1977) and interpretative studies (eg Meinig 1979, Burgess & Gold 1982a). Nevertheless, it can be argued that design and planning *applications* will necessarily have a narrower definition than the *research* field itself, but in any case, it is the research field which most seriously requires a reasoned and explicit definition.

Though intuitively there is a general appreciation of environmental values, research has shown them to be far more complex and difficult to identify, explain and understand, than many supposed. This necessitates a *pluralistic* definition of environmental aesthetics that might accommodate research in a multitude of subject areas and using different methods, but also one grounded in an understanding of aesthetics [2]. At the same time, this definition needs to provide a framework both to collect together pertinent past research and to offer clear directions for future research. Such a framework will encourage a consolidation of research, greater depth and rigour, and more effective and integrated progress, in contrast to the present amorphous and often *ad hoc* expansion of the field.

Probably the most clear and generally accurate definition is that presented by Carlson & Sadler (1982a p5) which suggests that:

>   *"Environmental Aesthetics ... covers the stored*
>   *meanings as well as the structured appearance of place*
>   *and landscape."*

This both covers past research and seems to be in tune with present trends or research directions. It recognises the broadening of the concept of 'environment' to include not just landscapes or scenery, but also places, that is the integration of aesthetic experience with everyday life. Further, it respects the importance of the twin 'traditional' concerns with the 'structured appearance' of environments and the 'stored meanings' or values. It is of course phrased in a 'post-positivist' language, but nevertheless offers research directions in both evaluation and interpretation perspectives, and more implicitly in empirical and theoretical approaches. Though no definition can be perfect, this one provides a useful basic formulation of the field as presently constituted [3].

Development

The development of environmental aesthetics can be represented by three phases in which particular approaches seem central to research progress. There is much overlap between these phases, a general growth in almost all research activity, and a consequent broadening of subject interests and methods employed. Development of the field has been particularly vulnerable to external factors, including the 'rise and fall' of interest in and resources for town and country planning, the growing public and political interest in 'environment', and the pendulum of the social sciences from quantitative to more qualitative epistemologies. Internally, the field appears to have suffered a

number of 'blind alleys', as Punter (1982) suggests, for as the myriad

of approaches and the volumes of work have progressed, only limited

progress has been made on understanding the key issues of the field.

The *first phase* consists of two related themes: the resurgence

of interest in the impress of culture on the landscape, and the

visual, formal qualities of the built environment. The first is most

notably seen in the historical work of Hoskins (1955) in Britain

'[4]'and the more cultural stance of J B Jackson (1970) in the USA (who

began the magazine *Landscape* in May 1951 - see Meinig 1979e). Also

significant was the paper by Lowenthal (1961) on experience,

imagination and epistemology, which reminded geographers of the

importance of the disinctions between geographic and everyday attitudes,

objective and subjective, individual and world view, cultural

specificity, subjectivity and imagination, and the anthropocentric

nature of world views, and environmental experience '[5]'. A more direct

contribution to environmental aesthetics was the work of Lynch (1960)

on the 'imageability' of city environments. Significantly, this

focused on the everyday environment where people live out their lives,

a built environment of pathways, boundaries (edges), districts (or

neighbourhoods), landmarks and nodes. It was a concern with the

perception of formal visual qualities, and the coherence of mental

representations or images that condition behaviour and 'welfare' in

the urban environment. Significantly, Lynch presented an environmental

aesthetics that was immediately relevant to the designer, architect

and planner of the city (see also Appleyard et al 1964). Cullen

(1961), whose work has attracted less attention, also made an important

contribution. He recognised three important gateways into his subject: optics and motion, developing the concept of 'serial vision'; place and position, including here and there, and inside and outside ; and content, both material and expressional. In spirit, this links back to Cornish and is suggestive of the later perceptual and experiential work.

Whilst Younghusband, Cornish and the landscape philosophers of the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries considered the contemplation of scenery and the visual beauty of natural environments, the work of Hoskins, Jackson (and many of those contributing to *Landscape*), Lowenthal, Lynch and Cullen focused more on the man-influenced or -imprinted environment. Further, Lynch and Cullen focused specifically on the urban context, perception, visual formal qualities of the environment, and, to a lesser extent, behaviour.

The *second phase* of development is characterised by quantification and evaluation. It generally covers the work labelled 'Landscape Evaluation' (eg Mitchell 1979) including landscape preference studies. During this period the field is strongly linked to concern about environmental quality and management, and major contributions can be recognised in planning (eg Fines 1968, Penning-Rowsell 1974, Robinson et al 1976). The emphasis, thoughout the phase, remained landscape description and value, and there was a lack of theory (Appleton 1975b). Two themes can be recognised: an initial focus on landscape as a resource, description and evaluation of the 'aesthetic object' (usually by 'experts'); and measurement of

environmental perception and values of 'the public', or users. In both cases, the focus remained, as in the previous phase, on the 'view', but now attempts were made to quantify and evaluate environments more 'objectively'. Perception and consensus studies (eg Penning-Rowsell 1982, Shuttleworth 1984) grew out of criticism of 'expert' evaluations, and appreciation of the potential differences between 'experts' and users or the wider public.

In efforts to be more 'objective', systematic, cost-effective, comparative and consistent (or 'repeatable'), both 'expert' evaluations and landscape preference studies sought surrogate measures or substitutes. In the first, geomorphic features were used (eg Linton 1968, Leopold 1969a/b, Doornkamp & Cooke 1974), including water and land-use elements, and scores allocated intuitively. Thus mountainous scenery with the presence of water gained higher ratings than urbanised land (as in Linton 1968, Fines 1969) but no firm evidence was given to support such valuations, except the systematic nature of the studies and the repeatability of findings (eg Gilg 1975a/b, 1976). Further, 'uniqueness' (Leopold 1969b) seemed to be the main criterion when scenic value was compared to economic considerations. In landscape preference studies it was soon realised that questioning users on site was limiting and transporting statistically sufficient numbers of 'the public' to particular environments was impractical. Further, there was a need to standardise responses so as to gain 'objective' and general assessments. Some work used behaviour patterns as a surrogate measure for landscape preference, as in recreational research. An alternative which generated many studies and some

significant general findings was photosimulation (eg Shuttleworth 1980a/b, Law & Zube 1983). This strategy relied on photographs of landscapes presented to relatively large numbers of respondents, who were usually asked to rate their preference. This work was conducted in a scientific fashion, somewhat akin to much positivist psychology, using 'control' views, sampling and statistical analyses. Progress was made in refining techniques and repeating results, yet difficulty remained in explaining those results. In addition, both 'expert' evaluations and photosimulation studies separated the study environment from the everyday life and behaviour of those living and working in that environment. The environment was reduced to an appearance, a view or a scene, but landscape as the context of life, that with existential meaning, was ignored.

The *current phase* is more pluralistic and qualitative (eg Appleton 1979a, Carlson & Sadler 1982). It is associated with a renewed interest in cultural and interpretative studies, ordinary and everyday environments, and an interest in environmental meanings (Meinig 1979a, Burgess & Gold 1982a/b). It is both a reaction to the earlier phases and development from them. There is also some attempt at consolidation, with a greater quantity of reviews and attempts to define the field (eg Mitchell 1979, Punter 1982, Carlson & Sadler 1982).

A useful simplification of this more complex phase is to recognise two basic themes: attempts to develop theory or explanation; and interpretative approaches. In general, theory development has not

been intrinsically generated but derived, as modification and development of theories from other fields. Theories have been chiefly biological, psychological and behavioural in orientation (eg. Berlyne 1971; Appleton 1975a, 1982; Smith 1977, 1979; Kaplan & Kaplan 1975, 1982). However, only limited attempts have been made to test and develop these theories by those not directly involved in their inception (eg Clamp & Powell 1982). Though the explanations offered by the theories for environmental aesthetic values and associated behaviour remain highly speculative, the theories do seem to provide important frameworks for organising existing insights and recognising directions for research. Personal construct theory (Kelly 1955) in particular has been widely used both as a theoretical stance in itself and as a route to assessing other theories (Fitzgibbon et al 1985; Zube et al 1975). Other frameworks have also been promoted, for instance a materialist perspective (Punter 1982) and phenomenology (eg Seamon 1982, 1984a, 1986a/b/c).

Common to much theoretical and interpretative work. has been the concept 'experience'. In the theoretical approaches this is essentially defined as the relationship between person and environment, that is beauty is seen as neither solely in the eye of the beholder nor restricted to inherent properties of the environment, but arising in the interaction between person and environment (Appleton 1975a p48). In more interpretative and humanistic studies a more complex and less mechanistic concept of 'experience' has been generated, which focuses primarily on meaning [6]. 'Experience represents the "various modes through which a person knows his world"

(Tuan 1975 p149). Interpretative studies describe in order to understand the aesthetic meaning of particular environments or lifeworlds; theoretical approaches set up descriptive hypotheses in order to explain environmental aesthetic experience in general.

As a consequence of this more complex concept of experience, interpretative studies have gone beyond the narrow confines of environmental aesthetics as it has generally been considered - that is as a concern with the evaluation of the visual properties of landscapes. Much previous work concentrated on the visual, beautiful and special, and the outsider view of environments. Much interpretative work has considered the contrast between insider and outsider views, environments as landscapes, places and homes, and as everyday or integral to day-to-day activities, considering symbols and signs, and many other dimensions.

Overall, therefore, environmental aesthetics has broadened, in subject matter and variety of methods, moving away from evaluation to interpretation of environments, and from consideration of the object and the subject, to the relationship or experience that subsists between them. However, there appears to have been a marked *retreat from the interdisciplinary position* of the field, with an increased concentration in environmental psychology and experiential geography, both of which have concerns outwith what is considered 'environmental aesthetics'. The field may be at a cross-roads: one direction leads to its demise or absorption into the broader concerns of person-environment studies; the other leads to renewed growth and more

assured identity through a broader definition of 'environmental aesthetics' and a more rigorous understanding of the grounding of the subject in aesthetics and environment.

Classifications

Classification is problematic, but several authors have attempted this task. The worth of this exercise is that it can show the range of approaches, the relationships between them, clarify the field definition, offer directions for future research, and may indicate an underlying unity.

Some authors call for a synthesis (eg Punter 1982), but probably more worthwhile is a dialogue (Buttimer 1984). Synthesis under a single 'paradigm' is frequently implied, for instance quantitative or positivist (eg Mitchell 1979, Sell et al 1984), or materialist (Punter 1982). Though useful for coordinating research effort and recognising priorities and openings for further research, such syntheses restrict and distort the authentic development of environmental aesthetics [7]. It is important to permit alternative epistemologies, to recognise the significance of similarities and differences in approaches, and the potential for cooperation and dialogue (see Polkinghorne 1983). Two types of classification can be recognised: a limited grouping of closely related sub-fields, and attempts to cover the whole field.

Mitchell (1979 ch6) classifies *landscape evaluation* into three subfields.

1) 'Landscape Consensus' in which a team of experts designate areas of high (scenic) value based on field reconnaissance and/or analysis of maps, aerial photographs and other material. Definite measurements are rarely made and reliance is put on 'expert opinion'. National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty were designated on this basis and seem to have wide public agreement, despite the reliance put on such a small and elite group of evaluators (Turner 1975; Gilg & Blacksell 1975).

2) 'Landscape Description' represents a specialised form of resource inventory, and involves a quantitative description of the attributes of a landscape which are then assessed against 'agreed' standards. The work here includes landscape architects (Litton 1972, Litton & Tetlow 1974), geologists (Leopold 1969a/b), physical geographers (Linton 1968, Doornkamp & Cooke 1974), and planners (Fines 1968). Common elements are the recognition of landforms and landuses, and their arrangement, and intuitively derived rating scales.

3) 'Landscape preference' studies assess personal and social preferences for landscapes, either directly or indirectly. Indirect methods infer attitudes through the examination of existing sources, such as literature, painting and behavioural patterns (Lowenthal & Prince 1964, 1965, Lowenthal 1968). This has some affinity with recent humanistic studies using literature and art sources. We may also include here, Marsh (1985), who uses postcards to infer landscape preferences. The direct approach usually involves asking respondents

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to indicate their preference for actual landscapes or landscapes represented by photographs on a 5-point semantic differential scale. This has been a very productive field, particularly in photo-simulation (eg Shuttleworth 1980b, Law & Zube 1983). User-related studies have also sought to reveal preferences (eg Priddle 1974).

Mitchell's (1979) classification focuses on studies of the natural environment; in contrast Punter (1982) offers a classification of studies in the built environment. He recognises three interdisciplinary perspectives or 'research paradigms':

1) 'Landscape Perception' has roots in the perception paradigm in psychology and centres on the subsequent adoption by social and design sciences in the development of a behavioural perspective. The research included here covers perception (Wohlwill 1976), cognition or images (Lynch 1960, Downs & Stea 1977), and evaluation (Smith 1977).

2) 'Landscape interpretation' is a broader grouping including work in archaeology, architecture, history, anthropology, geography, planning and design. The central idea is that landscapes admit a multiplicity of meanings. The comprehension of this meaning involves the search for order and for significance (Tuan 1971). Punter includes research in cultural geography (Sauer 1925, Tuan 1974), literary and art criticism (Lowenthal & Prince 1964, 1965), and historical interpretation (Hoskins 1955).

3) 'Landscape/Visual Quality' Punter considers to be the weakest in

terms of substantive work but one with an alarmingly strong influence. It is a concern with the formal qualities of the landscape and only secondarily with emotional and aesthetic effects. It includes the 'townscape school' (eg Cullen 1961, Whistler & Reed 1977), and also work on natural landscapes (eg Litton & Tetlow 1974).

Sell et al (1984) offer a broader classification of environmental aesthetics as 'landscape perception', developing an earlier categorisation of Daniel & Vining (1983). Such classifications reveal the complex and changing nature of the field. Sell et al (1984) recognise four paradigms, the first two as 'applying' and the second two as 'understanding'. They discuss them in terms of the rather positivist criteria - *reliability, sensitivity, validity, utility:*

1) 'Expert' includes evaluation approaches from both fine-art (eg Litton 1972, Wright 1974) and ecological (eg Leopold 1969b) theoretical traditions [e];

2) 'Psychophysical' which considers the environment as a source of stimuli to which individuals respond (eg Shafer et al 1969, Daniel & Boster 1976). Some recreation work may also be included (eg Peterson 1974);

3) 'Cognitive' approaches consider landscape quality as a construct built up in the human mind, usually from visual information. Included here are the psychobiological work derived from Berlyne's arousal theory (eg Berlyne 1960, 1971, Wohlwill 1976); and the related sentics approach (eg Greenbie 1975). Also Appleton's habitat and prospect-refuge theories (eg 1975a) and concern with the

socio-cultural effects of landscape (eg Buhyoff et al 1978, Riley 1980, Zube & Pitt 1981);

4) 'Experiential', probably the most directly relevant to the present research, centres on experience or man-environment interaction, both the aesthetic quality of landscape and meaning. Work here includes studies of literature and art (eg Lowenthal 1979, Sopher 1979) and empirical phenomenology (eg Seamon 1979). Research has considered ordinary landscapes (eg Meinig 1979a), sense of place, historical and cultural impressions, and visual blight (eg Lewis et al 1973).

Sell et al suggest a 'transactional model' (Ittleson 1973) might be used as a framework to integrate the four paradigms. Such a model, however, presupposes a common philosophy which clearly does not exist. In contrast, Porteous (1982a/b) suggests a more practical mechanism for synthesis or dialogue which builds on interactions *already* evident between the different research strategies. He recognises four groupings:

1) 'Humanists' include authors such as Tuan and Lowenthal, and tend to focus on exceptional landscapes. Porteous also notes the work of Relph. Porteous considers humanist perspectives to be 'elitist', since they allocate high aesthetic value to pre-modern forms and are apparently anti-modern and anti-urban '?'.

2) 'Activists' include those who campaign for 'better environments', and spend less time on research. Often they are more sure about what they do not like than what they like.

3) 'Experimentalist' are large group, mainly of social scientists, and

much of the research aims to measure environmental standards implicit in people's attitudes and responses to enviroments. Much use is made of photographs and other surrogates, and semantic differential scales. Again, non-urban environments generally gain higher ratings, and there is a lack of theory.

4) 'Planners': Here Porteous includes Lynch's legibility and imageability (Lynch 1960, Appleyard et al 1964), and Cullen's (1961) more aesthetic approach to movement in cities.

Porteous (1982)

RIGOUR

← major influence
◁— less influence
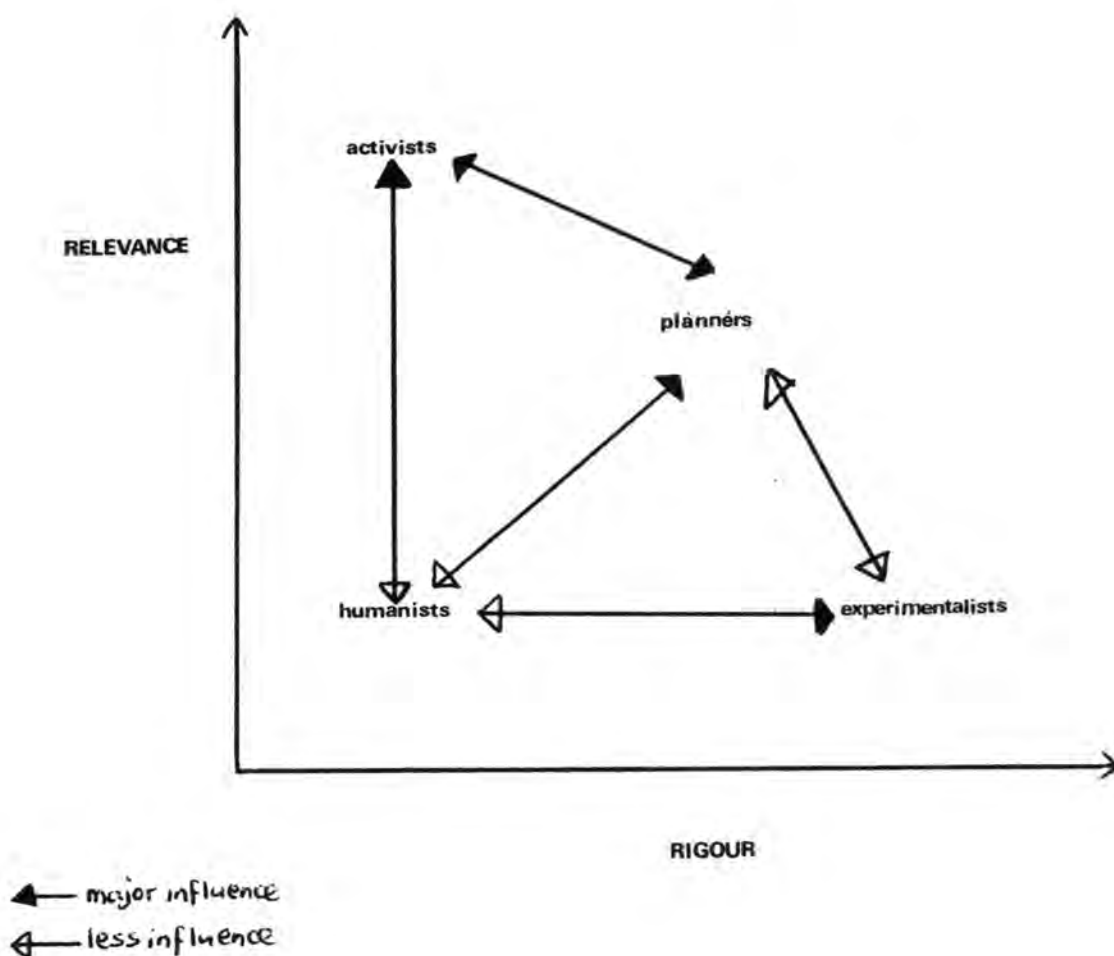
A synthesis is suggested on the basis of a simple diagram which positions each strategy in terms of *methodological rigour* and *social relevance*. It is important to realise that by 'rigour' he refers to scientific method, and by 'relevance' to both policy application and more radical marxist and humanist views. He does not take account of the 'rigour' of phenomenology nor the relevance of personal reflection as education. If these are taken into account the diagram becomes more questionable, though the basic classification has much intuitive attraction. He argues that advances in environmental aesthetics depend on fruitful collaboration between them, and therefore avoids the temptation to regard any one approach as superior to the others.

Porteous' classification is non-specific in that it could be applied to other fields of knowledge, but does seem to be the most useful within the present literature. My own classification returns to the specific situation of environmental aesthetics, but hopes to complement this classification. All classifications suffer from exclusions, anomalies and the limitations due to the perspective of the author and date of compilation. Here, I seek to offer a yet further, *updated perspective*, an *amplification* of the potential of the Carlson and Sadler (1982a) definition of environmental aesthetics, and *prepare the ground* for the present research.

Five groupings may be recognised:

1) *Evaluation* -

    a) resource or inventory approaches

    b) preference measurement, including photosimulation

2) *Interpretation* -

    a) formal aesthetic description, or language

    b) cultural-impress approaches

3) *Theoretical* -

    a) explanatory speculation or behavioural theories

    b) general frameworks or models

4) *Experiential* -

    a) literary and art interpretation

    b) empirical experiential strategies

5) *Others* -

    a) methodological debate

    b) application, including policy and education

The categories are overlapping, and some individual work falls under more than one. However, these categories reveal the main dimensions of environmental aesthetics and put the present research in context [10].

Evaluation includes quantitative approaches which seek to measure either the visual quality or value of the environment and/or

environmental values or preferences. These approaches both describe
and rank environments in a systematic way, often using surrogate
measures of environmental value. They seek 'objectivity', and hope to
integrate their result with other quantitative, usually economic,
assessments of environmental quality, and so contribute to planning.
There has also been a general lack of theory in evaluative strategies
(Appleton 1975b), and a tendency to focus on 'landscape' and
'scenery', that is the contemplation of rural and wild environments.

Resource and inventory approaches focus on the surface features
of environments, usually (though not always) landforms. Contributions
come from geologists, physical geographers, and planners, and the
environment is considered a 'scenic resource' [11]. Preference studies
were a reaction to the reliance of resource approaches on 'researcher
values' and seek to quantify the landscape preferences or values of a
wider 'public' (eg Penning-Rowsell 1982). This work includes
environmental perception and quality research (eg Craik & Zube 1976)
and photosimulation studies (eg Shuttleworth 1980a/b). Some research
has relied on the observation of behaviour to gain an indication of
preferences, as in some recreation research. More frequent have been
photosimulation studies which use photographs of landscapes and ask
individuals to indicate and rank their preferences. This latter work
has gained a high degree of 'scientific rigour', with, for example,
the ability to control view composition and use statistical analyses
(eg Ross & Kopka 1983; Law & Zube 1983) [12]. Some researchers combine
aspects of both resource and preference approaches, for instance
Litton & Tetlow (1974) develop a model of aesthetic response as well

as a descriptive classification of aesthetic dimensions.

Interpretative approaches do not necessarily assign value but offer a more qualitative description. The formal aesthetic studies, predominantly in architecture and design, have focused on developing a language for environmental aesthetic description (eg Alexander et al 1977, Alexander 1979). One can also include here the work of Lynch (1960) and Cullen (1961) on environmental images [13].

A particularly broad literature is provided by studies of the cultural-impress of the landscape, that is the interpretation of the landscape as like a text of culture and history (Hoskins 1955), of contemporary society and including concern about 'visual blight' (Relph 1976, 1981, 1982; Lewis et al 1973), or as 'geography as the mirror of man' (Tuan 1971). Here there is greater concern with ordinary, everyday and valued environments (Meinig 1979a, Lowenthal 1979, Burgess & Gold 1982). Usually researchers have not taken the role of the critic *per se* (Lewis 1973), but have sought to interpret and discover the underlying *meanings*. Increasingly, attention has focused on 'experience' rather than aesthetic object or subject, and humanistic and hermeneutical philosophies have been adopted. Therefore, concerns have spread beyond the traditional interests of environmental aesthetics to topics such as experience of place (Relph 1976), attachment to environment or topophilia (Tuan 1974), the person-environment relationship (Seamon 1979a) and the nature of

dwelling (see Seamon & Mugerauer 1985) [14].

Also important here is work on the symbolic environment (eg Tuan 1978, Meinig 1979d, Cosgrove 1980, Greenbie 1982). Specifically relevant to an 'aesthetics' of environment, Cosgrove (1980 p123) suggests that "..symbols give landscape its character of art." Appleton's theories (1975a, 1978, 1982) recognise the symbolic meaning of environments as habitats and a legacy of our evolutionary past. The main interest has, however, been a broader interest in environments as cultural and social symbols indicative of present and past society and life (Hoskins 1955; Lowenthal 1976, 1979, 1979c; Lewis 1979; Relph 1982).

Two *theoretical* strategies may be recognised: attempts to describe and explain the environmental aesthetic, and frameworks or models to organise research. Some suggest that there is lack of explanatory theory (Appleton 1975b, Punter 1982, Dearden 1985b). However, while not dominated by theory, three bodies of theoretical speculation are immediately evident each of which has generated much writing. They are all essentially behavioural theories and focus on the person-environment relationship. They link responses to mainly visual qualities with consequent patterns of behaviour. These theories seek reasons for and the function of the environmental aesthetic.

Berlyne (1960, 1971; Wohlwill 1976) has developed an empirical-based and laboratory tested theory for "psychological

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aesthetics' which considers the impact of environmental stimuli on arousal and exploratory activity. In geography, Appleton, influenced by Dewey's philosophy, has developed two interrelated biological or evolutionary theories (1975a, 1982). Habitat theory speculates that aesthetic satisfaction is related to or grounded in the ability of the environment to satisfy all our biological needs, and the highly rated environment is an 'ideal habitat'. However, modern man relies on technology and thus his 'aesthetic' assessment of the environment may not coincide with the ideal habitat but the aesthetic may represent a legacy of our evolutionary past. This is more obvious in Prospect-Refuge theory which argues that the landscape offers opportunities to see and to hide, and it is a combination of these, which are legacies of our hunter past, that provide aesthetic and psychological satisfaction. This theory has been much explored but has proved difficult to test (eg Clamp & Powell 1982, Greenbie 1982, Woodcock 1984) [15]. Smith (1977, 1979) offers a somewhat different theory, a neuropsychological approach derived from split-brain theory. His focus is more on an urban environment, the formal aesthetic of the environment and mental structures. He establishes an initial trichotomisation of fore- and mid-brain, and through a wealth of examples seeks to explain how a variety of common urban physical elements create a complex aesthetic potential. Where Lynch (1960) calls for 'legibility', Smith's theory promotes greater variety and complexity in the urban environment as aesthetically positive [16].

All the theories provide frameworks, but some researchers have

limited themselves to the specific issue of a framework. Craik (1968,
1970) developed a perception framework: observer, media of
presentation, response format and environmental dimension. This might
be useful in photosimulation work. Alternatively, Litton & Tetlow
(1974) adapt it to a formal aesthetic approach: environmental stimuli,
observer state of mind, context of observation and aesthetic
experience. This kind of framework offers the pertinent dimensions
that might be considered. Sell et al (1984) adopt
Ittelson's 'transactional model' of environmental perception (Ittelson
& Cantril 1954, Ittelson 1973). Personal construct theory (Kelly 1955)
is adopted by Fitzgibbon et al (1985) to evaluate and model complex
environmental stimuli - that is environmental aesthetic experience.
New experiences are evaluated or 'construed' from the order made out
of previous experiences. The approach has been applied in the work of
Zube et al (1975) for direct evaluation of landscape preferences, and
for testing theoretical models of landscape preference such as
Appleton's (1975a) and Kaplan & Kaplan (1982). Carlson & Sadler
(1982b) offer a simpler 'visual display format' to conceptualise the
context of environmental aesthetics (again derived from Craik 1970).
This consists in the intersection of two continua: scale (large-small)
and character (natural-built). Seamon's (1979a) consideration of
movement, rest and encounter, especially his 'environmental awareness
continuum' and 'triads of habituality', also offers frameworks.

Experiential approaches is probably an inaccurate label, but
within this grouping can be included all those studies which have been
encouraged by humanistic philosophies and qualitative methods. Much

work has been done using literature and art materials, in part on the assumption that the 'artistic mind' is particularly sensitive and able to express environmental experience in the art product (eg Tuan 1978b, Pocock 1981b, Seamon 1984b). The work is generally interpretative and empathetic, seeking to gain an appreciation of the writer's or artist's perception and intuitive understanding of environmental experience and meaning, and, by extension, also gain insight into the culture and society of his or her period and place (eg Rees 1978, 1976, 1982; Harrison 1982). This also includes a realisation that art-objects may represent and in part determine the 'reality' for a particular culture, both as an individual and as a shared 'way of seeing'. The media could also provide a massive store-house of information on experiences and meanings for environmental aesthetics (see Burgess & Gold 1985; Berger 1972, 1980).

Others have sought to reflect on their own experience of contemporary environments, and in particular to develop an ability to see, think and describe clearly (Relph 1984). In this respect, Seamon has done much to promote phenomenology as both a philosophical position and a practical science (Seamon 1979a, 1979b, 1982, 1984a, 1986a,b). Though much of this has been personal reflection by a researcher - as in Relph and Tuan especially - some researchers have attempted to involve others in the reflective process. This may involve environmental awareness groups (Seamon 1979), field exercises (Pocock 1983b) or environmental education in general (Goodey 1982) (17).

Finally, the category labelled *other* includes both methodological debates and concern with policy and education. The first has focused on questioning the 'rigour' of approaches, particularly criticism of evaluation approaches and theoretical strategies. The discussion has centred on the validity of studies (eg Penning-Rowsell 1981b), the rigour of techniques including the use of statistics and theory (eg Hamill 1985), the question of objectivity and subjectivity (eg Dearden 1985b), and alternative research methodologies [16]. Policy and education concerns the relevance and 'use' of environmental aesthetics. Zube (eg 1979) and Mitchell (1979) and many others have seen environmental aesthetics as relevant to planning in natural environments. There has been less enthusiasm in urban contexts. In particular, interest has focused on linking evaluations of scenic resource and landscape preference to recreational use (eg Warsynska 1976, Peterson 1976). Doubt has however been expressed about the immediate applicability of environmental aesthetics (Lowenthal 1979). More recently, there has been greater interest in environmental education (eg Goodey 1982, Seamon 1979b, Tandy 1979). In a broader context Relph's 'clear seeing', taken from Ruskin (Relph 1981, 1982) and 'environmental humility', derived from Heidegger's dwelling concept (Relph 1981), and Seamon's concern with environmental education and the work of Goethe (1978) indicate an area with much opportunity [17].

Environmental Aesthetics: five research groupings

THEORETICAL

EVALUATION

application
&
methodology

INTERPRETATION

EXPERIENTIAL
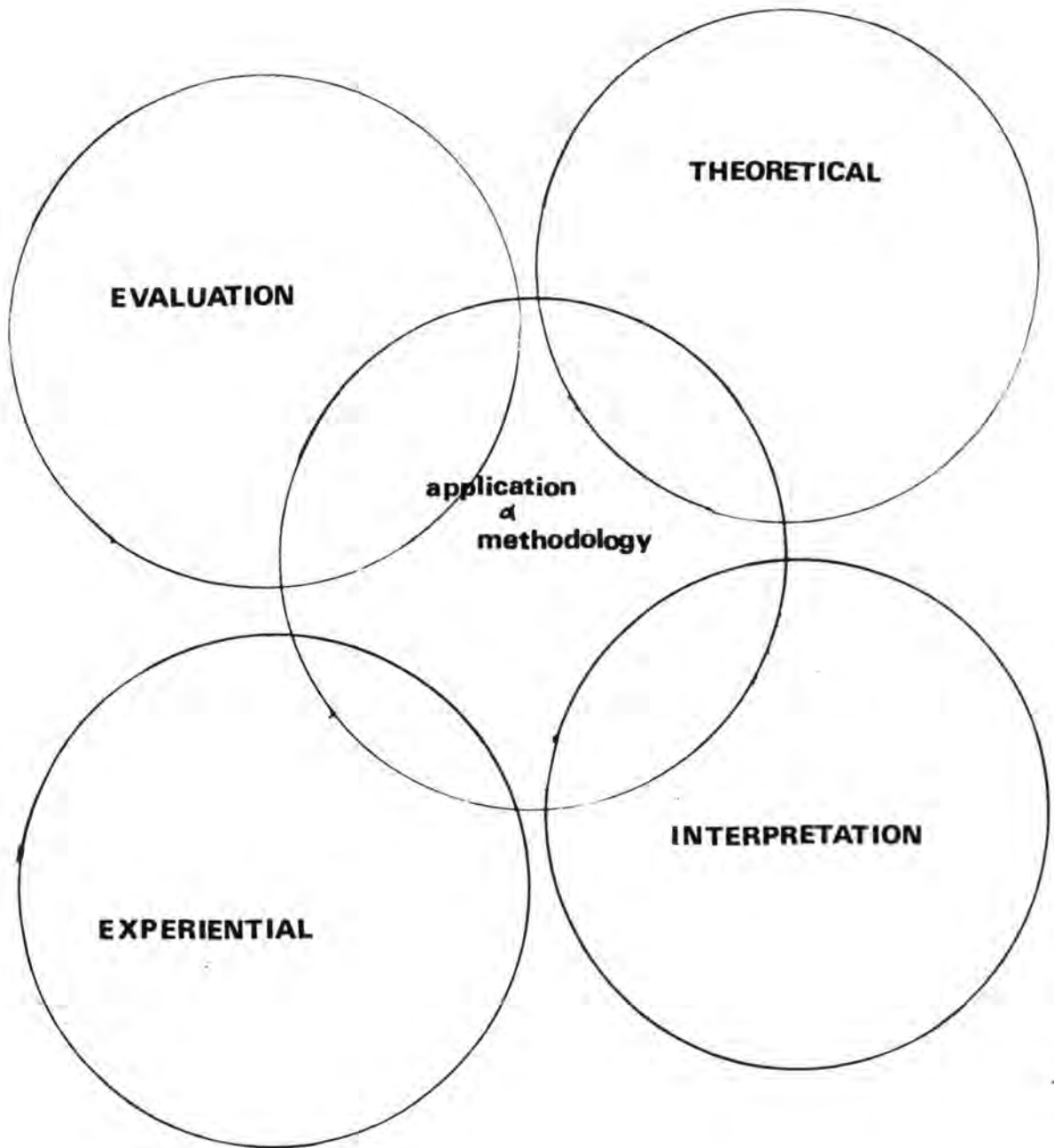
Issues, Criticisms and Directions

At the risk of sweeping generalisations and misinterpretations, a number of issues, significant criticisms and consequently directions for future research can be recognised. Here I will *not* consider in depth the criticisms of particular approaches, *but* I will mainly concentrate on those issues that concern environmental aesthetics in general. In this I suggest possible directions for future research and the ground from which the present research grew.

Several researchers feel that environmental aesthetics has as yet not come of age (eg Porteous 1982b); however there is much evidence to the contrary suggesting a gain in maturity across the field. The recent reviews, the increased methodological debate and the revised and developed reformulations of past approaches all point to this. There is now a greater willingness to recognise the limitations of existing research, particularly of quantitative techniques and the cultural and social biases in research. Also, there is more willingness to allow and encourage the co-existence of a plurality of approaches, develop dialogue, and a more explicit acceptance of the complexity of the 'environmental aesthetic'. Further, there is more appreciation of the dangers of surrogate and partial measures or indicators. "The current challenge in landscape aesthetics research is not to add further to the already existing plethora of evaluation techniques (*and other approaches*), but rather to develop cogent guidelines to match technique to the problem at hand" (Dearden 1985b

p265). More generally, there is a need to consider more thoroughly the basic epistemology of environmental aesthetics.

There have been many *inaccurate criticisms* of environmental aesthetics. There is not, overall, a rural bias to research, but a relative balance between urban and non-urban research. However, the distinction between townscape and landscape has been maintained and seems a "wholly illogical distinction" (Porteous 1982a). There is much emphasis on special or 'beautiful' environments, but also much work on 'visual blight' and ordinary environments (eg Lewis et al 1973, Meinig 1979a, Bales 1985).

In 1975, Appleton (1975b) was correct to recognise a "theoretical vacuum"; however Punter (1982) is incorrect to continue to assert this. As I showed earlier, when the field is considered as a whole, there has been much theoretical work including speculations or 'theories', and frameworks or conceptualisations [20]. Nevertheless, much earlier work, especially in landscape evaluation, was "rampantly empirical" (Porteous 1982a). Further, research has not concentrated purely on an aesthetic object, but has considered the preferences of subjects, and much work has also been done on 'aesthetic experience' and environmental meaning. However, the differentiation and possible relation between environmental experience in general and an 'aesthetic' experience has not been explored, and is particularly ambiguous in 'experiential strategies' (eg Seamon 1979a, Relph 1982).

There has been a lack of rigour in the use of *language* and a

dangerous tendency to invent fresh terminologies (eg Cullen 1961,
Litton & Tetlow 1974, Alexander et al 1977). In particular few authors
explore the literature of aesthetics(Appleton 1975a is a major
exception). The meanings of the terms 'aesthetic', 'environment', and
'environmental aesthetic' are rarely explored in any depth and no
commonly agreed, explicit definitions are held. *Environment* is
commonly dubbed 'landscape' and considered a scene or a view (see
Cornish 1928; Linton 1968; Fines 1968; Meinig 1979b/c; Relph 1976,
1981). It is that which is contemplated or observed for its own sake.
The participatory nature of environment is rarely appreciated and
accommodated within conceptions of environmental aesthetics. The
aesthetic is associated with 'beauty' , 'value' or 'taste', with an
implicit or explicit reference to an analogy with art, but only rarely
is the term explored or defined (eg Punter 1982) and the art analogy
itself needs critical investigation. Many concepts lack rigour and
consistency in application and are rarely questioned, for instance the
notion of 'uniqueness' (in Leopold 1969b), and the distortion of the
'perception' concept (Punter 1982). The lack of a commonly agreed
language can also be seen with the terms 'meaning', 'value' and
'preference' (see *1.3; 1.4*).

Related to these criticisms are those relating to the use of
quantitative techniques. The validity of the generated quantities as
surrogates for environmental values, the use of semantic differential
scales, the criteria for weighting variables and assigning relative
values (eg Lowenthal 1979, Penning-Rowsell 1981a) and the underlying
assumptions of mathematical and statistical techniques (eg Peterson

1976, Robinson et al 1976) may all be questioned. Hamill (1985) offers a particularly thorough criticism of Leopold (1969a), and by extension the many studies using similar techniques. He in particular notes the confusion over ordinal and cardinal numbers, the incorrect use of these numbers in simple mathematical operations, incorrect or 'spurious numbers' to represent words, and the use of these numbers to create 'spurious concepts' such as the 'uniqueness ratio'. Further, he notes that Leopold based his work on 'bad data', that is data collected for other purposes than environmental aesthetics, consequently limited by a particular format and level of accuracy. This criticism could also be extended to interpretative and experiential approaches using photographs (postcards), paintings and novels (eg Marsh 1985, Rees 1982, Harrison 1982). Of course, these material sources were not created for specific use by environmental aesthetics research, but then again all situations studied outside the 'laboratory' will have come into being for purposes other than and prior to research interest. This therefore should not be a criticism of 'data source' as of how that 'data' is interpreted. Hamill (1985) also notes that concepts are used with inadequate operational definitions, which is also a criticism that may be made of environmental aesthetics in general. There are therefore not only procedural problems but also conceptual ones.

However, there is a realisation within other work in environmental aesthetics that environmental values are extremely complex and qualitative. Early on, Lowenthal (1961) noted the *subjectivity* of 'geographic experience', including the difference

between individual and world views, and cultural dimensions. Tuan (1973b) reminds us of the ambiguity of attitudes to the environment which is integral to the very nature of our everyday life. A danger therefore in all environmental aesthetics, whether qualitative or quantitative, empirical or theoretical, is excessive generalisation, the dangers of universals, and losing sight of cultural and situation specific biases. Furthermore, as is appreciated in art (eg Hume 1977), aesthetic 'taste' is cultivated, and thus it develops with experience or practice, and much of our tastes is learnt. Interpretative approaches could also learn much from hermeneutics (eg Ricoeur 1981).

An excessive concern with the *visual* is widely recognised (eg Porteous 1982a, Sell et al 1984). Nevertheless, the visual is generally considered the most accessible and adequate dimension of enviromental aesthetics (eg photosimulation work; Shuttleworth 1980a/b). Appleton (1982) recognises that the actual experience of environments is a "total sensory experience", though here it is far from clear where the 'aesthetic' can or should be distinguished from the 'non-aesthetic' within this total experience. In recognising the "excessive concern with 'visual quality'", Porteous (1982b) calls for a holistic notion of environmental experience, and notes the need to consider auditory, olfactory, tactile and kinaesthetic components, and consequently the need to develop new languages for these further dimensions.

Some work has already been done on sound experience (Southworth

1969, Schafer 1977, 1985), and Pocock (1983) considers the different sense modes through 'experiential fieldwork' exercises. In Craik & Zube (1976) non-visual aspects of environmental quality are considered, and in Seamon (1979a, 1980a/b) a broader notion of environmental encounter, related to phenomenological concepts such as body-subject and lifeworld, is considered including the "continuum of awareness' and a 'basic contact'. Little work has been done on the olfactory, tactile and kinaesthetic senses, though these are difficult to record, measure and analyse. Sound would seem to offer the greatest possibilities, though "it is unlikely that non-visual environmental aesthetic research will ever have high priority. Yet non-visual sensory research could be extremely useful in enhancing navigability of blind and physically handicapped persons" (Porteous 1982b p80). Some work has recently been done on the environmental experience of blind people (Hill 1985). This and the work on environmental experience of older persons (Rowles 1978a/b, 1980, 1983, 1986) suggest that we need also to consider aesthetic experience as a composite of sensual experience modes, specific to particular types of people (age, sex, education, social and economic status, culture) and integral to individual lifeworlds, biographies, social milieu, and so everyday life.

Therefore, environmental aesthetics must consider the *context of aesthetic experience*. Until recently this has been neglected. There has been an excessive focus on the contemplated view, the scene, a 'picture' and a photograph. This observational stance is a consequence of the art analogy underlying the field, but it is also a result of

the 'outsider', or visitor, approach to environments. As Relph (1976) reminds us there are degrees of insideness and outsideness to place and landscape experience. Further, and possibly more seriously, this observer perspective reflects a limited or false concept of 'environment'. Environment is not just a backcloth, a scene or picture. It is not an object in the sense of works of art; rather it is participatory (Ittelson 1973) and surrounds and engages us (Grange 1985). Further, in addition to the environment itself, there is the life-context or lifeworld of our taken-for-granted, as well as conscious, activity, both special or everyday which takes place within and with that environment. It is here that the environment becomes a repository of human striving and therefore meaningful (Tuan 1971). It has been realised that the notion of signs and symbols, in both the environment and our behaviour, are important factors (Appleton 1975a, Cosgrove 1980, Greenbie 1982). However, there is much scope for a more thorough exploration and for the development of a framework to bring together the divergent perspectives.

Finally, there is an underlying ambiguity between aesthetics as heightened *perception* and aesthetics as *judgment* or evaluation. This is most clearly seen in the contrast between evaluation, and interpretative and experiential strategies. This reflects a lack of concern with explicit definition and understanding of aesthetics. The evaluations further raise the question of *ethics* (Porteous 1982a), that is 'whose values?' and the imposition of those values on others. In the case of environment it is important to recognise that it is a shared environment and there is usually a contrast between the insider

and outsider views, This is particularly evident in the city-dweller view of rural and wild landscapes in contrast to those who live there. Environmental aesthetics has been dominated by the city-dweller perspective. Also important are the communicability of aesthetic feelings (Falk 1983), the validity of surrogate indicators, and the fact that subtle and important aspects of aesthetic experience may not be expressible (particularly in the context of research). Recent research has taken a greater interest in appreciation or sensitivity, rather than judgment. This has been associated with consideration of a hitherto neglected area of environmental aesthetics - *education*. Education, or the 'cultivation of taste', is a major part of art aesthetics yet only recently has consideration begun to emerge in environmental aesthetics (eg Johns 1979, Relph 1981, 1984, Seamon 1978, 1979b). Finally, there has been little concern with the 'aesthetic attitude' (see *1.3*), that is the mode or perspective of encounter implied by environmental aesthetics. In most cases this has been assumed to be contemplative, a detached looking, and concern with the appearance of the environment for its own sake. It is in the light of such criticisms that it seems important therefore to stop and consider the concepts 'aesthetics' and 'environment'

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(1) Considering my research as a whole, as it unfolded beyond this review, through the group reflections to the researcher reflections, it now overall seems more appropriately labelled 'experiential geography' - that is a consideration of the experiential and existential significance of person-environment - and therefore is not confined to 'environmental aesthetics'.

(2) Hence, I have included a separate division on 'Aesthetics and Environment', *1.3*, which seeks to look at these basic components.

(3) It could almost be a definition of 'experiential geography' (eg Seamon 1979a, Seamon & Mugerauer (1985).

(4) Hoskins has had a remarkably significant influence in Britain, most notably over the development of TV documentary 'geographies' (see Youngs 1985) and coffee-table landscape books. The general theme is that landscapes can be read as a text, like a book of society, its culture and history (see Lewis 1979).

(5) In many ways, Lowenthal set the scene for an *'experiential geography'* which was not taken up fully until the late 1970's.

(6) In phenomenological research, knowledge is first and foremost seen as manifest in 'experience' rather than 'facts', and hence is 'lived' rather than 'thought'.

(7) By 'authentic development', I mean both to permit the phenomenon, an 'environmental aesthetic', to reveal itself in itself (as in phenomenology) *and* to allow the recognition or development of different concepts of an 'environmental aesthetic' – cultural, social, historical etc. The danger of any dominating paradigm, including positivism and phenomenology, is to blinker or tie us to a single ontology, and even limit our epistemology.

(8) Here 'ecological' is related to Mitchell's (1979) 'landscape description'.

(9) This could be argued against much environmental aesthetics, see for example the work in landscape evaluation (Mitchell 1979).

(10) The present research might be put under the label 'empirical experiential'.

(11) Note Leopold 1969a/b; Fines 1968; Linton 1968; Doornkamp & Coroke 1974; Robinson et al 1976; Land Consultants 1971; West Midlands 1971; Worcester 1974; Gilg 1975a,b, 1976; Crofts 1975; Laurie 1965; Wright 1974; Arthur 1977, et al 1977; Warszynska 1976; Patsfall et al 1984; Hudson 1986.

(12) Note also Shafer et al 1969; Coughlin & Goldstein 1970; McKenzie 1974; Kaplan et al 1972, Kaplan 1975, 1977; Unwin 1975, 1981; various in Craik & Zube 1976, especially Peterson, Brush, Daniel, Bechtel, Ladd, etc; Peterson 1974; Donnelly et al 1973; Clamp 1975, 1976; Helliwell 1978; Hodgson & Thayer 1980; Shuttleworth 1980a,b, 1983, 1984; Penning-Rowsell 1982; Zube & Pitt 1981, Zube et al 1982; Duffield & Coppock 1975; Herzog et al 1976, Herzog 1984; Feimer 1984. On landscape meanings and values note also Penning-Rowsell 1986.

(13) Note also: Fairbrother 1970, 1974; Wurman 1971; Alexander 1979; Rapoport & Kantor 1967, Rapoport 1982; Higuchi 1983; and Appleton (1975) & Smith (1977) which are placed under Theories.

(14) Other references: Lowenthal 1961, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1979, 1979a/b/c; Lowenthal & Binney 1971; Tunnard & Pushkarev 1963; Blake 1964; Peirce 1979; Lewis 1979; Prince 1979; Samuels 1979; Meinig 1979e; Jackson (ed Zube 1970), Jackson P 1979; Tuan 1973a,b, 1974, 1978, 1979; Burke 1978; Daniels 1982; Bales 1985; work on symbolic landscape such as Cosgrove 1980; Meinig 1979d; Greenbie 1982, see Punter's (1982) call for use of semiotics in environmental aesthetics. Also note Wright (1954) on 'natural house'.

(15) Appleton (1975a p262) writes: "It has never been my intention to prove anything but rather to open up discussion."

(16) See also Greenbie (1975) on sentics approach. The label

'aesthetic' may be questioned in all of these theories; and as Porteous (1982b) notes, they suffer from the dangers of a non-human base to research ideas, the hazards of aesthetic universals, and reductionism.

(17) For literature and art studies, eg Pocock 1981 including Pocock (1981a), Cook, Olwig, Thornes & Cosgrove, Middleton, Seamon, Prince etc. (1981); Seamon 1984b, 1985; Rees 1978, 1982; Salter 1978; Harrison 1982; Watson 1979; also note Johns 1979. An interesting study using postcards is Marsh 1985. Seamon (1986c p22) suggests, under the heading 'environmental awareness, that 'a *phenomenology of environmental aesthetics* argues that particular building forms, spaces and surfaces evoke corresponding experiential and symbolic qualities.' This phenomenological perspective is of two types: either 'cerebral reflection' by the researcher, or first hand experience by the student through direct contact 'exercises'.

(18) For instance: Kaplan 1972; Appleton 1975b; Penning-Rowsell 1973, 1975, 1981a,b; Penning-Rowsell & Searle 1977; Dearden 1981a, b, 1985b,c; Price 1976; Anderson et al 1976; Wohlwill 1976; Carlson 1977; Lowenthal 1979; Jacques 1980, 1981; Powell 1981; Clamp 1981; Litton 1982; Hamill 1985.

(19) methodology, policy and education: Laurie 1965; Penning-Rowsell 1974; Robinson et al 1976; Warszynska 1976; Zube 1979; Tandy 1979; Johns 1979; Cosgrove & Thornes 1981 (on Ruskin); Haynes 1981; Shoard 1981, 1982; Oliver 1982, Hall 1982; Uzzel 1982; Lee 1982; White 1984.

(20) Ofcourse, this point depends on one's definition of theory - here I take the broad definition which seems to be in line with Appleton's notion of theoretical speculations.

1.3   AESTHETICS AND ENVIRONMENT

In this subsection I briefly consider the interface between aesthetic philosophy and person-environment studies. This includes both the *communication* between two research areas, aesthetics and environmental aesthetics, and *preconceptions* about 'aesthetics' and 'environment', particularly within environmental aesthetics. These are major topics and therefore I focus on those issues which were most pertinent in the formulation of the present research [1].

Modern aesthetics, that is since the late nineteenth century, appears to have totally ignored environmental aesthetics. More unexpectedly, aesthetics has neglected nature (Hepburn 1968, Rose 1976). This is despite the interest of pre-modern aesthetics in both natural beauty and works-of-art. Further, most definitions of aesthetics still refer to both the beauty of art and of nature as central concerns, though not necessarily equal [2]. Modern aesthetics is dominated by art (Saw & Osborne 1968), and despite frequent claims to the distinction between 'aesthetic theory' and 'art theory' (eg Dickie & Scalfani 1977), in practice aesthetics is treated as the philosophy of the arts, particularly fine art.

Environmental aesthetics has also neglected communication. Writings in aesthetic philosophy are almost totally neglected up until the mid-1970's. However, this in part reflects the tangential attitude

to an 'environmental aesthetic', that is the field has taken up an
analogy with art, generally landscape painting, relied heavily on
surrogate indicators of environmental quality, and adopted the
'aesthetics' of everyday language - a concern with the contemplation,
usually visually, of beautiful objects designated 'art'. The dominant
concern has been environment as landscape or scene. Further, Punter
(1982 p100) raises the question: how does the notion of 'environmental
quality' or 'value' relate to 'aesthetic value'? Fortunately, some
researchers have stopped to consider their preconceptions of
aesthetics and/or environment, and as a consequence considered
writings in aesthetics. However, reference to these writings is
generally limited andsuperficial, and rarely considers contemporary
theories and debates.

For quite different reasons, Appleton (1975a, 1978, 1979b, 1982)
and Relph (1981, 1982, 1984) are two exceptions. Relph considers the
work of Ruskin, particularly his 'Modern Painters', and adopts the
notion of 'clear seeing'. This is part of Relph's phenomenological
interest in person-environment relationships manifest in place and
landscape experience. It is essentially in tune with the statement:
"It is probably more desirable to appreciate beauty than to understand
it" (Lee 1938 p9). Appleton aims more for an explanatory theory, or
speculation, and considers in some depth the writings of English
landscape philosophers of the eighteenth century, famous writings on
natural beauty by Addison, Price, Burke and Shaftesbury, and in
particular the work of Dewey. He placed aesthetic experience within a
biological relationship between person and environment (to use

geographic language). Here art becomes the more refined and explicit form of an aspect of experience in general (Dewey 1929, 1934) [3]. Dewey's pragmatic philosophy forms the basis of Appleton's habitat theory and prospect-refuge theory. Appleton, therefore, adopts three interrelated presuppositions: the analogy between animal behaviour and human behaviour, the foundation of aesthetic experience in biological needs, and the general stance that aesthetic experience is not confined to art but integral to much environmental experience.

Reference to more contemporary writings in aesthetics is almost non-existent [4]. Appleton notes that Hepburn (1968) and Rose (1976) both voice concern about the neglect of 'nature' in modern aesthetics. However, virtually no attempt has been made in environmental aesthetics to go beyond the visual-art analogy, and consider the other arts, for instance of music, which would seem in many ways to have closer affinities to environment with an aesthetic of a more participatory nature [5]. Cosgrove (1980), interestingly, makes brief reference to Langer (1953), whose conception of art as symbolic expression was developed largely in reference to music, has been widely influential in contemporary 'art aesthetics', and restricts the aesthetic to the unique property of fine art. Cosgrove suggests, in line with Langer, that while man modifies natural objects to human needs, man also recreates them as "symbols of sentience" which reflect his intentions, beliefs, values and opinions. Cosgrove continues the art analogy, and suggests that "symbols give landscape the character of art" (1980 p123), and therefore to analyse the symbolic meaning in landscapes we must turn to the art critic and historian. This dialogue

could be developed further, including other 'aesthetic object' theories, and particularly with interpretative approaches in environmental aesthetics. This contrasts sharply with the 'aesthetic attitude' theories of writers such as Bullough (1977) and Stolnitz (1960) who place the aesthetic in the spectator's 'psychological' stance towards an object, art or nature. The various attitude theories could be especially relevant for perception, behaviour and experience approaches, and studies that take account of the situation and prior conditions of the observer. Yet the debates of this highly active sub-field of aesthetics have been totally ignored. Therefore, there is much scope for dialogue between aesthetics and environmental aesthetics.

The absurdity of this relative lack of communication between contemporary aesthetics and the emerging field of environmental aesthetics is graphically illustrated by Bullough's introduction to his famous essay on *"'Psychical Distance' as a Factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle"* (1977 pp758-9):

"Imagine a fog at sea: for most people it is an experience of acute unpleasantness. Apart from the physical annoyance and the remoter forms of discomfort such as delays, it is apt to produce feelings of acute anxiety, fears of invisible dangers, strains of watching and listening for distant and unlocalised signals. The listless movements of the ship and her warning calls soon tell upon the nerves of the passengers; and that special, expectant, tacit anxiety and nervousness, always associated with this experience, make a fog a dreaded terror of the sea (all the more terrifying because of its very silence and gentleness) for the expert seafarer no less than the ignorant landsman.

Nevertheless, a fog at sea can be a source of intense relish and enjoyment. Abstract from the experience of the sea fog, for the moment, its danger and unpleasantness, just as everyone in the enjoyment of a mountain-climb disregards its physical labour and its danger (though, it is not denied, that these may incidentally enter into

the enjoyment and enhance it); direct the attention to the features 'objectively' constituting the phenomenon - the veil surrounding you with an opaqueness as of transparent milk, blurring the outline of things and distorting their shapes into weird grotesqueness; observe the carrying power of the air, producing the impression as if you could touch some far off siren by merely putting out your hand and letting it lose itself behind that white wall; note the curious smoothness of the water, hypocritically denying as it were any suggestion of danger; and, above all, the strange solitude and remoteness from the world, as can be found only on the highest mountain tops: and the experience may acquire, in its uncanny mingling of repose and terror, a flavour of such concentrated poignancy and delight as to contrast sharply with the blind and the distempered anxiety of its other aspects. This contrast, often emerging with startling suddenness, is like a momentary switching-on of some new current, or the passing ray of a brighter light illuminating the outlook upon perhaps the most ordinary and familiar objects - an impression which we experience sometimes in instants of direct extremity, when our practical interest snaps like a wire from sheer over-tension, and we watch the consummation of some impending catastrophe with the marvelling unconcern of a mere spectator."

A number of problems may arise when considering the various theories of modern aesthetics, for they are generally conceived in reference to fine art. Questions can be raised concerning the relationship between art and spectator, art and environment, the art analogy, and the preconceptions concerning aesthetics, an aesthetic and environment (also including scenery, landscape, and place).

'Aesthetics' is both a technical term used to refer to a branch of philosophy and in relation to art theory and criticism, and a word of everyday language, often almost synonymous with 'beautiful' or 'artistic'. In modern usage, aesthetics is predominantly associated with art, and consists most markedly in two contrasting stances: the formal properties of art objects and the attitude a spectator might have to such objects [6]. The distinction is evident in environmental aesthetics, though its significance is realised considerably less.

The common dictionary definition of aesthetics generally designates it as "the philosophy and theory of *taste* and of *perception* of the *beautiful* in nature and art' (my emphasis). This definition goes back to the English writers of the eighteenth century, such as Shaftesbury, and culminates in Kant's extensive and systematic study (Saw & Osborne 1968, eg Kant 1977, Burch 1977). Likewise, Vivas & Krieger (1953 (p1)) state that "'Aesthetics' is the name customarily given to the theoretical and systematic exploration of the questions which arise when men reflect on their interest in the beauty of nature and the products of the fine arts" (There is a similar definition in Stolnitz 1960). Yet their collection of essays, like all the others, restricts itself almost exclusively to discussion of art. However, they do note the importance of both philosophy or theorising and personal experience and practical education. Aesthetic study presupposes some experience and genuine interest in beauty and art, and a need or desire to formulate that experience into theoretical terms in order to clarify and give it order '7'.

The word 'aesthetics' comes from the Greek *aisthanesthai* (to perceive) and *aisthetica* (things perceptible). Baumgarten introduced the term to philosophy in the mid-eighteenth century, because he saw a need for an epistemology of perception. However, his own interests were in poetry and art, and naturally therefore he formulated his 'aesthetics' in terms of a theory of art and beauty. Kant heavily criticised Baumgarten and favoured a return to the etymological meaning of sense perception generally. However, in his key exploration

of aesthetics, the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant reverted to Baumgarten's more restricted formulation '[8]'. Nevertheless the field took a long time to gain recognition in Britain and only by 1859 could Hamilton write of the wide acceptance of aesthetics "to denominate the Philosophy of Taste, the Theory of the Five Arts, the Science of the Beautiful etc." in Germany, Britain and throughout Europe. In the late nineteenth century it acquired a more specifically art emphasis as concerned with "the property of arousing pleasure directly and immediately" (Fechner), and under the influence of the French 'art for art's sake' doctrine became associated with "extravagant affection and artistic dandyism" (Saw & Osborne 1968). It was at about this time, when W S Gilbert was parodying the 'aesthetes', that the term entered general language, though predominantly associated with art.

However, this separation of art and the theory of beauty from environmental experience in general, and the separation of art and society, would have been alien to the ancient philosophers, such as Aristotle and Plato (Venturi 1936). They didn't write treatises on 'aesthetics', but did consider questions of beauty and perception (Tillman & Cahn 1969). Plato recognised a triad of virtues - Goodness, Truth & Beauty - which he conceived of more holistically than later writers imply. Aristotle, more obviously relevant to an environmental aesthetics or an aesthetics of nature (Rose 1976), distinguished the experiential dimensions of wonder - contemplation, awe, discernment of mystery, curiosity concerning the unknown. This is a foundation of science as much as of art appreciation. However, deliberate and systematic interest in human taste and the factual aspects of the

apperception of beauty as a distinct mode of awareness result from the empirical epistemology of Locke. Key papers in this early stage of aesthetics are Addison's 1712 paper in the Spectator, and Uvedale Price's 1794 *'Essay on the Pictureque... and on the Study of Pictures for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape'* (Appleton 1979).

More recent schools of thought have doubted a distinctive form of awareness of an aesthetic or peculiar aesthetic properties to certain objects (Saw & Osborne 1968 p19). Dewey (1929, 1934), as noted earlier, returns to a broader notion of aesthetics: beauty resides neither intrinsically in 'beautiful objects' nor in the eye of the beholder; but that it is to be discovered in the *relationship* between the individual and his environment, in short 'experience' (Appleton 1975a p48). Marxist or materialist aesthetics calls for a consideration of the ideological and social function of art (Zis 1970, Johnson 1984) and the material or environmental base as well (Punter 1982). Further, some writers have abandoned the object-subject debate, and focused on language and aesthetic concepts (Wittgenstein 1969, Sibley 1959/1969 or 1977, Cohen 1977b).

At the risk of gross oversimplification therefore, the main theories and debates in aesthetic philosphy can be summarised as:

1) aesthetic objects, intrinsic properties or symbolic form, art theory as aesthetics [9];
2) aesthetic attitude, attention or interest, the aesthetic subject [10];

3) naturalist aesthetics or aesthetic experience as integral to experience in general [11];

4) aesthetic concepts and the language of art criticism [12];

5) materialist and other aesthetics [13].

All five could each have relevance for environmental aesthetics. For instance: Beauty intrinsic to the 'aesthetic object', or reflected in its form or properties, can be seen in much landscape evaluation research and the 'scenery as resource' concept. The 'aesthetic attitude', or beauty is in the eye of the beholder, can be seen in landscape perception studies. Work in environmental preference and values could be enriched by consideration of the notion of 'taste' and aesthetic judgment (Hume 1977, Kant 1977). And as Punter (1982) has indicated, interpretative and cultural approaches could be enhanced by a materialist perspective with its consideration of both the material base (environment) and socio-historical context of landscape value.

Concern has been expressed, within environmental aesthetics, about the use of *surrogates* for the aesthetic, particularly terms such as preference, taste, perception, interpretation, evaluation, value (and pleasure, Appleton 1982). This reflects a limited understanding of the term 'aesthetics'. In aesthetics, concepts such as taste and judgment, value, quality, pleasure, and perceptiveness have a long tradition. Signficantly, a recent collecton of essays is called *Pleasure, Preference and Value: essays in philosophical aesthetics* (Schaper 1983). Therefore, distinctions like 'preference value' and

'aesthetic value' (see Carlson 1977) would seem to be unnecessary.

A continuing tension and ambiguity in modern aesthetics is between the usefulness of art and art for art's sake, or the separation of art and society. This conflict is particularly crucial to environmental aesthetics, but there is much confusion over it. The separation of *aesthetic experience* and *everyday experience* would have been alien to ancient Greek philosophers, and many creators of art clearly recognise that art and the aesthetic grow out of a transformation of the ordinary world about them. Here two relationships can be recognised: art and environment; and art and society. Dewey (1929, 1934) saw art and aesthetic experience as part of a wider person-environment experience, and materialist aesthetics clearly necessitates the integration of art and society (or otherwise its total negation). Art is useful, and, by extension the aesthetic also - whether defined as object or experience [14].

Carlson & Sadler (1982a) refer to the "practical imperative" that unifies environmental aesthetics, yet one the most frequently quoted notions is Santayana's (1955) controversial distinction between *moral value* and *aesthetic value* (eg Peterson 1976). This is quite inimical to an environmental context for it separates art, aesthetics and everyday life, environment and society . 'Moral value' is something valued for the desirable ends it serves beyond itself. It is useful or has utility in the everyday sense. The 'moral value' of an environment might be its coal resources or its agricultural potential. 'Aesthetic value' is associated with pleasure, or potential pleasure, and is

appreciation of the value of something or an experience in itself, that is for its own sake. This is the love of life per se, art for art's sake, and 'the cult of scenery' (see Cornish 1935). This distinction may be tenable to a limited degree with 'framed' works of art such as painting or music performed in the concert hall. It becomes more questionable in the aesthetics of furniture and of architecture, where the aesthetic object is also useful in the everyday sense. Appleton advocates the 'totality of experience' and firmly states: *"As a criterion of the aesthetic, utility and inutility are irrelevant"*(Appleton 1982 p38). He sees pleasure to be in the actual performance of biological activities, and therefore recognises a fundamental entanglement of 'moral' and 'aesthetic' satisfactions. The integration is clearly evident in Bullough's experience of the fog at sea (above). Interestingly, Santayana also admitted that his greatest love of beauty was not in the arts - while art *transports*, beautiful places, beautiful manners and beautiful institutions *captivate*.

Certain central ideas, common to the theoretical debates in aesthetics, are relevant to environmental aesthetics. The focus is either on the contemplation of 'beautiful objects', or on the contemplation itself ('aesthetic attitude'), and on the formulation of aesthetic discussion or judgment. The general perspective is one of discernment, interpretation, and the cultivation of *positive values* or pleasure, either in objects or *in* experiences. This is summarised by the phrase "the pursuit of beauty", and commonly seen as a purpose of art creation and appreciation. For instance, Stolnitz (1960 p42) writes:

"the aesthetic attitude is always oriented 'positively' towards its object... (and)... welcomes its existence". Aesthetics is generally associated with 'beauty', yet the object or experience need not necessarily be beautiful *per se*, but "aesthetically interesting" in other ways - striking, moving, powerful, even hideous and ugly (Stolnitz 1960). This is because of the 'distanced' nature of the aesthetic attitude (Bullough 1977) and the set-apartness of aesthetic objects as art. It is also evident in the aesthetic concepts recognised by Sibley (1959), and in the environmental aesthetic interest in 'visual blight'.

Both *object* and *experience* perspectives are evident and relevant to environmental aesthetics. There is question of whether the aesthetic object is always an art object distinguishable from 'ordinary' objects, or whether all objects have the potential to be aesthetic, that is become art; and whether aesthetic experience is confined to the appreciation and creation of works of art, or part of a more general experience. Bullough's experience of a fog at sea is typical in its ambiguity. Was the experience merely an 'environmental experience' or an 'artistic transformation'? [10].Object theories emphasize aesthetic properties intrinsic to art objects. Scenic resource evaluations seem to follow a similar thinking. Aesthetic attitude theories recognise a certain form of attentiveness which permits aesthetic appreciation of works of art and nature. This may be perceptiveness or cultivated taste, both of the spectator and of the creative artist. Here, we have parallels with perception and preference studies in environmental aesthetics.

Frequently, attitude approaches recognise two dimensions within the aesthetic experience: there is a *'peculiar detachment'* and a *'simple or heightened consciousness'* (Pole 1983) [16]. Bullough (1977) sees this as both positive, focusing on details, and negative, detachment from practical concerns. He suggests the aesthetic emerges in the balance of these aspects. Stolnitz (1960, 1977) conceptualises the aesthetic attitude as 'disinterestedness' and recognises the further dimensions of sympathy, attention and contemplation. Kant's phrase "purposiveness without purpose" also comes to mind (Kant 1977). Vivas (1957 p408) states that "an aesthetic experience is an experience of rapt attention". The aesthetic is, therefore, attention first and foremost to an object or experience in itself with a temporary suspension, or detachment, from consciousness of other concerns, both practical interest and the wider context. The aesthetic is, therefore, a kind of dwelling on the moment of person-environment encounter and clearly there is some affinity with the phenomenological attitude. Bullough (1977) conceptualises this balance in which the aesthetic emerges as the "antinomy of distance", and refers to 'over-distance' and 'under-distance' with respect to these two aspects (see Dickie 1977) [17].

Aesthetics often uses common terms *with* technical nuances. Sibley (1959) uses 'taste' not to refer to personal preference or liking, but p421 for "an ability to notice or see or tell that things have certain qualities", which he refers to as 'aesthetic'. Hume (1969) refers to taste as careful and perceptive experience, and also relates this to

universals of beauty and the discernment of general principles of
taste. Preference studies in environmental aesthetics have in general
concentrated on the summation or averaging of personal preferences
rather than these more perceptual and universal notions of taste. Taste is
integral to the aesthetic notion of judgment. It is both
perceptiveness and judgment, and learned from personal experience and
acquired from a cultural tradition. Gordon (1909) writes: "People know
very little about their own tastes, and are often as not disappointed
when they get what they thought they wanted. *The chief purpose of
aesthetics is to help us to clarify and to become conscious of our own
tastes*" [10]. Further, Ducasse (1929/1953) refers to aesthetic
contemplation as receptive in the case of the spectator, effective for
the artist, and a judgmental attitude for the critic. All three seem
relevant to environmental aesthetics, possibly in the forms
perception, evaluation, design, and critical interpretation with
respect to people and environments past and present.

Until recently, environmental aesthetics has paid little
attention to the concept *'environment'* itself and how this might be
significant, and particularly the presuppositions inherent in the
analogy with art. Interestingly, the origins of the modern meaning of
'landscape', the most common rubric for environment, has been traced
to artistic usage. Tuan (1974) claims that the origins of the term
'landscape' lie in the Dutch 'landshap' which referred to commonplaces
such as 'a collection of farms or fenced fields...', and that the term
was transferred to England in the sixteenth century where it acquired

the precious meaning of art[19]. Everyday language therefore associates 'landscape' with a composed view or scenery, and commonly with something looked at or contemplated at a distance. The analogy is to landscape painting and, moreso today, the everyday representation of the photograph (see 1972, 1980).

Environmental aesthetics generally follows this analogy, with a focus on scenery or visual arrangement and preferences for particular 'views'. Sometimes the concept is technical and quite limited, with little real relationship to art, for instance: landscape as a scenic resource, the stimulus-response environment of psychological aesthetics, behaviourally "a kind of backcloth to the whole stage of human activity" (Appleton 1975a p2), and the cultural landscape or landscape as symbolic artifact. Landscapes are "myriad, non-discrete and constantly altering both in their components and their appearance" (Lowenthal 1979 p374). Further the relationship between 'observer' and landscape is a complex one, "Landscape occurs as an independent and objective phenomenon ... but is seen very differently by the observer as a series of oblique views which are unique to the viewer and viewpoint" (p131 Unwin 1975). Tuan (1974 pp132-133) considers the related terms nature, landscape and scenery and writes that landscape and scenery imply nature. Further "landscape came to mean a prospect seen from a specific standpoint" (1974 p133) - clearly much environmental aesthetics assumes a similar definition (see 1.2).

Therefore, environmental aesthetics needs to consider two entwined themes:

1) *the peculiar nature of environment* both as object and as experience, particularly as distinct from the 'objects' of the various arts; and

2) *a wider concept of environment*, including the addition of 'place' and other 'milieu' to the traditional focus on 'landscape'.

Modern philosophical aesthetic has neglected the consideration of 'environment' as both natural and man-made, special and ordinary, or as the dwelling place of mankind. Furthermore, "contemporary writings on aesthetics attend almost exclusively to the arts and very rarely to natural beauty" (Hepburn 1968 p49). This is despite an earlier lively interest in natural beauty (as in the eighteenth century English writers). Hospers notes: "Almost everyone has had experience in the presence of the ocean or the sunset, the mountain or the forest.... which would unhesitantly be labelled aesthetic" (in Saw & Osborne 1968 p25). However, are these 'aesthetic experiences' analogous to art, or a distinct form of 'aesthetic' parallel to the distinctions between the separate arts, or even a radically different aesthetic - one of the lived-world (*lifeworld*) as opposed to an art-world?

Hepburn (1968) and Rose (1976) both recognise a neglect of nature, or natural beauty and 'natural objects', in contemporary aesthetics. Nature is not synonymous with 'environment' as used in environmental aesthetics, though Hepburn uses nature and landscape interchangeably. For both, nature is objects that are not human artifacts or products of artistic creation, and therefore ignore man's

influence and the cultural landscape [20]. This might seem quite odd since works of art are human and cultural products, but modern aesthetics has been dominated by a notion of art as separate from everyday life.

On a theoretical level, nature presents a number of problems for an art-dominated aesthetics. The landscape does not minutely control the spectator's response to it as does a successful work of art, and it is an unframed, ordinary object in contrast to the framed, 'esoteric' and virtual character of the art object (Hepburn 1968 p50). These observations are not necessarily correct or useful. The landscape may not be intentionally created by an individual artist in order to excite an aesthetic response of a certain kind, but as a cultural or symbolic artifact the landscape is influenced by or changed through human activity or intentions, and itself influences or conditions the behaviour and experience of spectators or inhabitants. Furthermore, whilst the natural object is literally unframed and generally not detached from its everyday context, it may in contemplative perception be 'framed' as in the consideration of a scene, the taking of a photograph, and the recognition of symbolic values. Therefore, environment – including nature and man – should be a challenge to contemporary aesthetic theory.

Art and natural objects have shared and contrasting characteristics (see Hepburn 1968). *First*, there is the mutual involvement of spectator and object. The spectator can encounter natural objects as static and as a disengaged observer, but more

typically the object envelopes him on all sides. Also there is a reflexivity by which the spectator experiences himself in an unusual and vivid way, and this difference is not merely noted but dwelt upon (as in Bullough's fog experience). *Secondly*, 'frames', pedestals or other boundaries characterise the art object. They are set apart from their environment in a distinctive way. Used in an extended sense, 'frame' can refer to all devices that prevent the art object being mistaken for a natural object, or artifact without aesthetic interest, but one could argue that all objects or situations have such aesthetic potential. Natural objects may be 'frameless', in a strict sense, but this openness means that the chance train whistle, which cannot integrate with a string quartet, may be imaginatively integrated into one's experience of a natural object or scene. The challenge is to integrate, and these expansions of imagination can be memorable in their own right. There is therefore an increase in the role of unpredictable perceptual surprises, the possibility of which imports to contemplation of nature a sense of adventurous openness. Aesthetic experience of nature is therefore particularly responsive to context. *Thirdly*, there are certain general 'background' experiences common to a great many aesthetic situations and of aesthetic value in themselves. With the art object it is an exhilarating activity of coming to grips with the intelligibility of a perceptual whole, through built-in guides which we are aware were put there by its creator. The background here is the artist himself, his artistic language and the tradition he belongs to. For the natural object the exhilaration is a delight in the fact that forms of the world offer scope for the exercise of imagination. This is a basic creativity

analogous to the position of the artist. For instance we may sense clouds forming harmonies with mountains, or mountains with human forms. Extra-associations and interrelationships, actual or imagined, form an integral part, and might be cultural, historical, social, technical (for instance a knowledge of geomorphology or cultural history) [21].

Following the art analogy, aesthetic contemplation is of single natural objects in their individuality and uniqueness, or their formal organisation including elements such as scale, colour and texture. However, in addition, a sense of 'unity' in or through nature may be an important dimension not accessible to art. For instance, the tending towards the ideal of a oneness with nature, and the notion of such oneness as an aesthetic principle. Relevant here are Hough's (1960) reflections on Ruskin and Fry; he writes "by intense contemplation of form and space we become conscious of the unity between ourselves and the natural world." Ruskin's 'clear seeing' may lead to a unified apprehension of nature, and of ourselves as part of nature (Relph 1984). However, several types of 'unity' can be recognised (Hepburn 1968):

1) *the expansion of context*: the search for more context that determines the perceived qualities of the natural object or scene, including an openness to contextual intrusion and the challenge to integrate, and so 'recognise' unity.
2) *the humanizing or spiritualising* of nature, or as Hegel put it: the aim of art is " to strip the outer world of its foreignness." This

aims for a rapprochement between spectator and aesthetic object, and is associated with symbolisation (eg Tuan 1974), and the environment as 'mirror of man' (Tuan 1971).

3) *emotionalist*: the aesthetic response to the nature described in terms of human emotions - eg melancholy, placidity. A particular emotional quality may only be roughly equivalent to its human analogy, gaining a distinctive quality of its own, such as 'desolation'.

4) the *'naturalising'* of the human observer. Barbara Hepworth (Hepburn 1968 p56) felt that to be one with nature was to realise one's place in the landscape as a form among its forms. This is not to overcome nature's foreignness, but to allow it free play in modifying one's everyday sense of one's own being.

Rose (1976), from the perspective of 'meta-aesthetics', that is a philosophical enquiry into aesthetic enquiry, notes that 'nature' is equivocal. The individual's ontological and epistemological convictions influence how nature is thought about, encountered and appreciated. Similarly, the individual's purposes, experience and background are significant. This is especially important in a multi-disciplinary field such as environmental aesthetics, which is variously conducted by such groups as planners, designers, psychologists, geographers and architects.

Landscape is a key word in environmental aesthetics yet, as Santayana (1955) suggests, it is an "indeterminate object". Meinig (1979b) has considered what landscape is *not*. It is not identical with

'nature', but nature is part of every landscape. In contrast to aesthetic philosophy, he notes that landscape is *always* inclusive of man and nature. Every landscape is a 'scene' but not identical with 'scenery'. Scenery is a selected view or prospect, to be admired as beautiful or picturesque, and has the connotations of a set piece. In contrast, landscape is ubiquitous, more inclusive, and something to be observed but not necessarily admired. This might create problems for an aesthetic of environment, particularly one taking the art analogy. However, Relph (1981 p22) refers to landscape as "everything I see and sense when I am out of doors... the necessary context and background both of my daily affairs and of the more exotic circumstances of my life." This both expands the common notion within environmental aesthetics, and returns it to a form more compatible with the etymological meaning of 'aesthetics'. In line with Porteous (1982a/b) and others, Relph also includes senses other than sight, and adds memory.

Meinig (1979b) reminds us that landscape is all around us, but though related to environment it is not identical to it [21]. Environment is an inherent property of every living thing; it is that which surrounds and sustains it. Landscape suggests an aesthetic object distanced from the observer, *environment* can suggest an environmental aesthetics that allows the integration of aesthetic and non-aesthetic aspects of person-environment relationships and therefore an aesthetic integral to an inhabited world or our dwelling (see 3.2). Meinig notes that landscape is less inclusive as well as more detached, and not so directly part of organic being. Landscape is

defined by our vision and interpreted by our minds. It is a panorama which continually changes as we move along any route (eg Cullen 1961, Appleyard et al 1964). Strictly speaking we are never *in* the landscape, *as* we are *in* the environment; rather the landscape lies before our eyes and it becomes real only when we are conscious of it (Meinig 1979b). Environment sustains us as creatures, landscape displays us as cultures. As discernible sectors of the environment, landscapes are related to be not identical to places. *Place* is more integral to everyday experience and activities (or 'lifeworld'), and society or community. Landscape is more external and object. "The very idea of landscape implies separation and observation" (Williams 1975 p149). Relph also clarifies the distinction betweem place and landscape (1976, 1981). He sees environment as full of character and meaning through the intentionality of experience, that is inhabitation by communities or cultures. This *inhabitedness* is possibly the most radical difference between 'natural objects' and the 'environment', yet the full significance of this has not been widely recognised in environmental aesthetics.

Relph (1976) therefore suggests that in place intentionality is focused and directed onto an inside from an outside - places are where events and situations 'take place' or happen. Landscape intentionality is diffuse and without concentration. "Landscape is both context for places and an attribute of places" (p123 1976). Landscapes are not merely aesthetic background to life, however, but the setting that expresses and conditions cultural attitudes and activities. Much of the time landscape is a background to immediate concerns and is thus

forgotten or taken-for-granted, but occassionally, or discontinuously, it becomes central to attention and is contemplated in its own right. Nevertheless, much environmental aesthetics uses the terms landscape, scene and environment almost as if synonymous (eg Sell et al 1984).

It is, however, as important, if not more significant, to recognise the peculiar nature of environment as distinct from both natural objects and art objects. Ittleson (1973) in the context of environmental perception theory develops a transactional approach that has some affinity with Dewey's appreciation of person-environment. Ittleson makes a vital observation, which should be seen as the major distinction between the aesthetics of art and of environment: objects require subjects, and one cannot be a subject of an environment but one can only be a *participant*." The very distinction between self and non-self breaks down; the environment surrounds, enfolds, engulfs, and no thing and no one can be isolated and identified as standing outside of or apart from it" (1973 pp12-13). Bullough's experience (quoted above) would suggest that aesthetically this might not be so. It could be argued that whilst Ittleson is correct in an *existential* sense - as a basic fact of life, so to speak [22]- it is not necessarily correct in an *experiential* sense - that is, in how we are conscious of environment (see *1.4*). This is also suggested by the distinction between landscape and place, and between insidedness and outsidedness. More obviously, we do recognise 'objects' within that environment which are experienced aesthetically, both art objects and natural objects. These individual objects or collections of objects, the

result of selective vision, serial vision (Cullen 1961), or 'the eye of the beholder' (Meinig 1979c), may therefore result in the recognition or realisation of 'aesthetic objects' or 'aesthetic experience'. Further, we discern different 'places', and as Tuan (1974) notes the visitor will differ from the native in both place recognition and experience. "The visitor's evaluation is essentially aesthetic... the outsider judges by appearance, by some formal canon of beauty" (Tuan 1974 p64). Nevertheless, the participatory quality is important in some of the fine arts, notably theatre and music, and should be central to environmental aesthetics, especially of ordinary and taken-for-granted environments as experienced by local people.

Briefly, therefore, Ittleson (1973) recognises a number of "necessary characteristics" of environment and environmental perception (and therefore his interest is broader than environmental aesthetics). He uses environment in a general sense which could include landscape, place, home, lifeworld and 'ecological environment'. Environments *surround* and are therefore participatory, whilst objects are apart from and observed [23]. Environments (in contrast to particular natural objects) may lack definite boundaries, and are explored rather than taken hold of. Environments are always *multimodal*, as a number of researchers in environmental aesthetics have recently noted (eg Porteous 1982a/b, Pocock 1983b), though little has yet been done on these individual modes (other than sight), and on the interrelation between them. Importantly, Ittleson notes that environments are informationally *peripheral as well as central*. There is both information of immediate attention and a background of

peripheral information, both of which will interact or overlap. Put
another way, the place or environment of immediate activity, such as
the home, is nested within a wider natural and cultural milieu, such
as the town or region. Environments always provide more information
than can possibly be processed, and they always represent
simultaneously instances of redundant information, of inadequate and
ambiguous information, and of conflicting and contradictory
information, which call on the whole of our information processing
ability. In this sense, he suggests objects are more clear, relatively
simple and definite. However, works-of-art can be highly ambiguous,
implicative and complex, and the call to aesthetic experience is to
'perceptiveness', and by extension the cultivation of taste.
Therefore, a concept of 'aesthetic response', especially when
analogous to art, may 'narrow' the gap between 'object' and
'environment' [24]. Further, when we encounter environments we
apparently recognise 'objects' and seek order.

Environmental perception always involves *action*, that is
environments are not observed passively but are arenas for action (see
also Appleton 1975a, 1982). "Environments call forth actions"
(Ittleson 1973 p14). This becomes confused within the context of
aesthetics, for there are distinctions to be made between active and
passive listening for instance, and the question of 'moral' versus
'aesthetic' noted earlier. The important point is, however, that with
the exception of purposeful aesthetic contemplation as in
sight-seeing, aesthetic experience will arise *out of* situations of
more mundane activity in the environment (as in the fog at sea)

Bullough). The 'moral' or practical concerns may not be separable from the aesthetic experience and integral to it. Furthermore, environments possess *symbolic meanings* and motivational messages (eg Appleton 1975a, Meinig 1979d). Finally, environments always have an *ambiance*, an atmosphere, which is difficult to define but of overriding importance (eg Norberg-Schultz 1980). Ittelson (1973 p15) recognises a number of factors contributing to this: Social activity, that is other people are always part of environmental experience directly or indirectly; an aesthetic quality (for "an aesthetically neutral environment is unthinkable" p15); and a systematic quality, that is the various components and events relate to each other in particular ways.

Therefore 'aesthetics' and 'environment', are complex concepts within themselves and in combination. However, there seems to be much potential for the combination 'environmental aesthetics'. Perception and behaviour research, and the recent development of environmental aesthetics, suggest that the aesthetic cannot be seen as totally detached from everyday activity, whether biological needs or more immediate practical concerns of social and economic life. The present research takes up from this position: *the environment is inhabited and aesthetic experience may be integral, possibly even fundamental, to that continuous person-environment interaction.*

(1)   I merely scratch the surface of this enormous topic. A complete
thesis could be centred on 'aesthetics and environment', particularly
the various aesthetic debates and theories and how they might be
relevant to environment..
(2) Useful surveys of aesthetics are provided by a number of
collections of essays: Vivas & Krieger 1953; Osborne 1968; Tillman &
Cahn 1969; Dickie & Scalfani 1977; Schaper 1983. For an analytic
philosophy approach see Scruton 1983; pragmatism or 'naturalism' see
Dewey 1929, 1934; and for a phenomenological perspective see Dufrenne
1973.
(3)   J M W Turner, the painter, once said "every look at nature is a
refinement upon art."
(4) Somewhat surprisingly the most referenced is Santayana (1896):
eg Peterson 1976, Litton 1982. Kant (eg 1977), who is generally
regarded as the father of modern aesthetics, is totally neglected
within environmental aesthetics. The age-old debates as well as the
contemporary debates are neglected.
(5)   Interestingly, environmental aesthetics has taken up an
essentially painting aesthetic, as is explicitly evident in
photosimulation preference studies. In relation to environment this
runs the risk of reducing environment to a 2-dimensional image. An
interesting avenue might be an exploration of the aesthetics of the
other arts, notably music, which Langer (1953; p146 in 1977) argues:
"Yet the more one reflects on the significance of art generally, the
more music theory appears as a lead." This is so because of the role
of sign and symbol in music, of its participation nature and, as
performed, its unfolding over time.
(6)   eg Scruton 1983. Here, to keep the argument relatively simple, I
will ignore the distinction between artist and spectator which is
especially significant in 'art aesthetics'.
(7)   Note Goodey (1973) - "Our ability to organise our perceptions
probably gives us a satisfaction which is the root of our aesthetic
judgments. Our appreciation of an environment or structure may be a
measure of the degree to which we can organise the various stimuli we
sense."
(8) See Saw & Osborne 1968. Punter (1982 p101) inaccurately calls for
a "return to the ... broader Kantian conception". However, Kant's
formulation is a systematic, extensive and rigorous study of the
aesthetic which gives Kant the position as the true father of modern
aesthetics. See also Burch (1977).
(9) Collingwood 1977, Wollheim 1977, Langer 1953/1977, Bell 1977,
Bufford 1977, Cohen 1977a; symbolic meaning Panofsky 1955.
(10) Bullough 1977, Casebier 1977, Dickie 1977, Stolnitz 1960, 1977,
Ogden 1974, Vivas 1953; attention - Isenberg 1944, Clark 1960.
(11) Dewey 1929, 1934/1958; Hospers (Saw & Osborne 1968 p25); Note
also *Surrender and Aesthetic Experience* Wolff (1963).
(12) Sibley 1959; Cohen 1977b; language in art - Wollheim 1970, 1977;
Wittgenstein 1969.
(13) Zis 1970, Punter 1982, Johnson 1984; ideology Rubin 1979; art and
psychoanalysis Ehrenzweig 1953, Fuller 1980.
(14) Eg music. Up until the late eighteenth century composers were
employed in much the same way as other servants of the nobility and

church, and had a clearly practical role to provide music, serious and entertaining, for all manner of occasions. The separation of composer from society, or into an art elite, is particularly associated with the Romantic movement and the development of a concert-going public (- early beginnings in the London subscription concerts of the 1790's). Modern reaction to this is seen in pop music, film and TV music, with the emphasis on music as a commercial product; and left-wing radicals such as Berio, Henze and Eisler (also composed film-music) who believe the artist and art have a social and ideological function. The music-environment link has been maintained almost continuously, though in varying ways throughout the Western tradition. For instance, composers from such different periods as Haydn (1732-1809), Beethoven (1770-1827), Nielsen (1865-1931), and Messiaen (b 1908) have 'imitated' the sounds of nature - bird song, wind and weather, and water. Even in electroacoustic music, which uses much computer-synthesized sound, a major input remains recorded natural sounds of the environment about us.

(15) Furthermore, what of the possible differences between the moment of experience, the reflection on that experience, and expressive accounts of it? Which is the concern of aesthetics? Both, though often aesthetic research focuses on the latter. In the present research I focus on 'remembered experience.'

(16) Pole (1983) also distinguishes two overlapping and interrelating aspects of the consciousness continuum - *feeling* and *knowing*. 'To know what one's feeling is also, or may also be, to experience a subjective difference, as it were, in the feeling itself.' And so he argues that consciousness as knowing what one feels cannot be the prerogative of art appreciation alone. His complex argument about aesthetic *consciousness* and involvement is worth more thorough consideration, particularly in relation to phenomenology.

(17) This is a complex concept. It is most clearly explained by Bullough (1977). It is clarified by Dufrenne's (1973) phenomenological perspective. He recognises a distinction between actual objects and aesthetic objects. He posits the aesthetic in *consciousness* and summarises it as an 'in itself for itself for us'. "It is in me that the aesthetic object is constituted as other than me" (Dufrenne 1973 p232). In other words the aesthetic experience and the aesthetic object become one, by means of intentionality, since the aesthetic experience is a consciousness of something and constituted as a recognised whole, or 'object'.

(18) This is important for environmental aesthetics and education. Note also phenomenology.

(19) However, Houston (1982) traces landscape back to the Anglo-Saxon *landskrift* which referred to an area that is a cultural entity, such as the lands of a tribe or feudal lord. Nevertheless, he notes the modern association with landscape painting. Relph (1981 p26) reminds us that the suffix '-scape' is linked to the root '-ship' as in friendship, and means 'state of being'. The reduction of landscape to an object of contemplation, detached from everyday life, is a phenomenon of eighteenth century 'scientific humanism'.

(20) Here architectural aesthetics is relevant, which I have included under 'environmental aesthetics'.

(21) Context can also play a major role in art aesthetics. For instance, in the decor and arrangement of an art gallery, and the

concert venue for the performance of a piece of music. This context
may be entwined with background knowledge, as in the case of authentic
performance of baroque church music in contemporary churches.

(22) For a phenomenological perspective, see Grange, (1985) on
person-environment engagement - *Place,Body and Situation*.

(23) Newby (1978/1979) writes "landscape... is a continous and
enveloping experience. There is no frame. to view. The vista changes
as we move through and in the landscape." Again, this is correct
existentially, but experientially - or in consciousness - our
experience will be selective and more discontinous with respect to
parts of the environment and we 'frame' or compose' views. The
continuity is therefore like a continuum (see Jones 1983) and is an
abstract or representative concept not an actuality.

(24) see note (7) above.

1.4   AN ATTITUDE AND A LANGUAGE: PHENOMENOLOGY

As a consequence of studying the literature of Environmental Aesthetics, I chose to look towards *heightened experiences in the everyday environment* (see *1.5*) as appreciated by local residents, and sought to allow an appropriate method to emerge. This became *Group Reflection* (see *2.3*). Throughout, the central tenets were *caring and sharing*, that is a concern to allow participants to recall, express and explore with each other, and myself, their experiences as they are significant to them. Phenomenology would seem to be both appropriate and implied [1].

Phenomenology cannot be merely and simply applied, but is discovered through long acquaintance, and may be a form of spiritual discipline (Zimmerman 1983, 1985). It is both a philosophy and a method, the two being entangled as one. Phenomenological enquiry is manifest in many forms reflecting an acceptance of the necessary interdependence of methods and phenomena studied (Seamon 1983b). Two strategies can be recognised: phenomenologically -centred and phenomenologically - inspired. 'Centred' research is that which is most thoroughly phenomenological and can be said to contribute directly to the development of phenomenology itself (eg Merleau-Ponty 1962). 'Inspired' research is that which seeks or tends towards a phenomenological perspective but is not fully or consistently phenomenological and contributes less directly to the development of

the overall philosophy. Such research is characterised by the adoption of a general phenomenological attitude and language (eg Seamon 1979a; Norberg-Schultz 1980). This may lead the researcher towards more thoroughly phenomenological work in the future [2]. The present research is inspired by, and largely grounded in phenomenology, and is my own coming to terms with the phenomenological perspective.

Therefore, here I focus on the attitude and language of phenomenology as relevant to the present research. It is a highly selective and personal account [3]. In much of the research, particularly the fieldwork (Section 2), I do not make explicit this underlying philosophical position, and I little use phenomenological terminology. This reflects the need for an non-technical language when working with participants 'in the field'. Furthermore, the adjective 'phenomenological' and the use of a phenomenological 'jargon' does not make the research phenomenology, nor add anything profound to it. Therefore, in this subsection I will seek to share a particular perspective and understanding of phenomenology [4].

Phenomenology is most literally 'about' phenomena. Heidegger (1983 pp51-55) traces the concept *phenomenon* back to the Greek. It has two basic meanings: that which shows itself in itself ('primordial' phenomenon); and that which shows itself as something it is not, or 'seeming' (*semblance*). He suggests that these are structurally interconnected - "only when the meaning of something is such that it makes a pretension of showing itself - i.e. being a phenomenon - can it show itself as something which it is not; only then can it 'merely'

look like so-and-so (semblance)" (p51). In other words, the primordial signification (phenomenon) is already included in the second signification (semblance), but both have nothing to do with 'appearance'. An *appearance* is something, such as a symptom of a disease, that indicates something which does not show itself. Appearance does not mean showing itself, but rather it means announcing itself by something which does not show itself. Further, like semblance, appearance is also founded on the phenomenon. An appearance is essentially a reference-relationship which is an entity itself *and* is such that what does the referring (or announcing) can fulfil its possible function only if it also shows itself in itself as a phenomenon (which is an announcing of that which does not show itself). Phenomenology seeks to get behind, or *before*, appearances and semblances, so as to explore the essential nature of phenomena themselves. The phenomenon is therefore a 'showing itself in itself' and signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered.

Therefore, as a preliminary formal conception, Heidegger (1983 p58) suggests "...*'phenomenology' means ... to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."* This is the meaning of Husserl's 'to the things themselves!' and the rationale of his stages of reductive reflection. However, phenomenology is not an 'ology' in the sense of theology, botany or geology, which designate the objects of their respective sciences according to agreed specific subject-matter. Rather "'Phenomenology' neither designates the objects of its researches, nor characterises the subject matter thus composed. The word merely

informs us of the 'how' with which 'what' is to be treated... To have
a science 'of' phenomena means to grasp its objects in such a way that
everything about them which is up for discussion (i.e. their essential
nature) must be treated by exhibiting it directly and demonstrating it
directly" (Heidegger 1983 p59).

Many attempts have been made to offer a more specific definition
within person-environment studies (eg Dovey 1985 pp93-4; see [3]).
Seamon (1986b p1) offers a simple and valuable definition:
"Phenomenology ...is a descriptive science which attempts to identify
and clarify the underlying, essential structures of experience and
things-as-experienced." Further, Seamon (1986a p2) reminds us that
"phenomenology is a descriptive science at the heart of which is
concern, openness and clear-seeing" [5]. More broadly and possibly
less accurately, Douglas (1971b p16) offers a sociological definition:
"the study of the phenomena of everyday life on their own terms, or to
make use only of methods of observation and analysis that retain the
integrity of the phenomena ...phenomena as experienced in everyday
life, not phenomena created by (or strained through) experimental
situations."

Phenomenology is primarily a search for the fundamental nature of
phenomena ('essences') through the successive peeling away of the
presuppositions of everyday life, contemporary science, and even self
[6]. "Phenomenology, searching for a real beginning of all
philosophical thinking, hopes when fully developed to end where all
traditional philosophies start" (Schutz 1970 p54). Therefore, though

ontologically,in contradiction to many other philosophical positions and an effective critique of positivism, phenomenology can both coexist with and complement them, being essentially prior and foundational. More immediately, phenomenology starts from a recognition of epistemological primacy of ourselves, *Dasein*. "We shall find in ourselves and nowhere else the unity and the true meaning of phenomenology" (Merleau-Ponty 1962 p viii). Therefore, it can lay claim to being especially appropriate to human studies [7].

Merleau-Ponty (1962 p viii) writes "phenomenology can be practised and identified as a manner or style of thinking, that... existed as a movement before arriving at complete awareness of itself as a philosophy." Therefore, though Husserl formulated the first explicit 'phenomenology', he did not really invent a radically new philosophy [8]. Dilthey's philosophy of historical understanding, a kind of 'hermeneutic' method for the *Geisteswissenschaften* (human studies), has been frequently quoted as a precursor of 'phenomenology'.Dilthey explored concepts such as an historical consciousness, the role of meaningful texts or action, and the central concept of *Erlebnis* [9]. From 1905, Husserl and Dilthey corresponded for nearly six years, and the two clearly influenced the development of each other's thinking (Rose 1981 p108).

Dilthey's concept of *Erlebnis* ('lived-experience') clearly has major affinities with Husserl's *Lebenswelt* ('lifeworld' or 'lived-world'). Both men tended towards a kind of phenomenological idealism [10], but disagreed on historicism and the possibilities of

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self-transcendence of lived experience. Rose (1981) reminds us that Dilthey valued phenomenology as an epistemology, whilst Husserl (according to Schutz 1970) saw it as a basis for, or prior to, all sciences. For Dilthey, *Erlebnis* meant the definition of inner experience in terms of its natural relations to outer experience. This "operates totally within the presuppositions of empirical consciousness" and therefore objects in the external world remain presupposed, though there is no way of affirming their reality (Rose 1981 p109). There is therefore no phenomenological 'bracketing' of the world; it is simply there. Dilthey also began implicitly to use Husserl's concept of *intentionality* when making a distinction between 'psychic' and 'natural' objectivity. However, the key difference between them in the end is that for Dilthey there can be no totally presuppositionless understanding,because he regards meaning and meaningfulness to be contextual, that is they are always part of the situation and not something 'outside' which we partially objectify when we render a single meaning explicit. Here, everything must be understood in terms of a frame of reference which we appreciate from constant reference back to our experiences.

The phenomenological conceptions of *meaning* and *truth* are entwined with one another, and grounded in the very nature of human consciousness, or Being (*Dasein*) [11]. The everyday definition recognises that meaning is always for or to someone, and is a kind of order or sense of the world. "... Meaning implies two things. One is *order or harmony*. We find meaning when we can discern order or harmony in the chaotic world of facts and remove the irritation or insecurity

that chaos generates. Meaning also implies *significance*: a phenomenon has meaning because it is a sign to something beyond itself, to its own past and future, and to other objects. The significant object or event has the seeming capacity to condense the diverse strains of the universe into a thing within human reach" (Tuan 1971 p|&2). Meaning is significance, structure, reference and interrelationship. However, this seems to restrict meaning and be a superficial interpretation. It reduces meaning to the outsider view, the backward glance or hindsight, and it pegs it to specific situations. As in Dilthey, it is relative and contextual.

Phenomenology considers meaning more fundamental, and seeks to get inside "the *'circle'* in understanding (which) belongs to the structure of meaning, and the latter phenomenon is rooted in the existential constitution of Dasein, i e an understanding which interprets. An entity for which, as Being-in-the-world, its Being is itself an issue (*Dasein*) has, ontologically, a circular structure" (Heidegger 1983 p195). Meaning therefore needs to be approached *from within*. "What is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it in the right way ... In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing" (Heidegger 1983 p195) [12]. It is not merely relative to man and to human situations, but fundamentally man, or *Dasein*, and his everyday life is meaningful. As Tuan (1975) holds, meaning is constructed by experience. "Dasein only 'has' meaning so far as the disclosedness of Being-in-the-world can be 'filled-in' by the entities discoverable in that disclosedness. Hence only Dasein can be meaningful" (Heidegger 1983

p193). We are already 'in-the-world', and therefore "meaning is the awareness strand which joins person and world together in a moment of understanding" (Seamon 1986b p2). Therefore, meaning is a gathering and a disclosure of that which is already 'there' through conscious experience [13]. Its significance is in our becoming aware of our Being-in-the-world and of ourselves. This is entwined with the phenomenological conception of truth: "*truth*is fundamentally that which reveals itself, and the notion of truth as conformity of assertion with fact is a secondary one, for how could we talk of assertions conforming to the facts, if the facts had not revealed themselves to us? And what becomes unconcealed is not a self enclosed objectivity but ...a pole of identity whose meaning is available for actualisation" (Bolton 1982 p68) [14].

Husserl had a background in pure mathematics and logic (Johnson 1983), and this is evident in his systematic approach to reflection, *epoche* or reductive reflection [15]. He was particularly interested in the nature of human consciousness, and much of his work could be labelled 'phenomenological psychology' (Schutz 1970). Like Dilthey, Husserl regarded 'actual experience' as of primary significance over and above hypothesis and theory. "Natural cognition begins with experience and remains *within* experience." The horizon of this experience and cognition is the 'world' and "being and being in the world coincide since everything real joins together to make up the unity of the world "(Husserl 1983 p5). As Johnson (1983) recognises *p103* "first of all, I discover it (world) immediately, intuitively, I

experience it." This is a spontaneity of consciousness (Kockelmans 1967 p69), and 'natural cognition' is the implicit 'natural attitude' of, or within, everday life. It is a holistic attitude of person and world, and is an understanding prior to objective, scientific thought or hypothesis. This is however taken-for-granted and embedded in everyday life, or the lifeworld. To make this explicit, Husserl proposed various stages of phenomenological reflection (the 'theoretic attitude'). Nevertheless, "... the universals that become objects of phenomenological investigation cannot be had except through *actual experience*" (Husserl 1964 p xvii), and, to support this assertion, he cites the blind man who can never fully appreciate what it is to have a visual world like us. As Johnson (1983 p104) reminds us, in Husserl "concern is not with the reality of the world but with the subjective giveness of that world - with consciousness itself."

The first stage of investigation is *phenomenological reduction:* suspension of all beliefs characteristic of the natural attitude, that is everyday common sense and scientific theory. This is the bracketing-out of preconceptions or presuppositions about the phenomenon. It is a suspension of judgement, we neither believe or not believe, but "we hold in abeyance every belief". This exposes the crucial taken-for-granted notions of everyday life and science, that is the presuppositions of 'prior knowledge' (personal or 'book').

Secondly, *eidetic reduction* is when the particular occasion of perception or encounter with the phenomenon is taken as a universal. "We bring ourselves to grasp perception as a universal, we make the

pure essence of perception give itself to our pure intuition" (Husserl 1964 pxvii) [16].

A third stage is to discern the manner in which the objects of cognition are *constituted* in cognition. Husserl argues that this requires careful scrutiny of the manner in which, within cognition, objects are compounded or synthesized according to stable regularities that are not psychological laws of association but are rather the forms of cognitive acts [17]. Therefore, what is unclear or taken-for-granted in everyday life is made evident as a 'pure' or 'reduced' object, the essence, is brought forward in cognition (or 'explicated').

Finally, Husserl suggested a further and, because of our 'transcendental subjectivity', vital reduction. This takes account of the 'transcendental ego' or awareness of self [18], holds not only the things and features of the 'natural attitude' in abeyance, but also 'brackets-out' our phenomenal selves, including our own self.

Johnson (1983 pp102-103) notes through these reductive reflections "the crucial dimensions of that experience – *intentionality and intersubjectivity* – are revealed. Husserlian phenomenology can thereby bring into focus both unselfconscious experience and systematic reflection upon it." Heidegger's 'meditative thinking' refers essentially to the whole process of phenomenological reflection. This receptive attitude might be characterised as 'wonder' (Fink 1933), 'opening' (Giorgi 1970), 'surrender' (Wolff 1963), or 'love' (Laing

1964). The phenomenological position, or starting point, is therefore *epistemologically anthropocentric* in that "in the epoche one becomes aware that one cannot live, experience, think, value and act in a world which is not in some sense in oneself and derives meaning and truth from oneself. If one places oneself above that life by an act of bracketing out the ongoing world, one views one's own life as exclusively consciousness of the world" (Johnson 1983 p104). But the further transcendental reflection, which Johnson (1983) refers to as 'reflection upon reflection', seeks to bracket-out even the ego, or self, and therefore go beyond to 'pure data' [19].

Husserl summarises the phenomenological position: "It is the motif of inquiring back into the ultimate source of all the formulations of knowledge, the motif of the knower's reflecting upon himself and his knowing life in which all the scientific structures that are valid for him occur purposefully, are stored up as acquisitions... (the transcendental view) comes to its actual and true existence, to its actual and true beginning, only when the philosopher has penetrated to a clear understanding of himself as the subjectivity functioning as the primal source." (1970 pp97-8) It therefore reveals an essential *engagement* with the world, with things and people, quite different from the separation or detachment of the Cartesian ethic. "The world is not what I think, but what I live through. I am open to the world, I have no doubt that I am in communication with it, but I do not possess it; it is inexhaustible" (Merleau-Ponty 1962 ppxvi-xvii). Therefore, phenomenology removes the *object-subject* dichotomy. World as experienced unites the extremes of objectivism and

subjectivism (Merleau-Ponty 1962), and Husserl's phenomenological reflection on this unity reveals two vital dimensions of the engagement of person and world - intentionality and intersubjectivity.

Intentionality, that is 'consciousness of something', is apparently obvious and easily understood, yet highly enigmatic. Husserl (1983 pp199-202) regards intentionality as a *principal* theme in phenomenology, but its full significance is only revealed through systematic reflection. It is not unique to phenomenology, but gains a more fundamental meaning here than merely 'consciousness of something' [20]. Intentionality is peculiar to the sphere of mental processes, but manifest in many different forms, and is a characteristic of consciousness (Husserl 1983 pp119-201). Further, "knowing has the phenomenal character of a Being which is in and towards the world", that is Dasein has intentionality as a basic characterstic (Heidegger 1983 p87). Intentionality refers to the fact that human impulses and actions don't exist in some purely abstract sense, or unto themselves, but are directed towards a world and respond to it. "Human consciousness and experience necessarily involve some aspect of the world as their object, which in turn provides the context for the meaning of consciousness and experience. There is in other words 'a kind of indissoluble unity' between person and world, and this is also an inseparable tie for the student studying the thing" (Seamon 1983b p3; Stewart & Mickunas 1974). This unity is already prior to separate thought about person or world. Phenomenological intentionality is therefore not merely a relation or coming together between two separate entities, person and world or subject and object. Rather, it

is an expression of an *'implicate whole'* (to borrow a term - Bohm 1983), a unity that is already there, and in its variety intentionality presents the myriad forms of this person-environment engagement, enmeshment and oneness.

Therefore, Husserl's intentionality is more than 'consciousness OF something'. First, it is *"this marvellous ownness"* - acting bears upon action, doing bears upon deed, loving bears upon the loved one, being glad bears upon the gladsome. A 'regard' is directed from the pure Ego to the 'object' of consciousness. Secondly, it is "being-busied-with-the-correlative object *actionally* in a lived-world". Non-actionalities (eg liking, wishing) are also consciousness of something, but this isn't really the intentionality of phenomenology (Husserl 1983 p201). "The concept of intentionality, apprehended in its undetermined range ... is a whole indispensable fundamental concept which is the *starting point* at the beginning of phenomenology" (p202). In Heidegger's terms, intentionality expresses our essential Being, *Dasein*, as necessarily also a Being-in-the-world.

Therefore, phenomenological intentionality is integral to experience, action in a lived-world. Relph (1976 ch3) reminds us this intentionality is not just deliberately chosen direction or purpose: but must be understood as a relation of being between man and world that gives meaning. The key words are *'being'* and *'gives meaning'*, for it is not merely a biological, social or economic transaction, and nothing so crude as cause and effect, or object and subject. The

object and subject are evident only in so far as there is a unity, a meaningfulness, which is a relation of Being. This is expressed by Heidegger in the concept *Dasein* (Heidegger 1983, see below). Dasein is the 'region' in which all other Beings and phenomena presence, are made known to our consciousness. This is the stage of intentionality, where the unity or engagement of person and world is disclosed as a belonging of 'each to all'. Through intentionality "man measures the world" (Heidegger's phrase, 1971), and at the same time the "world measures man". The different forms of intentionality manifest the various 'styles' of engagement between person and environment (see Seamon 1979a).

Husserl's *Lebenswelt*, that is the everyday world where we live out our lives and the world we share with others, is variously translated 'lived-world' and 'lifeworld'. This lifeworld is a clarion call, like 'back to the things themselves!', and suggests going back to the world *as experienced*, more often quite ordinarily and habitually. Husserl saw this *Lebenswelt* as a 'forgotten' world, the gift we are almost unaware we have been given. This is the world that is right in front of our eyes, or more accurately in which we are as we are, and yet we do not normally see it, or notice it. Our attention is beyond, directed to everyday tasks such as working, travelling, eating and sleeping. This lifeworld is therefore habitual and taken-for-granted (see Buttimer 1976, Schutz 1966, 1970, 1972). The lifeworld [21] is a person or group's everyday world of *taken-for-grantedness* which includes surroundings, artifacts, gestures, behaviours, events, meanings and so forth (Seamon 1986c,

1979a). It is a whole world as lived or experienced, and not merely the abstract worlds of social milieu, behavioural environment, landscape, region or space. The concept *place* captures something of this richness, being not merely geographic but also social, historical, architectural and 'lived'. The lifeworld is not merely a stage, but in a sense it is us: what we do, where, with whom, how and when...

It is this lifeworld that phenomenology explores. The world of the natural attitude, the world of an essential unity as lived and experienced, rather than the abstract, presupposed, grossly simplified, and tidy worlds of science and abstract thought. This is the world of the known and unknown, includes ambiguity and certainty, has order and disorder, ambiance, 'ownness', is profane and sacred, and is the world as meaningful, as 'actually experienced' - it is not merely thought of but lived. Phenomenology seeks not to abstract from this, but respect it, be receptive to it in its fullness and wholeness, as our 'life-world'. It seeks to explore, 'penetrate' into the very entanglement of it all as experienced, and so to disclose the essential nature of our Being as Being-in that world.

Husserl's phenomenological reflection also revealed sharing with others -intersubjectivity. The intersubjective 'world' is the shared world, is the world we express in language and to which we belong as fellow human beings. "... I apprehend the world-about-(others) and the world-about-me objectively as one and the same world, which differs only through affecting consciousness differently ... even that which

is here intersubjectively in common is known in different ways, is differently apprehended ... Despite all this, we come to understand with our neigbours, and set up in common an objective spatio-temporal fact-world as the world about us that is there for all to which we ourselves none-the-less belong" (Husserl 1958, in Johnson 1983 p105). This is not the sharing of an abstract, identical, and 'objective' world in the sense of science, but a radical subjectivity, and 'common' world to which we belong and with which we identify. The intersubjective is a relation of empathy or identification with the world, is a recognition of 'common' experience, and a coming together and sharing with one another. Further, it is a fundamental and universal of experience, for we are Beings-in-the-world, and 'with-others'. In *intersubjective corroboration*, for instance, there is 'the verification of one person's experiential account with others' (Seamon 1986a p7). This intersubjectivity is an identification with another's experience and understanding; it might be a kind of empathy or sharing. Seamon (1983b p4) defines intersubjective corroboration as "do I find in my life situation and experience what other phenomenologists have found?" However, intersubjectivity is never fully expressed in language, even in discussion between phenomenologists, but is shared more intimately and 'spiritually'. It is disclosed or revealed rather than manufactured, and is basically given in that we are human beings and recognise each other as 'other human beings'. The intersubjective is not so much 'verified' or agreed, as 'confirmed' or realised. It is sharedness and an in-commonness, but not an agreedness, nor a sameness. The intersubjective is prior to belief and fact, and lies in the

taken-for-granted alreadiness of human existence. It is not a sameness, for whilst we have an in-commonness, or belonging to one another in intersubjectivity, this shared position still preserves the individuality of each person's intersubjective knowledge [22].

Heidegger, who dedicated his *Being and Time*(1983, original 1926) to Husserl "in friendship and admiration", provides a major development and maturing of phenomenology. However, his concerns were somewhat different, and his perspective essentially more philosophical (or ontological) than Husserl's more psychological tendency. Further the 'idealism' of Husserl is gone, and a greater rigour is apparent. His central concerns were Being and thinking [23]. He explored and developed phenomenological reflection as a way to disclose the essence of Being, and in particular our own Being, *Dasein* and our *Being-in-the-world*. He does not keep mechanically to the 'phenomenological method', or stages of reduction, outlined by Husserl, but rather enters the 'circle of meaning' (noted earlier). From this more hermeneutical position (later developed by Gadamer, eg 1975), he generates a form of recursive phenomenological reflection or *'meditative thinking'*. Central to this is the search for the right questions or entrance to phenomena (eg 1983), and the successive peeling away of ever deeper presuppositions. He often relies on a thorough etymological de-construction to trace back to the 'originary' meaning or essence of concepts and aspects of our experience of the world and ourselves. He has been criticised for over-emphasizing the ontological journey with the unfortunate neglect of the associated

epistemology (Ricoeur 1981).

Heidegger's philosophy has strongly influenced much of my own thinking in the present thesis - notably his approach to phenomena as a kind of 'opening attitude' or meditative thinking, his concern with Being and Being-in-the-world, the notions of 'care', and of 'man dwells poetically'. I have personally found his work clearer and more consistently argued than Husserl, who in bringing into the world an explicit phenomenology suffered inevitably from contradiction (see Husserl/Nakhnikian 1964). Heidegger, particularly in Being and Time, argues a complex case, but his understanding of etymology and greater sense of the phenomenological attitude as a whole permits a more communicative text. He further clarified and simplified his style in latter works , shifting his concern from the particularity of Dasein, to the broader concern of the mode of thinking (Denken, or Andenken) 'about' the essential nature of phenomena, of which Being continued to be central for him.

Heidegger (1983) argued that Being should be the central concern of philosophy and of our age. He sensed that we have forgotten the fundamental nature of our Being, and saw this as reflected in such contemporary concerns as the atom bomb, the reduction of distances through developments in transport technology, and the problem of the postwar housing shortage (eg Heidegger 1971). In other words, we have forgotten who we really are - 'mortals' who need to 'dwell poetically'. He recognised that the whole issue of our Being and Being-in-the-world was taken-for-granted and covered in

presupposition. He seeks to "· open up to and take true measure of the dimensions of our existence" (1971 p xvi), yet at the same time seeks to preserve the essential wholeness of Being and world.

'Opening' is characterised as *meditative thinking* (Heidegger 1966) and is a form of phenomenological reflection. Rather than the stages of Husserl's 'reduction', which are nevertheless implicit, Heidegger sought to get into the circle of meaning. He recognises a binary tension:

1) *calculative thinking* - is contemporary science and its applied disciplines. It sets hypotheses, applies prior and external criteria, findings from one situation to another, manipulates phenomena with little regard to the integrity of phenomena themselves, and sets the world at a distance. Its interest is not in the phenomenon itself, or the moment of experience, but on that which is beyond, the goal, purpose or utility.

2) *meditative thinking* is more intimate, receptive and open to phenomena as they are in themselves. It is a largely forgotten mode of thinking, but nonetheless implicit in human nature. Heidegger calls us to aspire to this meditative thinking, or 'opening attitude', through which we may discover ourselves and the essential nature of phenomena, and so learn how to 'dwell poetically' [24].

This meditative thinking requires two attributes:releasement towards things and openness to mystery. Heidegger (1966) considers the phenomenon of waiting and recognises *waiting-for* and *waiting-upon*. The

first is a waiting for something, and suggests definite expectations, desires, goals and needs. This is presuppositional and calculative. He argues that a more primordial and therefore essential characterisation is waiting-upon. This is more a receptiveness to what is already given, and without such 'knowing'. For instance, we wait-for dinner but the table and chairs wait-upon the diners. This latter characterisation is essentially one of humility and openness to becoming, and is the phenomenological attitude. 'For' relates to subjective human expectations of some sort; 'upon' refers to what is, if given, a gift. "In waiting (upon) we leave open what we are waiting for" (Heidegger 1966). This is the suspension of belief or disbelief of Husserl. However, such thinking, as in Husserl's reductions, is not passive but active and difficult.*Releasement* is openness to that which is given and already implicated in our Being-in-the-world and in Dasein as 'care'. Two aspects are recognised: being released *from*, and releasement *to*(Heidegger 1966). The fundamental authenticity and priorness of the latter is comprehended through *in-dwelling*. This is not so much an empathy as a 'getting into the circle of meaning', or allowing things to speak to us on their own terms.

Being and, in particular, *Dasein* are central to Heidegger's phenomenology.Dasein is related to Husserl's consciousness, but in many ways is a far more advanced concept. "Dasein is an entity which, in its very Being comports itself, understandingly towards that Being", that is it is a Being for whom its own being is a concern (Heidegger 1983 p78). "Furthermore, Dasein is an entity which in each case I myself am. Mineness belongs to any existent Dasein, and belongs

to it as a condition which makes authentic and inauthentic possible"
(1983 p78). Dasein should be true to itself, that is *authentic*, but
may be *'fallen'*, that is it can 'forget' itself and thus in sense live
in a land of make-believe ('inauthenticity'). Both authentic and
inauthentic are modes of being of Dasein (Heidegger 1983 p220).
"Dasein has in the first instance, fallen away from itself as an
authentic potentiality for Being its Self, and has fallen into the
'world'... On no account, however, do the terms 'inauthentic' and
'non-authentic' signify 'really not', as if in this mode of Being,
Dasein were altogether to lose its Being. 'Inauthenticity' does not
mean anything like Being-no-longer-in-the-world but amounts rather to
a quite distinct kind of Being-in-the-world..." (Heidegger 1983 p220)
This 'inauthentic' Being is fascinated with the world, or distracted
by it, that is with other than itself and is busy with that which is
beyond itself, and so forgets itself. 'Authentic' Being, as genuine to
itself, first and foremost is concerned with its own Being and
remembers the significance of this.

Heidegger searches for the revealing of man's *authentic nature*.
"Authenticity is that which is genuine, honest to itself, not just
superficially but in depth, without hypocrisy, unadulterated...
authenticity refers to a mode of being of Dasein, which recognises
man's freedom and responsibility for his own existence " (Heidegger
1983 p68, p220) . The authentic and inauthentic are grounded in
the *mineness* Dasein; its own Being as well as Being in general is its
concern.

Dasein is "understanding as self-projective Being towards its ownmost potentiality for Being", and is always beyond itself - "ahead of itself-in-already being-in-the-world"(Heidegger 1983 p236). Therefore, the character of Dasein is "grounded upon that state of Being which we have called 'Being-in-the-world'" (1983 p78). This stands for a unitary phenomenon. It is a whole within which we are already implicated and within which meaningfulness is disclosed. It has close affinity with Husserl's *Lebenswelt*, and can accommodate the concept of intentionality. The 'in-the-world' is the worldhood of the world, which is always dependent on a Being-in. Being-in as such is 'in-hood' itself. First this implies being-in something, as water is 'in' a glass, but this is a relation of Being which two entities extended 'in' space have to each other with regard to their location in that space. The character of Dasein's Being-in is something more. It is not merely being-present-at-hand, as the water 'in' the glass, one corporeal thing in another or spatial one-another-ness of things. "'Being-in' is thus the formal existential expression for the Being of Dasein, which has Being-in-the-world as its essential state" (Heidegger 1983 p80). This Being-in is a being alongside the world in the sense of being absorbed in world. It is an engagement and a wholeness. "Taking up relationships towards the world is possible only because Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is as it is" already prior to conscious thought (1983 p84). In other words man is first in-the-world, and only then can have a relationship to the world. It is not the other way round. This is a denial of the abstract and detached world of science, and considers the world in which we already

are entwined, *are* engaged and participate. To gain an understanding of this world and ourselves, which are both necessarily together, we do not stand at a distance or outside, but enter the circle of meaning in an open or receptive way.

Dasein's Being is fundamentally care, it "reveals itself as care" (Heidegger 1983 p227; see Part I.IV). "Dasein when understood ontologically is care. Because Being-in-the-world belongs essentially to Dasein, its Being towards the world is essentially concern" (1983 pp83/4). This care needs to be distinguished from will, wish, addiction and urge. "Care cannot be derived from these, since they themselves are founded upon it" (1983 p84). In other words, care is more fundamental and 'originary'. Heidegger approaches 'care' with a phenological reflection on 'anxiety'. "Being-in-the-world is essentially care... Being-alongside something is concern, because it is defined as a way of Being-in by its basic structure - care. Care does not characterise just existentiality ... it (also) embraces the unity of these ways in which Being may be characterised" (p237). Care is always 'in' Dasein's Being-in-the-world. Therefore, care has much affinity with Husserl's intentionality.

For Heidegger, and phenomenology in general, consciousness, and in particular Dasein (and in a sense 'experience'), is the 'place' where phenomena are manifest to us. Heidegger uses the term 'region'. A region is open-area, territory or space, and it is possible to designate a region as inherently dynamic by using the phrase

'that-which-regions' and 'regioning' to express the activity
directly. Dasein as the 'place' where Being is disclosed is the
'region', and 'that which regions' is Dasein, and that which is
'regioned' are Beings and phenomena. They 'presence' in Dasein. "The
region gathers, just as if nothing were happening, each to each and
each to all into an abiding, while resting in itself. Regioning is a
gathering and re-sheltering for an expanded resting in an abiding. So
the region is at once an expanse and an abiding. It abides into the
expanse of resting. It expands into the abiding of what has freely
turned towards itself..." (Heidegger 1966 p86). That which regions,
Dasein, brings forth a giveness, discloses truth, as being-uncovering.
Therefore, Hiedegger's 'meditative thinking' is not a 'grabbing hold'
but a receptiveness and 'tuning-in' to phenomena in themselves.
These 'presence' within Dasein, for Dasein is the 'region', or a Being
for whom Being is a concern (not merely its own Being but all Being).
In other words, 'man is measure'.

Ong (1971 p78) clarifies the notion of presencing in the term
'world-as-presence'. It is a given but it is also dynamic not static
and we are engaged in it. In other words we are already enmeshed in it
as 'Being-in-the-world'. "By presence I mean the kind of relationship
that exists between persons when we say that two persons are present
to one another. Presence in the full sense of the term entails more
than sensation. In so far as it is grounded in the senses, it appears
to be grounded in them all simultaneously. We speak of a 'sense' of
presence rather than a sight, sound, smell, taste or touch of
presence...the world as presence ... (gives) an immediacy and in a

certain kind of relevance" (Ong 1971 p78) [25].

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that Heidegger also returns 'to the things themselves', and in particular 'experience', or world-as-experienced. For instance, he notes the essential wholeness of experience and the already interpreted nature of perception. "We never really first perceive a throng of sensations, eg tones and noises, in the appearance of things - as this thing concept alleges; rather we hear the storm whistling in the chimney, we hear the three-motored plane, we hear the Mercedes in immediate distinction from the Volkswagen. Much closer to us than all sensations are the things themselves. We hear the door shut in the house, and never hear acoustic sensations... In order to hear a sound we have to listen away from things, divert our ear from them, that is listen abstractly" (Heidegger 1971 p26) [26].

To conclude, a number of critical comments may be gathered. Phenomenology is a wide and varied philosophy, and Seamon (1986c) notes that there is now a 'second generation' of phenomenologists who have begun critical assessment of previous work. However, there remains much resistance to the worth or 'validity' of phenomenological work. Much of this criticism is founded on a superficial appreciation of phenomenology, and in short is inappropriate criticism. The radically different ontology and epistemology make standard 'scientific' criteria, such as verification, repeatability and proof, inappropriate or, at least, in need of redefinition. However, much

phenomenological criticism of positivism may also be seen as somewhat inappropriate. Seamon (1986c) recognises three inappropriate common criticisms of phenomenology: triviality of topics, untestable findings, lack of concern for economic, social and political structures. This type of criticism "demands that phenomenology carry out a focus, stance and style of working inimical to the inherent nature of phenomenology as a way of knowing" (Seamon 1986c p18). Such criticism can be turned on its head. For instance positivist science can be criticised for its inadequacy in capturing the subtle nuances or quality of experience, a lack of concern for the humanness, 'dead' abstractions and inaccurate generalisation, and the 'false' reality of 'average situations'.

More valuable, or constructive, are criticisms from within the overall frame of reference. These include:

1) *fundamental criticism* - recognition of underlying contradictions within phenomenology itself; and
2) *operational criticism* - that is, of the practice, language and concept of individual phenomenological work.

Zimmerman (1985) has questioned whether we understand what Heidegger really means by 'letting things be' and 'preserving and sparing'. He questions the 'authenticity' of 'applications' of phenomenological insights, 'methods' and the adoption of phenomenological terminology. He reminds us of the radical contrast between phenomenology and positivist science, a difference which

questions the very way we live and think. He suggests we might consider phenomenology as a *'spiritual discipline'* which does not produce insights or transformation itself, but instead prepares us to receive it (Zimmerman 1985 p248). Here, we can also see parallels with the work of Ruskin on 'clear-seeing' (see Relph 1984, 1985b), and Goethe's approach to the natural world (see Seamon 1978, Bortoft 1985). Heidegger's 'listening and harkening' to permit the presencing of Being also requires an 'abs encing' or clearing in which Beings might presence (Zimmerman 1985 p251). This is a demand that an explicit phenomenology, one that seeks to develop a tradition and a 'body of knowledge', may find difficult to adhere to. Maybe we should take more notice of the modes of learning and self-exploration passed on by the *guru* in Eastern philosophies.

The whole idea of *'presuppositionlessness'* has been questioned. Douglas (1971b p21) suggests "presuppositionless understanding of everyday life has been repeatedly discredited by careful internal analysis of the arguments in favour of it. Husserl was well aware of the impossiblity of a truly presuppositionless understanding." Husserl did later suggest a distinction betweenordinary presupposition of a positive kind, and *implicit presupposition*, as in questioning and answering. The latter exists necessarily and consists not of assumptions but of the first things to be made explicit. Natanson (1952) clarifies further and argues that phenomenology is not so much presuppositionless philosophy, as a philosophy that makes presuppositions explicit and so neutralises them - to what ever extent this is possible.

The notion of 'essence' has raised a number of problems, and in particular how it relates to origins and universal laws. Harries (1983 p15) notes "we have to try to recover the origins, where the return to origins is not so much a turn back to the past as a turn to what is essential ..." Heidegger notes that "the universal that holds for each thing is called its essence or nature" (1971 p189). This, however, is not a universal *law*, rather a more intrinsic and holistic disclosure of the essential nature of the phenomenon. Heidegger (1971) clarifies with the distinction between:

1) *conceptual essence* - which is the feature that holds indifferently for many things. It is a class concept which ignores the individuality of its members; and

2) *essential essence* - which consists of what the entity is in truth, that is in itself for itself.

It is the essential essence that is the concern of phenomenology. In the case of Heidegger this is the jugness of the jug, the worldness of world, the thingness of thing and the authentic nature of Dasein.

Livingstone and Harrison (1983) recognise four 'tensions' which are worth brief consideration. First, there is the tension within phenomenology between *subjective* and *intersubjective*. These are the 'old faithfuls' of validity and objectivity. Seamon (1983b, 1986a) favours 'phenomenological corroboration', that is comparison between particular findings and our own reflections on the phenomenon. Do the

findings resonate, can we identify with them, do they have a 'sense of authenticity'? In Heidegger, there is the deeper notion of *truth* as disclosedness which is revealed through entering the circle of meaning. This is the primordial sense of truth. "To say that an assertion 'is true' signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself... 'lets' the entity 'be seen' in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true* (truth) of the assertion must be seen as *Being-uncovering*. Thus truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and an object in the sense of a liking of one entity with an object" (Heidegger 1983 p261). Therefore, "ultimately, phenomenological study is grounded in clear, qualitative awareness arising from intertest, sensitivity, and sincerity. In this sense weak phenomenological research is worse than weak positivist research" (Seamon 1986a p20). Rowles (1978a,b) has shown the value of 'verification' of desciptions with participants. However, as in Heidegger, this is not 'correspondence' between an objective reality and given abstractions, but a question of consistency and resonance, for knowing and expressing that knowledge is a creative and subjective enterprise. The *aim* is not explanation, but sensitivity and understanding. The priority is allowing things to be as they are in themselves rather than comprehensive knowledge for its own sake. "Phenomenology's best means for clarity and correctness lies in a continual process of critique, clarification and correction" (Seamon 1986a p20) as in history and other forms of thought. Both the exercise and the external criteria of verification will probably be inappropriate in a phenomenological context. Further, strict repeatability demands something unnatural, and to a large extent

impossible, to the world-as-experienced.

Secondly, Livingstone and Harrison recognise the tension between *uniqueness and generalisation*. This is the question: is phenomenology the description of the unique or the finding of general insights? The question is mis-worded. Rather, phenomenology is the study of lived, or actual, experience of particular situations which through phenomenological reflection reveals the fundamental nature of phenomena. In a sense, phenomenology takes the particular experience as a window on ,or even hologram (Bohm 1983), 'towards' the fundamental nature of phenomena and the world. This fundamental nature or essence of phenomena, as already noted, can be seen as the disclosure of universals. This search for "wider understanding and generalisation marks phenomenology's commonality with positivist science: both seek to provide order to the nature of physical and human phenomena, though phenomenology seeks to *describe* that order, while positivism seeks to *explain* and sometimes *control* it" (Seamon 1986a p21). This may be inaccurate, for phenomenology has a radically different ontological base to positivism and is essentially prior to it. Therefore, it assumes 'a world' is already immanent, though not necessarily already there in the objective sense of an 'out there' (the empirical positivist sense). Rather, since Dasein is necessarily engaged in the world as Being-in-the-world, and the Being in which other Beings presence, the world is continually in a state of disclosure and creation, or becoming, that is neither strictly 'out there' nor 'in here' [27].

Thirdly, Livingstone and Harrison (1983) note the tension or relation between *experience and language*. This is a more serious problem, for observation is bound up with language (see Heidegger 1971d). Mugerauer (1985 p51) writes "the environment and people always and already ... are given together in language." Heidegger's etymological analyses (eg 1971a/c) clearly show the link between experience and language. Language may suggest the essential nature of taken-for-granted phenomena, but language can also be a prison that holds us from the truth. Heidegger and phenomenological hermeneutics (eg Gadamer 1975) suggests that the route out of the dilemma is through getting into the circle of meaning, or language, in the right way - which is a fundamental aspect of phenomenological reflection.

Finally, Livingstone and Harrison (1983) note the tension between *individual and society*. This is in part an inappropriate criticism since phenomenology seeks a more fundamental understanding than either society or individual, and in a sense is prior to this relationship. For instance, Husserl's consciousness and Heidegger's Dasein are not necessarily 'the individual' [28]. Phenomenology has been accused of *voluntarism*, that is society seen as a product of intentional, willed actions of individuals and groups (Jackson & Smith 1984 p60). A careful reading of phenomenology suggests that the charge of 'voluntarism' is irrelevant and an attempt at upward generalisation to the level of society is not suggested by phenomenology. For society we need a phenomenology of society not an extrapolation of another phenomenology. Yet there remains a problem of bridging the gap between

the two levels in a way that reflects individual and society 'as experienced'. A start has been made in phenomenological sociology (Schutz 1970, 1972; Douglas 1971a).

It is important to realise that in phenomenology:

"all concepts or terms must remain in flux in a certain way, always at the point of being differentiated in accord with the progress of the analysis of consciousness and the cognition of new phenomenological strata within what is at first seen in undifferentiated unity. All terms chosen have their tendencies of being connected 'with other terms'; they refer to relational directions, of which it is afterwards brought out that they do not have their source only in one essence-stratum; as a result it is better to limit or otherwise to modify the terminology ... we can therefore only count on definitive terminologies at very advanced stage of development of a science. It is an error and basically absurd to apply extrinsic and formal criteria of a logic of terminology to scientific expositions which are just emerging and to demand of the sort which fix the concluding results of great scientific developments at the beginning..." "Clarity does not exclude a certain halo of indeterminateness." (Husserl 1983 pp201-202).

This sense of 'flux' is fundamental to phenomenological attitude, as well as its language. Receptiveness to 'things themselves' and a holistic view of the 'world-as-experienced' calls for much more 'open' concepts and terms, and methods of enquiry, than traditionally sought by science [29]. Even 'findings' disclosed by the phenomenologist must be taken as 'in flux', for "the phenomenological world is not the bringing to explicit expression of a pre-existing being, but the laying down of being... not the reflection of a pre-existing truth, but, like art, the act of bringing truth into being" (Merleau-Ponty 1962 p xx).

Because of reflection of the enmeshment of person and world,

researcher and what he studies, in phenomenological epistemology, there is necessarily no single and absolute 'reality', or findings about reality. Every phenomenological insight, even as fundamental as an essence, is *potentially* idiosyncratic, or more generally culturally and historically specific. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily accurate; rather each insight forms a perspective or window on the phenomenal world. This 'world' is the dynamic engagement of phenomena and observer, and is first and foremost a world-as-experienced, and is therefore not static. The phenomenon may change continually like life-forms, though a relative stability recognised as a phenomenon may be manifest (also see Bohm 1983). Further, the observer will 'gain in experience', that is sensitivity and understanding. Therefore, there is not simply one legitimate essential presentation of each phenomenon, but many. Each may be quite valid yet different, sometimes 'confirming' other presentations, other times offering 'new' perspectives (see Seamon 1982 p122). This does not imply that all one needs to do to have an 'absolute' or definite final answer about a phenomenon is to compile some grand summation, or major insight, of the whole. This may be valuable but presupposes that phenomena, even at the level of essence, are static or stable. Phenomenology and other 'philosophies' (eg Carr 1911, Bohm 1983) suggest a more dynamic 'reality', and one which we can never fully grasp. In other words, the phenomenological epistemology calls for a fundamental humility [30], and phenomenology is therefore inevitably unfinished (Merleau-Ponty 1962 pxxi).

Therefore "the phenomenologist hopes that through *sincerity*,

perseverance, and care (my emphasis), he or she will see the

phenomenon more fully and deeply. In turn, these descriptive insights

are presented to phenomenologists and other interested individuals,

who must then decide if the description resonates with their own seeing

and understanding " (Seamon 1986a p7).

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(1) Phenomenology is a whole new way of thinking, even a new way of
living (see Zimmerman 1985 p247). I have only begun to appreciate the
implications of this as the research has unfolded. As a consequence, I
do feel I cannot justify the label *'A Phenomenology of Heightened
Experience in the Everyday Environment'*, nor do I wish to claim that
Group Reflection is necessarily a phenomenological method (see
Appendix A). I have drawn on reading from phenomenology, hermeneutics,
pragmatism, and the 'new physics', but concentrate here on the first.
(2) In some cases research may be criticised as an inauthentic
'application' of phenomenology, and at its worst be merely the
grafting on of new terminologies to existing approaches. More
positively, research that is not explicitly phenomenology, but seems
in harmony with this position, would usually be posited under
'phenomenologically-inspired', though in the strictest sense *it* is not
inspired but the reader, eg Darroch-Lozowski 1985.
(3) In this subsection I do not consider the debates over
phenomenology within person-environment research for there is already
a rich literature on this. Encouraging this perspective: eg Relph
1970, 1984, Tuan 1971, Entrikin 1976, Buttimer 1974 (appendix), 1976,
1983, Ley 1977, 1981, 1982, Jackson 1981, Smith 1981, Jackson & Smith
1984, Seamon 1982, 1983b, 1984a, 1986a/b/c, Johnson 1983, Ley & Duncan
1984; and discouraging it: eg Mercer & Powell 1972, Walmsley 1974,
Billinge 1977, 1983, Baker 1979, Christenson 1982, Gregory 1978, 1981,
1982, Pred 1983, Pickles 1985. Note also Johnston 1983a/b.
(4) I have not confined my attention to 'second-hand' interpretations
of phenomenology, but considered in some depth original texts: Husserl
1958, 1960, 1964, 1970, 1973, 1975; Heidegger 1957, 1966, 1968, 1970,
1971, 1977, 1983; Merleau-Ponty 1962 (Kocklemans 1963, Edie 1964);
Schutz 1966, 1970, 1972; Gadamer 1975. Also I have considered
existentialism - Sartre 1963, 1968, 1948/1980; hermeneutics - Gadamer
(above); Ricoeur 1981; pragmatism - Dewey 1929, 1934; Rorty 1980,
1982; and others - eg Carr (on Bergson) 1911; Searle 1983 - and
discussion of the implications of the 'new physics' - Capra 1975/6,
especially *Bohm 1983* (which displays important parallels with

phenomenolo*gy), and Jones 1983. Note Spiegelberg for an overview of the phenomenological movement (1982); and 'doing phenomenology' (1975).

(5)   Heidegger (1983 pp59-61) points out that term 'descriptive phenomenology' is *akin to* "at bottom tautological".

(6)   This is *akin to* Husserl's (1964) stages of reductive reflection: phenomenological, eidetic, transcendental; and in Schutz's (1970) terms the move from the natural and objectivist attitudes to a theoretic or phenomenological one.

(7)   Here I differ somewhat from many commentators (eg Ley & Samuels 1978; Johnston 1983a,b; Pickles 1985): positivist science and phenomenology can both contribute productively to human studies, and philosophically it is conceivable to have a phenomenology of physical phenomena (eg a physics developing from positions such as Bohm 1983).

(8)   Many link a 'proto-phenomenology' to Dilthey and even to Freud (eg see Ricoeur 1981, Merleau-Ponty 1962). More recently parallels have been observed with eastern 'philosophy', notably Taoism, - see eg Capra 1975/6; and for a Heideggerean perspective on Tao Te Ching see Chung-yuan 1976.

(9)   Dilthey see Rose 1981, Ricoeur 1981, Gadamer 1975. Rose considers the implications of Dilthey's philosophy for geography, and in particular his text concept. A more contemporary and extended text concept is proposed by Ricouer (1981). He outlines its potential as tool in the social science and suggests that meaningful action might be studied as 'texts' (or 'discourse').

(10)   Husserl's focus on 'consciousness' reflects this. He is probably most idealistic in the Cartesian Meditations (1960).

(11)   Here, I focus on Heidegger's formulation. His more ontological perspective and hermeneutic tendency contributes to a more thoroughly worked-out conception of meaning and truth.

(12)   See the circle concept in Taoism, fn (8).

(13)   Note Husserl's concept of 'consciousness' and Heidegger's 'Dasein' are *not* identical, though closely related. Consciousness has been questioned (see Wilkes 1984). Dasein is a more advanced and fundamental concept.

(14)   Heidegger (1971 p18) writes , in reference to art, "truth is the unconcealedness of that which is as something that is. Truth is the truth of Being. Beauty does not occur alongside and apart from truth. When truth sets itself into the work (-of-art) it appears... Thus the beautiful belongs to the advent of truth, truth's taking of its place..."

(15)   Husserl see footnote (4). Many have seen Husserl's phenomenology as merely a critique of positivism and dichotomous to the Cartesian perspective. This is to some extent correct, though appears not to have been the immediate intention of Husserl himself. Above all he sought, like Dilthey, to find a 'scientific method' appropriate to human studies (*Geisteswissenschaften*) that might ultimately hold a position comparable to 'positivist' method in the physical sciences. His position grew from critical reflection of contemporary western philosophy, and in particular he sought "a refinement of Descartes' method of doubt" (Husserl 1964 pxviii).

(16)   Here, Bohm's (1983) use of the 'hologram' and the 'holomovement' in the notion of implicative-explicative knowledge has some relevance.

(17)   This contrasts with Peirce's inferential position (see Davis

1972).

(18) This 'transcendental subjectivity' seems to be a vital part of Heidegger's *Dasein*. It is here that Husserl's 'grounding' in Kant, notably the 'Critique of Judgment' (though he rejects Kant's position), is particulary evident.

(19) Johnson (1983) suggests that the geographer need not go as far as Husserl's transcendental reflection. However, surely a fully 'phenomenological' research should include this vital stage of 'bracketing' self.

(20) See Searle (1983) for a simpler concept of *intentionality*. His analysis of 'intentional states' and the structure of mental states is a particularly interesting 'solution' to the mind-body problem. See Bolton (1982) for a more phenomenological conception of intentionality.

(21) I generally use the term 'lifeworld'. It implies the world of everyday life as it unfolds now. However, I occasionally use the term 'lived-world', which is literally a less accurate translation, yet may be more in tune with Husserl's concept. This suggests a 'lived' world, the pastness implied shows an affinity with Dilthey's 'historical consciousness' and 'Érlebnis'. In practise, *Lebenswelt* must necessarily have both a current unfolding and a more retrospective pastness, for the lifeworld is habitual and reflected upon.

(22) The nature of intersubjectivity is in part revealed in Maslow's concept of interpersonal knowing. Subjective knowing, taken literally, is totally personal, private, almost inexpressible and is inaccessible by others. Objective knowledge is readily expressed and shared by different people, yet it is 'poor' knowledge, facts or bits of knowledge and a gross simplification. It is a far cry from the world as we experience it, know it personally and intimately; objective knowing is abstractive and a representation of 'bits' of that world. Maslow (quoted by Rowles 1978 p175) recognises a third mode of knowing - interpersonal knowing. This might alternatively be termed '*intersubjective knowing*'. "Examples, not always reciprocal, are a friend knowing a friend, two persons loving each other, a parent knowing a child, a child knowing a parent ... in such a relationship it is characteristic that the knower is involved with what he knows. He is not distant; he is close. He is not cool about it; he is warm. He is not unemotional; he is emotional. He has empathy, intuition for the object of knowledge: ie he feels identified with it, the same as it, to some degree and in some manner identical with it. He cares." Objective, subjective and interpersonal knowing are ofcourse not mutually exclusive modes of knowing (Rowles 1978b).

(23) For Heidegger references see fn (4). Often Heidegger's notion of *dwelling* is emphasized, however his primary concern was Being. Likewise, Husserl's *lifeworld* concept is often emphasized, yet for him the central concern seems to have been the process of phenomenological reflection itself that disclosed lifeworld. I consider dwelling in 3.2.

(24) Related to calculative and meditative are the contrast between the two aspects of mind: DIGITAL - logical, rational, sequential; and ANALOGUE - intuitive, imaginative, creative (Pauwels & Bergier p219 Jones 1983).

(25) Ong (1971) notes that presence is an ambiance, and most directly refers to persons, and a peopled environment. In Heidegger,

it refers, ofcourse, to the disclosure of Beings as they are in themselves, that is the fundamental nature of phenomena. Ong also links his concept of presence to phenomenology and the "intersubjectivity as a primary mode of human experience".

(26) Also note the emphasis on hearing in this illustration.

(27) See Bohm (1983) on *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, and especially the concept holomovement, the implicate-explicate process, and the hologram analogy.

(28) This is a complex point which I can't go into here. Heidegger (1983) for instance reminds us that Dasein and world do not correspond to subject and object.

(29) For a similar perspective on language and its relation to a holistic and dynamic reality, see Bohm (1983) on the 'holomovement' and 'rheomode' language.

(30) Note Relph's (1981) *'environmental humility'* developed from Heidegger.

1.5 HEIGHTENED EXPERIENCE AND EVERYDAY ENVIRONMENT

In this final part of *Section 1* I present the initial thesis statement and rationale. This is a brief statement of the research topic as *it stood prior to subsequent reflective exploration*. My research interest was both in a phenomenon, environmental experience, and in an appropriate method[1].

The reviews (see *1.2, 1.3*) suggest that 'everyday environments' have been neglected and the experience of people living in those environments. Phenomenology (see *1.4*) seems to offer an appropriate key to unlock this experience, that is 'environments as experienced'. In formulating the original thesis statement, or proposal, I sought to suggest a general interest and possible direction for research. It does not provide a comprehensive and thoroughly worked-out research focus, nor a theory or model to develop. It does not offer a hypothesis to test, nor a research problem or question to answer. Instead, it merely offers the *starting point* for the research and outlines some of the initial presuppositions and speculations. At the time my ideas were essentially vague since I wished to 'have' an *open attitude* towards the potential direction and development of the research and, therefore, a *responsive interest* so that the phenomenon might speak of itself, or be *explicated authentically*. I attempted to avoid excessive and unwitting preconception and constriction. Here, therefore, I offer a basic and initial research statement, but I do not

attempt rigorous phenomenological reflection.

The thesis statement can be presented in two forms:

1) the *fieldwork statement* - "an interest in our heightened or
memorable experiences in which the local environment plays a part".
This was arrived at with the group in the preliminary interviews and
the first few meetings (see 2.4).
2) the more extended and speculative *research proposal* (which preceded
it) - "to unfold the potential meaning and dimensions of the
environmental experience, with particular focus on the 'location' and
'role' of the 'heightened' and/or 'aesthetic' experience of the
everyday environment outside. It suggests that the 'aesthetic' may be
a part of all environmental experiences and significant in our coming
to terms with the world, or 'Being-in-the-world' and 'Dwelling'" [2].

The fieldwork statement, with its greater simplicity and openness
to the potential nature of the phenomena, formed the *working
definition* of the research topic. Here, I will concentrate on the
common constituents - heightened experience and everyday environment.

The concern is "experience in which the environment plays a
part" rather than environmental or geographic experience. These are
technical terms and presuppose that we might meaningfully refer to a
separate portion of experience independently of, or detached from,
experience in general or as a whole. In other words, we need to
consider experience as *lived*. My own reflections, environmental

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aesthetics, phenomenology, and a 'pilot study' in Quebec, Co. Durham, indicated that a specifically *environmental* experience might be inauthentic to the nature of the phenomenon. The 'environmental' experience is a post-rationalisation and abstraction. The individual interviews in Quebec confirmed my own reflections and suggested that the same given experience might be variously labelled social, historical, biographical, psychological, religious and so forth [3]. Experience is apparently holistic and implicative of many dimensions, of which 'environment' is only one. Nevertheless, environment is frequently a content of experience and would seem to be of key importance to that experience. Therefore, in what way might environment be 'articulated' within experience in the everyday context?

Originally I planned explicitly and directly to focus on 'aesthetic experience' in the everyday environment [4]. Interestingly, Pole (1983 p2) writes in the context of aesthetics, that "we talk of experience when we want to specify something *distinctive* (my emph.) about our seeing or hearing of things, which we cannot attribute to the things themselves - and also, of course, about our feelings concerning them." My initial question was therefore the age-old one: why are such experiences apparently so important to us and so treasured, *in both* art and environment? Further, do such experiences stand out from experience in general in the context of the 'everyday environment' and are they significant to our relationship with, and sense of, that environment?. In other words, do 'aesthetic' or

'heightened' experiences lie behind such phenomena as sense of place, attachment to locale and 'dwelling'?

In preparation for this I recognised a number of apparent properties of the aesthetic experience. First there is the structural 'dualism' of the aesthetic, which Bullough (1977) called the 'antinomy of Distance'. The *heightened* *contact* or focusing-in on something or situation for its own sake, that is a kind of surrender to the phenomenon; and *distancing* or detachment from everyday concerns, that is a kind of suspension of practical interest, of utility and self concern. Beardsley (1982) recognises that the aesthetic includes an attention on interrelationships, an intensity of feeling, is a highly coherent experience, and is complete in itself. Further, Wolff (1963) reflects on aesthetic experience and 'surrender'. He considers the aesthetic to be a form of surrender-to, a kind of 'cognitive love', which includes: total involvement, suspension of received notions, pertinence of everything, identification and a risk of being hurt. Interestingly, this could be the phenomenological attitude, or more generally 'authentic' experience.

A number of further specific properties can be commonly recognised in aesthetic experiences of art and environment:

a) *Particular ity*: an aesthetic experience is specific to the individual, at a given time and place, relative to a certain object and within a cultural milieu or tradition.

b) *Intentionality*: experiences are 'of something', and also form a

relation of Being between person and 'object'.

c) *Transformation:* there is a change or realisation of something within an aesthetic experience. We see the 'object' and ourselves in a different light. The ordinary becomes the special.

d) *Care :* we submit to the 'object' for its own sake, show a 'disinterested' concern and commitment to it as it is in itself.

e) *Discontinuity:* the aesthetic experience appears as a distinctive moment of explication within the dynamic flow of consciousness, like a kind of 'quantum' of consciousness.

f) *Imagination:* it is widely recognised as marshalling the imagination, and therefore there is an essential creativity and projection within aesthetic experience.

g) *Reflection:* equally, it is attention to that which is past and in the context of past life experience, training and cultural tradition.

h) *Embeddedness:* it is entangled within a web of 'aesthetic' and 'non-aesthetic', mental and physical dimensions [5].

i) *Sensitivity* - the aesthetic experience varies in quality, richness or depth, and this seems to reflect the sensitivity of the experiencer. Past experience and training may expand this sensitivity.

j) *Subsisting:* experience subsists in the relation between person and 'object', being neither solely 'in the eye of the beholder' nor 'intrinsic of art-objects' [6].

k) *Completeness:* the aesthetic experience has a wholeness and roundedness. If we attempt to reduce it to its constituents it is somehow lost.

l) *Implicative:* the aesthetic experience when it arises or is

subsequently recalled always seems to hide a part of itself, to be a partial explication.

m) *Justification:* it generates a desire to be expressed, shared with other people, reflected upon, re-captured [7].

n) *Oneness:* the aesthetic experience seems to express a mergence between person and 'object', a state in which the sum is greater than the parts.

o) *Memorability:* aesthetic experiences, whilst momentary, are special to us and generally linger in the memory.

However, the research was formulated in terms of *heightened experience* since the term 'aesthetic' is nevertheless ambiguous in everyday language and commonly associated with art and the beautiful (see *1.3*). This might conflict with or prevent an open attitude to the phenomenon - such experience in the everyday environment. I wished to avoid a premature analogy with art and to allow heightened experience to be expressed in its relevance to everyday life. In other words, the 'aesthetic' tends in practise to hold the presupposition of a detachment from 'experience in general' that may not exist. It can also be argued that the term 'aesthetic' suggests a subject/object world which a phenomenologist should avoid or at least explicate carefully [8]. Nevertheless do such types of experience arise in the everyday environment and what role do they play?

'Heightened or memorable experience' is not a surrogate for 'aesthetic experience' but a substitute. Not all heightened, nor memorable, experiences are aesthetic. Nevertheless, 'aesthetic'

experiences are usually heightened and memorable. The term 'heightened' emphasizes a concern with the more vivid experiences, that is those that seem especially clear and significant in our 'experience library'. As a consequence such experiences would also seem to be 'memorable', that is they remain salient in the memory. It would seem that heightened and memorable experience is that experience which *naturally* is a concern of everyday reflection, that is we think about without necessarily any need to be encouraged (for instance, by a researcher). Such experiences are probably treasured, may frequently be recalled, interrelated, and shared with, or expressed to, other people. Such experiences might be associated with both positive and negative feelings. Here, experience is presupposed as a kind of 'event' which can be recalled and shared with others. Heightened and memorable experience would seem to be easier to recall, a concern of 'normal' reflection, and more accessible to research. Furthermore, do heightened experiences provide a gateway to the explication of more taken-for-granted experience?

Schutz (1970) recognises two 'stages', or forms, of experience. There are those experiences that in their running-off are undifferentiated and shade into one another and are lived through, or of the moment; and those that become objects of attention in subsequent reflection. He calls these latter experiences - '*meaningful experience*' . This research concentrates on such meaningful, conscious or reflective experience. These experiences are characteristically discrete, much clearer, structured, reflected upon and maybe, though not necessarily, more expressible to others. An aesthetic experience,

a heightened and a memorable experience are all 'meaningful' in this sense.

Furthermore, "only from the point of view of the retrospective glance do there exist discrete experiences. Only the already experienced is meaningful, not that which is being experienced. For meaning is merely an operation of intentionality, which, however, only becomes visible to the reflective glance" (Schutz 1970 pp63-64). Therefore, this research necessarily will consider *remembered* experience. This remembered experience is dependent on the creativity, integrity and fallibility of memory. In addition, it is *expressed experience*, and most commonly in the form of words. It is, therefore, dependent on the expressive capacity of language and gesture, and the capabilities of speaker and audience. What is the relation between such experience, remembered and expressed, and experience as lived, or in the moment of unfolding? The research focuses on experience not as it unfolds in the moment of person-environment interaction, but as it might be explicated from that which has 'distilled' and lingered in the memory and endured subsequent reflection. Presumably, the most heightened and recent experience will be the most authentically preserved, though it may not be the easiest to express or share with others. Remembering an experience depends on a myriad of factors including the content of the experience, its relation to other experiences, and the frequency of repeated recall. It would seem that it is these reflective experiences that are significant to person-environment relationships. Is this distinctive and reflected upon experience significant, maybe vital, in our coming to terms with

the world, making sense of environments, the sense of and attachment to places and communities, and, therefore, the meaning we give to environments?.

I chose the terms *local environment* and *everyday environment* in preference to the more technical terms area, neighbourhood, and 'lifeworld' [9]. I also avoided the term 'ordinary' environment with its connotations of mundane and unimportant. 'Local' proved to be a useful and relatively neutral label. It suggests that environment round about us, which forms the 'world' of our day-to-day activities. This is both the neighbourhood, the village or town, and in a less participatory sense the setting or surrounding landscape. The term 'everyday' suggests that which is part of day-to-day life, largely habitual, experienced most frequently, and normally more often than not taken-for-granted.

'Environment' might seem ambiguous in the context of academic literature, for it can refer to an ecological or biological system, an economic, social or historical context, a psychological situation, and a region, landscape, place or geographic area. Further, it might indicate something broad like setting or context, or more specific like a work-place and home. However, this breadth and a relative neutrality can be seen as merits of the term. Environments are both positively and negatively valued, and exist in any number of scales and forms. 'Environment' is plagued by the number of technical uses, *but in everyday language* it has a relatively non-specific and open meaning. Here, it may refer to anything from the countryside to the

sitting room. It suggests one's *surroundings*, and is inclusive of both

the physical form, personal and social meanings, dynamic forces such

as the weather and seasons, and less tangible 'ambiances' like the

sense of home, roots or history, and mystery or folklore. In short,

therefore, 'everyday and local environment' hopes to focus attention

on *'where we live out our day-to-day lives'* . Therefore, this is not

the environment that is visited and the outsider view is 'not our

concern. Instead, I sought to access an insider view, that is the

experience of those living in the research area. This everyday

environment is not the 'holiday place', nor the 'unusual place', nor a

set of photographs of an 'unknown location', BUT the environment which

we live through and inhabit. It may be very special to us, as in the

case of home, and it may be apparently familiar and often

taken-for-granted. Yet this same environment might be the 'source of

some of our most heightened and memorable experiences.

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(1) At this stage I had no definite method in mind, save that I
wished to conduct some form of 'fieldwork' involving the participation
of persons living in a given environment. This method would be
qualitative rather than quantitative, participatory rather than
observational, and seek to reveal the 'insider' view. See *Section 2
for the fieldwork strategy that emerged, and Appendix A* for a brief
comment on this strategy in the context of 'phenomenology method'.
(2) See *Heightened Experience of the Everyday Environment* p4,
Graduate Discussion Paper no.12, Durham, January 1986.
(3) Interviews in the pilot study also confirmed that the term
'geographic' is extremely ambiguous for lay respondents. I therefore
avoided it totally in the main research. The Quebec pilot study was a
series of informal interviews, or conversations, with individual local
residents, at which I sought to discover if people reflected on their
local environmental experience and what role this reflection might

play. This was not an extensive study and lasted only about two months. It was a preliminary 'testing ground' in preparation for the main research in Ushaw Moor, Co Durham.

(4)   Beardsley 1982 (p730) notes the *value of the aesthetic experience*: it relieves tension and quietens destructive impulses; resolves lesser conflicts within the self and helps to create integration or harmony; refines perception and discrimination; develops imagination and one's ability to place oneself in others' positions; fosters mutual sympathy and understanding.

(5)   See the Network and Background concepts of Searle (1983).

(6)   "It is in me that the 'aesthetic object' is constituted other than me" (Dufrenne 1973 p232).

(7)   Note the model of intentional states in Searle (1983). He also recognises the *self-referentiality* of such states. This also seems to be a feature of aesthetic experience (and experience in general). It is an *intrinsic intentionality*. In other words one cannot prove against external criteria that one actually had such an experience. It is not a question of verification but of authenticity, and involves getting into the circle of meaning.

(8)   This statement comes from a letter I received 14/4/87 from David Seamon.

(9)   Everyday environment is nevertheless closely related to the phenomenological concept - *lifeworld* - but would seem more immediately appreciated by lay participants.

SECTION 2

GROUP REFLECTION

2.0   INTRODUCTION

In this section I present the fieldwork; the 'input' or method, Group Reflection, and the 'output' or data, the Group Record. I regard this section as the most vital part of the thesis and therefore urge you, the reader, to dwell on it, to reflect on it and to continue that reflection into your own personal experience of everyday environments.

Firstly, I look at several closely related studies in 'Experiential Geography' in order to suggest some of my reasons for developing a group strategy. Then, I outline Group Reflection and, therefore, how the fieldwork was conducted. Thirdly, I step back from these practical concerns to consider the dimensions of groups as a research tool. The group generated material is then presented in *Our View of the Valley* . This is the group record and was written in close cooperation with the Ushaw Moor Group. It is designed to stand alone as well as form a part of this thesis (see Rodaway 1987a). In the present work it is presented as a whole, but with the addition of a short preface. I urge the reader to dwell on this group record for it forms the first level of interpretation of the experiences explicated and the basis of the further researcher reflections in *Section* 3. The experience extracts included and themes suggested are best appreciated after several readings, as well as reflection on your own experience. Finally, the section closes with some comments on the group as it matured and the record itself.

2.1   TOWARDS A GROUP STRATEGY

Significant in the adoption of a group strategy were a dissatisfaction with interview approaches and researcher-based personal reflection, a belief in the potential of a group environment, observation and reflection on groups, and my own satisfaction with working in small groups. A more immediate stimulant was the research literature on environmental experience, especially in Geography. Here I felt there was an opportunity for a fresh perspective and the potential for a group strategy. Naively maybe, but nevertheless eagerly, I committed myself to developing a group strategy in the field [1].

Group Reflection complements many other approaches in 'experiential geography' - personal reflection (Tuan 1973b, 1974, 1976, 1977; Relph 1976, 1979, 1982, 1984, 1985a), sensitivity exercises (Pocock 1983b; Goodey 1982), informal interviews and limited participation (Rowles 1978a, 1978b), and environmental experience groups (Seamon 1979a) [2]. It also confronts many of the criticisms of these studies but, of course, Group Reflection raises a whole set of other problems as well, yet hopefully it still contributes important new insights into environmental experience. It was with the potential dangers of these problems in mind that I subsequently, towards the end of first stage of the fieldwork, considered in some depth discussion of groups in the Social Science literature (see 2.3).

Here, therefore, I briefly reflect on three recent field-based studies of environmental experience, in Geography, which indirectly and directly encouraged me to look towards a group strategy. Then, I will suggest some specific reasons for adopting a group approach to explore heightened experience of the everyday environment.

Pocock (1983b) notes how we take-for-granted much of our sensual experience of the environment, and in particular the contribution of an individual sense module. Sight is apparently dominant, and so in everyday experience we become 'blind' to the significance of the other senses. He reports on a fieldwork strategy based on "direct personal engagement" (p319) consisting of 'exercises' whereby individuals are requested to go out and encounter a particular environment but focusing their attention on a single sense - sight, sound, smell or touch. "The value of concentrating on one sense module is that we become much more discriminating and thus ultimately more sensitive to the overall environmental richness " (p320). However, as he points out, the actual role of the different senses is often most fully realised when a collection of individuals then pool their different sense perspectives after fieldwork. He shows that the exercises and the subsequent discussion increase awareness, not only of the environment but also of other people. Finally he links sensual experience to environmental knowing.

This study therefore shows the importance of personal experience, in particular focusing on a single sense module. It may loose sight of

the interdependency of the senses, but allows significant qualities of each to be revealed. The exercises are of course created for the purpose of fieldwork study, and no direct link is made with participants' everyday lives. The study was conducted in Shrewsbury, an urban setting, by students on a fieldtrip from Durham. Maybe, a more natural approach would be to ask individuals to recall 'heightened experiences' of their everyday environment, which may or may not be sensually uni-modal, and encourage them to sketch their 'life-context'. Secondly, Pocock showed that expression of our experience and discussion with others is significant to our realisation or understanding of those experiences. In other words, the link between sensitivity and understanding, that is between experience and environmental knowing. This study therefore suggested to me the significance of *focused* experience and *group discussion* on those experiences.

Rowles (1978a) in a more extended study explored the 'geographic experience of older people'. He made contact with a small number of individuals, all living in the same urban district, conducting an in-depth, individual exploration with each. His main fieldwork or meetings with these participants was for about six months, and consisted of lengthy informal interviews, or conversations, and limited participation in their lives - helping with the shopping, going to bars, providing a 'taxi' for visits to the doctors or relations. He sought to acquire information about each older person's *lifeworld* - both their biography and their present situation. From these conversations he compiled a series of individual 'vignettes',

each different in style so as to respect the individuality of each participant's life and environmental experience, and he 'confirmed' his account with each participant. After fieldwork he then sought to stand back from the individuality and recognise general integrative principles or themes. He recognised four 'modalities' in the geographic experience of older people: action, orientation, feeling and geographic fantasy. Each articulates differently for each participant but they provide a framework for a general understanding.

This study shows the importance of *friendship and trust* in experiential research and the *embeddedness* or enmeshment of experiences - sensual, emotional, social, historic - within each other. Here, the 'lifeworld' concept is particularly significant, the conversational style and limited participation in older people's lives, and the vignettes. Yet, I felt that the *modalities* recognised, though conceptually useful, did somehow seem divorced from the participant's reality. This is in part because they are formulated as general structures by the researcher. Is not the significance of older people's geographical experience *their own understanding*? After all, Rowles appreciates and tries to summarise in these modalities that their experiences indicate a coming to terms with the world of being an older person.

Seamon (1979a) explicitly uses 'environmental experience groups' as a research tool. As in the Pocock (1983b) study, Seamon focuses participant's attention by exercises or themes, but as in the Rowles (1978a) study he conducts an extended period of fieldwork with the

same participants. His groups met regularly to share their experiences of a particular aspect of environmental encounter, personal experiences from the past week or remembered from much earlier, and to discuss them to reveal general insights. The themes were set up by the researcher to encourage the participants to see their everyday or taken-for-granted environment in a focussed way: eg everyday movement patterns, centring, noticing, a place for everything and everything in its place. The researcher, or group leader, is also given 'key questions' to help the participants to gain a sense of dimensions of the theme (1979a Appendix A). After fieldwork he then seeks to integrate the insights gained by the use of a body-subject and lifeworld framework, and produces a series of models, including a 'triad of habituality', which indicate the dimensions of movement, rest and encounter - three aspects of person-environment relationships.

I was particularly attracted by the use of groups for the *expression* of experiences and the *preliminary exploration* of their nature and significance. However, as in the Rowles (1978a) study, the integrative reflection after the fieldwork seems alien to the understanding of participants and overly abstractive. Further, what is the rationale for the chosen themes, do they not introduce a preconceived notion of environmental experience, and could not the group play a greater role in the formulation of themes? The study seems 'strait-jacketted' in the prior categories of phenomenology, and thus at variance with its opening attitude. The participants opened to their taken-for-granted experience within the confines of the prior designated themes, but did the researcher open to their understanding

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of their own experiences and therefore their 'real' significance?

These studies, in part, encouraged me to consider a group strategy. Several *reasons for using a group* can be suggested. A group environment may permit a richer explication and clearer expression of environmental experiences, both their fullness and variety. With a group, it should be possible for the researcher to stand back and allow the phenomenon to speak for itself, and so avoid the presuppositions of prior questions and 'topics'. Therefore, the group should be allowed to find their own 'topics' around which to explore their experiences, and participants should be encouraged to stand-back from each other's experiences to recognise general insights or 'themes' [3]. Such a group may therefore reveal the 'real' significance of an environment-as-experienced, that is their own understanding of their own experiences. Sharing with others from a similar situation, such as a group of local residents, may encourage a more authentic exploration than a researcher-centred strategy. A group therefore redefines the researcher's role in fieldwork. With these comments in mind, I will now go on to consider *Group Reflection* in particular and how the fieldwork was conducted.

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(1) Is a group approach permitted from a phenomenological grounding? I suspended this question and focused my attention on the practicalities of developing an effective group. After three months of fieldwork I was confident of the merits of a group strategy, had a clearer conception of *Group Reflection* and its relation to phenomenology (see *Appendix A*).
(2) It is interesting to consider Cornish's *Scenery and the 'Sense of*

Sight(1935). This early example of 'aesthetic geography' contrasts with the present research in interest - visual perception and scenic beauty, the observer and visitor impression of spectacular mountain scenery. There is also an interesting contrast in method - personal, immediate experience of the environment (fieldwork) and speculative analytical reflection. Interestingly, he recogises the importance of various 'disciplines': the 'cult of scenery', athletic ability, 'cultivation of a state of receptive contemplation', and the 'acquisition of a scientific faculty'.

(3) In the terms used in the present research, such exercises and themes would be called 'topics'. Themes or 'modalities' subsequently recognised, or the 'sense' made of experiences related, are called 'themes' in the present research.

2.2   DOING GROUP REFLECTION

In this subsection I seek to satisfy the question: how was the fieldwork conducted? I will consider various elements of the 'method' which emerged as the fieldwork progressed - the what, how, when, and why? The presentation is not exhaustive; I do not provide sufficient for a 'handbook' on how to do *Group Reflection*, but offer an outline of the way that the research findings were arrived at [1].

Group Reflection continues the fieldwork tradition of Geography, which promotes first hand experience of the world around us. More immediately, it is a response to recent research in 'experiential geography' and seeks to complement this work. Group Reflection 'grows' out of a phenomenological stance which is:

1) *Receptive*: we must be receptive to the phenomenon, have an open attitude, be willing to 'listen' to its speaking for itself as itself in itself;

2) *Responsive*: we need to allow our 'methods' or mode of exploration to be responsive to that phenomenon and its speaking, encouraging its explication to us in a way that we may understand; and

3) *Respectful*: we must respect the integrity of the phenomenon as itself, its 'right to be', that is 'let things be', and so allow it to realise itself to us or in us.

Through these we may engage in a genuine 'conversation' with the phenomenon, and so learn about its essential nature, and inevitably about ourselves. In other words, method and context, researcher and what he studies, and finding out and what is found out are not independent, and it is important to make explicit the mode of exploration [2].

Group Reflection can be defined as a fieldwork strategy for 'opening environmental experience' - that is, to allow us access or *sensitivity* to the phenomenon or pertinent experience of it, especially where taken-for-granted, to then recognise general insights or themes indicating *understanding*, and finally to report or *share* 'discoveries' with a wider audience and contribute to the body of knowledge. It requires the participation of those local to the phenomenon, that is individuals with first—hand experience of the phenomenon under study. These individuals, or participants, come together with others, also local to the phenomenon, to share and explore their experience of the phenomenon. In the present research this group consisted of local residents who met to explore their experiences of the village of Ushaw Moor, their everyday environment. The group meet regularly over an extended period to explore their experiences, getting to know each other and gaining deeper insight into the phenomenon, environmental experience. Participants, therefore, recall experiences and explore them together.

Group Reflection is in contrast to and yet developing from personal reflection and interview strategies. It seeks to link or

bridge the gap between rich concrete descriptions of individual, personal, remembered experiences and the more limited, abstract generalisations of academic literature. It therefore hopes to move from private, or individual, reflection to a shared reflection, from specific experiences to general insights or themes indicating the nature and significance of the phenomenon - in this research, 'heightened experience of the everyday environment'. This fieldwork reveals and develops something of the understanding, or 'sense made', of the phenomenon by those experiencing it. Beyond the Group Reflection itself, the researcher can further reflect on experiences and themes explicated and consider their relation to the wider body of knowledge. Group Reflection therefore hopes to increase the lay participation (that is the involvement of those experiencing the phenomenon) in the research process and provides a framework in which they can explore their own 'situation' and express or share their discoveries with others [3]. It therefore would seem particularly suited to exploring the taken-for-granted: the insider's experience of his everyday environment.

The 'experiential group' is, therefore, the medium through which the phenomenon is explicated, translated and interpreted. It is formed for the purpose of research and the researcher is a member of the group. He is not an 'ordinary' member nor a 'total' leader, but more an observer, a pupil, a recorder and, to some extent, a limited participant. The group is a cooperative environment in which 'leadership' moves about the group, as members share in the exploration of their experiences (see 2.3). Consequently, the

researcher's role is redefined, especially during the fieldwork stage of the research process, as a kind of 'secretary'. As 'secretary', the researcher aims to develop and encourage the active participation of all members, group receptiveness to the phenomenon under study, and effective recording of the nature and significance of the phenomenon as it is revealed. This calls for an 'opening' attitude, of observation and acceptance, of listening and patience, and holding back preconceptions and interpretative judgment. The researcher is a member of the 'experiential group', but he has a back-seat role and that role changes, or evolves, as the fieldwork progresses. The group are the 'teachers' and he is the 'pupil'. Nevertheless, over time a more mutual relationship develops as the nature of the phenomenon becomes more evident and as participants establish their identities in the group. Trust and friendship are important skills the researcher, and participants, must practise to enable an active and effective group. However, in order to ensure research progress and facilitate end-of-research disengagement the researcher must maintain a degree of detachment, that is a working relationship.

As secretary, the researcher has three main tasks:

1) *organisation* - for instance: establishing with the group meeting dates, meeting agendas and agreement on topics and activites.
2) *recording* - tape-recording and transcribing of group meetings so as to collect together expressed environmental experiences and recognised themes.
3) *monitoring* - observing the group itself in meetings and in the transcripts, and encouraging active and continued participation by all members.

The researcher's role must be given care and attention, and self-monitored through the tape recordings. The fieldwork can only

progress at the pace at which the group 'opens' to the phenomenon. Also, a 'quiet enthusiasm' and thorough commitment are essential for lack of these may be detrimental to the group's performance [4].

This section is ofcourse written with hindsight. The fieldwork method emerged as the research progressed in response to the phenomenon being explored. Therefore, I will consider those elements, or 'procedures', that came to be standard. These can be looked at from both the researcher and participant perspectives [5].

For the researcher these include:

1) setting-up;
2) meeting agendas;
3) topics and activities;
4) meeting series/stages;
5) summary accounts;
6) tape transcription;
7) familiarisation and extracts;
8) feedback;

Setting-up the fieldwork is a vital and difficult stage. The aim is to form a small group of individuals who will be enthusiastic, committed and willing to share and explore their experiences of the local environment. There is no concerted effort to make the group 'representative' since phenomenologically this would be inauthentic to the phenomenal world as experienced. 'Representativeness' implies prior and external criteria, and presupposes prior knowledge, or concept, of the phenomenon, participants, and their experience. Above all 'representativeness' is an abstract notion, a kind of

stereotyping, possibly 'averaging', both alien to the world as experienced and a barrier to, or distortion of, the open attitude towards the phenomenon, its freedom to express itself, and the revealing of its essential nature. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the insights generated by the group, though manifest in the particular context of their lives, will also explicate more general understanding of the essential nature of the phenomenon. In other words, make explicit something which lies hidden within the experience of others, and explicate an understanding that they might be identified with and critically corroborated, in both similar and contrasting environments.

Preliminary informal interviews with each potential participant are conducted prior to the first meeting. In the present research the candidates for these were suggested by one of the proposed group members, who acted as 'gatekeeper', or hostess. The participants knew each other prior to the research but they had never before met as a single group over an extended period. The informal interviews lasted nearly three hours and were conducted at a time convenient to each participant, and in their own homes. The purpose of these was to get to know each potential participant, to allow them to get to know something of me, to develop a general idea of the research purpose and stance, and the level of commitment that would be expected of them during the research. These individual interviews helped me to establish rapport or 'friendship' with each member and to gain an insight into their individual characters and life (this was important for the monitoring of the group itself later). I also 'assessed' the potential participants for their enthusiasm and commitment to the

research idea, and ability and suitability for such a research
strategy [6].

The participants were invited to the first group meeting, and
after three meetings the membership stabilised to four participants
and myself. In the first few meetings emphasis is put on establishing
with the group a 'group sense' and a general 'research direction'. It
is a *small group*, since each member needs to feel free to express
his/her experiences at length.Trust, friendship, humour and general
chat are important to the development and maintenance of an effective
group. In the present research no payment was offered, or asked for;
participants became involved out of curiosity about the research
'idea' and a desire to get to know each other and Ushaw Moor better
[7]. The group meets regularly, two-weekly in the present research,
and over an extended period, such as a year. This allows a group
rapport to develop, the participants to tune-in to the phenomenon, and
to go beyond experience explication to deeper insight and
understanding. Therefore, once formed the group membership must
remain the same.

Experience recall is stimulated by the agreed *topics* and
activities. The group are encouraged to have an 'open attitude', not
to seek questions from the researcher, but to reflect on, express and
thus share their remembered experiences of the phenomenon. An
'opening' to environmental experience is encouraged by a
'conversational' style where formal questions, especially of the

interviewer-interviewee type, need not arise. Instead, each meeting starts with the 'topic field', or an activity, and each member offers accounts of their personal experiences. This sharing gains momentum, as participants progress from straight statements of opinions to rich accounts of experience. One participant's expressed experience reminds another participant of other experiences, maybe similar or contrasting. The group stimulate each other, aiding the explication of experience in a way the 'outside' researcher could not. Participants develop a form of 'intragroup questioning' - requests for clarification or further expression of a particular experience, and so mutually aid each other's expression.

The researcher develops with the group four basic structural elements to ensure effective Group Reflection:

1) a code of conduct (ground rules);
2) meeting agendas and fixed meeting durations;
3) negotiate topics and activities;
4) organise meeting series or achievement stages.

A generally agreed code of conduct is best discussed with the group and when necessary the group may need to be gently reminded of it. The word-of-mouth agreement is better than a written code of rules and regulations, but it needs to be maintained by open discussion of it, particular at the start of each fresh series of meetings ('verification'). The code of conduct should be common sense, limited and simple. In the Ushaw Moor group we had a procedure for when a member was unable to attend a meeting, that meetings would start

within 5 minutes of the official time and end no later than 10 minutes after the official time, and we agreed not to talk over each other but to listen and respect each other's contribution. Also it became practise that if a member was ill I would call round to see them and report to them the details of the meeting they had missed.

Meeting agendas help to ensure effective research progress and give an important sense of purpose to a group meeting. It only needs to be simple, such as:

1) comment on last meeting, words of encouragement, what achieved, any puzzles;
2) summary statement of the agreed topic field for present meeting;
3) possible dates for next meeting;
4) allotted time to negotiate the topic for the next meeting;
5) other miscellaneous business (future activity meetings, socials etc.)

Group Reflection develops from general *'topic fields'* agreed with the group which are reflected on individually, or privately, by each participant during the interim between meetings. *Activities* are also negotiated with the group but solving practical problems, such as equipment needed in setting up, necessitates greater researcher involvement. Activities may include taking photographs or visiting places, doing exercises, such as keeping an experience diary or playing 'games' of some kind. The purpose of activities is not to excite experiencing of or sensitivity to the phenomenon, but rather to stimulate recall or explication of prior experience of the phenomenon, the already experienced.

Over the meetings, the group begin to express their experiences

more fully and clearly, sharing understanding of particular

experiences and the excitement they brought. An *immediate context* may

be mapped out, for instance when and where the experience occurred:

geographically, historically and biographically. Gradually, the group

begin to notice common elements or *themes* in the various experiences.

Further, participants begin to back-reference to earlier accounts and

meetings, to interrelate each other's experiences and to begin to

summarise. At a certain point the researcher must recognise a 'change'

and encourage a shift of emphasis towards theme recognition. It is

useful for the meetings to be divided into series, or 'achievement

stages'. The researcher can utilise convenient holiday breaks, such as

Christmas and Easter, and allow three to four weeks between each

meeting series. The final meeting of a series can be devoted to

summing-up and looking-back over the earlier meetings, and therefore

can be important in establishing a sense of achievement and continuing

purpose. A change of series is also an opportunity for the research to

change direction and/or style. The present research was divided into

three achievement stages:

1) *tuning-in phase* : about 3 months

a group develops, discussion shifts from opinions to experience

sharing, a 'notion' of the phenomenon begins to emerge, in short the

group reflective attitude emerges;

b) *full experience expression* - 5 to 6 months

here focus is more firmly on particular experiences, fuller expression

of experiences, engaging in both activities as well as discussion to

excite experience recall, and theme recognition develops;

c) *report writing* : 3 to 4 months

emphasis on the themes and their dimensions within the experiences

expressed, and the writing and editing of a Group Record, or summary

account with or by the group.

A major task of the researcher is keeping a record of the meetings. Immediately after each meeting it is important to write a short 'nuts and bolts' *summary account* of the meeting. This should include the topic-field as it came to be defined in the meeting, the main points of the discussion, a comment on the group itself and the participation of each member, and the agreements for the next meeting. This summary, before any listening to the tape recording is done, is important though it need be little more than an A4 sketch. It gives the researcher's first response to, or impressions of, the meeting, its performance and what it considered. Subsequent comparison with the tape transcript usually reveals many differences in both content and emphasis. In this way, the summary account can expose research (or researcher) preconceptions that arise in response to the meetings. For instance, a meeting may have seemed limited and stale yet the transcript may reveal it as rich and productive; or the researcher may feel that one member dominated or another seemed to play little part, yet the transcript may reveal generous participation by all members.

Meetings are *tape-recorded* and *transcribed* in order that the participation of all members, including the researcher, can be monitored; and extracts or experience accounts can be extracted and a record of their discussion context preserved. Transcription is a

laborious and exacting exercise, but rewarding and essential to Group Reflective fieldwork. Transcription is made considerably easier by simple, regular procedures and practice. Also, it is made considerably easier if conducted within the few days immediately following the meeting, that is whilst the discussion is still fresh in the mind. First the tape should simply be listened to so as to gain familiarity with the structure or flow of the meeting. Secondly, the tape should be totally transcribed, recording tape count at regular intervals, author, ambiguities or mumbles, and overtaking (appropriately indicated). High quality is aided by restricting transcribing sessions to short 'periods', for an hour at a time for instance, and frequent back-checking of the tape is essential (eg *Appendix C:*).

Before *extracts* of experience accounts or recognised themes can be made, the researcher must become thoroughly familiar with the transcript. This necessitates reading and re-reading, and repeat listening to the tape. An experience may be related more than once on the tape but both occasions may or may not necessarily be 'extractable', and further, sometimes an account is curtailed by the flow of discussion or by talk-overlap, which also complicates extract formation. Consideration of several meetings is helpful, and therefore tape recordings and transcripts should be kept for reference. Selection of *extracts* is problematic and interpretative. It is aided by the basic fact that participants tend to repeat themselves within a meeting and over a series of meetings so that what are 'extractable' experiences becomes evident [8].

Finally, the *Group Record* is compiled. Its format is very much dependent on the phenomenon as explicated and the group. In the present research I wrote the Record at the request of and in close cooperation with the group. The group acted as an *'editorial panel'*. This Group Record consists of a general background, accounts of the various themes, selections of experience extracts, and individual member commentaries. There are many possible ways that the Record could be written. It can be made up of both individual and group 'perspectives', and may be written by the participants or the researcher. The Record aims to summarise the research both for the group, to form a 'memento' for them, and should be able to stand on its own as a report to others not familiar with the participants and the particular context. It can also form part of a wider research document as in this thesis.

The group member 'procedures' in a sense mirror the researcher 'procedures'. With hindsight, six can be recognised:

        1) topic fields;
        2) preparation;
        3) experience explication;
        4) theme recognition
        5) record work or editing
        6) socials

From the *participants' or group's perspective* Group Reflection is more informal. It includes a number of tasks, for both the individual and the group. These are relatively systematic but how these tasks are undertaken is left to each participant to decide. The tasks recognised here are based on my discussions with the group during the fieldwork.

Towards the end of each meeting the group is requested to formulate a topic, or focus, for the next meeting. It is helpful if the researcher offers some possibilities, derived from the present or previous meetings. This stimulates the discussion from which other possibilities are also generated by the group. During this brief discussion a 'topic field' or 'loose definition' is established. I use the term 'topic field' because these topics were usually quite broad and still 'open' to subsequent development. Participants explore the topic in the interim period through private reflection. At the next meeting, the researcher introduces the meeting with a summary repeat of the agreed 'topic field' and the group then shares environmental experiences from this starting point, but not necessarily confining themselves to the topic dimensions briefly recognised at the previous meeting. In preparation for meetings each group member devotes some time to private reflection on the agreed topic-field and experiences they recall. The way this preparation can be done is not set out, but the participants had several strategies, the effectiveness of which depended on their 'way of working' and commitment, and the nature of the topic to be reflected on. Private reflection might be done the next day, the day before the next meeting, or at various times over the two week interim; and, as became practice in the Ushaw Moor Group, participants may make personal notes or jottings. These were not to be read out at meetings but to remind themselves of their earlier reflections [9].

'Experience explication' is the recall and expression of personal

experiences. This is the basis of the group reflection which is a sharing of remembered experiences. Experiences explicated reflect both the private reflections of participants before the meeting and recall stimulated during the meeting. Explication is facilitated by practice and the cultivation of patient listening. As the fieldwork progressed members developed their abilities to recall and express their experiences, and they developed the necessary patience and respect to permit and encourage each other. Experience explication is selective and repetitive, or developmental, as participants try to share the 'feel' of an experience with the group. Further, experience explication involves the mapping out of an *immediate context* to experiences - including the 'when, where and how' of experiences [10]. This is important for stimulating each other's' experience recall and expression, and for sharing and developing understanding of those experiences.

Theme recognition is probably the most difficult task, but nevertheless is a quite natural stage. As fieldwork progresses and the 'library' of experiences amasses, the group begin to stand-back from the specific experiences and start to generalise and to interrelate the experiences, recognising similarities and differences. Participants recognise themes implicitly when they recall and interrelate their own and each other's' experience accounts in an ongoing group reflection. However, explicit attention to 'themes' and reflective discussion on them have to be practised. The Ushaw Moor Group made much progress with this in a meeting devoted to 'theme exercises'. Here some of the already recognised themes were placed on

separate cards, and each member had a 'hand' of three or four cards to 'sort' and 'exchange' with each other. They related the themes to already expressed experiences and recalled other experiences, and created further themes. Through this, a series of groupings of the themes can be realised and alternative themes can emerge. The dimensions of the themes are explored and 'definitions' agreed upon. In the present research, the group did not recognise a single hierarchy of themes, but instead realised that particular experiences call into play different groupings of themes, usually only some of them, and interrelationships between them. Further, the group recognised a great deal of overlap between the themes and in general did not favour simple and confined 'definitions' (in the more scientific sense) (see 2.4). Furthermore, in future research, games might be devised to aid theme recognition and development.

The *Group Record* can be 'written-up' by the researcher, by the group as a team, or by the individual participants as several 'vignettes' or 'commentaries', or some variation of these strategies. Important limiting factors are the abilities of the participants and the time available for producing the Record. Compiling the Record involves collecting together the research and summarising it. In the present research the group favoured a compromise, so the text was written by the researcher on the basis of discussion with the group and the transcribed material, and then the group edited the draft before the final copy was produced. Along with theme recognition, Record composition and editing formed the tasks of *Phase 3* of the fieldwork. The Ushaw Moor Group suggested that some background

information about their local environment and themselves should be included, along with photographs. They also favoured only limited selections of experience extracts, or examples, to provide 'anecdote' and contrast to the theme descriptions. I encouraged the participants to provide personal commentaries on the research. For the editing discussion each member was given a personal copy of the draft record to 'scribble over' and also asked to write further comments. The group editing meeting started with these but also, through the stimulation of group sharing, went onto other editing comments. These discussions revealed the 'reasoning' behind individual 'scribbles' and comments on the draft copies and also revealed the group consensus and individual differences. The final Record, therefore, reflects this discussion, is 'negotiated' with the group and produced 'through' the researcher. It should be possible with more time available for a written record to be produced by group members themselves. Also, it would seem that there are many alternative ways of presenting such a report on group reflections. For instance, photograph-essays, film or video; exhibitions, displays, diaries and story-telling. Further, the Record could be compiled as the research progresses rather than as a 'last exercise'.

Finally, the *social events* were suggested and organised by the group. In the present research these included a small Christmas party with a local 'house group' at the end of Phase 1, wine and mince pies at the start of Phase 2, a meal before the visits to local places at the end of Phase 2, a 'reunion' meal after Phase 3 at which copies of the final Record were given to each participant. These socials were

important to the development of friendships and the maintenance of the group (see 2.3).

In this section I have only outlined Group Reflection as it was done in the present research with the Ushaw Moor Group [11]. This is only one way that this strategy might unfold. There are of course a number of other issues which could be considered including the use of a 'gatekeeper', or hostess, in group formation and for providing a venue for group meetings, the disengagement at the end of the research, and the ethics of Group Reflection (for latter see *Appendix A*).

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(1) See also *Opening Environmental Experience* (Institute of British Geographers, Portsmouth Conference 1987, to be included in 'Essays in Experiential Geography' ed D C D Pocock, 1987). In this paper I considered Group Reflection as a strategy for gaining access to experience and appreciating its nature and significance. Here, in the thesis subsection, I focus on a specific development of Group Reflection: a study of heightened experience in the everyday environment and the Ushaw Moor Group.
(2) Also important are the authors of that exploration of or 'conversation' with the phenomenon. For reflection on this see: group - 2.4, 2.5 and myself - 1.0, 2.4, 3.5.
(3) As has already been observed, if an experience is memorable and significant to us we have a sort of urge to express it or tell other people about it, and this expression of it further realises it or fulfils it. It is in telling and reflecting on our experience that we continue to come to terms with it, make sense of it, and even develop it beyond its original manifestation.
(4) I use the phrase 'quiet enthusiasm' and commitment because it is vital that the researcher does not have a forceful or 'closed attitude' which will hinder the group's 'opening' to *their* experience and *their* recognition of themes.
(5) In a sense all the 'procedures' in this subsection are for both researcher and participants, but it is useful to distinguish the two perspectives when seeking to describe Group Reflection. The value of informal but systematic procedures are: *organisational* - to ensure

effective progress, and enable the vast quantity of material generated to be handled, and to monitor the complex dynamics of the group itself; for *morale* - giving confidence to the group, encourage it, ensuring a sense of purpose and achievement is shared; *assessment* - to enable others to assess the findings in relation to the way they were arrived at. Procedures aim to benefit participant and group, researcher and wider research community. To a large extent they are developed naturally and necessarily by those participating in the research.

(6) Would they be able to attend most meetings, work effectively in a group, commit themselves for a year, and cultivate an 'open' attitude?

(7) For group research see 2.3 and for the Ushaw Moor Group see 2.4, especially the individual commentaries. Burgess (1987a/b), in a group analytic study of environmental values, made standard payment to each participant, ostensibly to cover travelling expenses.

(8) Also, ultimately the understanding from the experience or theme is more important to Group Reflection than the *precise wording* of an experience account.

(9) These notes, or jottings, were usually just a few comments covering less than an A4 side. They were useful to get a meeting going and if a discussion suddenly ground to a halt, as even the most healthy discussions sometimes do.

(10) Rather than the more 'abstract' notions of 'lifeworld' or 'body-subject' found in the literature.

(11) Subsequent to the emergence of the Group Reflective strategy I became aware of several group approaches which have some similarities, but also important contrasts. For instance the group analytic approach (Burgess 1985b, 1987a/b); group psychoanalysis (Bion 1961, 1975), group therapy (eg Smith & Crandel 1984), and in particular the group review strategy (Brathay Hall Trust, 1987) which includes a group review procedure which has affinities with theme recognition.

2.3   <u>GROUP RESEARCH</u>

In parallel with *Phase 2* of the fieldwork I conducted an in-depth survey of some of the group research literature, in order to assess the progress of the fieldwork as a group strategy, and to recognise the possible problems that might be arising or likely to occur. Here, I focus on *the dimensions of a group as a research tool*, that is a group as a means of access to a phenomenon other than itself, as for instance environmental experience [1].

The *'small group'* is recognised as being somewhat distinctive from many other types of group (Barker et al 1979, MacGarth & Altman 1966, Olmstead 1959). "A small group is a collection of individuals, from three to fifteen in number, who meet in face-to-face interaction over a period of time, generally with an assigned or assumed leader, who possess at least one common characteristic and who meet with a purpose in mind" (Barker et al 1979 p[10]). Clearly below three we have no group, but the upper limit for a small group may not need to be as high as this, since already such a 'large' group will behave quite differently to one of only six or seven members. In this subsection, emphasis is put on the *intragroup* issues, though this does not mean that I do not appreciate intergroup issues and the wider context of groups. However, in the context of Group Reflection, the group is largely set apart from the everyday web of intergroup relationships. It meets regularly for a quite limited purpose and over a set period,

and once established has a fixed or closed membership.

In Geography, groups have rarely been used as a *research tool* in themselves [2]. However, Seamon (1979a) shows a group can be an important medium through which to gain access to a phenomenon and reveal an understanding of its nature and significance.

Group research has revealed many dimensions, or issues, that need to be considered [3]. These can be summarised under a series of headings:

    1) group type and function;
    2) the size issue;
    3) forming and maintaining a group;
    4) member roles and leadership;
    5) intragroup communication and feedback;
    6) the variety and role of goals;
    7) group performance and productivity.

All these are not independent but constantly interact during the life of a group. For instance, group maintenance is closely related to perfomance and productivity; goals are closely linked to the type and function of the group. In looking at these dimensions, I will relate some of them to Group Reflection, and in particular my experience with the Ushaw Moor Group.

Group Type and Function

We all have a rich experience of groups, of which family and school contexts are particularly significant, and have consequence for our performance in groups in later life (eg Scheidlinger 1954). The

research group is somewhat different from much of our experience but is built on that experience. Essentially, there are those groups to which we are ascribed, as it were, 'by default', such as the family, and those that we join or create, such as a social club or sports team. In research, there are groups which have been 'coopted' from those already in existence, possibly a youth group, school class, or trade-union. Also, there are groups specifically created for the research. These are often 'laboratory' based and one-shot (ie a single meeting). Much research into groups uses students, usually university age-group (eg Hackman & Vidmar 1970), or patients, such as people with emotional disorders (eg Bion 1961)[4]. Various tasks have been given to groups, for instance discussion, decision-making, problem-solving, so as to reveal the dimensions of group dynamics. Further, the researcher may be an observer outside the group, a silent observer within the group, or some form of participant. The participants may 'merely perform' in the group or may be asked to participate in the interpretation of that group's performance.

In the present research the group was formed in the field, from local residents, specifically for the purpose of the research. It was formed as a research tool and participants, who volunteered to form a group, were encouraged to reflect on the group itself, as well as the research topic to which the group was primarily directed. The researcher was in the group but with only limited participation, acting largely as 'secretary' to the group [5].

The function of a group may be to unite a collection of people,

to share, to protect or defend themselves or a particular cause, to complete or produce something, or to promote or contest something. Also, groups may form to educate members or to discover something about the world or themselves. The research group has this educative function, that is to explore a phenomenon. To fulfil these many functions there are many types of group and as many possible classifications. Groups might be distinguished as educational, social, commercial, cultural; or problem-solving, decision-making, campaigning, therapy and creative; or might be classified in terms of size, internal cohesion or relationship to other groups. The 'experiential group' contains several of these aspects, though interpreted with respect to the research task.

The Ushaw Moor Group, of the present research, was a small group where the participants sought to explore their own environmental experience. In the group they expressed remembered experiences and reflected on them all to recognise themes in the expressed experiences. This environment allowed participants to stimulate each other's recall and to develop a general understanding of the nature and significance of their experiences. Consequently, the need to ask formal questions, and their preconditioning implications, was avoided. Therefore, the group was self-educative and group-reflective, particularly in experience explication, but also problem-solving and decision-making, as when recognising themes and record writing. The group also had a social component - developing friendships - which was important for group maintenance and the high level of trust and

respect necessary in sharing deep, personal experiences.

The Size Issue

Group size is closely related to the type and function of a group, and also influences its productivity and performance, and its cohesion and maintenance. The group in the present research may seem very small, at four local people and the researcher. There were originally eight possible members, two of whom attended only the first two meetings, and new members were not admitted once the research was underway '*'. However, group cohesion or maintenance, commitment of members, participation and productivity seemed to be enhanced by a smaller or 'tighter' group (see Gross & Martin 1952; Cartwright & Zander 1954). A small group offers a higher potential level of participation to each member, and it is usually easier to share in a smaller group than in a larger one. This was particularly important for Group Reflection, especially the explication of personal experiences. However, a small group can be a disadvantage where complex problems are to be tackled and a variety of perspectives would aid their solution, but again the small group can be advantageous to efficient decision-making and developing a consensus (Hare 1954, Hackman & Vidmar 1970).

Some researchers suggest optimum sizes for groups. A study by Hackman & Vidmar (1970) shows that an 'optimum size' for a *stabilised* group is about four to five members for 'production, discussion and problem-solving tasks' (but they did use students in laboratory

groups). Furthermore, it seems that the participants involved will in part determine, by their level of commitment, ability and personality, the appropriate group size. Overall the Ushaw Moor group seemed about the right size. The small group encouraged full participation by all members and commitment, and made feasible the arrangement of alternative meeting times for activities and socials. Two further members might have been an advantage, since if more than one member was unable to attend the group could not meet as a group '7'.

Kephart (1950) suggests that that there is a major increase in potential relationships with only small increments in group size (though these may not necessarily become actual relationships):

GROUP SIZE	RELATIONSHIPS
2	1
3	6
4	25
5	90
6	301
7	966

Potential stress and complexity of a group increases rapidly, the likelihood for certain members to dominate, and others to retreat increases, and the time and freedom for extended expression becomes restricted. At a practical level could I handle more than a hundred relationships, transcribe tapes with more than seven speakers, and could meetings still be kept within an hour? Feasibility of tape transcription was important to the present research both for extracting experience accounts and for monitoring group development and researcher participation. In short there is an appropriate size to

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both the research topic and the participants, that is to the phenomenon and its media of expression, and maybe we have to allow this to emerge.

FORMING AND MAINTAINING A GROUP

Group formation is a critical process and, since a group is not a static phenomenon but continually evolves or matures, it is in a sense always forming and reforming. Therefore, the group itself has to be monitored and group maintenance has to be considered [8]. Successful group formation and maintenance leads to a productive group. This is much dependent on the quality of interpersonal communications and feedback, but the very success of a group can enhance its maintenance. Size, organisational structure, function and type also influence formation and maintenance.

Usually the research group has some criteria for selecting participants. This is a question of priorities. In experiential research, and in a first-time study, one is not necessarily seeking a 'representative' group. In the present research my general criteria were: *suitability* - that is, individuals with an experience of the phenomenon, and an ability to reflect on and express their experience in a group context; and *enthusiasm* - that is, a willingness, or eagerness, to participate and to give commitment to an extended research exploration. Participant selection is subjective, and is in a very real sense not 'selection'. Rather, some prior appreciation of

participants may both indicate positive faculties that might be encouraged, and reveal potential intragroup difficulties. During the research it is important to monitor the group itself, its dynamics and ebb and flow of tensions.

In the present research tape recordings of meetings were used. An effective group have a lot in common and yet still have differences so that a rich discussion can take place [7]. The Ushaw Moor group shared a common environment, Ushaw Moor, with residence for at least twenty-five years in different parts of the village. In addition, they were all over fifty years of age, either approaching retirement or recently retired, and generally socially and physically active.

A group is continually under some form of pressure or tension, for instance as inevitable conflicts arise between individual and group goals, between personalities, and between expectations and perceived progress. In a 'mature' group these are not destructive and there are 'mechanisms' for their solution. These include agreed rules of behaviour (formal or informal), and tension reducing processes such as humour and mutual respect. *Tension* in a group is of two types: 'social'- between individuals and between the researcher and individuals/group; and 'research' - what the research is, perceptions of own and others' contributions, and research progress.

As a 'mature' group, the Ushaw Moor Group openly discussed tensions, and this discussion spontaneously arose without the need for my intervention. Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) remind us of the

importance of such discussion arising spontaneously, since in
alternative situations participants may deny, or fail to face up to,
such tensions, and therefore spontaneous discussion of them encourages
more effective and amicable solutions. Tension can be released in many
ways. For instance, one approach in the present research was to allow
general chat on topics other than the immediate research, including
the weather, items in the news (such as Chernobyl), and local friends
and events. This chat took place before and after meetings, so freeing
group reflection itself from these more general concerns. Further, at
the end of a series of meetings the group was encouraged to reflect on
what had been achieved and where the research might next travel,
including both the subject matter and the method. Tension can also be
reduced by *humour*. Napier & Gershenfeld (1981, chapter 9) note the
importance of humour in small groups and its neglect in the research
literature. While I did not use humour in any 'manipulative' way,
humour did play a significant part of every group meeting, both in the
general chat and in the reflective discussion of experiences, where
the difficulties of expressing the 'feel' of particular experiences
and their sometimes apparent absurdity stimulated humour [10]. Napier
and Gershenfeld emphasize the distinction between a natural and
spontaneous humour which can create a supportive group environment and
help reduce tension, and the contrived or 'getting at someone' style
humour which is not beneficial. The humour has to come out of the
group and its activities, and be a laugh with each other rather than a
laugh at a particular member. The Ushaw Moor Group was able to share
just such humour.

Further, at the suggestion of the group, I allowed the setting up of α limited mumber of social events. At the end of Phase 1 we joined with a few other people for a small house party, Phase 2 began with an informal meeting of chat and mincepies, and Phase 2 ended with a meal (before we went out to visit local places). These allowed the group to relax more, to develop friendship, trust, respect and morale and it seemed to help them to settle down to the task in hand at group reflective meetings. *Friendship and trust* are very important to an 'experiential group', especially when commitment is required over a year and involves the genuine sharing of personal experiences. Weinstein & Holzbach (1972) note that friends are usually more productive than groups of strangers. Certainly, a group needs to get to know each other first before real progress is made on group tasks. There is some evidence in the literature that friendly groups can share more deeply whilst groups of strangers remain at a more superficial level (eg Bion 1961). Friendly groups would appear to be more stable and harmonious. Of course there is a danger that the researcher, as an outsider to a group of friends, may be blind to hidden-agendas and double-speak. However, preliminary interviews with each individual helped me to establish my own friendship. Also, a friendly group can still have a working-relationship.

The relationship between the researcher and the group is very important. Much group research offers some form of payment to participants making the researcher a 'paymaster'. Usually this is purely to cover incurred expenses such as travel (Seamon 1979a, Burgess 1985b). However, there is evidence in the literature that

payment does affect the researcher-group relationship, participant commitment, and the quality and quantity of their peaformance (eg Weinstein & Holzback 1972). Also, the significance of a payment will differ from participant to participant depending on such factors as economic and social status, personality and attitudes to money. In the present research meetings were held close to where members lived so that no travel expenses were needed and further members did not request any form of payment (though this was discussed at the end of Phase 1). Rather, they met out of a genuine interest in both the research and developing friendships (see 2.4individual commentaries).

Basic agreed procedures, or style of work, also may enhance group maintenance: meeting agendas and agreed topics and activities for meetings; specific times (including time available for group issues and non-research chat); variety of tasks rather than monotonous repetition; and division of the research into 'achievement stages' to give a sense of progress.

MEMBER ROLES AND LEADERSHIP

Members fulfil various roles in the group reflecting their abilities and personalities, and the various tasks in which the group engages. These roles may be quite rigid and clear, as in a committee which might have a chairperson, a secretary and various specialists (financial, publicity, personnel). The group in the present research has a simpler structure, in part because it had a quite focused task

and required all members to participate in that task. Member roles fall into two overlapping types: group-centred, and *research-centred.*

The group-centred roles relate to the maintenance of the group. For instance one member in the Ushaw Moor Group provided the venue for our meetings. Research-centred roles relate to the research topic. For instance, a member may call the group 'back to the subject' if he/she feels they have drifted off it; or a member might sum-up a section of the discussion and offer a summary statement; or help to finalise a decision, as in topics, activities, themes or the Record. In the present research these roles tended not to be fixed to any one individual, but rather all members equally participated, helping each other to express experiences, recognise themes and so on. The literature in general relates roles to specific members as in a sports team or in a committee, but in Group Reflection it is probably more effective to think in terms of *chains of role tasks*'. Therefore in a discussion on the topic for the next meeting, one member might suggest something, another something else, and then someone might offer an 'example' experience; further exchange results and members begin to see a topic 'definition', and one member will offer a summary decision to which agreement is gained. Any member can take on any task-role as the situation unfolds and they share in the discussion process.

Leadership is a role that has been much discussed in the literature. There are many conflicting theories [11]. The leader is essentially a 'focus', or pivot, and a reference point in the group. However leadership is not necessarily identical with a 'formal

leader'. Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) promote a *situational concept of leadership* in which the effective leadership moves about the group depending on the particular task in hand [12]. Thus in the Ushaw Moor Group, the researcher is 'leader' in the sense of initiating the group, its overall purpose, and in the 'secretarial' functions of arranging meetings, transcribing, and monitoring group performance. However, when engaged in group reflection the leadership is more ambiguous and less important because of the mutual sharing of experiences and respect for each other's contribution. Nevertheless, a kind of leadership is seen to be assigned to each member at different stages. When the group were considering 'old Ushaw Moor', one member was given special respect for his perceived greater knowledge, having been born in Ushaw Moor. When it came to 'the weather' the group considered another member as 'the expert'.

Finally, in the literature a distinction is sometimes made between the leader who assumes 'rational economic man' and the one that assumes 'self-actualizing man' in his communication with the group [13]. The first must manage, control and coerce his group. In the second, members are motivated, have initiative and participate more 'democratically'. In Group Reflection a 'self-actualising man' is assumed, and the Ushaw Moor Group had this more friendly, trusting and sharing environment.

INTRAGROUP COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Effective communication is vital to a group, and feedback is an

essential part of this [14]. Communication is nonverbal as well as verbal (eg Barker et al 1979 chapter 9; Argyle 1975, Festinger & Thibaut 1951) and unwittingly given as well as intentionally. Where a group is used as a research tool for the exploration of a phenomenon, the nature and potential problems of intragroup communications - which are information flows - become all the more critical. Inaccuracies, or misunderstandings, in this communication, both between participants and with the researcher, will lead to obfuscation of the phenomenon rather than its clear explication. This can arise from *actual* or *perceived barriers* to clear communication, and *false-assumptions* about communication.

Barriers, actual or perceived, may arise at any stage in the group's life though they are most obvious in the initial stages of group encounter. They may include the false-assumptions of commmunication (below); the language used by individuals, especially the researcher; physical barriers such as seating arrangements and group meeting conditions; individual problems such as hearing or stammering; and even boredom or tiredness. These can only be tackled when the group stops to consider them and to adjust to or solve them - talking more slowly and clearly, rearranging seating or finding a better meeting environment.

A group is a very complex communication system of both direct person-to-person encounters and more indirect 'environmental' or spectator encounters. When an individual communicates to a group they may 'perform', or express, to the group, but often the flow of

interaction is such that it tends to be directed towards one 'representing' member of that group - possibly the previous person to speak or a 'leader' - with the rest of the group 'spectating' but still open to participation [15].

False-assumptions not only inhibit communication but 'garbage' it. Casual encounters are especially prone but even extended group encounters can fall subject to them, because of their often taken-for-granted acceptance. For instance: we assume we know what others mean, and that they know what we mean; and we assume that interpersonal communication is a simple meeting of minds but minds cannot meet for there are too many intervening obstacles. We also assume that communication happens naturally and people express what they want to say in words, and those words are automatically understood by others (Napier & Gershenfeld 1981 pp25-29). Experience in the present research has shown me that at least when expressing 'heightened experiences' participants do not necessarily accept these assumptions. Rather, they repeat and rephrase, summarise or elaborate, as they attempt 'to get across' (emphasizing the divide between minds) the feel and understanding they have of their particular experience. Feedback from the group, verbal and nonverbal, is very important in this expression.

"*Feedback* is a process by which we find out whether the message intended is actually received. In the simplest sense, feedback refers to the return to you of behaviour you have generated..." (Napier & Gershenfeld 1981 p36). Feedback [16] can be seen as spontaneous or

natural, and delayed or constructed (often written). It is suggested that "the more group communication is allowed to be spontaneous and open the more participants will be willing to recognise the perceptual distortions that develop... " (Napier & Gershenfeld, 1981 p35). This can be seen in relation to both the group itself and the experience explication it generates. Put in symbolic interaction terms: we communicate both a particular content message and an image of ourselves (eg Stone & Farberman 1981).

Feedback, like communication in general, is complex, often implicit, automatic and unwittingly given in our on-the-moment response. This spontaneous feedback is often nonverbal - facial expression, changes in body posture - as well as verbal [17]. Also it tends to be more honest. In the present research, spontaneous feedback was particularly integral to experience expression, or explication, as participants helped each other · to share their experiences. In contrast, delayed feedback is more considered and more prone to falsehood. It is spoken, but often written, and is structured and organised, intentional and expectant of further response. The researcher can make effective use of it but it should not be overused in Group Reflection. This is in part because delayed feedback is separated from the immediate context and does not contribute to the *flow* of intragroup communication; rather it is a discontinuous input or externality. Nevertheless, it has the advantage of being more explicit, considered and controllable. Both forms of feedback are used by all participants including the · researcher. The tape-recorder aids the production of sensitive feedback. It is also important to

minimise feedback delay or else its relevance becomes obscure.

In conclusion, Napier & Gershenfeld (1981 p37) suggest that feedback is most effective when:

1) asked for rather than unsolicited 'I'm telling you so';
2) descriptive rather than evaluative;
3) behavioural rather than global;
4) soon after behaviour occurs rather than after a long time lapse;
5) positive rather than negative.

Most feedback in present research seems to have kept to these guidelines. Only two feedback notes were used: one ending Phase 1 and the other summarising the 'photosessions' of Phase 2 [18].

THE VARIETY AND ROLE OF GOALS

Groups are formed for many purposes and have many goals. Participants may have many personal goals but there must be some common goal(s) agreed by the group. In the present research this was a desire to explore the heightened experience of the everyday environment. Goals can be implicit as well as explicit but the main research goals need to be clear when using a group as a research tool. Goals are a complex issue both because of their variety and enmeshment, but also due to their interaction with the other group dimensions, especially performance & productivity and group formation & maintenance [19].

A goal is a target, an aim, an objective or an end. Goals are

therefore a direction, often something to be achieved or completed, but also an 'environment' or frame of reference to define the group purpose, the member roles and to assess its success or failure. A group can have many types of goals, coexisting or sequential, complementary or competing [20]. There is also the problem of the perception, interpretation and understanding of goals and of goal achievement by members, and goals of course change over time. In brief we can summmarise the variety of goals as:

1) individual and group goals;
2) explicit and implicit;
3) 'rigid' and 'fluid' or developing goals;
4) long-term 'strategic goals,' and short term task-related goals;
5) ambiguous or vague, and clear goals;
6) goal complexes and simple goals [21]

In Group Reflection the goals may seem at first somewhat vague or ill-defined, especially in the initial formation of the group. However, we need again to distinguish the various goals and their changing nature as the fieldwork progresses. A useful distinction is between strategic and task-related goals. At the formation of the group there are two strategic goals: forming an effective group, and developing a 'definition' of the research topic. At this stage the research goal is somewhat unclear and fluid. This is essential if the group is to 'open' to the phenomenon. The 'effective group' might be defined as one in which members could express their experiences and develop a shared understanding of them. In the early meetings the group gradually developed a clearer definition and understanding of these strategic goals, though to a certain degree they continued to change throughout the fieldwork.

During the fieldwork, each meeting had short—term task-related goals. These included: 'topics' for group reflection (eg 'old and new Ushaw Moor'), and 'activities' to do, both the procedure and the subject matter goals (eg writing the record). Further, there were more implicit goals which the group occasionally discussed. For instance, the 'social events' reflected a desire to develop friendships, and along with my visit to a member when she was ill, were related to group maintenance goals.

GROUP PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY

The present research uses the group as a research tool for gaining access to a phenomenon and revealing participants' understanding of it. Here, performance and productivity may be seen as the group's effectiveness in achieving this, that is explicating the nature and significance of environmental experience. In the literature, the terms performance and productivity are used almost synonymously, and refer to the output, or achievement, of a group relative to its goals. There are a number of dimensions: quality and quantity, or in the present research variety versus depth of experience explication; individual and group performance (Davis 1969); actual and perceived performance; expectations and motivation; participant and researcher views. Not only does performance and productivity of the group have to be monitored by the researcher, but will be monitored more informally by the participant. Participants will need to feel the group is achieving its aims or some of them and

satisfying their personal goals as well. Participants will assess their own and others' contributions to the success of the group and may expect some form of reward or confirmation of their achievement. In the present research this took the form of feedback comments at the start and end of meetings, and at the feedback discussions at the end of a series of meetings. In addition, the Group Record forms a final summary of the group's performance (see 2.4).

In Group Reflection the standards for assessing group performance and productivity are internal to the group and are agreed informally with the group in the feedback discussions. Within the strategy, there are also structures which help to generate a sense of progress, or achievement, during the research - meeting agendas, meeting series or phases ('achievement stages'), and the Group Record. Researcher-group feedback is important to this sense of progress, and mostly includes general summary comments and words of encouragement, but also includes the limited presentation of transcribed material, experiences and themes. In addition, the group assess and create their own sense of achievement, encouraging each other and considering what they have done over a series of meetings.

Performance and Productivity are interdependent with ALL the other dimensions. For instance, Berkowitz (1954) & Stogdil (1959) link individual behaviour to group performance. The 'maturity' of a group is influential, and thus if a group is high in negative tension, and has much disagreement, productivity may be hindered, or slowed. Weinstein and Holzbach (1972) note that friends are usually more

productive than strangers. The Ushaw Moor group were friends, and through the group they developed those friendships. Hackman & Vidmar (1970) conducted an empirical study into group size and task effects on performance. Davis (1969) devotes a whole book to group performance and recognises group size (eye contact), group composition (intellectual abilities and personality traits), group cohesion (cohesion-performance cycle) and norms as significant factors.

From the present research, it is clear that there is a variation in the productivity of a group, or its 'effectiveness', over the period of the fieldwork. In the formation phase its effectiveness is less, but as it matures and develops that effectiveness increases. Further, there seems to be a point at which 'diminishing returns' set in with respect to certain tasks, whilst achievement of other tasks becomes more effective. Towards the end of Phase 2 the rate of explication of fresh experiences began to decline, but the group showed increasing interest and ability in looking back at the meeting series as a whole and developing 'generalisations'. This, as theme recognition and composition of the Group Record, formed the basis of Phase 3. The Group Record forms a summary of the performance and productivity of the group, and therefore, the next subsection consists of that Record, which was produced with the Ushaw Moor Group.

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(1) January to April 1986. There is a rich literature, especially in Psychology, Sociology and Education Theory, on groups. Here I have chosen not to offer a review but recognise some   general insights

into groups. I draw on theoretical and empirical studies of groups themselves.

(2) Of course, here I am not referring to the use of groups in geographic teaching, nor research teams and committees.

(3) Two thorough and stimulating general texts I found very useful were: Barker et al (1979) - a text about small group communication written by a small group; and Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) - "this text is designed to give readers an understanding of group processes and to improve their skills as group members or leaders." Both texts recognise the value of a plurality of perspectives on the nature of groups.

(4) Bion (1961) is not studying groups in themselves, but rather using a group as a tool for psychoanalytic therapy.

(5) Researcher participation was limited with respect to the topic - experience of the everyday environment - because the participants' everyday environment was not shared by the researcher. For the 'secretary' concept see 2.2. In the literature there is somewhat restricted comment on the participation of the researcher in the group. Frequently he is seen as a leader. In psychoanalysis, he is 'the therapist', and, like a leader, is a central reference point of the group (see Bion 1961; Scheidlinger 1954). He intreprets, he diagnoses, he teaches. In Group Reflection however, the researcher is a pupil.

(6) Jacquie Burgess (personal correspondence, 1985) expressed concern at the size of the group. She considers ten to be the minimum viable size. Her main concern was the drop-out rate. However, viable size is dependent on the functional focus of the group and the participants themselves.

(7) It is difficult to ascertain what the appropriate group size should be without some kind of alternative study with different sizes of group.

(8) I refer here to the literature on forming groups, maintaining groups (eg Barker et al 1979; Napier & Gershenfeld 1981) and group cohension and tension (Cartwright & Zander 1954; Schlenker & Miller 1977).

(9) Research on group cohesiveness and productivity notes importance of groups having something in common, eg sex, age, class, but also a common goal - Carwright & Zander 1954; Gross & Martin 1952; Berkowitz 1954; Napier & Gershenfeld 1981.

(10) For instance the 'Five Seasons' experience - see 2.4.

(11) The debate is between leadership as a 'natural faculty' (ie. some seem to have a natural gift to lead), 'learned role' (ie all you need is to go on a training course) and 'context' (ie conditions may lead you to be leader). Also, much is made of the distinction between 'nominal' and 'effective' leader.

(12) Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) in their chapter on leadership summarise much of the extremely complex and often conflicting literature. They develop a 'fluid' concept of leadership which is very appropriate to the Group Reflective strategy.

(13) 'Rational economic man' has little ambition, a reluctance to work and a desire to avoid responsibility, and people are motivated by economic competition and conflict is inevitable. The leader under these assumptions must manage people, motivate, organize, control and coerce. 'Self-actualizing man' is seen to be motivated by hierarchical

needs, and as the basic needs are met new needs emerge and become
motivating forces. So a group will continually be maturing or changing
by an internal dynamic of the motivation of its's members. See McGregor
D. 'The Human Side of Enterprise' New York: McGraw-Hill 1960 (he uses
terms 'theory X' and 'theory Y'); and Schein E. H. 'Process
Consultation' Reading Mass. Addison-Wesley 1969 (he uses terms
'rational economic man' and 'self-actualizing man'). These
interpersonal stances can also apply to the relationships between all
members in a group.
(14) Importantly, Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) consider 'Perception and
Communication' in chapter 1. For small groups in particular see Barker
et al (1979) where communication is considered in relation to goals,
information flows, nonverbal communication, 'Listening & Feedback',
and 'Special Forms of Small Group Communication'; and Festinger &
Thibaut (1951).
(15) The argument in this paragraph is complicated, but based on my
own observations of a particular type of group - the 'experiential
group' developed for Group Reflection. Here participants expressed
remembered experiences often in response to the expressed experience
of another member. Thus, a member A might tell the group about an
experience of fog, member B might contrast this with one of wind, and
member C might look towards A and express another fog experience, and
B becomes a spectator (and so on) - but all participate and are
potential performers.
(16) In literature, feedback is often classified as psychological or
group-orientated and topical or product-orientated - the first dealing
with the intragroup (interpersonal) relations themselves, the second
with research information interaction in the group. The two are
entwined. Here I consider the distinctions spontaneous and delayed
feedback.
(17) Barker et al (1979 chapter 9) recognise three forms of
'nonverbal' communication in small groups: physical appearance (dress,
stereotypes, other appearance features), physical behaviour (facial
expression, eye contact, body-movement, territory, personal space,
touching), and vocal behaviour (emotion of speech, voice texture and
pitch, possibility of contradictions between verbal & nonverbal in
voice).
(18) I have concentrated on Napier & Gershenfeld (1981), but I also
found very useful the study of Barker et al (1979) with its emphasis
on 'listening'. In Group Reflection the researcher needs to be a good
listener, an active and a responsive listener, giving positive
nonverbal as well verbal spontaneous feedback to the group during
meetings.
(19) Barker et al (1979 p63) distinguish between goals and purposes.
People meet in small groups for a purpose, even if not entirely clear
to the individual or group. Such purposive behaviour leads frequently
to goals. Generally the two terms are used synonymously but more
accurately *purpose is that which makes goals* attractive, purpose is
personal and goal is external... Here, I generally use the term goal,
and include in 'goals' both the overall purpose of the research and
individual tasks and objectives leading to that overall goal.
(20) The group literature on goals is large reflecting the importance
of them (eg Mills 1967, Olmstead 1959, Cartwright & Zander 1954).
Napier & Gershenfeld (1981) offer a particularly clear summary.

(21) Note also - Cartwright & Zander (1954) list four conceptions of goals:a) as a composite of similar individual goals; summation or shared goals; b) as individual goals for the group, that is the situation from the individual's point of view; c) as dependent on particular interrelations among motivational systems of several individuals - a tension; and d) goals as an inducing agent, that is resident in other elements such as group motivational situation.

2.4   <u>GROUP RECORD:</u>

<u>OUR VIEW OF THE VALLEY</u>

<u>Preface</u>

This subsection consists of the *Group Record* which was produced with the Ushaw Moor Group. I urge you, the reader, to remember that this is first and foremost the *group's* record. It has some affinity with oral history, but does not seek to 'tell a story', nor describe a geography of Ushaw Moor. It goes a step further than Rowles' (1978a) vignettes, by seeking to offer both participant descriptions of experiences and their understanding, represented in the themes. It lays emphasis on the themes and on a group level since Group Reflection seeks to explicate both the experience and understanding of participants themselves (insiders of a given environment), and to share insights that might be more general to the experience of us all. In other words, Group Reflection, and therefore the Group Record, seeks to bridge the gap between the concrete experience of the individual and the abstract generalisations of the academic (Rodaway 1987b). In addition, it is hoped that this style of report allows participants a degree of protective anonymity (see also *Appendix B*).

Therefore, the Group Record is a summary of the group reflections and is designed to stand alone as an separate entity, in addition to forming a part of this thesis. The following text is exactly the same as the final text presented to the group, and available to other

readers, under the group's title: Our View of the Valley (Rodaway 1987a). It is both a report on environmental experience and, less directly, the Group Reflective strategy[1]. Therefore, it is a commentary on the fieldwork study and presents the output of that study. It presents the research 'data' and a first ordering, or group reflection, of that material. Also, it offers insight into the nature and operation of Group Reflection, and the Ushaw Moor Group in particular. In *Section 3* I will offer further 'researcher reflections', or second and third orderings of the experiences and themes [2]. In this way, group reflection offers *insights both* to the participants and the wider readership, and encourages continued reflection on the Record, the wider literature, substantive and methodological, and one's own experience of everyday environment.

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(1) A contrasting style of report, written like a research paper by the researcher for the group, is the *Eltham Report* from the Open Space Project (personal correspondence Jacquie Burgess; for detail of this group analytic study see Burgess et al 1987a/b).
(2) David Seamon (letter 27/3/87), in response to reading the final Group Record (with a copy of my thesis outline), suggested that this Record is the first ordering, and that Section 3 forms further orderings. He regards such 'repeated' ordering to be a major feature of the phenomenologist's attempt to describe and understand the world as experienced.

OUR VIEW OF THE VALLEY

Ushaw Moor Group, 1986

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Four local people, and myself, have met regularly as a group over the last 10 months (Oct '85 to July '86) to reflect upon their experiences of the environment in which they live, Ushaw Moor in Co. Durham. They have both recalled and discussed with each other their experiences and reflected on them in order to recognise common themes within those experiences. This short Record is therefore not a study of Ushaw Moor or the group, but is a summary account of these *Group Reflections*.

The Record does not aim to list 'example experiences' but to outline common themes which come out of the experiences expressed. The purpose of the Record is to provide a summary for both group members and other people, who may not know Ushaw Moor in particular but who might be able to identify with some of the recognised experience themes and relate them to their own situation. It is also part of a broader Ph.D. research thesis in progress at the University of Durham.

A brief BACKGROUND aims to give perspective and context. The larger section entitled REFLECTIONS focuses on the *main themes* recognised by the group. In their COMMENTARIES each member offers some thoughts on the research as a whole and this record. We hope our reflections will encourage you also to reflect on your own experience.

THE STUDY

The group has been meeting over the last year with the purpose of sharing and reflecting on each other's personal experiences of the local environment.

Three series of mostly fortnightly meetings were held from October 1985 to July 1986, with a final meeting to be held in November 1986. They were held in one member's home near to the homes of the rest of the group. I came across from Durham. The group was encouraged to share and reflect on their personal experiences and so appreciate the value of them. I have composed the Record on the basis of tape transcripts of all the meetings and especially the group discussions in Phase 3 which concentrated on recognising common themes and composing the Record. The draft version was thoroughly discussed and edited by the group.

Each meeting was about an hour long. Various topics, generally coming from previous meetings, were discussed and the group engaged in a number of activities including looking at photographs, writing down treasured experiences and visiting sites in Ushaw Moor. I chaired the meetings taking up a role similar to that of a secretary, tape recording meetings, organising meeting dates, producing feedback notes

and encouraging the group to stand back from particular experiences &
recognise common themes. Meetings fell into three Phases.

Phase 1:

from October to December 1985 explored general discussion topics and
focused interest on various aspects of our attitudes to the local
environment and some of our experiences.

> 1.1 Procedure Introductory Meeting
>
> 1.2 Contrasts of New & Old Ushaw Moor
>
> 1.3 Sensual Experience of the Local Environment
>
> 1.4 Structure & Texture of the Environment
>
> 1.5 Weather & Seasons Experiences
>
> 1.6 Feedback Discussion & Summary

Phase 2:

from January 1986 to April began to consider more deeply experiences
and reflection on them. Experience sharing was stimulated by using
photographs, feedback material, recording personal experiences on
small cards, and visiting sites in Ushaw Moor. Through this common
themes were recognised.

> 2.1 General Introduction
>
> 2.2 Using Photographs (1)
>
> 2.3 Using Photographs (2)
>
> 2.4 Photo's Feedback & Recording Experiences
>
> 2.5 Summary of Themes, &
>
> Visits to other places discussion
>
> 2.6 Areas & Issues of Ushaw Moor
>
> 2.7 Summary & Visit to 10 Sites

Phase 3:

from April 1986 has focused on preparing the Group Record.

        3.1 Phase 3 Strategy & Background

        3.2 Themes Exercise & Group Record Ideas

          & Moving House Discussion

        3.3 Record Draft

        3.4 Main Editing Discussion

        3.5 Concluding Meeting

USHAW MOOR

The village has been the setting, where the group live, or their 'everyday environment'. Experience of this environment has been the main focus of group reflection [1].

Ushaw Moor lies on the south-facing slope of the Deerness Valley about 2.5 miles west of the City of Durham on the B6302 road to Esh Winning. It is a former pit village which grew rapidly in the last half of the 19th century. Today it has virtually no local employment and is chiefly residential. The present population is about 6400 people [2]. The village is made up of the remaining terrace streets on the east and council estates (mostly postwar) on the west, with the Broompark estate forming a western limit.

Ushaw Moor began to develop in the late 1860's with the setting up of a colliery to the east of the present village by Chaytor, a local businessman. In 1871 there were about 31 adults, predominantly

male and employed at the mine, but by 1881 the population had grown to a village of 708 men, women and children. The pit was sold to the Pease family in 1893. They also owned larger mines at Esh Winning and Waterhouses further up the valley and many coke ovens. The Pease family dominated the development of Ushaw Moor, in employment, housing, religion and sport. A foundation stone of the Baptist Church, for instance, bears the name of one of the family. In the 19th century the mine prospered on the 'main seam', a seam of high grade coal which was locally coked. The Derwent valley limb of the North Eastern Railway was opened later in the century and became the main transport for all types of goods in and out of the valley. This has since closed, as well as the Station Hotel and former 'big store' of Broughs. The old village therefore is remembered as a hive of activity, with a strong sense of community, enhanced by the pressures of severe strikes both in the 1880's, and in the twentieth century. The colliery was Nationalised in 1947, but as early as 1912 coke production had already gone into decline and the quality of coal had fallen. Employment for much of the time was around 450 men & boys and peaked in 1955 at 491. The colliery closed 1960 (its sisters at Esh Winning closed 1968, and Waterhouses 1966), but the rest of the village economy had already been in decline since the interwar period (3).

Two cores developed in the 19th century: several streets around the colliery and coke ovens on the east beyond the present village and a group of streets by the the Flass junction and down Station Road. After the closing of the colliery, in 1960, the eastern and smaller

core was totally demolished and is now a picnic site. The Flass junction remains the centre of the present village and the location of a number of shops. During the postwar rehousing of people from other pit-villages in the region Ushaw Moor was selected for limited development and this accounts for the high proportion of council houses in the village. There is a small pre-1939 estate (Flass, Hall & Hunter Avenues) which rehoused local people from the colliery streets. The major council house developments and spatial expansion of Ushaw Moor westwards along Broom Lane date from the earlier postwar period. The last major council development is Skippers Meadow built about 1970. Three of the group members live in this estate, and the fourth has a flat in Oversteads on its southern margin. The Broompark estate forms the western limit of Ushaw Moor and the main private housing development.

The economy of the village has been changing from a local one to a regional one. Miners began to travel to other areas (notably the east Durham coalfield) or moved away, and many more people began to commute to other areas for work in a variety of other occupations (and for shopping & entertainment). The bus and the car have replaced the railway, and with them new families with less commitment to the Ushaw Moor have moved in. Community has declined, or become much looser. Early council house policy was local with many families moving from the old colliery streets to the new council estates, both from Ushaw Moor and other villages in the local area, many of which were labelled 'category D' for demolition. Today the policy is district based so that even tenants of Ushaw Moor can not be assured of alternative

accommodation within the village.

Today there is little village-based employment and people work
mainly in Durham, the surrounding region, and some as far as
Newcastle. Unemployment is high and there are many young families.
Much of the population are now 'outsiders' who have moved in from the
North East and some from other parts of the UK, and tend to live in
Ushaw Moor for shorter periods. Village facilities are limited
including a few shops (newsagent, butcher, baker and
mini-supermarket), a public house, clubs, cricket field and recreation
ground, primary and secondary schools, and several churches. There is
a Community Association which uses the facilities of the Deerness
Valley Comprehensive School on the Bearpark side of the village. Here
many activities are run by the Association, including indoor & outdoor
sports, a youth club, keep-fit and jazz band. However as yet there is
no community centre and a proposed small sports centre has only
recently been approved. The village also lacks a health centre and
library [4].

Almost every house in the village has views of the surrounding
countryside, the Deerness Valley. This has now regained much of its
former attractiveness after extensive land reclamation 1971-1982 by
Durham County Council (which won a R.I.C.S./Times Conservation Award).
The valley setting is one of the most treasured features of the
village. Land reclamation included conversion of derelict housing
areas to woodland, extracting shallow coal and stabilising the land
for electricity pylons, converting the former rail track into a

country walk with three picnic sites and several open spaces for the public, soiling colliery shale areas, planting woodland and creating much 'new' agricultural land. Therefore, the modern village is becoming an attractive 'dormitory settlement' for people working in Durham and its region.

1.   Skippers Meadow

2.   Oversteads

3. Ushaw Terrace

4. Temperance Terrace (on right)

5. Aldridge Court
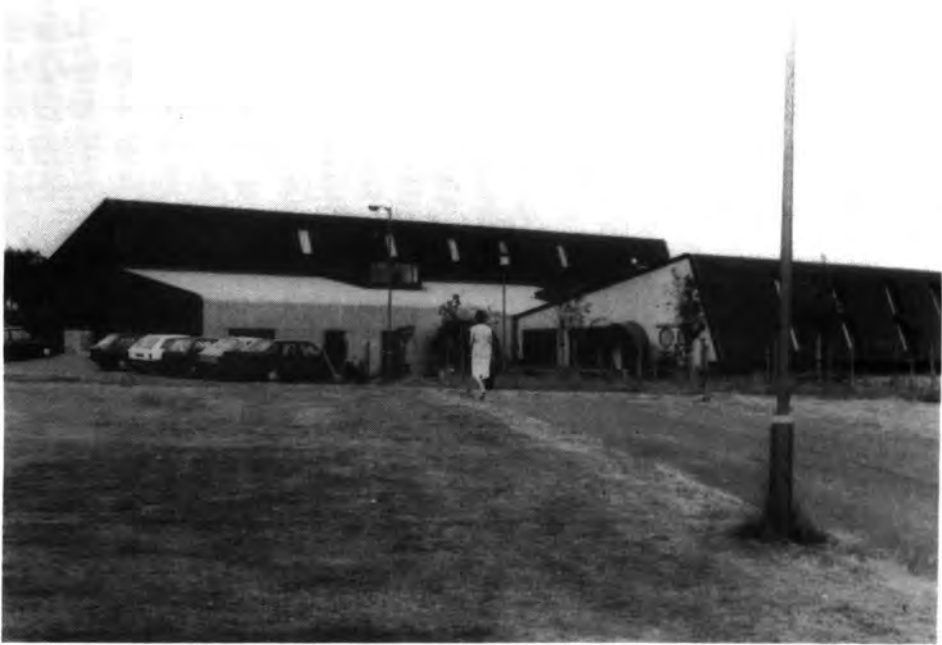

6. Oakridge Road

7.   Holly Park
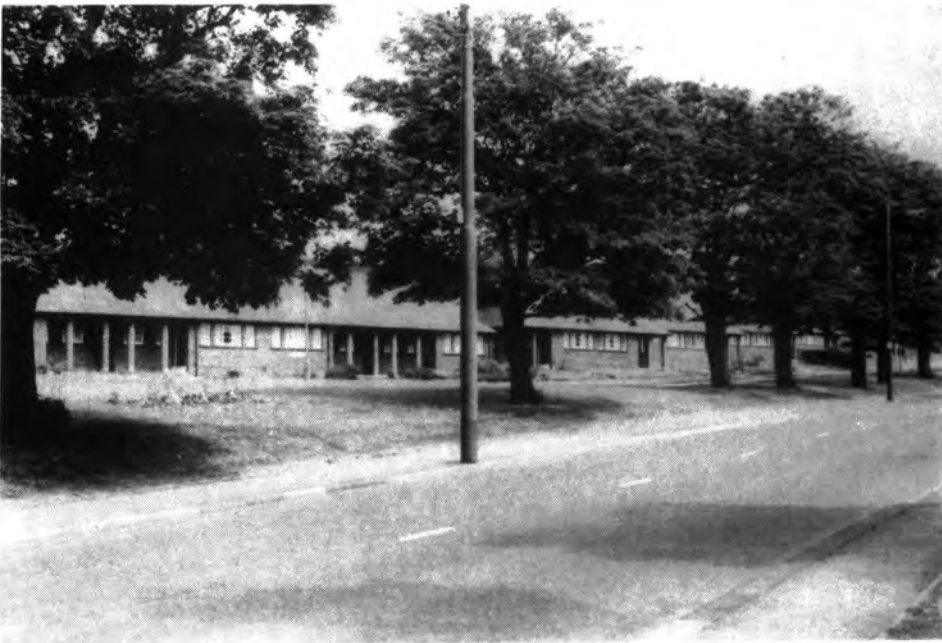

8.   Broom Crescent

9. Cochrane Terrace (Aged Miners Homes)

10. Track by Cochrane Terrace, looking across to New Brancepeth

11. Primary School, Broom Lane

12. Brecon Hill

.13. Station Road

.14. Allotments opposite South View

THE GROUP

What kind of people are we? What kind of group developed? This section sketches the human context, or authorship, of the reflections. A degree of anonymity is felt necessary which therefore restricts the comments but hopefully they remain sufficient.

The original group was to include 6 local people and myself. After preliminary interviews and two group meetings this had become a five-member group: Jackie, George, Jean, Eleanor and myself. The four local members already knew each other prior to the research but had never met together as such a group before. Meetings were held in Ushaw Moor in a group member's home (ᵓ). All the group (except myself) have lived in Ushaw Moor for over 25 years and have each lived in more than one part of the village. Only Jackie was born in Ushaw Moor, the others moving to the village in 1941, 1947 and 1958. George came from Brandon, about two miles south of the village, and Jean from Sacriston 3 miles or so to the north. Eleanor having lived as far afield as London & Birmingham was born in Ashington, Northumberland. Each of the group has had some experience of living in both colliery streets and postwar council housing (see table).

ELEANOR	GEORGE	JACKIE	JEAN
(1941)	(1947)	-	(1958)
Ushaw Terrace	George Street	Station Road	Maple Park
Dale Street	Bracken Court	Arthur Street	Skippers
Broadgate	Broom Lane	Whitehouse Lane	Meadows
Lilac Park	Laburnum Court	Broom Crescent	(1971)
Skippers	Oakridge Road	(1954-86)	
Meadows	Skippers	Oversteads	
(1978)	Meadows (1971)	(1986)	

By the end of 1986 all the group will have retired. Jean retires from teaching, in Durham, later this year. George retired early on health grounds after working some years at Ushaw Moor colliery and then as an insurance representative in the local area. Jackie spent 6 years away in the forces, some time at the New Brancepeth coke ovens (just south of Ushaw Moor) and most of his working life as a driver at Ushaw College. Eleanor has done a variety of jobs in domestic, factory and shop work. Three of the group are now widowed, two of whom live on their own, and George lives with his wife and family. Jean and Eleanor used to have dogs and so got to know many parts of Ushaw Moor this way. George and Jackie still do much walking in the village. Three of the group live in Skippers Meadow, and the fourth recently moved from Broom Crescent to the Oversteads just below Skippers. All the group enjoy the countryside and a 'good view'. Despite feeling Ushaw Moor is a 'mess' at present, all of the group are much attached to the village, enjoy living here, know how nice it can be in fine weather and appreciate 'coming home' after a spell away.

I come from West Yorkshire, and the group meetings have formed part of my Ph.D research in Geography at Durham University. The meetings were tape recorded and transcribed following each meeting. I organised meeting dates and got the group to decide on topics/activities. In addition I monitored group progress and encouraged them to reflect on personal experiences. As the research progressed the group developed the ability to share both particular experiences as well as opinions, and to reflect on all these to see

common themes.

Initially all the group were unsure about the research aims, or focus, and style, or procedure. This was left very open and only an interest in 'personal experiences of the local environment' emphasized. This was a 'necessary risk' for the early stages of the research and aimed to encourage a more appropriate designation of the focus and procedure [6]. Specific questions were avoided and instead the group were asked to think of general topics to talk about and reflect upon as a group. Each member soon got into the swing of things and found that they could express experiences and relate to each other's experiences, so stimulating each other's memories. During the research the group became more aware of how much we do 'take-in' and value the local environment. Further they began to recognise that there were common themes across their experiences despite the variety.

By the end of Phase 1, when a feedback note was produced, each member began to feel that something was being achieved. As George noted, it was surprising how much the group found to talk about throughout the meetings. Laughter and friendship were also important and undoubtedly encouraged the sharing of some most treasured experiences. The group was relaxed yet kept to meeting agendas so that progress was maintained.

REFLECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Through the meetings the group shared many personal experiences and attitudes about Ushaw Moor. Reflecting on these they recognised *common themes* and it is these which form the 'meat' of this Record. The themes are only general labels which we have developed to *summarise, interrelate* and *make sense* of our experiences and attitudes. Some extracts from the meetings are included in order to encourage readers to reflect on the themes in terms of their own experiences [7].

After *recognising* themes we then sought to 'group' them in some way. It became clear that many of the themes overlap, and in some cases are aspects of another theme. There are no perfect categories and each experience challenges any simple theme definition. The themes are pointers to the sense or general insight the individual experiences give the group. The themes outlined here are not exhaustive, only suggestive [8].

Each experience seems to have a basic structure: There is a STANCE, such as 'watching'. There is a FOCUS, such as 'footprints of birds in the snow'. And there is a RESPONSE, such as 'feeling a sense of nothingness'. Many of the themes express all three aspects of this structure, others tend to one part of it; whilst others seem to

indicate additional parts.

The themes were grouped into *Nature, Buildings & People*. Many of them fit under more than one heading and other themes are closely allied to the themes under the other headings. With these comments in mind we now look at some of the insights we have gained by reflecting on our experiences of our everyday environment - Ushaw Moor.

NATURE

Nature was very important to the group. All had a positive response to various aspects of Nature whether it was the bit of green in among the houses or the countryside around Ushaw Moor. It contrasted with feelings about Buildings and People - it's the nature part that gives us confidence that things are going to go on and it's all going to happen again... It gives us a permanence. In short, we seemed to show that we all enjoyed Nature.

Nature is therefore a key heading. It is an ideal we look-up to. It always tends towards being 'harmonious'. We want where we live to blend-in with Nature. It has continuity, permanence and is renewing with the cycle of the seasons. The group were fascinated by things just growing or coming alive again. We look forward to the coming of Spring, and love to see the buds appear. Included under this heading were growing things (plants, animals, birds, insects), the views of the valley, and the weather (rain, sunshine, fog, wind). Gardens tended to be thought of in terms of the need to keep them tidy and in

this respect came under the heading Buildings. The group felt that Nature has an inherent beauty and power in itself.

The group shared strong emotional responses to Nature, sometimes including a tension of joy with fear. We accept Nature as it is. We delight in it, stand and look at it, show awe, wonder and amazement. Some of our deepest and most treasured experiences are linked to it. Nature seems to call us to stop and look, we find ourselves watching, listening, and being fascinated. We might be looking out of the window, sitting on one of the benches, or taking a walk down the Mill way. Sometimes we purposefully go out to experience nature as on a walk, other times it stops us in our tracks as with a thunderstorm. Some of the most extended and exciting experience accounts were responses therefore to the delights of nature.

Grouped under this heading are:

1) GREENNESS & GROWING, this is nature experienced in among the houses as the grass and trees outside in the street, the birds singing, animal footprints in the snow, or the calmness of open green spaces. Greenness & Growing is therefore much broader than the literal designations such words might initially suggest, but reflect a richer experiencing of Nature in our surroundings. We might be looking-out of our home, sitting in the garden, or walking to the shops. The group noted that Greenness & Growing make up for the blandness and nothingness of the houses, it hides the litter, it gives a peacefulness and calm, it makes the place look better. The cycle of the seasons is also important here as we look for the buds coming in

spring or the autumn foliage. The richness of green colouring, the
play of light & shadow in a storm (the sky often as important as the
land), the difference that snow, rain or wind make, or the excitement
of just watching living things, the continued growing and the ever
'freshness and newness'.

2) WEATHER, in particular rain, snow, sun, and wind. In
the other Nature themes we had a sense of delight; in addition the
weather tended to excite feelings of wonder and amazement. It was here
that a greater emotion and sometimes a tension between joy & fear was
experienced. The sky often featured and the closer view was common. But
whereas *greeness* is near-view, and *outlook* far-view, *weather* tended
to be more immediate and gave a feeling of greater involvement.

Group members experienced the weather either individually or with
a small group such as the family. A thunderstorm can excite us with
its power and mystery. The big black clouds, the heavy rain, the
light ning, the thunder, and the strange lighting of the countryside
around, and maybe the house-lights flickering. We might have a little
fear and yet we are excited by it, and somehow we can't avoid stopping
to watch it. When sharing experiences of thunderstorms the group
focused much on the sky and especially on the emotions felt - the
environment itself seemed to fall into the background. Changes in the
weather, the seasons and extremes such as a windy day, a heat-wave, or
heavy snow fall excited interesting experiences. The environment was
shifted into a new perspective and experience of it heightened and made
more memorable. Going to work down by the Mill way and seeing the

thick snow everywhere made it another world. The everyday route became

thrilling and fantastic - with an arch of snow right over the tops of

the trees - and yet at the same time the glistening snow in the

sun-shine and the drifts high up the legs made it frightening and

exhausting.

3) OUTLOOK, the valley, the far-view, a scene. All the

group appreciate looking at the view of the valley whether it's while

out walking, or sitting on a bench, or the view from the house. They

particularly treasured the views from Cochrane Terrace (Aged Miners'

Homes), the Recreation Ground, the 'College Road', Brecon Hill and the

Ushaw Colliery site. The group felt that in some ways a good outlook

was more important than a good looking house. They experienced a sense

of uplift, a harmoniousness, a happiness, peacefulness and calm, a

sensual delight of the open-air. It could even be 'a poor morning and

still be nice.' The valley setting is one of the most valued features

of Ushaw Moor and makes up for the untidiness of many of the housing

estates. This is reinforced by improvement and recuperation of the

valley through reclamation (mainly 1971-1982) after the closure of

mining and coking activities.

It was suggested at one meeting that nature and the outlook had

possibly become more important to each member as they had become older

and also now that they have more time to stop and look. One member

suggested that 'maybe we've been made more aware of it because of the

impermanence of our dwelling places and man-made things, whereas there

is a permanence in the natural, growing things, that they are going to

come again, and when we are gone they'll still be here'.

"The night we were here last, we went out (member & some friends) and when we came back we saw this *beautiful* tree... We'd just left Thornley Close, and it was terribly frosty, and it really was a beautiful thing. And I must have past that tree hundreds of times and it had always been just a tree with red berries on, crisp papers and everything along the bottom or at night just a dark shape. But really that night it was a fairy tale..."

"There was one afternoon when we'd been for a walk (member and his family) and just as we came in we experienced five seasons in 15 minutes! We were just walking up the path and the sky went black and the rain came down. It was torrential, bouncing about a foot off the bottom. Ten minutes after that it was hailstones, massive hailstones! In two or three minutes the ground was all white. The cloud passed over, the sun came out and melted the hailstones. And the steam was rising up! The sun. It was fantastic ... all in about 15 minutes."

"Something I noticed on Friday night when I was coming back home. It was very dark up by Ushaw College and there was a fog, and you had to go very slowly in the car. Then, just so far along I noticed there was a light in the distance. I'd never really noticed it, it had never sort of struck me before how much difference one light can make to having no lights. If you are in a fog and there are no lights you are just looking right in front of you and you are trying to keep your eye on the curb. But it is as if a light ahead seems to make such a difference to your confidence in going forward. You sort of think there is somewhere to go."

"A friend once came to my house and went upstairs to the bathroom. She stood looking out of the window and says: 'I love this! If I lived here I would put a chair on this landing and sit, because you can see right up the valley from here.' It's the only place where I've got a view really..."

"It is eerie when there's a bit of fog. You can stand in our yard and look across the valley, and often you can see it rising off the river where it is spread across, and you can see right across the top of it..."

"One thing, especially now when it is snowy, I like to see the prints of the birds around the house, and particularly when I've come in. It amazes me how near the door they get, and it makes me feel as if, you know, they've been visiting somehow. I feel as if they take the place of growing things in winter, instead of having flowers and things. I get pleasure when I come in in the summer and see a little bit of colour. But I get pleasure at seeing these bird prints around my house. It makes me feel as if I'm necessary, they've come to see me."

"I was going to work one morning after it had been snowing solid for about two days. I went down the Mill way. It was about a foot deep on the way down, when I got to the bottom where the gate was it was about four foot deep. I tried to climb over the top of the gate and when I got across to the other side, where you crossed the line to the wood, all the snow had formed an arch across the ditch and over the top of the trees. Yes, I walked underneath this archway, and all the way down there. There was only me out because no one in their right mind would go down that way. I'd never seen anything like it! I went under this archway and, when you came out at the bottom where there is a bridge, there were drifts of snow either side and just the river running through the middle. That was fantastic seeing the sun was blazing down. I went further on making up the hill the way I used to go to work and the snow gradually got deeper and deeper. I was standing halfway up the bank and I was stuck there. I couldn't get out. I was really scared! I'd never been out in anything like it. I was just looking around when the sun came out and all of a sudden I was blinded. I remained there a moment standing in the sun. Anyway after I had got a bit more energy together I ploughed my way up to New Brancepeth..."

"I was once down the Mill way with our Ian and, where the gate is, there was a field on the right hand side that you couldn't always get in. It was difficult to get into but we came up from the bottom and came on into the field. I hadn't been in before, and that day I went into the field and it was just like something you see in a painting. It was all different sorts of colours of blue and red, full of different sorts of flowers. My attention was attracted by some butterflies which I'd never seen before. They're like a fly with a black wing and they've got red spots on them. The next year I was looking forward to going back and seeing those again but I never saw them any more."

"I always think it looks worse on a windy day. When it was the Queen's celebration, and it was June, that cherry tree out there was lovely with all the blossom on it. But it was a windy day and it was blowing all over the place, the blossom and everything else. The wind seemed to knock some of the pleasantness off the street. When I think what it's like when coming back off holidays, if it's a windy day and the bushes are blowing about it doesn't seem as nice as if it is a calm day with a blue sky..."

BUILDINGS

Much discussion focused on buildings, particularly the contrasts between *insides and outsides*, their fit within a street (*out-of-place*) and the importance of *looking-after* them. The group felt that Nature is living and growing, Buildings in contrast seem inert and decaying. The group considered the colliery streets, the various council estates and the private Broompark estate, as well as individual buildings such as a particular house, the new Primary School, the Catholic Church, Flass Public House and its steps. They also considered where we live, where we have lived in Ushaw Moor, where we would & would not like to live, and local places we've never been to or not very often. Possibly the most significant contrast noted was between the 'permanence' of the colliery streets and the 'impermanence' of many modern dwellings, in particular the wood-clad houses of Skippers Meadow.

Skippers Meadow was most frequently referred to because this was 'home', yet much of what the group saw here seemed to them evident in other parts of Ushaw Moor. Grubby and slummy were adjectives they felt appropriate for many buildings and streets. 'Nice' seemed to be the strongest positive assessment of the better areas. One member noted, 'we seem to be developing a big-slum everywhere, yet all it really needs is a coat of paint.' The importance of a 'bit of care' was emphasized frequently. Further, all the group felt that despite this the local environment had much improved, and could look very attractive on a bright and sunny day.

The grouping of themes under Buildings was closely linked to the heading People. The group argued that the state of buildings reflected a lack of respect, especially self-respect, a neglect of *responsibility* on the part of tenants, owners, and council. Was there a change in people's attitudes to buildings and streets, especially in the care given to the insides in contrast to the neglect and untidiness of their outsides? A common observation was the *nothingness,* blandness and sameness of much of the postwar building. Without *nature* much of the estates 'had nothing to make them'. They noted the lack of character and identity, houses and even a school somehow not looking really like what they're meant to be. Buildings being 'just shapes', geometry or 'repetition rather than pattern'. It could be anywhere, and anything [9].

Experiences ranged from Ushaw Moor as a whole or streets, to individual houses or little details on them. A sense of the past was important, whether it was memories of having lived in the street or estate previously (possibly when new and clean and tidy) or the more general feel of history. Colliery streets will always look like colliery streets however much people improve their houses. The group also distinguished between near-view and far-view. Looking across to the Allotments like a shanty town but close-up individual 'crees' are so pretty and well cared for.

Several themes were grouped under the heading Buildings. Each theme seems to contain at least two dimensions: 1) an implicit

opposite (eg permanence-lack of permanence), and 2) a 'doing' part
linking it to people (eg 'keeping it tidy').

1) NOTHINGNESS seems to be related to order,
out-of-place, lack of character or functional identity, interest or
variety. This was a kind a feeling that something was lacking, a sense
of insufficiency. The 'withdrawn quietness', the lack of smoke from
chimneys, sometimes in the daytime very few people are seen outside,
the disrepair and neglect of the outsides of houses and of gardens.
Associated words were blandness, sameness, muchness, just-shapes,
'lost'. The group expressed this sense of *nothingness* when they stood
back and looked at whole streets or groups of houses [10].

There seems to be 'order' but not 'harmoniousness'. All the group
appreciated a fine sunny day, especially after the grass has been cut,
when many of the council estates could look very pleasant. Yet they
couldn't get excited about the buildings in the same way or to the
same extent as the nature part. Much of what was valued in particular
houses, such as Skippers Meadow, Cochrane Terrace or Brecon Hill, was
the outlook, the view of the surrounding countryside.

One member captured the essence of this theme: *'nothingness is
the lack of something to stand out in our minds'*. Maybe this was not
so much a lack of variety as of distinctiveness. A related idea was
places being 'lost' and having a deserted atmosphere [11]. Nothingness
was also associated with a feeling of threat and a lack of belonging
(buildings & people). Discussion was often about houses, rarely about

homes. Blandness was recognised as a superficiality and lack of deep commitment or concern for the place. Houses built like Skippers seemed almost 'an experiment', and the residents of many of the estates seeming not to have any intention of 'making a home' in Ushaw Moor.

2) INSIDES & OUTSIDES was encapsulated in the phrase: 'when you get inside those houses they're really beautiful.' The group felt that people's attention and care had shifted to the insides of houses. In short, people have withdrawn. They recognised that our experience of buildings in the environment was 'coloured' by our knowledge of their insides as well as outsides: Knowing the occupant, knowing how nice the houses are inside and having seen the view looking from the inside out. The group had divided opinions about the new Primary school. Two members had never been inside the school and therefore could only relate an 'outside' experience which tended to emphasize its *out-of-placeness* and lack of functional identity. In contrast the other two members had been inside and were more familiar with both the hidden back of the school, with the playground, and the inside itself. As a result these members had a more positive experience of the school and noted its cheerful colours and advantage as an environment for teaching children.

The group also shared experiences of moving house in Ushaw Moor and going inside other people's houses. Discussion about moving into a new house revealed how our response to a house changes once we've been inside it and especially after 'tasting' its views out of the windows. The group noted that the houses on Brecon Hill may seem somewhat bland

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yet inside one gets a beautiful view over the valley. Many of the colliery houses have been extensively modernised and are 'beautiful inside'. The outside of houses is often 'scruffy' and ill maintained in many parts of Ushaw Moor yet insides can be most attractive and possess attractive outlooks. It was felt a good outlook is possibly more important than a good looking house without such views from the inside. All the group enjoyed looking out of their homes at the countryside around. They mentioned less the view out to their garden which often they were a little ashamed of. Two aspects of Insides & Outsides therefore came out: 1) the care of insides, and 2) the importance of the *view* from the inside-out.

3) the LACK OF PERMANENCE in buildings contrasted to our experience of nature. The lack of permanence seems to be both in the *buildings* - especially the materials used in building - and in *people* - in their lack of commmitment to repair and maintenance. The group sensed a link between a lack of permanence and the feeling that owners, tenants and councils all somehow lived 'for now only'. They felt that the council houses, including Skippers, and the new private Broompark estate wouldn't be around as long as the colliery streets had been, nor did they feel they had been built with any such intention.

Skippers with wood-cladding and concrete was contrasted with the red brick of Aldridge Court. The latter seemed to have a greater feel of permanence, but only from a distance. The colliery streets of brick or stone also had this sense of permanence which concrete, glass and

wood failed to create. The permanence experienced was not so much based on a sense of history as on an emotional response to the substance of the building materials and structures. However, people failing to show any commitment to their Buildings in not 'looking-after'them was also emphasized. Close-up, as opposed to the distant view, Aldridge Court proved to be less attractive with much litter and vandalism.

In more general discussion about buildings, the group observed that they seem to represent a change in how people value and act in relation to the local environment. Things aren't built to last, whether it's household appliances or the houses themselves. A throw-away lifestyle and a throw-away environment. The high turnover in occupiers in council and private property was pointed out. The group also noted how there is more litter nowadays, though they asserted personal and community *responsibility* to keep the place tidy, and appreciated the tendency to give-up collecting the litter when so often it blows back onto 'our patch', and the street itself is left anyway. Throw-Away also seemed to be reflected in the opinion that 'people want what they want there and then.'

4)THREATENING. The group felt there was a threat in the environment which was part of the decline in community and related to the themes above. When looking at photographs of Skippers, they noted how much of a nothing it seemed, and that the simple square windows in square boxes arranged on grass expanses looked like barns, halloween masks looking at you, a goods wagon off the railways or like shapes that seem as if they'll change into other shapes. The disrepair, the

peeling paint and unvarnished timber, the long high metal fence and the overall starkness on a dull day all added to the feel of a 'concentration camp'. Did the fence keep us in rather than cows & sheep out? Nevertheless, they argued it's not the environment that people fear, it's the people. Not knowing one's neighbours, the behaviour of young people, and the tales of muggings seem to give even our own street a sense of threat.

We observed threat in particular places and at particular times. For instance, the Flass corner in the centre of Ushaw Moor. Here it was the 'rough-looking' youths on the steps, especially their spitting, which created a sense of threat. The emptiness of many of the estates in the daytime, that is a lack of people walking about, or in their yards, the keeping of doors shut and people keeping to themselves, seemed important. The woods after dark and central Ushaw Moor after the pub closes were thought threatening. It seems the sense of 'home' has retreated from the local environment, even the street outside, into the house itself. As one member put it people have withdrawn and there is often not a 'peaceful quietness but a withdrawn quietness.' In the old days in the colliery streets there was a greater community, in part reflecting living closer together but also the common bonds to a local work-place and social life. Now the houses are more spaced out, have gardens and fences, people work all over the North East in all kinds of jobs and have all manner of 'external' ties, even close friends and relatives now live outside the village.

5) OUT-OF-PLACE never refers to nature, but rather to

buildings and streets. The group recognised here a sense of order:
out-of-place, out-of-proportion, out-of-order, lacking harmony. They
experienced a lack of fit, disorder and incorrect scale or proportion.
Whole structures could be out-of-place as the new Primary school
possibly, or high fences erected in Skippers by tenants purchasing
their homes. Or, individual 'textual' details could be out-of-place as
in the disrepair of a house in a row of well-kept ones, or an 'awful
colour' of paintwork, or inappropriate extension.

When standing back to look at some whole, such as a street, the
out-of-place was recognised. This relates to an intuitive and
subjective sense of order. The group had a high degree of agreement on
this order and felt it was very important. Out-of-Place is a
'rightness' to be maintained, a kind of belonging. The group linked
this to *respect and responsibility*, for the environment and other
people.

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"When I looked at this photograph of Skippers Meadows, I was quite
impressed by it. I thought it was nice and clean, but it's the houses
that's got me fascinated. It's nice looking really, yet the more you
look at it the less there is in it, and how much of a nothing it is."

"I think I was sitting one day in my flat (in Oversteads) just looking
up at these houses in Skippers, and I thought of the difference to
years ago. You can look at these houses and you know *probably* that
there's people in them during the day, yet one misses seeing everyone
walking past. It looks cold and dead at times. It contrasts so much
with the old colliery streets. You could see smoke coming out of the
chimneys and you'd think to yourself there's somebody in there."

"When moving from Maple Park to Skippers, I didn't really think much
of these houses until I came inside and I saw out, from the inside
outside and I liked it..."

"You see down there - Aldridge Court - they are nice houses from a distance. I like the red brick. It looks quite prosperous and wholesome sort of. I think it looks nice, but when you get down there and you see all the litter and the stones & things thrown down on the path. It's the people that make it... When you get down there it's a bit like a rabbit warren. You feel as if it's got nothing, as if it has no character at all, it's just houses."

"Looking at some of those in Skippers you might think that someone had got hold of a handful of match boxes and just thrown them. Though I know they are nice inside." / "And the way there is a little bit in between and it seems as if one window down there and one window there, so it looks a bit threatening in a way. And then at the end of this house over the road there is a CB aerial and it's got wires sticking out and it again looks sort of halloweenish, ghostly somehow ... It looks to me as if the houses are looking at me and they are all making faces. It is a bit like halloween, a sort of cartoon, or a geometric - something they make children's films with, shapes and shapes changing into different things" / "...a big barbed wire around it like a prison camp or something."

"You know that piece of waste grass outside my front door, it's just like a big triangle in the corner with the next estate? It's always people from across the green, in the private houses, that bring all their rubbish out there. You see them bringing bags of (left-over) cement and so on. One day I did see it and said to myself now's the time I should ring up and do something about it..."

"If you showed a picture of Skippers to a complete stranger, they'd never say that's a housing estate. I'm back to my old idea about the boxes. You've just got one box on top of another and the windows are just plain square. There's no style or anything about the windows, just a plain square stuck in a wooden case. You'd think it was part of a factory or something."

"To walk down those colliery streets sometimes is really depressing. People are painting them such awful colours. In South View there is a whole house this horrible green. Now that really is out-of-place!"

"It's nice to see different things, if the houses had been different. But when you've got the same type of houses all the way down (Broompark Estate), and you start to get different shapes outside, what they're building on - some's got pointed rooves, some got flat rooves. It's all out-of-order."

"When I came to this house in Skippers, after being offered it, I didn't know, I wasn't sure, whether I was going to have it or not. But I went into the dining end and looked out of the window up to Ushaw College. Straight away I could say 'Yes, I like it! This is lovely.' And it was the view from the inside out. There was another house I hadn't been in before, John's. I used to think I wouldn't live down there on Brecon Hill. For a private house I didn't think very much of it. I went in and looked out over the valley. It was lovely, I could see the point of view of living there, looking from the inside out."

PEOPLE

Experiences of Nature were much 'closer', more personal, and
positive. Of Buildings they were more detached and critical, often
negatively. The group felt blame had to be put on the tenants, owners,
and council, and the decline of community. A lack of care for one's
own place. One member summarised it neatly: 'it is the people that
make it.'

People, both ourselves and others, are a vital part of the
experiences and attitudes shared. The group brought out two major
aspects: *personal encounter* with the environment and *responsibility &
community*. The group therefore recognised themes relating to being
part of this 'community' - belonging, respect, responsibility; 'doing'
- looking, looking-after, hurrying, lifepractice, withdrawal; and
'responses' - wonder, fear and other emotions. All these themes knit
together and overlap with those under the headings Buildings and
Nature.

The group noted how often we, and everyone else, take the local
environment for granted and do not stop to look at our own place. Also
that People unwittingly pass on their values to others, particularly
the young, through their actions - whether it's dropping litter,
playing cricket near large windows, dumping on 'spare' land or
neglecting the maintenance of property. A thread running through many
of the experiences and attitudes was the feeling that it is *our*

place, and the appreciation that it is a *shared* environment, 'we must all do something about it'. All the group associated these with the problem of a decline of community, seen in not knowing neighbours and feeling people have withdrawn, and with the apparent change in people's behaviour, or lifestyles, from the old days in the colliery streets.

Two forms of experiencing the environment were recognised: *looking* and *hurrying*. After considering these we'll go on to consider briefly the groupings community, doing, and responses.

1) LOOKING is a very important theme. In relating their more valued experiences group members invariably included that they were looking, watching, listening, noticing and such like. They appreciated how our attention focuses in on the environment itself and we sort of forget other concerns and enjoy just looking at things. Sometimes it is a little detail such as the beading in the stonework on a house or it is a broad view such as the outlook over the valley towards Brandon. We seem to slow down or stop and to 'dwell' on our encounter with the environment. The group's experiences showed we think about what we're looking at, that we might remember what it used to be like in days gone by, could be like if people looked after it, or can be like in fine weather, and we may have an emotional response like feelings of uplift, joy, delight or even fear. Group discussion revealed that when looking we remember, whilst the environment we've hurried through is soon forgotten. A member noted how driving through a place is not the same as walking through it or 'being there'.

Another related how, as in a visit to the old Ushaw Moor Colliery site, you have to be there to appreciate how beautiful it is now after reclamation.

Experiences shared showed an 'opening' to the environment, even 'communion' with it when *looking*. The group appreciated linked looking to an acceptance, a love, a taking notice - in short when looking we *care* about the environment. There is a patience, a stopping to look, a willingness to let go and a reflecting on memories & associations. The various 'looking' experiences were often contemplative and sometimes the source of a 'revelation of some kind. It might be amazement at the arch of snow down the Mill, or a thunderstorm of 'five seasons', or of an ordinary tree made like a 'fairy tale', the uplift of looking over to the hills or the excitement of seeing an airship.

Looking may be a purposeful act, as when we go out to see something, but there is a certain point when we have 'lift-off' - a heightened experience - where looking no longer needs effort of concentration, when we are part of the environment, in communion [12]. Walking into a field, one member was struck by all the colours - it looked just like in a picture. Sometimes we seem to suddenly fall into looking, as if we have been drawn to something. A light attracts the attention in a fog, or a distant sound at night calls for recognition. The group found that some activities are more conducive to looking, as when we visit a place we haven't been to before, or when taking a different route to the shops from normal, or going on a local

'Treasure Hunt'. We also felt it was important to 'practise' or develop our ability to 'stop and look'. To repeat, therefore, the group saw an important link between *looking and caring*.

2) HURRYING or haste, in contrast, is the 'normal' stance when we put our head down and go. Here the environment isn't really looked at; instead we are going somewhere or our mind is on something else. If it's raining or cold we might be in more of a hurry, or if we are going to work or late for an appointment we take less notice of the environment. Group reflection revealed hurrying in several guises:

> 1) tasks may 'block' us from looking,
>   such as shopping, visiting friends,
>   going to and from work;
> 2) the way we go through the environment,
>   travelling by bus, driving the car, walking
>   with an umbrella; and
> 3) habit or routine, including regular work
>   times, and always taking the same route.

It seems that Hurrying is not necessarily superficial; rather it is brief. Sometime afterwards we may reflect on a hurried journey and suddenly remember something we half-noticed but didn't realise or bother thinking about at *the time*. Hurrying or haste races on and at the time we have our mind on things other than the environment. The group appreciated that when retired one has more time to stop and look than when still going out to work, but they also noted how one needs to be interested in looking as well.

Under the heading People, *'doing'* themes were an important category. Some of these have already been considered in passing, but

here the main ones are outlined more explicitly.

3) 'LIFEPRACTICE' was coined to refer to everyday or *habitual activities* such as going to the shops or to and from work, *how we go* about these in the form of walking, driving the car or going by bus, and the *situations* like being at home, visiting a friend, coming out of church, coming home from work or from holiday. Essentially lifepractice is our normal lifestyle and habits and so links in with *hurrying*. Lifepractice may be conducive to looking as when we retire we might feel to have more time to stop and look, or it may tend to put us in a hurry as we rush about in a daily routine.

The group particularly focused on *changes* in lifepractice which often lead to new experiences of the environment and 'seeing' it differently, or afresh. Changing job, moving house, getting a dog (or no longer having one), having children or watching them growing up and leaving home, being widowed, retiring from work - all were felt to influence the experiencing of the everyday environment. The group recognised the break with habit and the formation of new habits that comes with change. Sometimes this change is only appreciated much later when revisiting a part of our past - the colliery site where George once worked or Station Road where Jackie was born - or when we are just reflecting, reminiscing or recollecting on our own or with other people.

4) LOOKING-AFTER, CARING. The group included keeping the place tidy or 'keeping it up': gardens, litter, paintwork and

general repair of buildings. Care reflects commitment. All the group cared about the outsides of their own homes and linked it closely with *respect* and, especially, *self-respect*. They not only considered their own actions and responsibilities, but also those of other people - tenants, owners and council. Looking-after is more than simply going through the motions of keeping it up. Thus the group complained about the 'rough' cutting of the grass by the council workmen who then left loose grass cuttings everywhere and the edges & paths untidy. The group recognised both an active looking-after as when keeping the place tidy, and a passive aspect as when dropping litter or not bothering to repair & maintain buildings. More active 'negative' activities such as graffiti and vandalism, and dumping were also discussed. Eleanor told the group about the 'spare' land near her house that was used for dumping by local people and how she had got the council to come and clear it. Certain forms of 'disrespectful' behaviour were seen as opposite to a looking-after attitude: 'the lad next door' cutting across a member's grass with his motorbike, and the backyard made into a 'sea of mud' by parking a car. The group therefore saw looking-after as respecting one's own & other people's property. Dumping was a particular concern here. But they also appreciated that some of the lack of care was almost 'by accident', passive, and a force of habit, or even just simply laziness. As one member put it in reference to an untidy garden or a gate needing repair: 'you can get used to things looking like that.'

5) RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY were much discussed in the meetings, particularly when going beyond personal experiences to

consider attitudes and other people's situations. Self-Respect was seen as particularly important, and a sense of pride in one's home and place. The group noted how people don't seem to bother about the outsides of houses nowadays, including gardens, yet the insides of houses are often beautifully kept. Jean noted how the unemployed would seem to have time to look-after their houses & gardens, but don't bother, as if there is a loss of self-respect. This respect was linked with responsibility and the decline in commitment to community.

Thus the group saw responsibility as the other side of the coin, the essential community aspect of the theme. People had a responsibility to keep their bit tidy, for one untidy house in a well-maintained street would not only be *out-of-place*, but would also spoil the whole street. Responsibility also extended to parking cars & the making of noise, especially late at night. The theme was linked to the observation that people, in some senses, seem less friendly nowadays and that there has been a decline in community. Linked was the idea that people seem nowadays to have less respect for others and the environment in general, seem to be more self-orientated, and now-biased, with little thought beyond the immediate. The group feared there was less willingness to take responsibility as with the dropping of litter and bothering to pick it up, unwillingness to intervene to stop vandalism and disrespectful behaviour, and the general problem of dumping and neglect. It was felt that we rely too much on other people to do something and that it is everybody's responsibility.

6) BELONGING, or being part of a place and a community, knowing one's place and caring about it. This was seen as both *roots* and *community*. Belonging includes knowing one's neighbours or not, knowing one's place and the attachment to it, making a home in Ushaw Moor. The group observed how in the past the old colliery street was like one home for all the families in a row, the street and yards an extension of the *insides* and a sense of community as one big family. People shared their street, everyone felt a responsibility to keep it tidy in sweeping yards, whitening steps and cleaning windows. In contrast, the modern estates, such as Skippers Meadow or Broompark estate, have a high turnover of occupiers and people rarely know everyone in their street, despite the smallness of courts and cul-de-sacs and the modern family. There is *withdrawal* from the local environment and community. One member noted how people are more self-reliant in the sense of having their own 'private' friendship circles often with people in other areas, and plenty of chairs, cutlery and other things that neighbours used to borrow from one another at one time. We 'co-habit' rather than 'share' the environment. Therefore, the group felt that belonging, like community, had declined. They all felt a strong sense of belonging to Ushaw Moor, having lived over 25 years there. The group know what it is like in all weathers, know lots of people, have lived in several parts of the village, and remember much of its local tales.

Finally, experiences shared of personal encounters with the environment fell into one of three situations:

1) solitude or on one's own, eg:

   a) George down the Mill way in the snow

   b) looking out of the window at the view

   c) in bed listening to the sounds

   d) Jean walking the dog & looking to the hills

2) with others or interpersonal experience, eg:

   a) Eleanor& friends in Thornley Close

   b) Jackie & schoolmates seeing the airship

   c) Jean on a Treasure Hunt in Ushaw Moor

   d) George, old colliery site with a friend

   e) a coachparty or family on a trip

3) shared or expressed experience, eg:

   a) telling someone about your experience

   b) our group reflections

The *'responses'* or emotion of the personal encounters related suggested three further themes:

7) WONDER, JOY & AMAZEMENT were all closely related to *looking*. Members frequently referred to these responses when recounting their more heightened experiences, mostly of nature. In a more detached way, buildings could also excite interest and fascination: the detail, observed by one member, where care had been taken in renovating an old terrace house to keep some beading in the stonework as decoration, or the delight at the prettily painted allotment huts.

Amazement and wonder *were* linked to looking, accepting and

delighting in the environment as experienced 'just at that moment'. All the group shared positive feelings on such occasions, an uplift, happiness, joy and satisfaction. We might be weighed down with our worries and suddenly look-up at the view of the distant hills and experience a profound feeling of up lift. The group therefore recognised two aspects: feeling gloomy and downcast and then being uplifted by an heightened experience of the environment; and other occasions when the environment itself might be dull, possibly raining or just cloudy, yet suddenly we notice some special detail and gain delight and joy, which somehow outweighs everything. The most heightened experiences therefore seem to turn the everyday and habitual into something special and memorable.

8) FEAR, THREAT & WITHDRAWAL, has already been touched on under *threatening*. The group noted an awareness of threat, but emphasized this as not fear of the environment but of people - what somebody might do. We are all reluctant to admit our personal fears and hold a positive attitude that we needn't be afraid. All the group felt no fear of walking through any part of Ushaw Moor, but did feel that some parts, particularly late at night, might not be as safe as we would like. They appreciated how many people do have fears - old folks, mothers with young families. This was linked with the feeling that people have withdrawn into their houses and locked their doors and 'hide' behind their TV sets.

Fear was also referred to in a more personal and limited sense, in contrast to the relatively vague sense of threat. For instance a

particularly fierce thunderstorm, or George's journey through the snow
drifts down the Mill, or Jackie's sighting of an airship when still at
school - in these cases the fear is more a form of perspective. We
have a 'tension' of joy and fear, more like a 'spirit of adventure'.
Fear in this sense was linked in with wonder and amazement.

9) COMMUNION & SHARING. The group noticed how when we
are looking, looking-after, showing respect and taking responsibility,
we have a special relationship to the environment. It becomes our
place, we belong to Ushaw Moor and it means something to us. We have a
commitment to it. The more heightened experiences revealed a kind of
'communion' with the environment. We share the environment with
others. The group felt that many people have forgotten this. Also, it
seems we can take the environment for granted for much of the time yet
this does not necessarily prevent us from having deep commitment to
it. This commitment seems to be rooted in those occassions when we
experience the environment in a 'new' and deeper way.

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"For all that I have lived in Ushaw Moor all my life, when I moved
from Station Road to come down to Broom Crescent, they could have
moved me anywhere in the country. I was lost. I think I'd moved to a
different place altogether, and it was just in Ushaw Moor."

"I love to look at night over towards Brandon over the tops of the
houses. You see the lights and it's just like a fairy necklace, like a
diamond necklace going over..."

"There is a few places I hadn't been to in Ushaw Moor until we had
that Treasure Hunt at church. I'd never been down behind Ushaw Terrace
and round where the allotments are. It's like a little maze down there
but it was nice. I enjoyed walking down there. It wasn't beautiful or
anything but it was interesting. There was little paths here and
there. It was interesting, it was nice."

"The bluebells started going, I don't know when because I haven't been
down the mill way recently. In the field, along towards Ushaw Moor

there used to be a big dip, and it used to be crowded with black-berries and in late spring it was absolutely carpetted with bluebells. Then last time I was down, there was only the odd bluebell here and there..."

"Something that happened a long time ago: it wasn't in winter and it was a fine morning. I was taking the dog out for a walk down there and, can't think whether it was fine or not, I know I wasn't feeling very fine. And I was just walking along and I had my head down, thinking of all my problems. And then I looked up and I saw all the hills in the distance, and you know the bit out of the Bible came to my mind: 'I lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help' and I know it's not supposed to be said like that, but that's the way it came to me. I just felt different all of a sudden, just seeing those hills and I came back much better. I had been walking along with my head down and I put my head up and I looked a long way away and it seemed to just lift me up."

"...I went down the Mill, the first time I'd been down for years and the last time I'd been down they had chopped a lot of trees down. I found later that they had chopped down more than their quota, and it was really very stark and barren. When I was down last time the bracken was growing and the blackberry bushes were growing. *It really was coming alive again!* And I thought it's going to be lovely."

"When I was about seven or eight years old playing in the street, Miss Fergusson was teaching us how to play diablo. There was four or five of us. We heard this humming noise. We looked over to the pit house, coming slowly towards us was this long cigar shaped object which we'd never seen before, and a bit scary at the time. Anyway, Miss Fergusson says 'Oh! it's an airship', and sure enough as it got nearer and nearer it said on the side R101, and we thought that was real then, and it slowly came nearer and right over Ushaw Moor..."

"At the old Ushaw Moor Colliery site there's a new picnic area now, near the old pit yard and where the house used to be. We (George & a friend) went into the pit yard and saw the old shaft standing there, and the old colliery buidlings where they used to be. We were standing reminiscing about old times. What we were thinking about was all the reclamation that had gone on, all the old heaps that used to be there from New Brancepeth and Ushaw Moor right up to Pit House, and how they'd all vanished and all the trees and that planted. When we were standing there, standing by the old shaft, we could hear the noises. You wouldn't believe it, but you could hear the noises in the pit yard, what used to be, all the trucks and everything going. And when we were standing by the shaft, it was just standing there like a big monument and that's when we looked around and all where the heaps used to be, all massive slag and stoneheaps, and old trucks and everything standing about. When you looked out and saw all this grass and the new trees right up to where Pit House used to be, and the heap up there used to be like a mountain, and when it snowed on top of it was like Kilimanjaro standing up there, wasn't it? Marvellous the change, just standing there now. It was the first time we'd been along for years..."

"We used to find it nice when we were going to the pithead very early
on a morning, when it was just starting to break daylight. A warm
summer's morning walking along to the colliery. It was nasty when you
were going down the hole, but when you were sitting on the top there,
it was nice and warm, and not a sound in sight."

"There are one or two houses in Dale Street where they have put a
little bit on the front door, and they've done the pebble-dashing and
things like that, and tidied them up and made them look nice. There is
one that has taken into consideration some sort of beading above the
door and that looks nice. You know, they used what it looked like
before and tidied it up and used it as decoration. And it has improved
tremendously down there hasn't it?"

"I was in my sitting room this afternoon and the lad next door came.
He came from up the top, down the footpath on, his motorbike. And
instead of going up his own path, he just rolled it straight over my
little bit of grass - not that there is anything to hurt - but the
grass is flattened! ... He's got his own back grass all just a sea of
mud where he has brought his car in up under the kitchen window."

"In this place there's no wires, telephone poles or anything, isn't
there? If you go down Oakridge Road nowadays, more people's got
telephones and there's wires straddled all over the middle of the
road, hundreds of them. I just noticed this about a fortnight ago when
I was walking along."
"I always notice when it's warm, you know, the temperature. On Sunday
I was in church and as you came outside it was IMMEDIATELY a lovely
warm day. It had been cool in church, but immediately you came out of
the door there was warm, balmy air... It was a beautiful day on
Sunday."

COMMENTARIES

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTARIES

Group members were asked to individually offer a few personal comments about the research as a whole, both the meetings and the final record. Many of these comments reflect views that the group as a whole endorse [13].

GEORGE

When I was first asked to join the group by Jean I was a bit apprehensive, but being a person that likes to talk and get involved in conversation I said yes. I am pleased I did so as I have found the meetings very interesting indeed. I have learnt a lot about other people and places that I did not know before. The group itself is made up of some of the friendliest and good people that anyone could wish to meet and it has been a privilege to be a part of it.

Looking back I found the day out looking at our village from other angles brought a lot of pleasure to me. I saw things in Ushaw Moor that I had never seen before, for instance the vicarage & Ladysmith Terrace. On the whole I tend to grumble about the village - the untidiness, the vandalism etc. - but I would be very reluctant to move away as the good things outweigh the bad. I am not too happy

about our experiences on paper. They do not seem the same as when you are telling the story to people who know the place and understand our dialect. Others might not be able to fathom it out. Information on the village was very good.

JEAN

I agreed to participate because geography has always fascinated me [14]. I saw the meetings as an opportunity to strengthen friendships and I found Paul (researcher) to be enthusiastic yet sensitive, young yet mature in thought, and well organised but open to new ideas. Initially I was disappointed that out of six who agreed to come two did not participate in the meetings.

The meetings consisted of general discussion on a particular topic and were conducted in a relaxed way. It was amazing how when Paul had analysed our conversations the common view became clear - an older generation view. Through it all runs a longing for supposed past (ideal) values of caring, sharing and stability with a sense of present overall inadequacy and lethargy. It also shows that we need and want dignity in our environment, but that first we must show respect for *it* ourselves, and be good examples, *making an effort* to co-operate with and encourage others. We all seem to accept the status quo with amiable resignation.

The advantages of living in Ushaw Moor include:
1) small enough to generate a sense of belonging and knowing many people who are accepted for what they are;

2) easy access to countryside whether by foot or vehicle;

3) caring schools, and quite a number of social organisations & clubs.

But the drawbacks - we all accepted the status quo with amiable resignation:

1) general air of untidiness and lethargy;

2) housing uninteresting

3) a lack of supervision of children together with little example or training in social or environmental responsibility;

4) little communication between and among the clubs and churches;

And above all there is a sense of looking inward rather than outward - living from day-to-day, no vision of the future.

The highlights of the meetings were the commitment and support of members to meetings, the common view that was revealed, the anecdotes that brought the past alive, the humour, the professional finish to our deliberations (the record), our 'poetic language', and a more rounded view I gained of my companions. We did however have a tendency to sometimes dwell too much on the past, and I had an inability to finish off sentences.

There is a need for greater communication between people and various groups. We need to find out more about the views of younger people. There needs to be an individual & group (or community) commitment to giving rather than getting. Finally we need to develop a more outward view.

JACKIE

I am not a reader but I was impressed by the draft report (Group Record). I was not sure what readership it aimed at. I felt it difficult to criticise but the group editing meeting helped a lot. I enjoyed this meeting very much.

The research turned out to be a good idea, writing a report was also good, and getting Paul to write it down - I couldn't have done it. None of us had previous experience of this kind of thing (the research), and initially no idea what was going to happen. The photograph discussions were a good idea and the inclusion of photos in the report. People should be able to identify with it. Recognising themes was difficult initially until we got going. The group situation helped, for ideas from somebody else could help you and you could expand on them. Personally I do not like formal interviews and questionaires, as afterwards you can always think of other answers. The group idea was therefore a good idea and meeting over a year was good. We got the different seasons - Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer. We all had different occupations in the past and different outlooks on things, yet something in common. I enjoyed the group meetings. If people start asking questions I need to think for a while, and having meetings over the year allowed us to think more and develop our thoughts. Breaking the meetings up into three phases helped us to think a bit, to stand back and assess what we'd done and where we were going. We started in bad winter weather with bad thoughts about Ushaw Moor, and as it brightened up with the fine weather we shared bright,

good thoughts about Ushaw Moor. We had all the seasons of the year and grew to appreciate Ushaw Moor in different weather conditons. We realised how it could be both less nice sometimes and much nicer other times.

Through ~~the~~ doing this you start looking around, and through the group we have helped each other to look at these things more (our environmental experience). We have realised how we just take it for granted. For instance, there is always more strangers in Durham Cathedral than locals! I probably now stop more to look and to take a closer look than otherwise at places.

ELEANOR

Overall I was impressed by the draft Group Record, though I thought the wording of the draft was a bit 'academic' in places. The research itself was broadening. We talked about things we hadn't noticed about Ushaw Moor and had come to notice as we'd gone around. It also showed a negative side to our attitudes to our neighbours, possibly a bit of a narrow attitude, and to the place itself. We found all the nice spots as well as the awful ones. I was particularly impressed by our visit over to New Brancepeth where we saw the plantation and the thrill of the reclamation of it all, and the view of Ushaw Moor along the hillside. There was a hopefulness that Ushaw Moor is improving a lot. We seem to have got away from the old values but we seem to have got some new values. The young ones hopefully will appreciate Ushaw Moor. The village might be a bit better with a few

more shops, as I discovered today when I decided to do some baking.

The real problem with the meetings at first was not really knowing what we were doing, but when we got into it it was good. Each session led on from the previous one. The second phase was especially good because by then we were into the swing of it and had a better idea where we were going. There was also more variety with photographs and other activities to help our discussions.

We learnt a lot both about what (Ushaw Moor) and how (the research method). I hadn't realised people could do this kind of exploration, and I had never thought about this kind of research before. As a group, we all 'clicked' with each other, each person's ideas led on to somebody else's. It was lucky maybe that we were the people we are. We got on well despite differences in attitudes and our different pasts which showed up. Anyone reading the Record and not knowing the place will get a good idea of Ushaw Moor. Maybe we were one-sided, a sort of 'them and us', but maybe in other villages like Ushaw Moor there will be people with similar situations.

****

Above all this form of research requires a willingness to listen, an eagerness to share, and a desire to make sense of our experiences. I am indebted to each group member for their enthusiasm and steady commitment over the year, without which this record would not have been written. I hope that this record is a worthy memento of our group reflections and will stimulate us to continue to stop and look at our own place and reflect on our own experiences.

With gratitude,
PAUL

BEARPARK

N

school

allotments

AREAS of USHAW MOOR

16   15   6

2 school   3   7   8

Old Colliery
Site

church   9

church   flass
ch   church

church   1   school

allotments   5   10

4   recreation
ground

cricket
field   11   sports
centre   12

13   14

Deerness Valley Walk
(old railway)

1. shops with Flass public house opposite
2. Temperance Terrace, Walton's Buildings
3. Ushaw Terrace, Dale Str & Arthur Str
4. Station Road
5. High View & Cochrane Terr (Aged Miner's Homes)
6. Whitehouse, Bracken & Victoria Court
7. Hall, Hunter & Flass Avenues
8. Aldridge Court & Ash Avenue
9. Oakridge Road
10. Broom Crescent, Fir, Holy, Lilac, Maple & Pine Park
11. Brecon Hill
12. Skippers Meadow
13. Thornley Close
14. 'Broompark Estate' (Broom Hall Drive etc.)
15. Whitehouse Lane (from Flass to Bearpark Rd)
16. Ladysmith Terrace and Vicarage

Source: material selected from Ordnance Survey: Durham City
Map 1985 edition, to which I have made several simplications
and added the sports centre (building in progress).
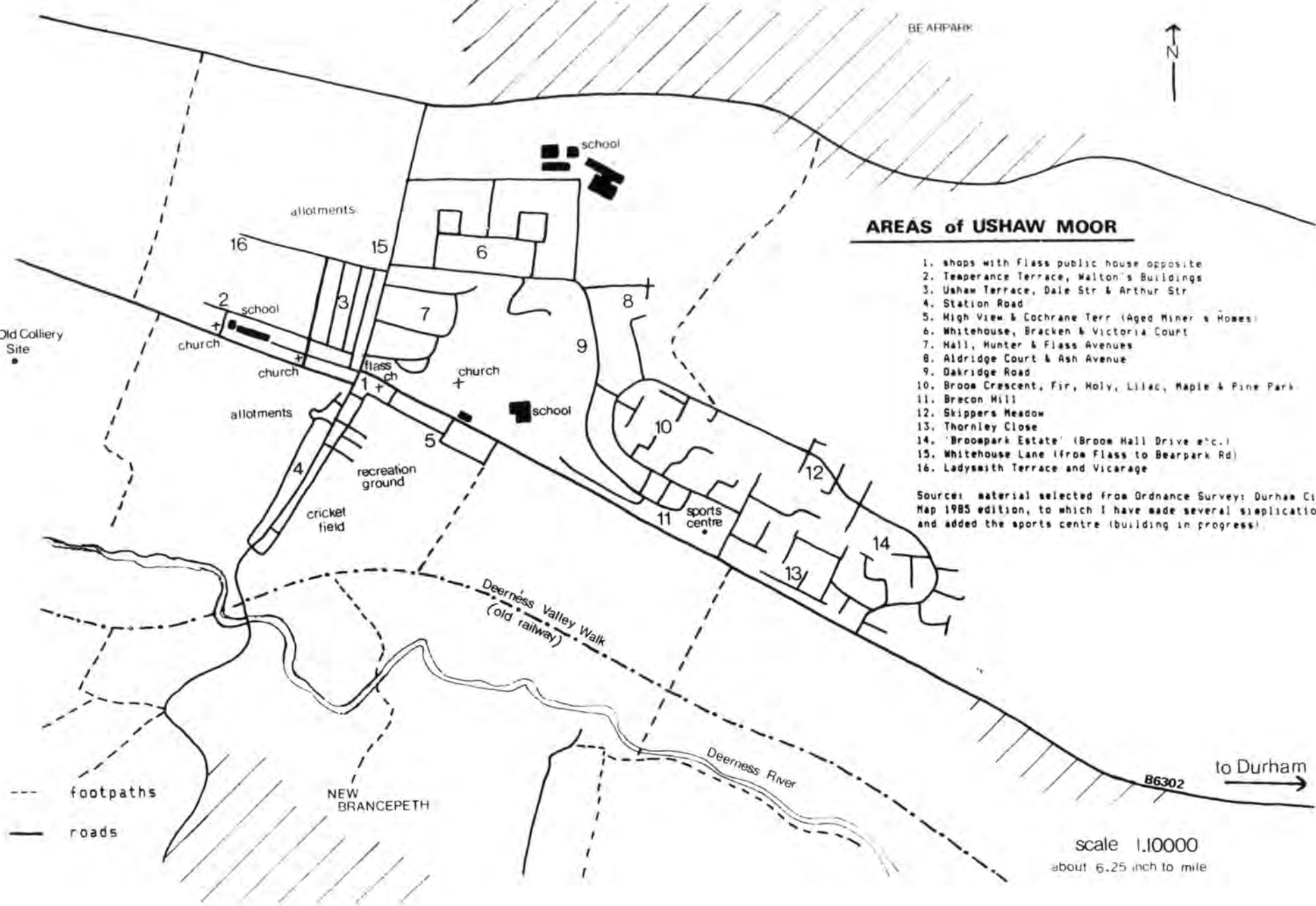
Deerness River

--- footpaths

NEW
BRANCEPETH   B6302   to Durham

—— roads

scale 1.10000
about 6.25 inch to mile

FOOTNOTES

(1) Material for this section comes from the group's own knowledge, researcher observations in the village, and a number of references.
Norman Emery, *Pease & Partners and the Deerness Valley*, MA thesis in Economic History, University of Durham, especially chapters 1 & 2.
The City of Durham Local Plan, 1986.
For Pease family see also R. Moore *Pitmen, Preachers & Politics*, 1974. For a brief study of a neighbouring village and mining life see Douglas Pocock *A Mining World: the story of Bearpark, Co. Durham*, City of Durham Trust & Dept of Geography University of Durham, MacDonald Press Ltd, Spennymoor, 1983c.

(2) It is only in the *1981 Census* that Ushaw Moor is recorded separately; previous censuses group it in Brandon & Byshottles (around 16000 population). For the *1971 Census* Ushaw Moor was around 4500. No more major expansion is planned for the present decade (op. cit. *Local Plan*, 1986). Of the present 6402 usually resident, 3119 are male & 3283 are female; 14.1% pensionable age & over, 38.6% under 25, and 47.4% between 25 & pensionable age. All residents born outside the U.K. only about 1.5%.
(1981 Census of Population)

(3) op. cit. *Emery, 1986*

(4) op. cit. *Local Plan, 1986*

(5) Meetings were held at Jean's home, usually fortnightly on Monday evenings between 6 & 7 o'clock.

(6) This reflects the philosophical underpinnings of the research - phenomenology, especially that of Martin Heidegger for instance: *Being and Time*, New York: Harper & Row (1983 edition); *Discourse on Thinking*, New York: Harper & Row Torch Books (1966);*Poetry, Language and Thought*, New York: Harper & Row (1971). He builds on Husserl's "back to the things themselves", that is permitting phenomena to speak for themselves, 'opening' to them through a 'meditative' form of thinking rather than 'calculative'.

(7) In Phase 3 the group decided that the extracts should be included as 'personal anecdote' but separate from the thematic text. Secondly they suggested minor editing of the exact transcript in order that extracts would be much clearer and easier to understand. The extracts are included at the end of each theme grouping - Nature, Buildings, People.

(8) The themes recognised were developed with the group. I recognised a limited number of theme 'labels' in a feedback note at the end of Phase 1, these were developed, or rejected, and many others added by the group in subsequent group reflection. The theme exercise meeting (Phase 3) was particularly important in establishing the 'definition' of the final themes and groupings.

(9) note Ted Relph *Place and Placelessness*, Pion Ltd (1976); and *Rational Landscapes & Humanistic Geography*, Croom Helm, London (1981)

(10) this theme was first developed whilst looking at photographs of Ushaw Moor, especially Skippers Meadow.

(11) this is related to ideas such as placelessness (op. cit. *Relph 1976*) and "noplace".

(12) this is something like when one looses oneself in a game or

task, playing a game or playing a musical instrument; see
Hans-Georg Gadamer *Truth & Method*, English translation by Sheed &
Ward, London (1975)

(13) George and Jean provided short written commentaries for the
editing meeting on the 7th July, 1986. Eleanor's comments I gained
through a phone-call on the 10th. Jackie gave his comments when I
visited his flat on the 11th.

(14) Jean suggested six potential canditates for the group. I
then had quite long (2-3 hours) informal interviews with each of them
in their homes.

2.5   GROUPING

To end *Section* 2, a few informal reflections can be offered on
the group, its members and its record. I hope that these reflections
will enrich your understanding of the fieldwork and the Group Record,
and prepare the way for the more formal and critical 'researcher
reflections' in   . Section 3 ⁽¹⁾. Here, I use the label 'Grouping'
since it is a central concept to the fieldwork. We formed, or
collected together, into a group. We shared, we reflected. Experiences
were grouped, themes recognised and interrelated, and grouped. It was
all grouped, selected and ordered, into a group record.

The *success of the group* and its tone reflected our
personalities, abilities,   responses to each other, the research
topic and fieldwork strategy. The group and myself share a positive
view of the fieldwork because it was both effective in revealing a
bountiful collection of experiences and, through the recognised
themes, insight into these experiences, but, also, because it was a
most satisfying group to be a part of and an experience of genuine
sharing. Most of the potential problems suggested by the group
literature (see 2.3) seem not to have arisen, or been resolved. My own
commitment and excitement, and that of Jean in the important initial
requests to potential members, were vital. Also critical was each
participant's willingness to build friendship and trust, and an
intuitive grasp of the research task, including a readiness, or

patience, to be receptive to the phenomenon and to discover, share and explore one another's experience. Much of the life of the group is revealed throughout the Group Record, and explicitly in the Individual Commentaries. As Eleanor put it, "we all 'clicked' with each other", and we also 'clicked' to the phenomenon. This was shown in the fact that the group had no difficulty sharing experiences, even conflicting perspectives.

With hindsight, Phase 1 of the fieldwork was crucial and we were in many ways very fortunate to 'gel' as a group within the first few meetings. The preliminary interviews and the first topic fields were probably important in this. Initially, we were all, myself included, somewhat unsure of where we were going, yet, as Eleanor put it, we "soon got into the swing of it." By end of Phase 1 the group was thoroughly established, and able to develop much deeper reflection. The group felt free to share personal experiences, and we all felt at ease with each other, tuned to the phenomenon to be studied and the style of research. By this stage each member had established their personality in the group, and their perspective. To a large extent, all were teachers and all were pupils - or, more accurately, *we simply shared.*

I restricted my own experience sharing since Ushaw Moor was not my everyday environment, but sometimes my own experiences of Ushaw Moor or Durham, which the group could identify with, would provide a little counterpoint and stimulus to the group reflection. This proved to be a more authentic participation than the more traditional

researcher questions found in other research. Nevertheless, I sought
to limit my participation so as to allow more time for the rest of the
group, since after all it was *their* everyday environment and *their*
experience I was interested in . My contributions came most often when
conversation seemed to be slowing or drifting into general gossip, or
when a particular experience just called out to one of my own and I
had to share that 'grouping' and so join in.

Friendship and humour were integral to the group reflection, and
as much a part of the research as experience explication and theme
recognition. This was not confined to the research meetings. The
socials were also an important part (see 2.2). These non-research
meetings, such as the meals at the end of Phase 2 and at the end of
the research, when the final copies of the Record were given out,
provided opportunities for a wider sharing and developing of
friendships and trust. This undoubtedly contributed to the relaxed but
effective group environment that was maintained throughout the
fieldwork.

This kind of limited participation in the participants' lives,
and the clearly defined stages of the research with its explicit
period of duration, seems to have made the *final disengagement* at the
end of the research, and the ending of the group, an expected,
pleasant and comfortable process (for want of better words). This
contrasts with the research literature, especially of participant
observation and in-depth studies with individuals, where concern has
been expressed about the difficulties, and even traumas, of

disengagement. Some researchers have participated more in the individual lives of their 'subjects' and as a result have felt over-involved [2]. I kept most of my contact with the members of the group as part of the research - at the end of the day I was from Durham and they were from Ushaw Moor. I enlisted George's help when I went to interview two local old people. This was at a point when George had seemed 'down' and a little impatient with the progress of the group, and therefore this cheered him up. I went on a sponsored Fast for Oxfam with Jean. When Eleanor was poorly and missed a meeting, I called round with a report of our meeting and we spent a pleasant time together chatting about people and about cookery. And when Jackie moved to Oversteads I made sure I called round, and he was delighted to show me his new home. Like many groups in general, we met both to develop our friendships and for a particular purpose, here the research. No payment for members to attend was necessary, nor even considered an issue by the group. We all gave abundantly to the group and reaped rewards far greater [3].

The *Individual Commentaries* tell us a lot about the Ushaw Moor Group. They recognised their various personalities and differences, but also felt a common view emerged. They each recognised how the everyday environment is so often taken-for-granted, and the research encouraged them to look more at their own place. We learnt about Ushaw Moor, about each other, and about doing this kind of research. Members appreciated how much they belonged to Ushaw Moor and it belonged to them. Each member showed how personal experience was linked to caring, and a deep social concern, and felt responsible for the environment.

The group was critical of, as well as positive towards, Ushaw Moor, its people and themselves. They recognised that our behaviour can unwittingly pass on values and, further, that it is our duty to be aware of this and to take care. It is our responsibility to look after the place. We are not powerless but can do something, even if it is just the care of our own house and garden. The group noted the importance of everyone 'doing their bit' and of local organisations and clubs, and, as Jean reminded us, the need for communication between them. Above all, the group appreciated that the environment was a shared one and that people, including ourselves, seem to have somewhat forgotten this, and withdrawn. While the group tended to feel community was declining, people were more aggressive and self-reliant, yet the group had a positive view, a feeling that it is better today than in the past, some hope in the future, and an urge to act. Maybe I should have encouraged this drive to action more. Maybe we could have gone out 'to tidy our street', got involved with the local community, 'spreading the word' about the need to look at and look-after *our* environment [4].

Each member made a special contribution to the group. I can only touch on this here. Jean had suggested a set of potential members out of which the final small group emerged. Despite Jean's important role in this initial phase and throughout the research in providing our venue for meeting, she did not dominate or direct our group. Her experience as a school teacher equipped her with an awareness of the importance of allowing and encouraging each member to participate in

the meetings. Our Christmas Party was at her suggestion and proved an effective way to 'confirm' our group. She was particularly good at recognising the common themes, whilst George picked out the differences. She may have been a 'moral' leader initially but we were all leaders in the group, or members of a team, each with particular gifts.

George could sometimes be unusually quiet, most often because of his delight in just listening to the rest of the group. However, when he came in to the conversation, when someone's experience excited him, he would hold our attention with detailed, rich and exciting, clearly heightened experiences. It was George who would have us on the edge of our seats listening as his sometimes awkward narration unfolded subtle details of environment and emotion. As he got going his ability to express himself would take off, as the experience itself transported him. And we also were captured. George spends much time walking in the local area, and with his many house moves and experience as an insurance representative, he had a rich local knowledge of people and places.

Jackie also enjoys walking and looking about the local environment. He could sometimes appear detached from personal experiencing, often offering an opinion first. Yet he did share deep personal experiences. He particularly 'grew' through the meetings. He gained in confidence and, whilst finding theme recognition particularly difficult, nevertheless gradually managed to contribute effectively to it. He initially interpreted the research differently

from the rest of us, seeing it as a study of what Ushaw Moor used to be like, but after a few meetings he joined the consensus. However, his contribution to this consensus was to enrich it with a strong sense of the changing nature of place. We were particularly indebted to his rich knowledge of old Ushaw Moor.

Eleanor also much appreciated the changing nature of Ushaw Moor, but she had a more positive view. All the group recognised their older age group 'bias', yet Eleanor observed that old values were being replaced by new values, some better than the old ones, and that 'good old days' were sometimes more bad than good. She urged us to see how much the place had improved. It was Eleanor who urged us to take up our responsibility, to do something about it. Jean emphasized looking after our own house, garden, and possibly the street, and showing a good example. However, Eleanor extended this to working with others in organisations such as the Women's Institute (of which she and Jean were members) and the importance of doing something about it, telling people, standing up for the environment. Her own action against local dumping, whilst quite limited, was nevertheless important [5].

Each member could be both 'accepting' and critical. They were not afraid to say 'I don't think so', 'no, I thought it was more...', and so to disagree with, or question, each other. They could listen to each other patiently yet eagerly. They helped each other by both attentive physical posture and occasional words of encouragement, for instance: "that must have been marvellous". As the research progressed, they learnt to stimulate each other by recalling related

experiences and by asking 'clarifying' questions such as 'where? when? how?'. They all appreciated how heightened experiences somehow shifted the 'world' into special perspective, "it was magic" as George put it. This was a 'world' where judgment was suspended and we each sought to appreciate an experience for itself. Each member had an ability to reflect, an attitude conducive to the research, but their ability or adeptness developed, their sensitivity expanded, the research experience was found to be "broadening", as Eleanor put it. In short, they established a genuine *Group* Reflection. As Jean put it, a highlight of the meetings was "the commitment and support of members", or as George put it "the group itself is made up of some of the friendliest and good people that anyone would wish to meet and it has been a *privilege* to be a part of it." We all, myself included, wholeheartedly agreed with him. All the group gained a deep satisfaction from the research. We had learnt so much about both our experience, and also about each other.

In *the Record* I deliberately emphasize the group view rather than that of individuals. Sometimes an experience is linked to a particular member, sometimes a little detective work will suggest a link, but othertimes no specific author is indicated. I thought much about the nature of a record and we much discussed it in the group meetings, even before Phase 3. It was a group decision to include extracts as separate collages since each experience and each opinion, invariably exposed more than one theme and no one interpretation was satisfactory. In any case I wanted the record to be both a summary to the group of their general insights and a basis for my further

reflections (see *Section 3*).

George is correct to see that something of the excitement, richness and nature of experiences is lost when we write them down. Eleanor criticised the 'academic' language of the draft and I must admit much of this still remains. Yet the group also were impressed by and wished to have a 'professional' touch to their Record. Therefore, in part for this reason, the group encouraged me to write the basic draft of the Record. Prior to this there was much discussion about the content of the Record and, once there was a draft, the group did much editing and discussion, both of the overall stucture and details, before the final version was put together [6].

The Record is highly structured and there are many cross-references. In editing, the group removed many of these for they felt that it confused. I also sometimes spelt out things which they felt were unnecessary, though it is difficult to 'guess' what you, the reader, will need to understand the Record and to follow its arguments, not knowing Ushaw Moor or the group. We all felt that it was important that readers could in someway identify with 'our view', our experience, and relate it to their own situation. Since I wrote the draft, the Record is much influenced by my perspective on the group, as would a report written by any other single member. Working with the group over a year, and the group's thorough editing, seem to have counteracted this 'bias' to a large extent. The view the Record presents is probably not so much a 'group consensus' as a 'group agreement'. Undoubtedly, my own response to the group reflection and

my personality remains as a part of this final Group Record. Can this be avoided? Each member might have chosen a section to write, possibly written an essay (an extended version of the Commentaries), but would the inevitable repetition and disjuncture have been satisfactory? I don't know. Future work using Group Reflection might consider this option and develop others (see 2.2).

The group, and others [7], have noted the 'poetry' of their experience accounts. Maybe I could have used this more. Certainly, if you are willing to let the phenomenon speak for itself, to just sit and think about the experiences included in the extracts, or go back to the transcripts and taped reflections, many of the themes are quite explicit. Further, and possibly more significantly, something more and less tangible is revealed about the group and heightened experience of the everyday environment. The themes make explicit the understandings of the group, that is the general insights they culled from the myriad of experiences shared. It is these themes which form the bridge between the concrete desciptions of specific experiences and the more limited and abstract generalisations of academic literature [8]. Already, therefore, much of the reflection and interpretation has been done by and with the group, but to complete the bridge I go on in *Section 3* to reflect further on the material, its internal 'consistency' and its relation to the wider literature.

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(1) This subsection is repetitive of earlier material, notably 2.4,

and is not exhaustive. However, I hope that it encourages the reader
to reflect on the 'authorship' of the research, in particular the
group. Here, I write as a member of the group, and hence use the terms
'we' and 'us'. For comments on myself, see 3.5.

(2) For instance see Rowles (1978a/b). He clearly found disengagement
a somewhat emotional experience, especially the involuntary case when
one participant died before the research had been completed. There is
also the problem of disengagement for participants who have come to
see the research as a part of their life, and the researcher as
friend. However, such disengagements are a common feature of life in
general, and I sought to follow that example. In other words, to face up
to the immanent end of the group, make explicit the limited period of
the contact, and discuss with the group both their fu:ture plans and
my own beyond the present research. Such discussion usually was part
of the general chat of our meals together.

(3) I had thought the Record might be a 'necessary payment' to the
group but it was simply a nice bonus to Jean, Eleanor, Jackie and
George. They felt payment was unnecessary and irrelevant, and after
all the research was conducted in their spare time and a short walk
from their homes. In any case, surely 'opening' to phenomena is not a
question of money, and such payment would militate against it.

(4) Future Group Reflective research might take this more activist
stance. This might stimulate experience explication and theme
recognition, encourage a more socially aware research, and close the
gap between 'reflection' and 'practical action'.

(5) For instance, Eleanor recounted a case of dumping on an area of
grass between Skippers Meadow and the Broompark estate. She had
repeatedly contacted the local council until some action was finally
taken to remove the waste and to tidy the area.

(6) The choice of included photographs is my own, but the chosen
themes and most of the extracts included were the result of group
discussion. Also, in the present research I felt that there was not
the time or the commitment in the group to have a full group writing
of the Record. In future use of Group Reflection I wish to increase
group participation in this phase.

(7) Copies of the Record were mailed to a number of researchers, most
of whom gave positive reponses to it. The term 'poetry' was used by
Anne Buttimer, but clearly Relph, Seamon, Jeans and Cosgrove
recognised this quality.

(8) In a sense, concrete description of an experience is the bridge -
in the form of language - between the moment of environmental
encounter and the general insight finally resulting in the mind and
reflected in future behaviour. Further, just as a *bridge brings
together the two banks of a river, it also transforms their meaning
through setting up a relation. That is, a 'bridge' - such as
language, memory, thematic reflection, logical thought - is an
interpretation or 'contribution' to the realisation of the nature and
significance of a phenomenon.*

SECTION 3

SIGNIFICANCE

3.0 <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

In a sense, the thesis as so far presented could be regarded as complete, for the method and the phenomenon under study have been explored and reported. The Group Record in itself can stand alone as a research statement. However, many questions are immanent. In this final section I do not seek to offer 'grand conclusions', but I present *'Researcher Reflections'* [1].

The label 'Significance' is used to indicate that I will reflect on the 'value' of the research - the insights it may offer for our understanding of person-environment and the development of experiential method. The two, of course, are not independent and ideally should be considered together. However, in order to simplify the argument, I will first consider the insights into person-environment, relating them to the wider literature and further develop the thesis. Then, I will more briefly raise some of the problems and limitations of Group Reflection as experiential research.

Maybe, a Researcher Reflection runs counter to the position underpinning the whole thesis - *an opening to a phenomenon and allowing it to speak for itself through those who directly have experience of it.* My further reflections are detached from, or outside of, this direct experience. Further, they are separate from the situation of explication of the phenomenon, that is they come after

the group meetings, and so inevitably suffer as hindsight and run the risk of 'post-rationalisation'. Researcher Reflections are far more detached from the phenomenon as experienced in everyday life than are Group Reflection, yet maybe reflection on taken-for-granted phenomena requires, at some point, various degrees of detachment as we seek to reveal more general insights of significance to us all. In the recognition of themes the group continued to further explicate already expressed experiences and freshly remembered experiences, and in so doing maintained a continual contact, or 'conversation', with the phenomenon. In contrast, Researcher Reflection does not maintain this 'conversation' but it is still a necessary and worthwhile exercise. It allows us to consider the research as a whole and therefore recognise more general insights and problems not apparent close-in. It provides the means through which to interrelate the research to the wider literature, and so contribute to a body of knowledge. Furthermore, as already implied, it offers the possibility of recognising general insights, or even universals, in the human experience of environment. It goes without saying, therefore, that these Researcher Reflections are more speculative and my personal perspective. I hope that they complement and to some extent clarify the Group Reflections.

Firstly, in Gathering (3.1), the experiences and themes explicated by the group are considered so that general insights into 'heightened experience of the everyday environment' and, more broadly, the person-environment relationship, might emerge more clearly. A series of integrations, or 'gatherings', are formulated, which provide 'windows' on the person-environment relationship and frameworks for

consideration of that relationship. These gatherings do not usurp the group themes but seek to complement them. Secondly, *Experience, Place and Dwelling* (3.2) are considered, and the thesis further developed in the light of the wider research literature and group reflections. These subsections avoid the more traditional stance of 'conclusions' and offer material for a continued reflection. Nevertheless, the summary comments of *3.2* might be considered as preliminary conclusions, though they are first and foremost stepping stones to future research, and a link to the wider literature. In *Reflections* (3.3) the problems and limitations of both the fieldwork and the wider thesis are considered, concentrating on the research method (see also 2.5). The subsection *Responsive Application* (3.4) will look beyond and consider the directions for future research and, in particular, the question of 'applicability', both of the substantive findings and of the research strategy. Finally, *Personality* (3.5) briefly sketches aspects of the researcher's 'personality' and so complements the personal reflections that began the thesis (*1.0*), and the reflections on the group (*2.5*). This aims to recognise that the phenomenon explicated and the understanding shared are coloured by, or are from the perspectives of, those who 'research'.

It is hoped that this *series of endings*, offered by Section 3, will stimulate your own reflection both on this research and your own experience of the everyday environment, and on topics for future research and how that subsequent research might be conducted.

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(1) On 'conclusions', see Seamon's comments fn(1) *1.1*.

3.1   GATHERING

'Gathering' is bringing together, coming together or harvesting. Here, I will reflect on the experiences and the themes explicated by the group and formulate a series of integrations, or 'gatherings'. These researcher reflections are grounded on the whole fieldwork: conversations, experience accounts and recognised themes, as well as the Group Record. Through this 'gathering' it is hoped to recognise more general insights into 'heightened experience of the everyday environment' and person-environment. The gatherings do not seek to replace the group recognised themes, but complement them, and offer an alternative and more general perspective.

Integrative reflection has become general practice in Experiential Geography, even though its detachment from active 'conversation' with, and abstraction away from, the phenomenon could be questioned [1]. Such critical reflection seeks to appreciate the meaning, or order, in phenomena, and enables a body of knowledge to be developed, though not necessarily one of facts but rather of agreement (as in phenomenological corroboration). The integrations, whether 'gatherings', 'models' or 'modalities', are to some extent analogous to the *precedents* of a court of law. These previous cases provide a background, an 'experience', an example, and a guide in the consideration of the present case. A precedent does not prevent an alternative decision, but suggests a potential and adequate decision.

However, each case has to be assessed in itself and each decision remains specific to its case. Future cases may follow the precedent, or less frequently test it. This testing reflects changed circumstances or values (possibly due to the passage of time), or that the situation of the case is at some variance from that of the precedent. Each case, therefore, can contribute to the acceptance of a given precedent, its abandonment, or the establishment of a new precedent. This 'testing' is much more context-aware and interpretative, and not the prove-disprove dichotomy of 'scientism'. Consequently, integrative reflection should not be applied in the strict positivist sense but nevertheless contribute to the critical development of an overall understanding, which is more wisdom than knowledge [2].

I have sought 'gatherings' which cut across the three theme groupings or 'realms' - Nature, Buildings, People - in order to consider the themes in a much broader perspective (listed below). I hope in this to clarify the insights into the nature and significance of 'heightened experience of the everyday environment', but to put emphasis on the wider notion of the person-environment relationship within the everyday environment.

THEMES FROM THE GROUP REFLECTION

Nature:
> greenness and growing
> weather
> outlook, scene, view, setting

Buildings:
> nothingness (including sameness)
> threatening
> lack of permanence
> out-of-place
> insides and outsides

People:
> looking and hurrying
> looking-after, caring
> respect and responsibility
> 'lifepractice'
> belonging and sharing
> wonder, joy, amazement
> fear, threat, withdrawal (3)

The gatherings vary in their scope, and there is considerable overlap and therefore inevitable repetition (see below).

GATHERINGS

Looking Language:
> language of experience
> looking and knowing
> action or concern

Social Concept:
> togetherness
> symbolisation

Ordering Regimes:
> life-force
> inert order

Person-Environment Engagement:
> participation
> boundedness
> commitment
> belonging

Each gathering offers a 'window' and aims to reveal pertinent aspects of the person-environment relationship. Where relevant,

reference will be made to the wider literature not to 'confirm' these themes and gatherings, nor the literature itself, but to establish a dialogue. The next subsection (3.2) considers more thoroughly this wider literature, and seeks to contribute to this body of knowledge by speculative development of the present thesis.

Looking Language

Experience, or the person-environment relationship, as revealed by the group, seems to be dominated by sight, and in particular looking[4]. The label 'Looking Language' is used to suggest that looking is much more than seeing, more than a mode of environmental encounter, and more than metaphor. Looking, considered in its broader experiential significance, seems to be *the language of experience*, including the moment of encounter, subsequent personal reflection, and the recall of experience to other people. Looking Language is, therefore, part of the *structure* of person-environment. Language consists in both the words and phrases of a discourse and the grammar and structure of that expression. The content and structure are interdependent. Language is both opportunity and constraint. It allows us to share meaning, but it also conditions or limits the meaning that might be expressed. Nevertheless, the effort to share meaning, particularly that generated by 'new' experiences, as in art and in technology, can also change those 'conditions' and so develop further meanings for given words, new vocabularies, and new forms of expression and language structures. As 'language', looking seems to be integral to the generation, content, form and reformulation (in

reflection and expression) of experience and, therefore, our *making sense* of the world, and by extension 'Being-in-the-world'. [5].

In the literature there has been a clear recognition of the dominance of sight in 'geographic experience' and sight as a mode of environmental encounter, the visual-bias of much research, the importance of the visual metaphor in person-environment concepts and everyday language, and the link between sight and knowledge [6]. The group material shows the dominance of sight and suggests the key elements in the Looking Language: looking (in contrast to hurrying), watching, the look, a view, a scene, looking-for, looking-out, looking-at, and looking-after. In particular, a vital link is evident between *looking* and *knowing* which is the making sense or structuring of the world. Looking is about finding-out, getting to know, and thus making sense. It leads to a view, a scene, an image or a sight. (Interestingly, Jager (1985), referring to the 'body, house and city', argues that both are seen and are sources of sight). Looking is, of course, 'conditioned' by past experience, and social and cultural contexts. Looking, therefore, focuses, selects, composes and structures. It is more than seeing, for as in the theme Hurrying we still 'see'. Looking involves 'stopping' to consider and focusing in on what is seen - a part of the environment.

Group reflection revealed a distinction between the 'look or appearance of something, and 'stopping to look' properly, looking carefully. Further, the experience accounts first recognised a particular feature or set of features. The individual had stopped to

look at a storm, was looking at the view of the valley or a particular house. [7]. Significantly, the group used term 'looking' and almost never 'seeing'. Maybe this reflected the focus on 'heightened experience', but also looking was meant as more than just sight and included the other senses - in short it referred to a multimodal stance toward the environment, the theme Looking. In Aesthetics much has been made of the difference between seeing and looking, as well as hearing and listening, and touching and feeling. Looking, listening and feeling all suggest participation, or a dwelling-on the phenomenon and the experience itself. To see, to touch and to hear is more a physical response to stimuli and the actual contact. To look, to listen, to feel is a reaching-out to the environment, an opening to phenomena and an engagement with the world. This is more reflective, discerning, interactive and creative. It is 'stopping to look' rather than see, and 'creative listening' rather than hearing. The group noted the continual 'flow' of seeing, hearing and touch, that is a 'forgotten', or largely sub-conscious, part of every moment of everyday life. However, in more memorable or heightened experience, there is a shift from Hurrying to Looking, and a focusing on the person-environment relation, or 'experience', itself. We stop to look at our own place.

In addition to the dwelling-on the experience, it is also a *looking-out*. This is a particularly significant structural component of the Looking Language and of vital importance to person-environment. Looking suggests that the environment, or things, are set at a *distance* and are 'outside' or 'over there'. Nevertheless, this is

creative and interactive since looking both receives information from
that 'out there' and projects a sense or structuring of it. In other
words we see a view or scene, a composition or 'picture' (8). Further,
this structuring enables us not only to make sense of the
environment, to give it organisation and therefore establish meaning,
but it also allow us to remember experience, make use of it on later
occasions, further reflect on it and relate it to other experiences,
and express and share it with other people. As Mugerauer (1985 p51)
argues, *the environment and people always and already are given
together in language.*

There are many consequences, and in a sense purposes, for this
'at a distance'. Looking recognises *wholes*, such as views, scenes and
outlooks, and also *parts* or things within these wholes. It thus
structures the world, selects and orders. The view or the scene, even
the object or thing, is *composed*, recognised, and named. Relationships
are revealed, or even created, between parts to make up wholes, and so
establish meaning. Looking is *selective* for, as the group pointed out,
we look at *something* and if we look at something we cannot be looking
at something else. If we look at more than one thing we tend to
interrelate them in some way and so compose and structure. Looking as
the language of experience is therefore *creative*, and in its deepest
form a 'poetry' of dwelling (see Heidegger 1971d/e).

The group reflection also revealed that looking is more than
taking note of appearances. It is exploring and thinking. The group
noted the *contrast* between the near- and far-view, between the inside

and the outside of a house, and between the overall appearance and being there. Looks can be deceiving. Looking is often founded on prior knowledge and a myriad of associations; it includes recognising places, remembering events and people, and recalling previous experiences, and it reflects our established tastes and values. As the group noted "ours is an older generation view".

Finally, Looking Language is about *action*. Looking is attention to, that is looking-at or *concern*. Looking reaches out from person to environment and it 'searches' rather than 'reacts' (the latter is seeing). Looking is a *choice*: we can close our eyes or open them, we can look this way or that, we can concentrate on the detail or take an overall view. Group Reflection revealed that looking is more than a passive and detached observation. In addition, and of fundamental importance to person-environment, looking is also *looking-after and caring*. We not only look because we care, but also we look as a prelude to action. Looking at the dumping and graffiti, looking at the disrepair and state of maintenance of property call us to action. To look-after is to look *and* do something about it, that is to tidy, to repair, to maintain. Looking is also *loving*. The group looked, and were concerned about Ushaw Moor as *our place* and our responsibility. Here, we are reminded of ... 'topophilia', a love of and attachment to places (Tuan 1974). Looking is, therefore, an aspect of our engagement with the local environment, a sense of belonging, and a care and commitment to it. In short, this Looking Language is both illustrative of, and integral to, person-environment and our 'dwelling'.

Social Concept

"*It is people that make it*", as one participant stated. Group reflections, whilst on personal experiences of the everyday environment, nevertheless frequently make reference to social concerns and suggest a social concept integral to person-environment. Two aspects of this Social Concept may be recognised: *togetherness and symbolisation*.

Respect and Responsibility are central themes, and were linked especially to the relationships between *people*, and a concept of place as *community*. Frequently, this is concern over a decline in community. It was felt that today people are more independent-minded and pay less heed to their part in a local community, not knowing neighbours and having little commitment to making a home in Ushaw Moor. The contrast between the care of insides of houses and the lack of care of their outsides was seen as indicative. In the theme groupings - Nature, Buildings, People - the latter is pivotal. Repair and maintenance of buildings reflects self-respect and respect for community. The group valued their everyday environment, therefore, as *shared*. Person-environment is also person-person.

Much experiential research is based on personal reflection and the experience of the individual [9]. Strictly speaking, our experience is always personal and the perspective specific to our individual lifeworld, but, nevertheless, attempts have been made to

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recognise general insights that might be relevant to us all. However, Group reflections reveal a more genuine and vital 'sociality' in experience, or person-environment. As alreay nded, the everyday environment is a shared one, and it is our place. Further, this place, or environment, is a community, and our community. Place is, in part, the geographic experience of community: community is in part the social experience of place. In short we live together and we experience the environment together.

This 'togetherness' complements the concept of 'intentionality' at the heart of Phenomenology. It is in part surprising to have such a notion so evident in the group reflections since the primary focus was 'heightened experience', particularly personal experiences which are most individual-centred. Yet, the recognition of this Social Concept is not so surprising for everyday environment, where we live out our day-to-day life in interaction with both people and environment, as part of a community. Togetherness is more than intersubjectivity, and seems to be related to belonging, community, and a concept of a wider self. It ranges from going to the old colliery site with a friend and having a 'shared' experience, or being in the house with one's family watching together the storm raging outside, to a more implicit identification with a community, a sense of social responsibility and a respect. In explicating experiences and recognising themes, for instance, the group also showed a concern for socio-environmental issues: such as dumping, graffiti, play-areas, the 'big slum', vandalism, and threat in the environment; and more positive issues, such as the new health centre, sports centre, and the general

reclamation and improvement of the valley.

Phenomenology gives us the concept of 'intersubjective' (see
1.4), yet group reflection on experience in the everyday environment
seems to suggests more an 'intrasubjectivity'. Intersubjective implies
the interaction between two or more separate individuals; by contrast
intrasubjective implies an interpenetration; they are both
individuals, and yet also at the same time a single whole, or
community. This is togetherness, that is one of identity and
belonging. In these, we are both a part of a greater whole, such as a
family or community, and unique individuals in that whole. Our
identity is related to our belonging to the wider whole, and our
belonging suggests our individual contribution to that whole.
Biblically it is put: "The body is a unit, though it is made up of
many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body" (1
Cor. 12:12). This is a wider self: for instance - the upkeep of houses
and gardens was seen by the group as a question of self-respect, and
people's behaviour in the street, whether children at play or parents
parking cars or having noisy parties, was a question of respect for
others. More generally, "attitudes to environment and space is
inseparable from attitudes to people and life's purpose and meaning"
(Tuan 1973b p422).

The other aspect of the Social Concept is symbolisation, or the
environment as signs and symbols. The group's experiences and themes
clearly showed the importance of the local environment, and individual
places and buildings, as concretisations of meaning. Symbolisation is

an integral part of our sense of a shared environment. There are two entwined concepts. A *symbol* is 'a sign or representation of any moral thing by images or properties of natural things' and can range from a mathematical character to an American skyscraper. A *sign* is a broader term refering to 'that through which anything is shown, indicated or repesented' and can include anything from a nod of the head to a name-plate above a shop. There is a rich literature on symbolisation in the environment but this does seem to use the terms 'sign' and 'symbol' almost interchangeably and so loses much of the significance of the differences in emphasis [10]. A useful clarification is this: a symptom is a sign or indication of a disease and not a symbol of it; a church might be a symbol of religion but its state of decay and disrepair might be a sign of religious decline. However, in many cases a feature is both a sign of something specific and symbol of something more general, both are shared meanings: we recognise a disease by its symptoms, we recognise common symbols in churches and skyscrapers.

Group experiences and themes clearly showed the significance of the everyday environment as meaningful, both as a whole and individual streets and houses, being concrete signs and symbols. The environment represents particular meanings and points to other meanings. Again respect and reponsibility is an important theme, manifest in the form and state of the local environment, but also nothingness, threat, lack of permanence, out-of-place and so on are made tangible. Norberg-Schultz (1980) argues that man through building symbolises and so frees meanings, that is his understanding of the world. As architect, Norberg-Schultz is clearly refering to construction but, as

Heidegger (1971a) implies, our dwelling in the world is also a form of 'building' which is more cultivation than construction, or 'sparing and preserving'. The group, as local residents, were clearly not builders in the literal sense, but 'cultivators'. Here the important activities include looking-after, keeping tidy, repair and maintenance. The group frequently referred to the state of repair or disrepair, tidiness or mess, of individual houses, gardens and even streets, as indicative of, or a sign of, a lack of self-respect and, through themes such as out-of-place, a lack of respect for others. The withdrawal of people into their houses and the sense of threat also were signs of an environment which had a clear division between inside and outside, personal space and social space, the secure and the insecure. By contrast, nature, the greenness and growing, and the valley or view, symbolised calmness, harmoniousness, wholeness and all that was good and joyful. Nature was symbolic to the group of an ideal, whilst the built environment pointed to the 'reality' of everyday life, and in a sense symbolised the decline in community and lack of harmony. Whilst the state of disrepair of house, lack of care for gardens, litter and graffiti, were signs of a lack of respect, emphasizing the impermanence of buildings and the generally short term, or temporary, residence of many people in Ushaw Moor, it symbolised the decline in and lack of community, and lack of commitment to the local environment. The associated nothingness of many buildings, the general feeling of a 'big slum', and impermanence, also symbolised the nature of our society today: "people want what they want now". The buds on the trees were signs of coming spring, but the general vitality of the "freshness and greenness" symbolised the ideal of

nature. Thus, as the group's reflections show, signs and symbols, whilst not identical, are closely related and integral to our experience of the everyday environment, and emphasize the social concept integral to person-enviroment. After all, as the group frequently emphasized, the everyday environment is our *place and shared.*

Ordering Regimes

A regime is a 'mode of living; mode of governing or managing'. Running throughout the experiences and themes are various senses of order. Put most generally, these form two ordering regimes which might be labelled *'life-force'* and *'inert order'*. They interact, sometimes conflicting, yet essentially complement each other. This dynamic, or 'balance', seems to be significant to person-environment, placeness and dwelling in the everyday environment. These ordering regimes are manifest in a myriad of guises, and the three theme groupings or realms - Nature, Buildings, People - provide important windows on them, and represent the group's senses of order (see 2.4).

Nature was seen as something to be looked-up to, as an ideal and having inherent beauty. It was harmony, peacefulness, wholeness and wholesomeness. Above all, the group recognised nature as having a 'newness and freshness', that is: it is self-sustaining. When we look at nature, both individual growing things and nature as a whole, we see change with continuity. The group noted the cycle of the seasons

but also the renewing vitality of nature after periods of degradation, such as that caused by mining pollution. They recognised an ebb and flow, a rhythm, and an inherent power or life-force. The most fulfilling experiences were associated with being close to nature, feeling this vital force of life, and 'harmonising with nature'. This ordering regime is therefore one of continuity with change; of growth, decay and growth again; of a richness and variety; and of a vitality and inherent power - of life. Further, a permanence was recognised, that is, as one participant put it, "the natural growing things will be here long after we're gone". Finally, the group recognised that we can not 'create' this order, rather we have to allow it to occur, be sensitive or receptive, and thankful for its gift. We might manipulate it, restrict it, or encourage it, but the ultimate ideal is to 'blend-in with nature'. Part of this, is the sense that nature is all around us, is our roots, our grounding, and the ultimate reference.

It is interesting that Norberg-Schultz (1980) in recognising 'natural places' includes similar ordering elements. For instance he includes natural forces of living things (or life), a wholeness and unity, a cosmic order or structure , and temporal rhythms including the cycle of the seasons.

Buildings offer a man-made order, an order which is created and has to be maintained. This is most obviously evident in the continual need for repair and maintenance of buildings, and the upkeep of gardens (which are man-made and therefore 'buildings'). This is a regime of making or building, decay and renewal. It can have a degree

of permanence, but this is through maintenance. This is the regime of history and human creativity [11]. It is dependent on a continual purposeful input of energy by people, that is repair and maintenance, demolition and rebuilding. Further, it suffers continual degradation from people (users) and the forces of nature. Often, it is not in tune with nature but stands against that order. It may be more 'rigid' and lacking the ebb and flow of the living natural order. At one extreme there are the 'abstract' orders of classical and modernist architecture; at the other extreme there are the ethnic and vernacular structures that blend with local environment and climate (eg Aldwin 1984, Seamon 1986c). Buildings have no inherent 'drive' and rely on our manipulations.

There is a discontinuity in the order of buildings. They are built, they decay, and at intervals they are repaired or replaced. This is particularly apparent in contemporary everyday environments where most buildings have a limited life, or age, and many are infrequently maintained. The group contrasted the older colliery streets to the postwar estates, noting the difference in 'permanence (or 'lack of permanence') in construction materials, and the contrast of all buildings to nature. There is also an instability resulting from the pressures of changing tastes and lifestyles, and changing needs as changes in society and technology lead new functional demands on buildings and patterns of living. The group noted the importance of the motor car and the television, particularly when discussing the contrast between Ushaw Moor in the past and today, and themes such as insides and outsides, and withdrawal. They also recognised a contrast

between the richness of a natural order and the blandness and sameness of much of the built environment. This 'repetition not pattern' was seen as a kind of 'orderlessness' but not chaos. This was captured by the themes nothingness and out-of-place.

People represents not so much an ordering regime as an interface between inert order and life force. It is represented in themes such as respect and responsibility, and looking-after, and the the group's emphasis on blending-in with nature, and repairing and maintaining buildings [12]. In other words, local residents in their everyday environment take it as largely *given*, and do not so much 'construct' order but rather 'cultivate' it. Therefore, the 'ordering regimes' are not only largely taken-for-granted but also not precisely distinguished in everday life. They may become particularly aware of them when conflict arises, for instance: in extreme weather conditions, or when a new building is erected or an old one demolished. The order of nature becomes a kind of ideal, and symbolic of a 'natural order', and that of buildings a kind of a symbol of society and individual behaviour. That "we seem to be developing one big slum" was seen as a result of a lack of commitment to place and community, withdrawal, lack of concern for the upkeep of buildings, lack of self-respect and sense of responsibility.

Here the question of order is one of *decision and choice*, conscious or unconscious, intentional or non-intentional, and *action and power*. We either seek to harmonise with nature or seek to create our own order. People make, or 'construct' and 'cultivate', the

environment around them through purposeful action and more unwittingly through their day-to-day behaviour. It is at this interface that order becomes significant for person-environment and meanings emerge. The 'balance' between life-force and inert order forms through, is represented within, and also in turn influences our experiences. The consequence is the quality of dwelling. The interaction between these ordering regimes is directly linked to the sense of place or placelessness estabished in the everyday environment (see 3.2).

Grange's (1985) threefold division of environment into 'Nature, Social, Built' has some affinity with the group realms 'Nature, Buildings, People' in the ordering regimes implicated. For Grange, 'nature' is characterised by inherent power and generosity like the group's 'nature', though he links it to a concept of the physical as in the sense of the Greek *phusis*. By 'social' he refers to the balance between the protective routines of daily life and the potential freedom lurking in conformity. Something of this is hinted at in the group's realms 'buildings' and 'people'. Finally, 'built' refers to a further people element, and directly links to the group's label 'people', being the building or making of a world, and the ultimate goal being dwelling (in the Heideggerian sense of 'sparing and preserving').

Person-Environment Engagement

In this gathering, I consider some of the key aspects of

person-environment as engagement. The focus on 'participation', 'boundedness', 'commitment' and 'belonging' (used in a more extended sense than in the Group Record) hopes to indicate those aspects that seem to be most significant in the context of heightened experience in the everyday environment [13]. In many ways, this gathering gathers the others together and again there is much overlap. The label 'person-environment engagement' was arrived at after much deliberation, particularly over the associated terms belonging and enmeshment. Belonging means 'to be the property of, attribute, or appendage of; to be the concern or business of...' This captures much of the oneness of person and environment suggested in many of the group's experiences and themes, but it misses the necessity of that 'appendagement'.Enmeshment usually refers to 'entanglement or being trapped'. Again, group reflection does reveal an entanglement between person and environment but this is not so negative as enmeshment might suggest. There is constraint but there is also opportunity [14]. A pivotal theme through out the group reflection was responsibility, which implies both obligations to others and the possession of privileges. Thinking more broadly to person-environment, this suggests engagement. To engage is 'to bind by contract or promise' and therefore an engagement is 'betrothment; obligation by agreement or contract...' Person-environment as engagement is commitment to the local environment, both intentionally and consciously, and more unintentionally and, maybe, unwillingly. Engagement, therefore, may accommodate both the positive tones of belonging and possibly more negative tones of enmeshment, and reveal something of the scope of person-environment - passive and active, immediate and distanced, full

and partial.

a) *Participation*

The person-environment relation is first and foremost realised
through interaction, that is *participation*. Experience arises not only
out of an enmeshment with environment, but also ∧ a concern and a need
to interact with that environment. The issue is the depth of that
participation. This was revealed in, for instance, the group themes
looking, hurrying, insides and outsides, and withdrawal.

Looking and watching are *observational*, that is they are 'at a
distance' or limited participation, but are nonetheless a
reaching-out, a concern or care. Recall of heightened experiences also
revealed an *emotional* participation, the feelings of joy and uplift,
love and concern, or fear and feeling of threat. Participation is
therefore joining, or sharing, with the environment. The importance of
'being there' was also emphasized, as a contrast between near- and
far-view, inside and outside of buildings and places, walking or
travelling in a vehicle. This is a participation that is *involved
proximally*. The most treasured experiences seem to bridge a gap
between person and environment, which is both physical and emotional,
and is generated and enforced through the everyday stance when
practical concerns, and technology of everyday life, separate the
world into such distinctions as here and there, and object and
subject. This is Hurrying in contrast to Looking (see 2.4). In
hurrying our participation is a glance and a *passing through* the

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environment. In contrast, in looking we stop to consider that environment, and to realise our vital oneness with it, which is normally taken-for-granted. Here, as Heidegger reminds us, we come to appreciate our Being-in-the-world, our Being as *Dasein*, and therefore learn to *dwell poetically*, that is participate as authentic beings (15).

Categories of Participation

        observational
        emotional or sharing
        involved proximally
        passing through
        dwelling poetically
        an action imperative
        commitment

Further, the experiences strongly brought forward a call to participate, *an action imperative*. Experience not only 'arms' us with information, or contributes to our sense of the world, but also a desire to act or interact with it, in terms of both the utility and the aesthetic. The group noted that we see the state of disrepair of buildings, or the litter in the streets, and feel an urge, even a duty, to do something – to look-after, repair, pick up litter, keep tidy, or to at least complain. Further, experiences, call us to appreciate them, and their environmental context, in themselves – the enjoyment of the views and atmosphere of the colliery site, or the delight of the view from our window which call us back again and again. Therefore, the group reflections seem to indicate that *experience leads to action*, and emphasise person-environment (and person-person) engagement as responsibility and action.

Finally, the degree and nature of participation reveals a *commitment* between person and environment. Hurrying participates at 'islands' of attention and often at a mediated distance, whilst it dashes through, taking-for-granted the intermediate space, only considering it if significant changes are evident that might impinge on present activity. Hurrying, therefore, is engaged in activities rather than the environment, or only indirectly, or intermittently, considers it. By contrast, Looking focuses on the environment itself, it considers it as whole, it participates in and realises a wholeness and oneness, exploring, tuning-in, and allowing the environment to unfold as continuous. Looking comes when we take a stroll down a country path or when we are 'arrested' by the fascination of a thunder storm.

b) *Boundedness*

Van Eyck noted the importance of inside and outside in architecture and stated that "man is both centre bound and horizon bound" (see Norberg-Schultz, 1971 p34). Grange (1985) refers to the concept of 'Umwelt' or roundedness - that is, environment is both 'open' yet 'enclosed'. Group reflection also suggested the vital importance of this aspect of engagement, in themes such as outlook and scene, insides and outsides, out-of-place, withdrawal, and responsibility. There is a sense of boundaries or horizons, and bounded space or territory [16].

The group recognised areas of Ushaw Moor and 'atmospheres' of

such areas from 'homeliness' to 'nothingness'. Bounded spaces ranged from the insides of houses to identity with the nation. More interestingly, a local area, such as Skippers Meadow, could be felt both peaceful and home, and at other times, or from other perspectives, as containing threat and giving a sense of nothingness. Boundedness is both physical and emotional, and there are many senses of boundedness, both positive and negative, which coexist, and interpenetrate, in our experience. Therefore, boundedness contributes to a sense of a place as gathering and forming centres of meaning.

This boundedness can be both uplifting and give a sense of 'openness', as in the view of the valley or of Skippers Meadow on a sunny day. The emphasis is on the space contained. Alternatively, it can be threatening, hemming-in and 'closing-in', like the darkness of a storm or the fence that seemed to be for "keeping us in rather than the sheep and cows out!" The emphasis is on the boundary holding-in. Thus, there is a positive boundedness of horizons and opportunities, and a negative boundedness of barriers and constraints.

Boundedness is therefore also the *interface* between person and environment, though often an ambigous one, and between one enclosure and another. The clearest evidence of this experience came out in the frequent discussion of the contrast between insides and outsides, both of houses and areas. There are the *thresholds*, or transitions, including the window that we look out of and the door that one withdraws through [17], and the more distant transitions, the horizon in the view of the valley. It is the boundary that, in the case of the

house, offers protection from the snow or a storm, or gives the privacy of one's own home. In area, and more negatively, it is the barrier to separate 'them and us', between our place and their place. It is also the divide between that which is 'known' and 'not known', and 'seen' and 'not seen', and so a kind of *frontier*.

c) *Commitment*

This could be variously labelled permanence, maintenance, commitment and continuity, and again the three 'realms' - Nature, Buildings, People - are distinctive. Permanence is the appropriate term for 'commitment' in Nature and, as lack of permanence, of Buildings. An alternative for Buildings is maintenance which might be used, since it brings out the importance of People and looking-after. For People, the term commitment is most appropriate as a continued relationship between person and a specific environment.

The commitment sensed in natural, growing things and the countryside as a whole is a continuity or permanence but not an inertia (see Ordering Regimes, above). It is an ebb and flow, a cycle of seasons, and the continual growing, dying and growing again. The continuity of Buildings is more a 'battle' against decay. Maintenance is in practice a discontinuous activity, either repair or demolition and building. The group recognised the importance of the durability of materials and design of buildings, as indicative of commitment, as well as the behaviour and care taken by people. The group, however, put emphasis on maintenance as representing commitment to and

participation in local place and community of both people living locally, and beyond who exercise control over it, for instance the council. This in turn seems to be indicative of the nature of the person-environment relationship, or the quality of dwelling (see 3.2).

In considering withdrawal into houses, the group noted the contrast between 'show-house' interiors and the 'one big slum' of the street outside. Commitment seems to be still there but it has shifted from the more permanent and public 'environment' to the more temporary and personal 'possessions' of the inside of houses, and so commitment has retreated, or become more restricted, both temporally and spatially. This might be dubbed a 'privatisation of commitment' and seems to suggest a change in our dwelling, that is our relationship with the everyday environment, possibly associated with social and technological changes we are continuously adjusting to. However, the group reflections suggest two different types of commitment. One is a response to the outlook, the local setting or 'our valley'. This is the 'commitment' to living in a relatively rural setting, and is more observational and emotional participations. The other is a more intense, actional and tangible 'commitment' to one's own place, and in particular the insides of houses, represented in the quality of furnishing and decorating. This kind of *bifurcation* in person-environment engagement will be further illuminated in 3.2.

d) *Belonging*

As emphasised, the group's experiences and themes revealed

engagement as a kind of 'responsibility', including privilege and obligation. Further, as this aspect suggests, the gathering consists in a relationship both with things or the environment, and with people or community. Belonging is a kind of 'possessive' intertwining of person and environment, and person and community. It is associated wih blending-in or harmonising with nature, wholeness, identity, communality, community and roots. Gabriel Marcel writes "an individual is not distinct from his place: he is that place" (quoted by Relph 1976, ch3). However, group reflection on heightened experience of the everyday environment suggests something more enmeshed and reciprocal: *we both belong to a place and the place belongs to us*. It is a commitment to the 'local environment and community, and a 'grounding' in these. Seen as important were knowing neighbours, knowing the area and something of its 'history', through participating in the local community, walking, shopping and visiting in the local environment, and living for some years in the village (and in several parts of it).

Belonging seems to be a two-way, mutually reciprocal relationship acquired through social contact, geographic proximity and the passage of time. It is a binding of a person to a place and a place to them. We become part of a whole - the community, the place - and share in its identity, yet also establish our identity as distinct from this whole, as an individual part. The participants were enmeshed by their daily life in the local place and community, and therefore local issues, such as the site of a new sports centre or the provision of a health centre, became *personal* concerns. Belonging is, therefore, being possessed by a place and community, and possessing it; and it is

a double-identity, that is *with* the place or community and distinct *from* it.

The theme 'Nothingness' indicates much about belonging, since it is in a sense when belonging is lacking. Belonging is about being 'in place', 'taking place' and 'having a place'. Nothingness refers to the observation that many modern buildings seem to lack local character and/or functional identity, and the built environment is one of repetition rather than pattern. A particularly evocative experience is the feeling of an area or collection of buildings being 'lost'. In other words, they don't seem to belong to anyone in particular, and no-one seems to care, look-after or take responsibility for them. This suggests that belonging is not necessarily a certain result of temporal, spatial or social proximity, but requires some form of effort or participation and commitment. Putting houses and shops together does not make a village, and putting people together in a street does not make a community. There has to be interaction and a desire to become a whole. This was noted in the contrast between the old colliery streets of past times and the new estates of the postwar period. This further gives support to the argument that places and communities are not just dependent on the physical environment and design, but also on people, and in particular the nature of their engagement with environment and one another, or a *community and a place*. The increased individuality and independence of people, and mobility of their lives ruled by car, telephone and television were noted. Further, to plant a few trees and grass around a patch of water does not instantaneously create a 'piece of nature', as the group

recognised with the reclamation projects in and around Ushaw Moor. Over time, however, if the planting has been ecologically sound the planted environment will transform itself, taking on a more local character specific to itself, becoming more 'natural' and 'wholesome' in appearance rather than sterile and bland (see also Fairbrother 1970, 1974). Thus 'belonging' is somehow also a natural process, an ideal, yet we can contradict it or break it. Fully realised belonging seems to have a reference therefore to a 'life-force' regime.

Full engagement, when 'man dwells poetically', corresponds to a mutually reciprocal binding of person and environment, represented in the richness of place. Through the hurrying of everyday life, and particularly the mediation of our many technological aids (such as television, telephone, computer, motorcar) we become 'separate' from that immediate contact and forget something of our dwelling or place it under strain and change. While absolute detachment seems impossible, that engagement can become 'a conflict of fleets and armies' - in other words alienation and placelessness. The group's reflections on heightened experiences, and the importance given to looking, suggest that we still possess at least some ability and opportunity to enrich our person-environment engagement, and regain a deeper sense of places and ourselves. In the next subsection we will explore the nature of the experience, place and dwelling, as suggested both in the group reflections and the wider literature.

(1) For instance the 'geographic modalities' of Rowles (1978a), and the 'models' of person-environment in Seamon (1979a). Possibly also, the descriptive classifications in Relph (1976), and Tuan (eg 1974).
(2) Note the idea that there is "a mode of learning more concerned with process than product. This style of learning can be called *understanding* - the coming to see more deeply and lucidly the nature of one's own life and the world which unfolds (Grange 1974). Understanding seeks the *meaning* of events; and also helps the person to see more thoroughly and intimately the patterns of his or her own experience" (Seamon 1983a p54).
(3) See Group Record (2.4). Here, I deliberately avoid repetition of the theme 'definitions', in part because in the gatherings I decompose them into their various dimensions. Further, it is important to remember that the labels used in the Group Reflection and this Researcher Reflection are not necessarily equivalent to the meanings of everyday language, or elsewhere in academic literature, but they are specific to the present research, though often there is much correspondence.
(4) It is difficult to select an appropriate title for this gathering. Alternatives might be looking, visuality, visual metaphor, sight. Norberg-Shultz's (1980) definition of visualisation has some affinity - see fn (12). Note also that Looking Language is a broader 'concept' than the group theme Looking.
(5) On text concept see Ricoeur (1981); on metaphor see Murray (1975).
(6) Of the many references note: sight and knowledge (Pocock 1981, 1983b); Meinig on the beholding eye (1979c); Perkins on 'picturing seeing' (1970); the question of visual blight (Lewis et al 1973; Relph 1981, 1982); the social significance of visual imagery (Berger 1972, 1980); Lynch's concept of 'imageability' (1960); various perspectives on seeing (Cullen 1961; Relph 1979, (on Ruskin) 1981); see also Capra (1976 part 1).
(7) Here we have dialogue with Heidegger's distinction (eg 1971, 'Thing and Work' pp20-39) between things-that-appear andthings-in-themselves. He argues, we never really perceive a throng of sensations, eg tones and noise (*thing-that-appear*), but rather we hear a storm whistling in the chimney, hear a three-motored plane, or distinguish a Mercedes from a VW (*things-in-themselves*).
(8) see fn (7) above.
(9) Even where this is brought together into a group sharing, as in Seamon's environmental experience group (1979a), the Sigtuna Conference (Buttimer 1983), or Pocock's student groups (1983b). Furthermore, Appleton's prospect-refuge theory (1975a) is essential of the individual's experience, and Landscape Evaluation and Landscape Perception both consider experience for the individual, though the latter aims for the average, general or consensus view (see *1.2*).
(10) For instance: visual blight, Lewis et al (1973); cultural symbolisms, Tuan (1974); reading landscapes, Samuels (1979), Hoskins (1955); landscape symbols, Cosgrove (1980); 'biological' symbols Appleton (1975a); Meinig (1979d); Clamp & Powell (1982); social symbols, Greenbie (1982); semiotics, Punter (1982).
(11) Strictly speaking nature can not be historical, but the creations

of man are.

(12) Note Norberg-Schul   (1980): he argues that man-made places relate to natural places in: a) *Visualisation*: making natural structure more precise and therefore expressing man's understanding of his existential   foothold in nature; b) *Complementation*: man has to complement a given situation by adding what 'lacks'; c) *Symbolisation*: man has to represent his understanding of nature, including himself and so free meaning.

All three imply that man *gathers* experienced meanings through building, and so through creating he concretises his world.

(13) This is not exhaustive because I have attempted to avoid repetition. The Group Record and the other gatherings already have said much about the person-environment relation. Further, 3.2 will take the reflection further linking experience, place and dwelling.

(14) Relevant here and supported by the group reflection is Heidegger's understanding of the nature and significance of human mortality, of learning to be mortal (see Heidegger eg 1971a). Also, Zimmerman (1985 p252) writes: "I am not in my body, my body is "in" me as the clearing (in which my ego, object and space can appear)." Group Reflection suggests that it is more accurate to argue: I am in my body, and the environment, and so a slave of mortality, and my body, and the environment, is in me, and so I am free, the clearing for the presencing of beings (see *1.4*).

(15) See Seamon's *awareness continuum* of person-environment encounter (Seamon 1979a ch13,14,15) and diagram 3.2p294.

(16) See also Lynch's work on 'imageability' of environments (1960), also Lynch & Appleyard (1964), Cullen (1961); and Tuan's reflections on 'here' and 'there', the senses, and body posture (1974, 1971), and Appleton's prospect-refuge theory (1975a).

(17) See Lang (1984) for an interesting essay on *The Dwelling Door: a Phenomenological Exploration of Transition.*

3.2 <u>EXPERIENCE PLACE DWELLING</u>

The present research has explored, with a small group of local residents, their *heightened experience* of an everday and largely *residential environment*. Through Group Reflection, it has explicated accounts of their experiences and their understanding of them in the form of recognised themes. In the previous division I further reflected on these, extending the reference to person-environment in general, and recognised some dialogue with the wider literature. Throughout the research I have not sought to 'test' the thesis outlined in 1.5, nor to be confined to it, but rather, in allowing the phenomenon 'to speak for itself', I have permitted the thesis to gradually develop and mature. In this subsection the thesis is again considered explicitly, and is developed. I do not attempt 'grand conclusions' but, nevertheless, hope to collect together the arguments of this research concerning environmental experience in the context of the wider literature. This, I hope, will both bring to a close the present exploration, but stimulate further reflection, on this and other research, and offer a basis for a future reflective journey.

In adopting this title, minus commas, I am clearly showing an affinity to Heidegger's famous paper 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (1971a); however, this does not mean that I will attempt anything as fundamental, nor will I strictly conform to its rubric. Rather, in the light of the group and researcher reflections, and in dialogue with

Heidegger's work in general and the wider experiential literature, philosophical and empirical, I hope to develop the present thesis from the confines of heightened experience in the everyday environment to speculations about person-environment as a whole [1].

In particular, similar to Heidegger, I wish to emphasise the essential unity and relation of my chosen elements - experience, place and dwelling. There is a significance to the order of his title: 'building' is the start of his deliberations, 'dwelling' is the central concept and the goal of building, and 'thinking' the perspective or framework. In a similar way, I will consider 'experience', following it through to 'place', and then consider their unity in a notion of 'dwelling'. In seeking a more specifically *geographic perspective* I will journey beyond Heidegger's paper and offer a different emphasis. His ultimate concern was Being; mine will be person-environment. Much of the experiential research literature puts emphasis on 'Being-in-the-world'; I focus more on 'our making sense of the world' [2]. Specifically, I suggest that *experience* and *place* are fundamentally linked in our making sense of the world, both are aspects of 'dwelling', and are indicative of the present state and changing nature of that 'dwelling' in contemporary everyday environments. Further, I will develop a concept of 'dwelling' which is more in line with the group's emphasis on community and responsibility. Therefore, this subsection will draw on a broad range of literature from phenomenological philosophy and experiential research, including architecture and design, psychology and sociology, and geography.

Heidegger has been widely 'used' in the literature, and especially the *Building Dwelling Thinking* paper (1971a). However, it is a widely misunderstood essay, both in terms of its overall philosophical stance and, therefore, the 'applicability' of its ideas, and in terms of what it says more 'substantively' (see Zimmerman 1985). Many researchers have taken on his concepts, such as 'building', 'dwelling', and 'gathering', but have abandoned many of the nuances that these have, especially evident when the broader body of his writings are considered. Even within this paper, we can see some of the neglected nuances. For instance, Heidegger traces 'building' to both 'construction' and 'cultivation', and *therefore* considers it as fundamental to dwelling. This is not merely for the building of new structures, but moreso for our living in existing buildings, that is a mode of Being-in-the-world. Further, though he considers the example of the bridge as 'gathering' meaning, that meaning is realised essentially though experience and in thinking, since he considers man's Being to be 'a clearing' for the 'presencing of beings', that is the 'where' of gathering. As Norberg-Schultz (1980) suggests, the bridge is only a concretisation of that meaning. Further, I think it is important to remember that this is a shared meaning - a bridge is used by a 'community'. Through the bridge, people share meaning in some ways analogous to language. When Heidegger's other writings are considered, in particular those relating to the Being and the 'thing' (1971b/c, 1983; Zimmerman 1985 p251), the bridge seems less a 'building' that gathers, and more a *place* where and when gathering occurs or can occur, that is *takes*

place. The bridge refers to both an 'experience' and a 'place',
presented as two sides of the same 'process', that is gathering, which
in turn is a fundamental component of dwelling [3].

I will develop these ideas by generating a dialogue between the
group and researcher reflections (essentially *2.4 & 3.1*), and the
wider literature, against this philosophical background (see *1.4*). The
argument will progress from experience and the original thesis,
through place, to a consideration of dwelling, but nevertheless I wish
to emphasise the essential unity that these concepts reflect in the
constitution and realisation of person-environment.

Experience

The present research, as far as possible, began with an open
attitude towards what might constitute 'experience'. Essentially, the
research was to be an exploration of heightened or memorable
experiences of the participants in Ushaw Moor, their everyday
environment. During the first few meetings of the group an implicit
definition of 'environmental experience' was arrived at. The
'validity' of such a 'open' conception only becomes evident when one
begins to realise that experience is not a 'black and white' definable
'thing' but a 'phenomenon' (see *1.4; pp87-88*).

In most general terms, "experience is a cover-all term for the
various modes through which a person knows his world" (Tuan 1975
p149). Seamon (1979a) has explicated an aspect of this encounter between

person and environment in his 'awareness continuum':
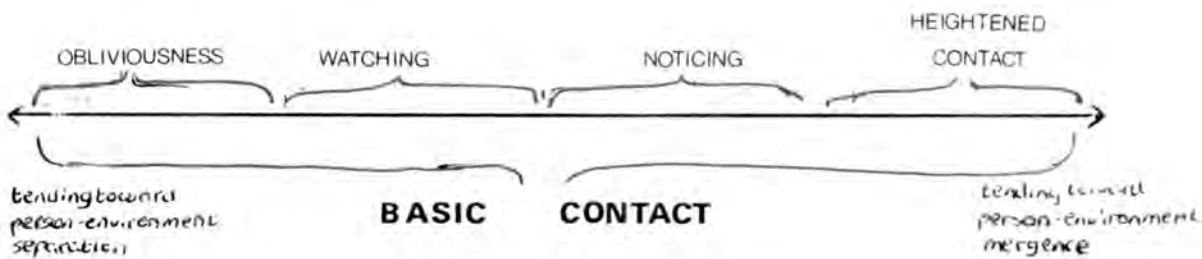
This experience is more than perception; it is a way of *knowing*.
It is an integration of encounter with the environment ('perception')
and thought ('reflection'), and by extension, in response, it becomes
behaviours and attitudes ('expression'). Through the present research
I have come to see experience as not something precise or specific,
but rather this more general 'representation' of what subsists between
person and environment.

In the literature, experience is associated with the rubrics -
perception, encounter, images, memories. Essentially, experience is a
personally constituted phenomenon which we might share with others
through some form of expression. As Lowenthal (1961 p251) reminds us,
"experience is not only unique: more significantly, it is also
self-centred; I am part of our milieu, but not of my own, and I never
see myself as the world does. It is usually one's self to which the
world attends;..." Further, how we behave towards the world and others
reflects our experience, and that interaction is itself experience
forming. As was evident in the group reflection, there is both a

moment of person-environment encounter and immediate reflection, which we might call *experiencing*, and that after subsequent reflection, which can be termed *remembered experience*[4]. There is, also, both the explicit experience, that is some kind of event, and the more general sense of experience, as in life-experience or job experience. There are both our own personal encounters with the environment, direct experience, and second-hand experience culled from others, including through conversation, reading and television, that is indirect experience. The group reflection attended to direct, remembered experience 'events'.

An experience may appear quite simple or complex, but whilst often apparently clear in the moment of experiencing, with subsequent reflection, may become ambiguous and, more importantly, highly implicative. A specific experience is enmeshed with other experiences, and with the broader life-experience. Nevertheless, as was clearly evident in the group reflection, experiences are felt as 'wholes'. In a sense, the recalled, or expressed, experience is like the tip of an iceberg, revealing its essential nature to the careful observer in the exposed part, whilst its greater mass remains hidden. In addition, an experience, however constituted, seems to have an internal consistency and sufficiency, even though it usually remains only a partial explication. In part, this is because experiences are differentially remembered, the salient points (however defined) coming to mind first. This recall will reflect the pertinence of immanent experiences, and possibly also their 'strength' in memory, to the present situation or, in the case of group reflection, the conversation. Further, the group

meetings clearly showed that when recalling experiences we do not merely re-present some stable and established event of memory, but rather something dynamic and 'living' is realised. Thus, a participant might recall what is essentially recognised as the 'same' experience, say of a snow storm, on several or many occasions but the account will be somewhat different in each case. Sometimes this account is short, other times long, sometimes it reveals or emphasizes one aspect, another time another, more 'factual' details may be revealed or more 'emotional' ones. On occasion, in expressing experience to others or reflecting on it alone, several 'experiences' may be reconstituted as a single 'experience', or an 'experience' might be split into several 'experiences'. A particular experience may have no direct correspondence with any reality. The 'factual' content of the experience may juxtapose geographical, historical, social or other information in creative combinations but not necessarily accurate to actual situations as originally experienced, or even ever experienced (5).

However, those combinations seem to express something of the significance, or *sense*, of the experience to the person remembering it, at the time it was experienced and/or as it now seems with reflection. Hart (1979 p148) recalls his experiences of childhood places, and writes, "although I may have experienced a place hundreds of times, it always appears as a single composite image, incorporating events I have myself witnessed, together with those described by others, dreams and fantasies. Although these images are commonly built from dozens of separate experiences, they are usually recalled in

conjunction with one particular event." This 'lie of experience' is an essential creativity, the crux of the ambigous phenomenon we call experience. Though 'factually' inconsistent, experiences are generally emotionally consistent. As the research progressed, it became more and more evident that this *consistency* in experience, or in the 'discernment' of experience, is a *making-sense* of *person-environment* for the individual, both during experiencing and subseqent reflection and in the expression of remembered experience. It is a coming to terms with ourselves, the world, and our relationship with it. The experience then is less an object of reflection but a *process* of reflection, thus, to use Meinong's (1960) distinction, it subsists rather than exists. In this sense, experience is a kind of making sense and made sense, and reflection on experience reveals and develops understanding. This is the understanding as process (Seamon 1983a p54), as described earlier (fn (2) 3.1).

Nevertheless, in a less precise sense than a thing or object, we can recognise experiences that remain in the memory - *memorable experiences* of places, people, events, emotions and feelings. As the group reflection shows, sometimes these experiences are collected together as 'images' or 'senses' of places, people and events. Much day-to-day experience is not only taken-for-granted but seems to be forgotten. Yet; other experience remains firm in our memory, or with the help of reflection and the prompting of a given situation, such as another's similar or contrasting experience, can be recreated or recalled. These more memorable experiences are still dynamic but have a sense of durability. Group reflections seem to confirm the

speculation that these might be particularly significant to individuals' lives, and are in part also preserved and represented in mementos such as photographs, diaries, letters, and other objects. They might be key events such as a holiday, a walk shortly after the death of one's husband, or the occasion of moving into a new house. Further, some experiences explicated were points of personal 'revelation', when a key sense of the world, ourselves or our lives, and a unity of person-environment is revealed to us.

In the philosophical literature we are reminded that an experience is always about something, that is it has *intentionality* (see 1.4). However, what the experience is *about*, that is the object of the experience, is not necessarily important nor consistent, rather, what is significant is the intentionality itself, the making-sense that this reference allows us to achieve. However, it is through the context and content of experiences that we seem to remember and value them. Furthermore, experiences are loosely classified in terms of their contents, for instance environmental or place, social or community, historical and religious.

Rowles (1978a) recognises four general *modalities of geographic experience*. These he uses as 'tools' for a kind of integrative and comparative description towards an understanding of the person-environment relationship of older people, and the experiential geographic consequences of growing old [6]. Though the Ushaw Moor Group was younger than Rowles' participants, there is much dialogue between these modalities and the concept of experience revealed by the

present research. Action, orientation, feeling and fantasy indicate the dimensions of geographic experience. As Rowles speculates (1978a p196), as individuals grow older there are characteristic changes of emphasis both within and among the modalities. These changes involve "constriction, selective intensification and expansion". In brief, as action, that is physical movement in space, is constrained with age, fantasy, that is imagined experience of places displaced in time and space, will become more important and an expanded portion of geographic experience. Clearly, therefore, these modalities indicate that experience is, or contains, a making sense of the world, and a coming to terms with the person-environment consequences of becoming older. Not only is the geographic experience of the older person apparently different to a younger person, as represented in the constitution and balance between the modalities, but also makes a different sense of the world and leads to different strategies in person-environment interaction.

The importance of experience as a making sense can also be seen in research covering situations where that 'sense' is constituted differently from the way we normally consider it. For instance, the geographic experience of blind people (Hill 1985), the deaf, children (Hart 1979, Piaget 1955), and other periods and cultures (Saile 1985, Tuan 1974). Further, when our attention is specifically focused on that which is normally taken-for-granted we can become more aware of our experiential 'structuring' of the world. In the present research a local 'treasure hunt', holiday visits to other places, a visit to one's birthplace, or the old colliery site, heightened awareness of

the environment and the experience of it. Also important here was the subsequent reflection and group sharing of such experiences, leading to the recognition of similarities and differences, and common themes. In the research literature, the use of selective perception exercises, or topics, to focus attention on particular aspects of environmental experiencing has not only increased individual awareness of normally taken-for-granted experience, but also through subsequent reflection has revealed much about the sense modalities (eg sight, hearing) and the degrees and complexities of person-environment (eg Seamon 1979a; Pocock 1983b). In other words, the role of experience, particularly when reflected on, as a making sense.

The present research began from 'heightened experience', in the hope that such special experiences are not only more memorable and, therefore, more accessible to group reflection, but also it was speculated that they might form a particularly vital point of our personal and shared making sense of the world. In this research, we (myself and the group) subsequently realised that heightened experience was, in part and importantly, a gateway to more 'ordinary' and submerged experiences, which also consisted in making sense. That is, all experience seems to be significant as much, if not more, for its structuring of person-environment for us, as well as the 'factual' information it contains. Anne Buttimer (1976 p282) refers to "ways of knowing experience", but really the crucial realisation should be that *experience is a way of knowing*, and by extension integral to our 'Being-in-the-world' and dwelling.

Although this may seem a little banal, it is far more important than might at first appear. For not only is experience a making sense, which is continued in further reflection, but it is also a depository of made sense. This is not so much a body of knowledge, as of *knowing* '⁷', which influences not only our attitudes and behaviour on the environment, but also our response to it. In short, this knowing preconditions us like a lens of sensibility. The fear of the street at night, the joy of a view of the valley, or more generally our commitment to a place, reflect our experience, direct and indirect, and therefore sense of person-environment - the sense not so much of world or self as separate entities, but of self-world in 'engaged situation' (see Grange 1985).

Place

Most generally, "the term 'place' as opposed to space, implies a strong emotional tie, temporary or more long-lasting, between person and a particular physical location" (Sime 1986 p50). Place has been variously used as yet another catch-all term for 'space plus character', as Norberg-Schultz (1980) succinctly, if somewhat ambiguously, sums it up. However, probably the most revealing statement in the recent literature is given by Relph (1976 p49): "What sets place apart from space... is experience of 'inside' as distinct from 'outside'".

Lukermann (1964) recognised six general elements: *location* (both

site and situation), *integration* of elements of nature and culture (usually associated with uniqueness), a *framework* of circulation, *localisation* (that is places are parts of larger areas and they focus), places are *emerging and becoming* (that is there is a continuity in change), and places have *meaning*. Place without question is considered to have *areal contiguity* and a degree of *social recognition*. Group reflection seems to include all these, but puts particular emphasis on place *as community*. It is in places that we live together and they become 'our place' (see also Ellis 1982). Further, in a more physical sense, the theme out-of-place refers to a sense of 'right order'. This was both 'appropriate', as in decoration and extensions to houses, or the style and scale of new buildings, and 'harmony' in the sense of one disrepaired house in a well maintained street *being* out of place. Consequently, the group frequently associated place with respect and responsibility to things and the environment as a whole, and people and the community. Knowing one's place was knowing 'where' and knowing 'who', but it also implicated the more colloquial 'knowing one's place' as a position in the local environment and society [8].

Much of the literature on place is American and reflects a deep concern about a 'loss of place', that is place as richly unique, local milieu of culture and geography. The literature from Britain and Europe is less copious and this may reflect a greater sureness of place in these regions, but also a more taken-for-granted attitude. In the group reflection the most explicit concern about place was first in reference to a decline in community, and second to themes such as the

experience of nothingness in the local environment [9].

A key distinction is immediately apparent in the present research, between:

1) *experience of place*, or place as relationship; and
2) *concretisation in place*, or the place as artifact.

These are 'dependent' aspects of the same phenomenon. The first emphasizes the person-environment articulation, and therefore the continual becoming and changing of places. The latter emphasizes the relative constancy in places, their identity and role as deposits, or repositories, of meaning. In Heidegger's terms, place as experience and concretisation is a 'gathering', and is akin to the bridge (1971a p152). In other words, "place is a centre of meaning constructed by experience" (Tuan 1975 p152) and represents, or is a legacy of, that experience.

The literature has tended to use the phrases 'sense of place' and 'spirit of place' as al*most synonymous, and many reviewers treat them as interchangable. Several authors however do recognise a difference in connotation, and some make brief reference to the origins of these phrases in ancient thought (see Dovey 1985a, Sime 1986). To some extent, spirit of place refers to something out there and independent; sense of place suggests something more akin to a mental construct and dependent on us. However, such definite distinctions are rarely maintained within the existing literature. However, it is useful to the present research, and future work, to make explicit both such distinctions and the more genetic, or fundamental, conceptions, and to

respect a clearer distinction.

   Spirit of Place [10] can be traced most clearly back to Roman
times (see Sime 1986), and the notion of a 'genius loci'. This
suggests that certain areas of the environment, usually inhabited for
a period of time, are imbued with a spiritual quality, and "reek with
personalities, characters and guardian spirits" (Clay 1983). This is
closely linked to the idea of 'sacred places' (eg Tuan 1976, 1978;
Graber 1976) and seems to have its precursor in nature worship. Places
seem to have some quality, nearly always intangible, over and above
the collection of physical contents. Spirit of place is more than a
sum greater than the parts, but a kind of 'being of place'. At the
'landscape determinist' extreme, Durrell (1969) refers to it as
'something special' that makes places more than mere space. Durrell
argues that "the important determinant of culture is after all the
spirit of place" and that people have "little to do with the matter".
Architectural interest in the spirit of place has tended to emphasise
the role of human agency or creativity in place-making (Sime 1986),
often analogous to work-of-art. Despite much recent interest in the
'spirit' of place, many authors use the term not so much to refer to
some kind of 'being of place', rather to represent 'a quality without
a name' or the 'timeless way of building' (Alexander 1979, et al
1977), and more generally, 'a certain ambience' (Clay 1983).

   I prefer *sense of place* [11], since this is   more in tune with
the notion of 'place' in the group reflection and is the more common
term within Geography. Sense of place is less clear in its origins but

can be traced to a Greek concept of place (see Sime 1986). This is closely entwined with a notion of *belonging*, a relationship between person and environment, person and person, and therefore culture and milieu. It is a two-way and mutual enmeshment, having some affinity to the *genre de vie* of Vidal de la Blache (see Buttimer 1976), and 'dwelling'. Sense of place is, therefore, a coming together of person(s) and environment in a specific locale, an engagement reflecting the 'taking place' of everyday life, and therefore both the concretisation and experience of this engagement (as place). It is both the various ways in which that belonging is experienced and its manifestation in the symbols and images recognised and concretised by people and their culture in environmental locales, that is the gathering of meanings (see Norberg-Schultz 1980). The reference is to both local environment and the inhabiting culture — the two both interpenetrating and developing together. Further, a sense of place is a *knowing*. To know one's own place is to 'have a place', to have recognised identity, and it is to know that environment and one's self (eg Clay 1983 p113). There are many ways in which person and environment can come together, ways that we and things become placed, and thus in a very real way there are many 'senses' of place (eg Relph 1976; Eyles 1985).

There is, nevertheless, overlap between the 'spirit' and 'sense' of place. The two are not mutually exclusive nor dichotomous: for instance, places are associated with human inhabitation, are locales or areas, and have temporal continuity. Both respect a need for personal involvement and the passage of time in the emergence of

placeness [12]. This indicates a congruence between 'place' and 'dwelling'. Further, it is widely recognised in the literature, though often in different ways, that there is both an 'insider' sense of place and an 'outsider' view, and that activity in space is an important factor (see Canter 1977) through which different degrees of place experience and types of place are generated. It is also a common, possibly modern, presupposition which associates place and uniqueness or distinctiveness (Buttimer 1980 p166). Often both connotations, spirit and sense, are subsumed under one or the other. For instance Norberg-Schultz (1980) refers to a 'certain character' which is the 'genius loci', but also links place to a kind of person-environment engagement which is 'friendship', or belonging, of person and environment.

As noted, I favour the 'sense of place' with its connotations of belonging and knowing, its ability to accommodate many 'senses' of place, and both place as experience and concretisation (also see Bognar 1985). Relph (eg 1976, 1982) shows us that the types of places manifest in our society, or which we experience, reflect the way we inhabit the world, that is our dwelling. Group reflection emphasises that this inhabiting is with or in relation to others, that is place is also *community*. Further, the concretisation of place as artifact, or 'object', stands up against us, that is the place is a reflection of our dwelling, or a consequent 'deposit' of everyday life. Place, therefore, indicates our respect and responsibility to both the environment and other people, both in its form and our experience of it.

Group reflection suggests several important *dimensions* that are particularly relevant in the context of place and the everyday environment, as seen by those living for some time in that environment (that is, insiders), and as revealed through their remembered experiences. There is the sense that place is both something given and already there, which we not only participate with but are enmeshed in but, furthermore, it is something which needs and must be looked after, or cared for, and therefore engages us with responsibility. The emphasis was *place-maintenance* rather than place-making, that is in Heidegger's terms, 'cultivation' rather than 'construction'. The key phrases here seem to be 'making a home', and 'having a commitment' to Ushaw Moor. Though this sense of place is clearly one of locale, it is more complex than area. It involves a multiplicity of different scales, types and degrees of placeness, ranging from the 'valley' to the 'house', and from an insider place of 'my house', to an outsider perspective of places not directly participated in. Further, there is a vagueness, or fluidity, about the boundaries of many places, and some places whilst temporarily separate may be spatially synonymous. This time-space dimension is also a social differentiation as 'locales' have multiple uses, form different places for different people, and even for the same people on different occasions. This suggests that whilst places are *represented* in the structures of the environment, particularly buildings, they may essentially *subsist* in specific person-environment experiences, or contexts.

The group regarded Nature as an ideal to which the built

environment must somehow relate, or respect [13]. *Buildings* directly related to everyday life in the association of specific activities or functions - the shop, the school, the church, the house - but also 'symbolised' the type of person-environment interaction, or 'dwelling', which took place. *People* were considered central, as was especially evident in the themes looking-after, nothingness, and threat. Therefore, the group reflection suggests different degrees of placeness, or placelessness, and that places are necessarily associated with specific activities and people. In other words, group reflection suggests that place is experienced in reference to specific activities, person-person and person-environment interactions. Places are *for* or *of*, that is, like experience, they have an *intentionality*.

Grange (1985 p71) considers place to be an essential 'where' to which people and activities are engaged, that is they always must 'take place' some*where*. The placeness of a country walk, a football field, a school or a house reflects the activities that go on in it. As architects have come to realise, a given building has many uses and therefore should have the capacity to be many 'places', not necessarily all confined to the building as a whole, but in reference to parts of it, or its wider environment or context (eg Norberg-Schultz 1980).

Places *symbolise*, that is as 'objects' they concretise meaning. Here, group reflection suggests that place is something like Tuan's notion of 'mirror of man' (1977). That is, it shows how we dwell, or

live, in the environment both as a record in the appearance of places, and in our place experiences. For instance we may experience a sense of nothingness or threat, and recognise a blandness and a 'big slum'. The group clearly associated the appearance of places with the behaviour and attitudes of people. The disrepair of houses and untidiness of gardens was seen to reflect a lack of self-respect, commitment to community, and making a home in the locality. The group recognised that building materials and styles, such as Skippers Meadow, and lifestyles,including limited residence and unemployment, might hamper care of the environment, but they felt it was our responsibility to 'make places'.

The group felt personally committed to and responsible for their local environment and various places within it. This responsibility, however, varied in degree relative to the fit of a place in their 'lived world'. This in turn is manifest in various *levels of place* with consequent different degrees of participation or involvement (Tuan 1975 p153). One's own home gains most care, the street a more limited and more shared responsibility, and concern for the wider setting, the valley, is more passive, a willingness to stop and look.

Group reflection distinguished two basic person-environment relationships: looking and hurrying (see 2.4). These are not mutually exclusive, and in particular Hurrying is nearly always 'immanently' Looking should circumstances permit. These stances seem to be associated with different experiences of place, and ultimately lead to the creation of different types of place. Looking tends to stop and

reflect, it dwells, and therefore is a rich experience of the environment. Looking might be associated with placeness in its fullest sense. Hurrying tends to be in haste; we pass through the environment with attention primarily on other concerns beyond. Hurrying treats the environment more as space than place, constituting it as routes and landmarks. As a 'place' it is much less detailed and much simpler, and has some affinity to Relph's placelessness (1976) and Norberg-Schultz's flatscapes (1969).

Developing from this, three general levels, or 'resolutions', of place, or degrees of placeness might be discerned in the group reflections. This is, of course, a simplification but provides a useful summary of the multiplicity of places in which people participate during their day-to-day activities. The most positive and general sense of place was 'our view of the valley', that is a delight in the *local setting*, the scene in which Ushaw Moor takes place, its situation. This was not immediately participated in but formed a general backcloth, predominantly an emotional uplift of nature. Secondly, there was the immediate sense of place of the *insides of houses* and other buildings, and the neighbouring space. These places were the space of everyday life, where we are most enmeshed with our environment [14]. These places might expand and contract over time. There might be contraction as we move from childhood and playing in the street to old age and restricted mobility (see Rowles 1978a). The group noted a seasonality, as in the winter we retreat into our houses, but in summer the garden becomes an important extension of this inside place. Further, an inside may be many places for different

people, and even the same person. The church is   the place both of
Sunday services and of social gatherings, the school both of education
and for electoral voting. The participants also recognised the
difference between an 'outsider' view of such inside places, and being
there or going inside. Such immediate places are a 'base', a home, to
which people withdraw and from which they look-out, and from and to
which people journey (Buttimer 1980 ch8). Therefore, these places form
a pivotal role in our lived world. Thirdly, and by far the most
complex resolution of place is that which subsists between insides and
setting. In the group material this is best labelled 'outside'. It
seems to be a kind of interchange between the two. It is close to
Norberg-Shultz's flatscapes (1969) and is characterised by the group
theme Nothingness (see 2.4). In a sense it is an abandoned space, a
no-man's land, yet it is participated in. It is the environment we
hurry through, in the sense of the theme hurrying; it is the
environment of threat; it is the environment of the 'big slum' [15].
The group recognised it as an environment of signs and symbols, but
also one in which they felt distanced and somehow outsiders. Relph's
(1976) varying degrees of insideness and outsideness are relevant
here, though they have only limited correspondence. Whilst the inside
is towards behavioural, and existential insideness, the outside is
closer to an existential outsideness [16]. To a certain extent, the
outside is the 'no-place' that has been of so much concern recently.
It is in this outside where the changing nature of dwelling in
contemporary everyday environments, here largely a residential
environment, is first apparent, though it is suggested at all three
resolutions.

Therefore, group reflection suggests that places are constructs of experience, and that we relate to the environment in many different ways, corresponding to many different experiences and types of place. In particular the different resolutions, or levels, of place and placeness seem to suggest that in the lived world we engage a multiplicity of styles of 'dwelling' and together with other people, for place is also community.

Dwelling

According to Heidegger 'dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on the earth' (1971a). Dwelling can be seen both as a noun and as a verb[17], but he lays emphasis on the priority of 'to dwell' over 'the dwelling'. He notes that not all buildings are dwellings, but building leads to dwelling, and "we do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is we are dwellers " (p148 1971a). Dwelling is a mode of being, of being-in-the-world or, in more commonplace terms, it is a way of living or form of person-environment interaction. Furthermore, dwelling is a kind of relationship between person and environment, and in a sense a mode of 'knowing'. To dwell, Norberg-Schultz reminds us, "implies the establishment of a meaningful relationship between people and a given environment" (1980 p13), and to be said fully to dwell suggests a kind knowing akin to friendship. The Nordic man is a friend of his particular environment, the Arab is a friend of the desert, and each is 'tuned' so to speak to the harmonies of their respective milieu (Norberg-Schultz 1980). To dwell

"means to live in a manner which is attuned to the rhythms of nature, to see one's life as anchored in human history and directed towards a future, to build a home which is the everyday symbol of a dialogue with one's ecological and social milieu" (Buttimer 1976 p277). Therefore, "dwelling, as described by Heidegger (1971a), involves the process by which a place in which we exist becomes a personal and social world and home" (Seamon 1986a p4).

A notion of dwelling can be discerned within the group reflections and is evident in the desire to 'blend-in' with nature, the importance given to knowing one's place, participating in a community, having a sense of 'history' and belonging to a place. But what is dwelling as Heidegger conceives of it ontologically, and how does this relate to the group reflections? What is the nature of dwelling in the contemporary everyday environment, and is it changing in some way? In other words, what is the link between experience, place and dwelling, and how does this unity illuminate our understanding of person-environment?

Through reflection on the genetic meaning of the terms 'build' and 'dwell', Heidegger reveals the two fundamental characteristics of dwelling. Both 'build' and 'dwell' have their origins in the idea: "to stay in place". To dwell (*Wunian*) in addition has the sense: "to be at peace, to remain in peace". In other words, the 'place' of dwelling, the dwelling, is a place to stay or of staying, that is continuity and rest, and a place of peace, or stability. There is, therefore, a strong similarity between 'dwelling' and 'place'. Heidegger further

notes that peace (*Friede*) also means "free; preserved from harm". Therefore, his *first* fundamental characteristic of dwelling is 'sparing and preserving'. This applies to dwelling in all its forms as a kind of allowing things to be as they are in themselves. 'Experience' as looking or looking-after, and 'place' as home, would seem to have dialogue with this concept of dwelling. However, the themes hurrying and nothingness would seem to be in contrast to this authentic dwelling.

As was noted earlier, "to build is in itself already to dwell" (p146). This building is both *construction and cultivation*, that is putting or bringing together, and encouraging or maintaining. These are a kind of making, and specifically a 'sparing and preserving'. In group terms we are reminded of looking-after and care, and more generally respect and responsibility. Therefore, Heidegger's *second* fundamental characteristic of dwelling is *gathering*. This is an allowing to come into being together, that is a realisation of meaning and therefore being-in-the-world. Man dwells 'on the earth' and 'under the sky', and he is 'mortal' in contrast to 'divinities'. This 'fourfold' is an oneness which man gathers through dwelling. This does not exploit but permits things to become, that is the 'presencing of beings'. "Mortals save the earth, that is snatch it from danger, but also set it free to be itself." This attitude is also central to Relph's (1981) call for 'environmental humility'. In learning to dwell we must allow things to be as they are in themselves. Further, "dwelling preserves the fourfold by bringing the presencing of the fourfold into things. But things themselves secure the fourfold only

when they themselves as things are let be in their presencing" (1971a p151). Gathering as of a 'fourfold' is not explicitly evident in the group reflections on experience in the everyday environment, but, in a more literally 'down to earth' fashion, is implicated in the immediate sense, manifest in experience, of a lived world of everyday life.

Therefore, dwelling is concerned with 'sparing and preserving' and 'gathering'. Jager (1975) also reminds us that 'dwelling' is intimacy and depth, and that it is "a round rhythmic movement of sparing and preserving which takes place within the awareness of a centre" [18]. The group themes, looking and hurrying; looking-after and care; respect and responsibility; and wonder (see 2.4), immediately come to mind. As was evident in looking and looking-language (3.1), there is both a sparing and preserving in the attentive stance and a gathering in the bringing together of a 'view'. Hurrying seems to be contrasted to dwelling, in its haste and concerns beyond the immediate person-environment interaction itself. Hurrying manipulates or uses the environment, and in this has affinity to buildings that are not necessarily dwellings. Hurrying passes through, crosses space rather than dwells in places. However, hurrying may not necessarily be an antonym of dwelling, but possibly a different mode of dwelling, for example as Tuan (1975) has suggested, places are constituted at different levels, or resolutions, through different degrees of person-environment involvement [19].

Looking-after is clearly concerned with a form of 'sparing and preserving'. It is the repair and maintenance of buildings and the

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concern about issues in the local environment [20]. Respect and responsibility is possibly more significant since this was essentially a social concept (3.1), reminding us that essentially we dwell, especially in the everyday and residential environment, *together* with other people. How we dwell will not only be reflected in our dwellings, but it will influence how our neigbours dwell, both as an example and as a constraint on how they can dwell. Further their 'dwelling' will influence our dwelling. The group brought out, for instance, how care of houses reflected self-respect, and how within the context of a street it was everyone's responsibility to keep it tidy and to respect neighbours. This social component, that is dwelling in a community, is not really considered in Heidegger's writings. He deals with being, and the ideal of 'poetically dwells man' (eg 1971e), that is from the perspective of person-environment as an individual's experience, and as a universal of mankind. Yet, a rich sense of community and Heidegger's 'dwelling' seem to relate to the same phenomenon. Consequently, a decline in community, as in the not knowing neighbours and a kind of co-habiting in space, suggests a loss of genuine and full dwelling.

It would seem that *experience* and *place* have affinity with 'to dwell' and 'the dwelling', respectively, and so are congruent with *dwelling* [21]. How is this realised in the lived world of everyday life? How does the unity of experience, place and dwelling articulate, and what does it contribute to our understanding of geographic experience and person-environment?

Tuan (1975 p153) tells us that "experience constructs place at different scales". As noted earlier, three levels, resolutions, or styles of engagement with the environment can be recognised in the group material - insides, outside, setting. These are however more complex and interpenetrating than Tuan's more traditional typology. Relph (1976 ch4) through his seven categories of inside/outside place experience shows how place relates to authentic or inauthetic dwelling [22]. Heidegger (1971a) considers the activity of *building* as both construction and cultivation, and this is a person-environment interaction. Seamon (1979 ch4) considers the varying degrees of person-environment awareness and engagement as a continuum from separation, or obliviousness, to mergence, or heightened contact. This is alternatively the extremes of inauthentic and authetic dwelling, and movement about this continuum can be related to placeness and placelessness. The group reflections seem to indicate not a smooth and continous awareness continuum, but nevertheless a range of degrees of person-environment engagement. Further, there is constant changing between them, sometimes quite abrupt switches, which are dependent on the given situations, or activities, of everyday life. Looking and hurrying are not the extremes of a continuum, therefore, but implicative of each other, and form a complex.

When experience is looking, in the group sense, it seems to be a 'sparing and preserving', and both constructing and cultivating. Looking is caring, it is recognising a view, it is looking-after, and a kind of loving. Further, looking also 'gathers', or makes sense, through bringing both person and environment together, and arranging

it into a meaningful whole or scene. Place also seems to consist in these two fundamental characteristics of dwelling. When place is treasured, as in the home and 'our place', it is a dwelling. For the group this was a sense of calm and peacefulness, of belonging, of stability and happiness. The place, like the building in Norberg-Schultz (1980), visualises, complements and concretises, and so gathers meaning (see 3.1). Furthermore, experience and place are interlinked, in our biographies and community with others in the lived world, through day-to-day activity in the environment. As Tuan (1975 p152) put it: "place is a centre of meaning constructed by experience". Places are our everyday lives - shops, schools, houses, factories, roads, footpaths. The experience of those places - hurrying, nothingness, 'big slum' - reflects the way person and environment interact and our degree of participation and commitment to 'dwelling'. But is dwelling merely a 'heightened contact', a friendship of person-environment, a communion; or can we recognise various *styles of dwelling*?

As Buttimer puts it (1976 p277) "Humanisation of the earth could be seen as a process in which mankind has sought various styles of dwelling in space and time". Group reflection, and more general observation of the contemporary everyday environment and our everyday lives, suggest that there is an ideal akin to 'authentic dwelling', as seen in the desire to blend in with nature and share in a local community. Further, the group appreciated that there had been major technological, economic and social changes in their lifetime that had resulted in 'new' person-environment and person-person relationships,

represented by the mobility of car and bus, the need to work outside the village, the withdrawal of people into their houses, and the decline in community. They noted how we possibly value scenery more today than in the old days, we have bigger windows in our houses, we all travel more and faster, seeing more of the world through the windows of cars and buses, and the eyes of the television, and have more holidays. All these are summarised in the three 'levels' of place, or styles of engagement: *inside, outside and setting*.

Heidegger uses the example of the bridge (1971a p152) to illustrate dwelling, and specifically gathering. The bridge is really a place, a concretisation of the meanings of a lived world. The bridge brings together the banks of a river, but it *permits* a lived world, one of trade and exchange. However, the bridge seems to oversimplify person-environment and dwelling as evident from the group reflection.

The *inside*, or the home, is the place of most concentrated experience. The village was also a 'home place' for all the group as they had each lived at least 25 years in Ushaw Moor, and were much involved in the local community. However, the village is a place at a different scale and is not experienced in so immediate and enmeshed way as the house. The inside is where most care is lavished, it is the most bounded place where there is a clear inside-outside divide, it is the base from which we journey out and return at the end of the day (Buttimer 1980), and it is that portion of the environment that is most intimately known, most possessed by us and most part of us. The 'sparing and preserving' is mutual, as the inside is both security and

freedom. Through the house we gather our lives, both within its four walls, and to and from itself in our daily forays. The inside gathers us, as in the way we decorate and furnish it, and care and upkeep it, reflecting how we live and 'represent' our experience. In short the inside tends to be our most intimate dwelling in 'a world' and the most fully man-made place [23]. Further, the 'state' of the house reflects our style, or depth, of dwelling. The care of insides in contrast to the relative neglect of outsides suggests a withdrawal from the local environment and community. The state of the inside itself in, for instance, the central position in the sitting room of the television or the hi-fi is indicative of our dwelling [24].

The *setting* is the other extreme. This seems to be experienced in two degrees of participation: 'looking-out' from the house, and 'going-out' as when walking down the Mill or being there at the colliery site. In all cases it involves a 'stopping to look', and particularly at nature. This is the stroll, the watching and the enjoyment of a 'peacefulness and calm'. The setting is a wider sense of place and the title: *Our View of the Valley* is a reference to this. It is a positive attitude, but one that seeks to accept, to care and love. This is dwelling in the more romantic sense, a kind of dreaming. It is a relaxing with the environment, an aesthetic enjoyment of the environment and the experience in themselves. This is not authentic dwelling in the sense of full engagement of person and environment through everyday life. The experience of setting is detached from such everyday concerns. This is a place as background, but nevertheless it is a most treasured place [25]. It seems to be

both the ideal, and a complement to, on the one hand, the shallow experience of *outside* and, on the other, the deep enmeshment with *inside*.

In the context of contemporary everyday environments, the inside is the immediate place of living, much of which is taken-for-granted, and the setting is the wider place of looking and reflection, and is usually appreciated positively. The *outside* seems to be the 'place' of greatest concern for the present state of our dwelling. This is the street outside, the neighbourhood, the landscapes of the lived world. It is the realm of nothingness, out-of-place, lack of permanence, and threat. It is here that we have dialogue with 'visual blight' (Lewis et al 1973), placelessness (Relph 1976, 1981) and flatscapes (Norberg-Schultz 1969). The outside is the in-between looking-out from the inside to the scene or setting, and it is the zone we hurry through on our journeys to and from buildings and 'places'. This outside seems to be most clearly dependent on community. As already noted, this shared place, the street and the neighbourhood, has been negatively affected by the decline of community. It is also most directly influenced by the increased pace of everyday activity. The inside and the setting can still be appreciated 'at leisure', but the outside tends to be hurried through, often by bus or car. The setting is environment as nature and has a constancy, a natural pace, and a sense that it has always been like that; the inside is intimately tuned to the scale of human life in chairs, tables, stairs and doors. The outside, however, seems to have become radically different. It is dominated no longer by pathways, but by roads and carparks, the

buildings are no longer so individual but form 'repetition without pattern', and their scale is often greater. The outside seems to be tuned more to technology, to the machine not people, and to the user not a community (see Relph 1981, 1982; Appleyard et al 1964).

The various 'places' are not constant but continually interact, reflecting our multiplicity of styles of 'dwelling' in everyday life. The journey to work is from one inside to another, via an outside (and in an inside). There is also a kind of seasonality. The setting is more a looking-out in winter and a being-there in summer. The inside is literally confined to the inside of the house in winter, and associated with warmth and security. In summer, the inside spreads out into the garden and the fresh air. The outside is a pleasant openness, if a somewhat 'withdrawn quietness', in the sunshine of the day, but at night it closes in and is threatening. Grange (1985 p78) classifies environment into physical, social and built. These are kinds of 'experiential contexts' akin to the styles of engagement, or 'levels' of place, suggested by the group reflections. *Physical*, the world of nature, seems to have dialogue with 'setting', *social*, the world of human relations, seem to relate to 'outside', and *built*, the world of human creation, has some affinity to 'inside'. Further, as Grange sees these in the unity of 'human engaged situation', so setting, outside and inside need to be seen as a unity, as aspects of the complex of contemporary dwelling in the everyday environment.

Summary

To summarise, experience, place, and dwelling can be appreciated as a genuine unity, the articulation of which constitutes and reveals an understanding of person-environment in a contemporary residential environment, or lived world. The present research, Group Reflection and Researcher Reflection, reveals a complexity and dynamism in contemporary person-environment interaction which is manifest in the form and experience of everyday environment. Therefore, it can suggest several significant interpretations of, or speculations about, dwelling in this lived world, and so encourage continued reflection and offer possibilities for future research.

a) *Man dwells both immediately and reflectively*. Right from the moment of person-environment encounter, that is an awareness of 'experiencing', we begin to make sense of the world. This sense making is continued, or elaborated and refined, as we subsequently reflect on remembered experience. This applies to both the stances of looking and hurrying, for often, subsequently, moments of hurried encounter become realised as 'experiences' which are reflected upon. This was evident the frequent participant comment: "I didn't notice it at the time". When the switch between hurrying and looking is sudden while we are 'going through' the environment, it results in a 'heightened experience', but experiences from both looking and hurrying can also in subsequent reflection seem a 'revelation'. Heidegger conceives of dwelling as both 'thinking' and 'Being', and therefore, when we say

that man dwells immediately and reflectively we mean that thought and being are integral to meaningful person-environment interaction, and this is realised through 'experience' and in 'place'.

b) *Man dwells with others, that is together*, and that togetherness is integral to dwelling. This is evident in the importance given to the themes respect and responsibility, and the strong link that the group made between place and community. This was also reflected negatively in the association of nothingness, lack of permangence and threat with the decline of community. Heidegger focuses on a gathering of the fourfold, that is man as mortal, and as *Dasein* (see *1.4*). Here we come to realise our 'Being-in-the-world', and the Being of other beings. Group Reflection revealed a more immediate concern, that is our *togetherness* as fellow human beings in a shared world, that is our belonging to a social world.

c) *Man dwells in many different but interacting ways or styles*, and the very nature of dwelling may be changing. This is the three resolutions of placeness, or styles of engagement, that were recognised - insides, outside, setting. It is also their complexity and interpenetration in our everyday life. Rowles (1978a) suggested four modalities of environmental experience and the hypothesis that their nature and balance change as people become older. The present research agrees with such reflection, and further suggests that changing technology, social values, personal lifestyles and day-to-day activity in general, create both a continually changing manifestation

of dwelling, but also may change the very nature of dwelling. In particular, dwelling seems to becoming more complex, with the pace of hurrying, the increased life spent in buildings and vehicles mediating between our immediate environment and the environment at large, and the 'fantasy' (if we can borrow Rowles' term) of extended experience through television and other media. All these lead to 'new' senses of the world, and maybe leading to changes in the very nature of our Being and Being-in-the-world.

These summaries and speculations can not offer 'grand conclusions', but only more questions for future exploration. It is now appropriate to look back and consider the research itself, the strategy and operation, and then to look beyond to possible 'responsive applications' of these substantive and methodological findings.

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(1) Here I focus on Heidegger's conception of person-environment and 'dwelling'. Other related conceptions include Eliade (1957), who makes the distinction between sacred and profane space, and Bachelard (1958), who considers the poetic modes construing nature, place and time.
(2) The essay grew out of an interest in the postwar housing shortage debate and the question of homelessness (see Heidegger 1971a p161). Though dwelling is important in Heidegger's philosophy, his central concerns are Being and thinking (see 1.4). I do not wish to over-play the dialogue with Heidegger (1971a) but it does provide a worthy 'gateway', or guide, for the speculations of this subsection. Further, the 'geographic significance' of this paper is more fundamental than many have appreciated. Refreshing in this respect are Relph's recent essays (1984, 1985b especially) and the collection of essays edited by Seamon & Mugerauer (1985).
(3) For this kind of interpretative development of Heidegger, see

Zimmerman (1985), Grange (1985).

(4) This is related to Husserl's distinction between 'noema' and 'noesis' (Husserl 1983 ch3).

(5) For example, Rowles (1978a), the experience modality of geographical fantasy.

(6) He recognises them by considering his conversations with the participants as a whole and the individual experiences the participants recalled. Unforgtunately, he did not in general encourage the participants to stand back from their experiences and recognise themes, so as to reveal their own understanding of them. This contrasts to the present research.

(7) Bohm's (1983) 'rheomodal' language is relevant here with his conception of an implicate and dynamic wholeness.

(8) See also May (1970), quoted in Relph (1976), who recognises four senses of place as geography: *the earth* as the place of man; place *as a unit*, such a city or province; the place of residence or of worship, a place of *specific activity*; and place as *location*.

(9) Clay (1983) describes the recent interest in place, in planning & design, architecture, psychology & geography, and more popular literature, as an *obsession*, a kind of movement, a coalescing of interests. Sime (1986) feels 'place' is finally coming of age as a mature research focus. Note also a brief review of the place movement in Buttimer (1980 ch8).

(10) For example: Durrell (1969), Norberg-Schultz (1980), Garnham (1976), and in the context of 'sacred place' Graber (1976), Tuan (1978).

(11) For example: Hart (1979), Buttimer (1980 ch8), Tuan (1980), Clay (1983), Violich (1985), Eyles (1985), and, essentially in terms of 'sense' of place, the classics: Relph (1976), and Canter (1977).

(12) Tuan (1975 p164) reminds us that "experience takes time. Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement." Bognar (1985) further notes that "real places... do not sell themselves out easily with cliches promising experience without personal involvement. The discovery and understanding of place cannot be instantaneous and once and for all event. Place must be inhabited and cared for, taken into possession through time and learning - a process often requiring considerable effort and involvement. Only in this way can place make sense and provide a lasting bond between people and their environment. Places should have a certain permanent quality - a *permanence with change*-..."

(13) Note Norberg-Schultz (1980) recognises 'natural places' and 'man-made places', and a relationship between them through which man 'builds' and gathers meaning. This relationship has some congruence with the group's linking of Nature, Buildings and People (see 3.1).

(14) Note, the home as symbol of self literature, such as Cooper 1974; Korosec-Serfaty 1984.

(15) The 'hurrying-environment', if I can coin this phrase, or the flatscape, in its blandness and sameness, and often larger scale, has much similarity to the environment that Appleyard, Lynch et al consider in 'View from the Road' (1964).

(16) However, Relph's categories do not correspond very closely, and

it is difficult to adequately relate them to *setting* and *outside*. The nature of person-environment is far more complex than these simple categories might suggest.

(17) Heidegger shows this distinction: "we attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building" (1971a p145) and "not every building is a dwelling" (1971a p145). Buttimer (1976 p277) also asks "'Dwelling': a noun or verb? a building or a craft? a landscape artifact or a process?"

(18) Jager (1975), considering 'theorizing', develops the notion of dwelling and suggests an intermingling and necessary complementarity of 'journeying' and 'dwelling' as modes of thought. 'Journeying', which is abstractive thought, involves "an ability to remove oneself from entanglements", whilst "dwelling does not allow such... it weaves together disparate elements into a single cloth (p252)." "Dwelling is foremost an obedience to what is about to emerge. It is primordially a waiting near the source." Dwelling is a roundedness, a "curving and bending responsiveness" and a round rhythmic movement of sparing and preserving which takes place within the awareness of a centre. It is "tending and cultivating. It requires a full emotional, intellectual, work and cult-oriented bodily participation" (p254). Jager associates journeying with a road, and is a corresponding awareness of passing. It "requires abstinence from the start. Thought begins with a denial, with a distance... There is no need for closeness and intimacy of careful tending and coaxing. The road gives us a world that already exists... that emerges before our glances as already radically independent. The sphere of journeying everywhere speaks of distance and separation." (p254). Looking and Hurrying are not directly congruent with Jager's 'dwelling' and 'journeying' respectively, but seem to possess something of this complementarity and the immanence of one in the other.

(19) Note also Heidegger (1966), Dwelling and Looking are related to 'meditative thinking' and, to a lesser extent, 'calculative thinking' and Hurrying have affinity.

(20) There is also a dialogue with Heidegger's concept of 'care' in *Being and Time* (1983).

(21) *Congruence* is 'suitableness, agreement, consistency', and I use the term to emphasise the relationship and fundamental unity of experience, place and dwelling.

(22) Authenticity (see Heidegger 1983; also Relph 1976) refers to a sincerity, and unselfconscious immediate and communal involvement with the meanings of the world - it is a realisation of the oneness of person-environment and the allowing phenomena to reveal themselves in themselves.

(23) Here it is worth noting the link between home and self identity - see Cooper 1974. Note also how the motor-car has many characteristics similar to the home, a dwelling for the sales-rep who in actuality may spend most of his waking hours within its cell and very little in the 'house'. Interestingly the group almost never used the term 'home' but preferred 'house'.

(24) Geographers would not normally consider the inside space as relevant, leaving it to architects and psychologists. However, as for instance the theme Insides and Outsides shows, the significance of the other 'levels' can not be fully appreciated without considering this important portion of person-environment.

(25) See landscape concepts *1.3*. Interestingly, Relph's landscape concept (see 1976, 1981, 1982) refers to both 'outside' and 'setting'.

3.3   REFLECTIONS

In this subsection, originally labelled 'But...', I will look back at the research as a whole and the individual stages, and reflect critically on some of the problems and limitations. I do not seek to undermine the research, nor provide excuses for it, but to show an awareness of the problems and limitations. It is a vital part of any research to stop and critically assess these conditions. Nevertheless, here I will only begin these reflections with a limited outline (1).

A key question is the apparent conflict, or discontinuity, between the underlying philosophy, *phenomenology*, and the strategies of Group and Researcher Reflection. First, this is a conflict between a philosophy of the individual consciousness and a group strategy and, second, a question of the relationship between presuppositionless reflection and theme recognition (including the 'gatherings'). It is important to emphasise that the research was *not* an application of phenomenological method and, in any case, such a philosophy is not applicable in any 'positivist' sense (Zimmerman 1985). Phenomenology offered a point of departure and a light in the fog. Above all, I sought to be receptive and responsive to the phenomenon and the participants' experience of it, and from this the distinctive stages of Group Reflection and Researcher Reflection emerged (see *I.4; Appendix A*). Furthermore, such research must be fundamentally

exploratory and largely specific to its context, the phenomenon under study and the student (participants, researcher) (Seamon 1983b).

No attempt was made to engage in 'phenomenological reduction' and 'eidetic reduction' (Husserl 1964). Nevertheless, the research aimed to go'back to the things themselves!' and, in particular, the world as experienced. I encouraged an'open attitude' towards the phenomenon, and how it might be explored, so as to allow the phenomenon to reveal itself in its own nature, or being. More concretely, I sought to reveal heightened experience in the everyday environment as appreciated by local residents. The research strategies aimed to make explicit or, where possible, avoid presuppositions: particularly, avoiding those of prior definition of environmental experience, and the more implicit presuppositions of questionnaire and interview approaches. The reflections on my own heightened experiences (see *1.0*) and on the literature (*1.2*; *1.3*; *1.4*) helped to make explicit some prior notions. Further, Group Reflection encouraged a 'conversation' with the phenomenon as experienced and understood by those actually experiencing the phenomena, enmeshed within their own everyday life. Group sharing both encouraged critical reflection on our notions of heightened experience and stimulated the explication of such experiences in their variety and fullness. However, this group strategy relied'not on systematic and philosophical reflection, but on more informal sharing of remembered experiences, relative to agreed topic fields, and reflective discussion leading to theme recognition.

There are two obvious problems for research inspired by

phenomenology: 'capturing' the moment of conscious experience as it really is in itself, and sharing the understanding that this realisation generates. Phenomenology offers individual, systematic, critical reflection, and the discipline of 'reductive reflection', or 'meditative thinking'. Such self-reflection risks self-deception, and the findings generated may be difficult to share with others, but possibly its major value is as a mode of self-realisation. How can we generalise such insights of one individual to us all, that is to give us understanding about our experience.?

One solution might be *group, or shared, reflection* [2]. To tackle the twin problems of 'capturing' experience and generating general insights, the present research focuses on recall of remembered experience and theme recognition, with a group. This is followed by Researcher Reflection which offers further ordering, gatherings, and seeks to relate the research findings to the wider literature. The group acted as a medium through which the phenomenon could express itself, and a shared understanding of those with direct experience might be revealed. Theme recognition aimed to reveal general insights from the particular experiences explicated, that is the participants' understanding. In the research context, it is difficult to gain access to the moment of experience authentically and, therefore, group reflections made use of remembered and heightened experience. Expression of experience clearly is dependent on language and, in sharing with others, their understanding of that language and their own prior experience. Further, sharing remembered experience assumes that such experience accounts preserve the true nature of the

phenomenon, and in part this depends on the creativity and fallibility of memory. "The remembered past is not simply a past of perception since one is remembering(my emphasis), the past is already being designated in a reverie (dream) as an image of value. From their very origin, the imagination colours the paintings it will want to see again" (Bachelard 1969 p105). The remembered experience is not the actual experience and is, in a sense, 'heightened' by being remembered. Further, reflection has already begun, and it is already transforming the experience. However, to be constituted as 'meaningful experience' (Schutz 1970) suggests a degree of stability, or preservation, of meaning. To focus on heightened experience might seem to neglect more taken-for-granted experience, which presumably is particularly prevalent and important in the context of everyday environment. However, in the present research it was found that the recall of such heightened experience frequently led to the explication of more taken-for-granted and implicated experience (see 1.5; 3.2).

In interview and personal reflection approaches it may be difficult to stimulate authentic and full experience explication, and to recognise general themes beyond the particularity of an individual's situation. A group context appears to stimulate recall, and encourage fuller and clearer expression of experiences. However, sharing experiences, and specifically heightened experience, with others in a group context might also encourage the dramatisation of those experiences, even the faking of experience. However, the group

context is again of value, since a small group meeting for almost a year, and one that develops strong ties of friendship and trust, seems to be essentially more honest to itself and the phenomenon. This contrasts, most markedly, with the one-off street questionnaire, where the respondent may relate genuine experience, fake such experience, or more often attempt to give experiences that he feels the researcher is looking for. In this context, it is difficult to 'verify' genuine experiences, even with comparison of different respondents. In particular, in the present research the group was encouraged to generate their own 'definition' of the phenomenon for study, and the topic fields and activities that might be used to explore it.Both the extended contact with participants and the group context therefore reduce the influence of researcher presuppositions and inauthentic experience explication and theme generation. Nevertheless, explicated experiences are not actual experiences, but our reflective record, and therefore more a 'gateway' back to the things themselves, the moment of actual experience. Further, the recognised themes are inevitably reductions, but not 'phenomenological reductions'. Also, they are not abstractions in the positivist sense, since in Group Reflection, participantsrecognise themes whilst continuing to recall previously expressed experience and explicate further experiences, and so maintain a continual 'conversation' with the phenomenon.

Unfortunately, in *Researcher Reflection* such a 'conversation' can not be maintained, but might be simulated through continual back-reference to the group reflections, both tapes and transcripts, in addition to the Group Record. The gatherings (see3.1), and the

researcher reflections in general, are not as easily supported as the group explicated experiences and recognised themes. In Researcher Reflection the conversation with the phenomenon, strictly speaking, has been broken, however careful and frequent the back-reference. Nevertheless, after an extended period of reflection with the same group of people, something of the integrity of the phenomenon, and of the nuances of group reflections, is understood. Despite this, as in all phenomenology, we have to rely on sincerity and careful critical reflection. The material which forms the basis of Researcher Reflection is essentially a trace of that which was 'alive' and becoming to the group and individual participants. This is a necessary forfeit if the research is to progress to more general insights and relate its findings to the wider 'body of knowledge'.

A fundamental limitation, or condition, of the present research is *the group*, and in particular its effectiveness as a medium for the authentic explication of experience and for the recognition of themes which preserve the integrity of the phenomenon. Further, the *researcher* must also be 'brought to account' both as 'secretary' to the group and in the subsequent Researcher Reflections. These reflections must respect the integrity of the group reflections. A potential danger is the *corruption* of them by the researcher through attempts to 'force' them into 'inauthentic', or outside, categories. In particular, when relating the reflections to the wider literature the researcher should not be over-ready to integrate with and recognise apparent correspondence with the categories of other studies. In the present research, the Researcher Reflection was

divided into two stages to reduce this danger. First, I reflected back into the group reflections to develop the gatherings; only then did I reflect beyond to the wider literature.

A further danger for Researcher and Group Reflection on remembered experience, and related to presupposition, is a kind of *post-rationalisation*. In other words, we may see a pattern where none is experienced, with hindsight recognise a chain of events which were experienced only as an unfolding unknown future, and we might even 'see' a phenomenon where one was not encountered in 'actual experience'. This problem is particularly important for Researcher Reflection, since whilst considering the group material as a whole may reveal important insights, these may be at variance with the phenomenon as experienced by the participants and therefore potentially inauthentic to it. However, the post-rationalisation argument presupposes that 'experience' stops when the moment of encounter with environment is past, and that reflection is radically separate from that encounter. Phenomenology emphasises the enmeshment, or more accurately unity of experience and reflection, but also reveals the important distinction between 'authentic' and 'inauthentic' reflection, or meditative and calculative thinking (Heidegger 1966). If we are honest, respect the integrity of our experience and open to the phenomenon, then our awareness of the phenomenon expands, but if we seek to race to outside categories, to manipulate and confine the phenomenon, then we lie and impose 'post-rationalisation' and lose sight of the actual phenomenon. As already noted the group context encourages a more authentic reflection. In keeping to the

group material, the researcher seeks to continue this respectful attitude.

As already partially suggested, there may be potential for conflict between group and researcher reflections. In addition to the necessarily different perspectives and motives of researcher and participants, there is also the difference between the *individual and shared*, or group, 'view'. In the Ushaw Moor group there was both a discernible group consensus, but at the same time each member had his or her own particular perspective within, and on some occasions in contrast or addition. I have considered something of the individual participants' perspectives in *Grouping 2.5*, though in the interest of anonymity I have not been able to disclose detailed accounts. The Record commentaries also give some idea of the individual perspectives. My own perspectives are in part revealed in *Prologue 1.0* and *Personality 3.5*.

The research relies on, or is restricted to, experiences that might be 'said', that is expressed through *language*. As Douglas (1971 p9) reminds us within the context of social meanings of everyday life: we need "...some form of communication with the members of that society or group; and, to be valid or reliable, any such communication with the members presupposes an understanding of their language, their uses of that language..." In the context of local residents and the outside researcher, it is vital to appreciate the nuances of dialects. Working with the group over almost a year, and the informal,

conversational style of meetings, including non-research interactions with participants (as in socials), enables the researcher to tune in to local dialect, and encourages the group to develop a common language and understanding. There are still possible problems when the research findings are shared with a wider audience. This is in part tackled through the creation of a Group Record, which is both for the group and for a wider readership. Researcher Reflection, both the gatherings and attempts to relate the findings to the wider literature (3.1;3.2) also form an important part of this communication process. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize the specificity of theme and gathering 'definitions', since the labels chosen, though convenient, do not necessarily hold equivalent meanings and nuances to everyday language, nor that of experiential research in general. Fieldwork with groups rather than individuals, and of extended interaction rather than one-off meetings, seems to encourage more open use of local dialect, and possibly the emergence of group specific nuances. Yet, at the same time, this extended interaction with participants enables the researcher to acquire an understanding of dialect and nuances. Furthermore, and probably more significantly, it would seem that if people are to explicate and share their experiences authentically, then it must be most readily expressible in their everyday language, or local dialect, rather than the more formal 'Queen's English', or some technicalised language. After all, any language or dialect presupposes, within its structure and vocabulary, particular senses of the world [3].

'Beginning' and 'end' of all research are crucial. In particular,

in participatory fieldwork, such as Group Reflection, there are the problems of *group formation*, or inception, and *disengagement* at the end of the research (see 2.2; 2.3). Inception is both the setting up of the group and approach to the phenomenon for study. In the present research, a 'gatekeeper' or host member was found who suggested a number of possible participants. With the hostess, I had managed to arrive at a general statement "an interest in our experiences of the local environment, and a desire to recognise general themes in our experiences," and an understanding that the research envisaged a year-long commitment, probably of one hour meetings fortnightly. It is important that the hostess has a clear, if partial, appreciation of the research aim and strategy, and that the researcher appreciates the understanding the hostess has. This is an obvious but vital point. It is, therefore, important to ~~both~~ give a sense of the research idea, however open it is to subsequent group development,*but* to make explicit the level of commitment envisaged, to all potential participants. In the informal interviews, or conversations, I had with each person suggested by the hostess, this was presented. The general formulation being something along the lines of: "Are you interested in your experiences of the local environment? Would you like to meet with other local people, in a small group, to share some of these experiences and explore them? The group would meet in Ushaw Moor and for about a year, probably hour-long meetings every two weeks." In addition, these informal interviews allowed a preliminary getting to know one another, and so prepared the way for an effective researcher-participant and group rapport. Furthermore, the first few meetings are crucial, for they set the tone of the research and

strongly influence participant commitment. For the first meeting I chose the topic field - contrasts between Ushaw Moor today and in the past - since this appeared to be of common interest for all the participants. From then on the group suggested their own topics and began to focus the exploration on to *those topics that seemed most pertinent to them and their experience.*

Quite naturally, at first each participant wanted to ask questions about the research aims and be asked specific questions about their experiences. With patience, trust and light humour, it is possible to encourage the group to develop their own formulation of the focus of interest for the group reflection. I encouraged the group to talk about experiences rather than to wait on questions, and I emphasized my role as 'pupil' and theirs as 'teachers'. People adapt and learn by doing, and the group soon "got into the swing of it", as Eleanor put it. The conversational approach, the mutual stimulation of sharing memorable experiences, and the trust and friendship that was built up enabled a true group reflection to emerge within the first few meetings. From then on all participants had a high level of commitment to the group, and engaged fully in all the meetings. Group enthusiasm and commitment must be maintained if the research is to be effective. Rowles (1978a) achieved this with his participants by developing friendship and trust, through limited participation in the their lives and a willingness to respect their personal integrity. I also relied on friendship and trust, and in a more limited way joined with the participants individually and socially in occasional activities outwith the research, such as several group meals and

visiting a sick member (see 2.2).

Disengagement is often considered a problem in participant observation and other forms of participatory and extended research interaction. This can be a problem for the researcher, but where research is explicit, it can be a particular concern for participants. In-depth, extended interactions, such as Rowles' (1978a) work with individual old people, lead to the development of deep relationships of trust and friendship. Literally, the research and the researcher can become a significant, even essential, part of the participant's life. On a human level the ending of research, and disengagement can be emotional and give a sense of loss. The problem, however, is not unique in everyday social relationships. The discontinuity of research disengagement was eased in the present research by making explicit well in advance the limited period of the group, and discussing this disengagement, such as conversation about each other's future plans and hopes. Furthermore, within the three phases of the Group Reflective strategy there was a preparation for this disengagement. The third fieldwork phase shifted to themes and group work on a written record. The Group Record, gave an important sense of achievement and completion. Further, in contrast to much experiential work where the researcher disengages the research through setting meeting dates and writing an independent report, in the present research the participants were directly involved in the build-up to disengagement, since they ultimately determined the number of meetings in Phase 3 and their dates, participated in the creation of the Group Record, and made the final meeting, a month or so after the fieldwork

itself, into a special occasion by organising a meal.

Of course, participatory research is dependent on the abilities and personalities of those involved. As *secretary* to the group and the 'odd man out', the researcher has a role demanding certain qualities - a willingness to listen attentively, when necessary to be supportive verbally and non-verbally, a patience to allow people to express themselves, a sense of humour and a cheerfulness, and an ability to set people at ease, nurture trust and friendship. Yet at the same time this must remain a working relationship. This was encouraged in the present research through the meeting agendas and series agreed with the group, and the three phase structure of the fieldwork. Taping meetings both frees the researcher to listen attentively and responsively, and enables the researcher to monitor his own impact on the group discussion and the group itself. The tapes were transcribed and studied as the research progressed, and in this way I was able to respond to my 'mistakes' as they arose (see2.2).

Explicated and written down experiences might be seen as 'artificial', and even deceptive, for in being interrelated with other experiences they become gradually more separate from their specific context, and the implicate details of personal biography and lifeworld. Much phenomenological research lays emphasis on the enmeshment of experience in these contexts and relies heavily on careful description of them. Within group reflection such detailed description is not sought, but to enable group sharing of experiences participants naturally give a 'pertinent context', 'filling in' some

contextual detail from their biography and lifeworld to enable other members to appreciate their expressed experience. This may be more valuable than the more extended and thorough phenomenological descriptions. However, outwith the group context this lack of more thorough contextual description may be a limitation on the sharing of experiences and themes, and further critical reflection on them by others.

I have only scratched the surface in these reflections. Many of these problems and limitations could be reduced in future research, but may not necessarily arise where method is allowed to be responsive to the phenomenon of study.

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(1) The last two subsections (3.1;3.2) are closely linked, and complementary, one essentially looking back to, or within, the group reflections, the other looking out towards, or seeking dialogue with, the wider literature. Likewise, the next two subsections (3.3;3.4) are complementary. *Reflections* looks back, whilst *Responsive Application* looks beyond to possible future research and wider 'application', substantive and methodological. Both only begin major reflective journeys which must ultimately be a concern for future exploration.
(2) The problems and limitations of Group Reflection are also considered in *Opening Environmental Experience* (Rodaway 1987).
(3) For an interesting essay on 'language' see Heidegger (1971d), also Mugerauer (1985), in hermeneutics Ricoeur (1981). NB. Wittgenstein's distinction between that which can be 'said' and that which can only be 'shown'.

3.4 RESPONSIVE APPLICATION

I have discussed some of the insights gained into environmental experience (see *3.1*, *3.2*) and the method, *Group Reflection*, but reflection need not stop here. We need to consider the wider 'relevance' of the research findings, substantive and methodological, that is *look beyond*. In this subsection, I will only begin this reflection and offer some brief suggestions.

Two topics might be recognised [1];

1) future research possibilities; and
2) wider use of substantive and methodological findings.

'Application', whether as future research or as wider use, must be *responsive to the individual research situation, phenomena studied and the researcher(s)* (see Relph 1985b, Seamon 1983b, Zimmerman 1983, 1985). Application must, therefore, not be an external and manipulative exercise, as in the application of scientific findings or explanations. The present research should not be seen as offering prior categories, models or theories, nor a fixed method or procedure. Here 'application' is not so much the employment of a ready-made package of knowledge, nor the testing of such prior knowledge, nor the seeking of repeatability of finding. Rather, in the phenomenological context 'application' must be considered in its more basic characterisation, namely that of 'close attention' and, by extension,

considered as sensitivity and responsiveness. Research in this context might be likened to 'experience' in its more everyday, that is "to know by practice or trial" [2]. The research, substantively and methodologically, offers a starting point for future research, suggesting (though not dictating) possible directions. The presuppositions of this research, and the particularity of the proposed study situation, need to be considered before any 'application'. Today, there is a second generation of 'phenomenologists' who do not seek crude applications, verification and repeatability of findings or methods. Instead, they seek critical and interpretative progress, looking back to previous work, and forward to what is beyond, to yet further dimensions of phenomena, but also respecting the phenomenon of study in the given situation (see Seamon 1986a). The whole process is one of corroboration (Seamon 1983b), refinement and sincerity. It is not merely identification with explications, but the releasement towards phenomena, that is further explication (see 1.4). Here, therefore, we are referring to 'responsive application', an essentially humble process, an open attitude and a tuning-in to a given situation.

We have already, in part, considered the relationship with existing research in environmental experience and implied some possible directions for future research (3.1; 3.2). Nevertheless, some further more explicit suggestions may be made with regard to research directions which might clarify and complement the present study. Much of these surfaced during discussions with the Ushaw Moor Group at the end of Phase 3 of the fieldwork.

Research might continue 'vertically', that is essentially within the present topic and method. This might include research on the specific themes suggested by the group, such as looking, looking-after and out-of-place. Alternatively, it might distinguish more explicitly specific situations, such as the different seasons of the year, major changes in individuals' lives and the environments, particular parts of the local environment, or occasions, as for instance on returning from a holiday away, when showing a visitor around, and the memories of first impressions on moving into the area. The strategy of group reflection could also be further refined, with increased use of activities and alternative modes of presentation of findings. These might include greater use of photographs and video-film, the keeping of personal or group diaries, going on walks or drives, using painting, poetry and writing stories, and forming exhibitions [3].

'Horizontally' future research might seek dialogue and integration with other related topics and strategies. For instance, the findings of the present research would seem to have dialogue with Rowles' work on old people and the geography of ageing (1978a, 1980, 1983, 1986), Seamon's geography of the lifeworld (1979a), Pocock's experiential fieldwork (1983b), and Relph's more personal reflection (1976, 1981, 1982). In particular, attention could be placed on phenomena congruent with 'environmental experience', such as lifeworld, place, roots, home, community, image, and local identity. Furthermore, there is potential for exploring the dimensions and role of the particular senses, such as hearing and smell, and emotions

such as fear or contentment. There is potential methodological dialogue with Seamon's awareness group approach (1979a), Burgess' use of the group analytic approach (1985b, et al 1987a/b), in reference to 'theme recognition', the conceptual encounter approach (De Rivera 1981), and, in a broader and more educational context, the group review strategy used by the Brathay Hall Trust (1987).

The Ushaw Moor Group suggested that future research could be conducted with other groups and in other environments. They appreciated both the 'uniqueness' of their group and yet the potential for other groups to reach some degree of 'commonality' - or 'corroboration'. Such groups might consist of people with similar, or different, socio-economic and educational backgrounds to the Ushaw Moor Group. Especially, it was felt a younger aged group would offer important contrast. Group reflection could also be developed in the study of other types of environment, notably the work place, the school or college, and tourist environments.

Group reflection is about *caring and sharing*, and reveals and develops *sensitivity and understanding*. In short it provides a context for both explicating taken-for-granted experience, attitudes and values, and developing a shared understanding of these. It is in these that it has wider use both within and without research. The Ushaw Moor Group emerged as a situation both for research and for friendship development. As one member recalled: I gained a more rounded view of my companions. Further as another added, they learnt about Ushaw Moor, their local environment, and about research, that is: "I

hadn't realised people could do this kind of exploration..." (see 2.4 (commentaries)). These social and educational dimensions offer much potential. For instance, group reflection might be effective in sensitisation to local environment; and to the local issues (not necessarily environmental); developing action groups; community care groups; in the education of children and adults; in visitor or tourist education; and in environmental response studies, in both old and new environments, with local people and visitors; and even welcome-groups for newcomers to an area, particularly in new housing schemes.

As examples of the wider use of Group Reflection, two situations can be outlined:

1) environmental education for all age groups; and
2) more sensitive or 'responsive' local planning, design and architecture.

Here I am not referring to education as learning a given body of knowledge, or 'rote learning', rather to education as *exploration*, *doing*, *and self-discovery*. There is a growing literature by geographers concerned with such participatory education, where what is to be learnt is not specified so much as how learning might unfold, that is an attitude, opportunity or direction to be cultivated. Much of this 'education' has focused on the taken-for-granted and on the development of greater sensitivity about and concern for natural, historical and cultural environments or landscapes (eg Relph 1984). Much of this work is inspired by phenomenology (eg Seamon 1979b, Copeta 1986) and focuses on the individual. Environmental education is a concern both for the more 'formal' education of young people (eg

Goodey 1974b, Copeta 1986) and the more 'informal' education, or discovery, of other age groups (eg Goodey 1982, Relph 1982).

As in the present research, there is a promotion of the 'open' or receptive attitude. Relph, using the work of Ruskin, has promoted 'seeing clearly' and careful description. Taking up Heidegger's 'sparing and preserving', and 'dwelling poetically', he develops the concept of 'environmental humility' (Relph 1981). This concept needs further development, but implies a whole new style of environmental education, one that cultivates receptiveness, caring, responsibility, patience, guardianship, humility, and a sense of wholeness. Seamon has considered the value of Goethe's approach to the natural world, which has similarities with Ruskin's and with phenomenology, and its implications for education (Seamon 1978). He has also explored the use of environmental awareness groups as both a research tool and a form of education (Seamon 1979a).

However, group reflection offers something more than a receptiveness to taken-for-granted environment and experience. It encourages the sharing of sensitivity, and through reflective discussion, theme recognition and development, the explication and generation of concepts and understandings. The group can also generate a 'report', either with the help of the researcher or independently. This 'report' both summarises their discoveries and offers them to other people for critical reflection, 'corroboration' or identification. Furthermore, the group can generate its own 'educational mechanisms', such as the activities noted earlier. Much

research into the experience of children and young people relies on observation and commentary by adults, or some form of questioning (eg Rosenberg 1969, Friedberg 1969). True participant observation, or experiential involvement, is not possible by adults. Nevertheless, it might be possible to involve children and adults more directly in the research into their own enviroments and experiences through sensitisation exercises and games (eg Pocock 1983b, Copeta 1986), and adults can reflect on their own childhood memories (Hart 1979). However, since Group Reflection is essentially a simple, open and responsive strategy, it would seem feasible for young people (and other age groups) to operate it on their own, within wider courses of study, as a 'project'. Because it requires a series of meetings in order for experiences and attitudes to be explicated fully, themes recognised, and a 'report' compiled, it would seem less suitable for on-site sensitisation of tourists or visitors to scenic, historic and cultural environments. Here the nature trail, town trail, and guide book seem more appropriate (eg Goodey 1982).

Nevertheless, group reflection need not be confined to environmental experience and geographic research. It might be useful in oral histories, exploring social and economic behaviour of individuals and institutions, research and therapy in emotion and other psychological topics, including deviant and retarded behaviour, drugs and smoking [4]. Both substantively and methodologically, the present study has potential for responsive application in *oral history*. Oral history relies upon the spoken testimony of living witnesses of recent history, and is therefore essentially a 'history

of survivors' and dependent on memory. It usually involves an extended series of conversations between a researcher and a survivor, which are taped and interpreted by the researcher. It , therefore, has important affinities with the present research, both its interest in remembered experience and the relationship of trust and sharing between researcher and participant. Of the many problems oral history faces, group reflection might contribute, in particular, to the easing of two of them. First, stimulating the recall of past events, particularly the more taken-for-granted aspects of them, which may nevertheless be of vital importance. Here a group of survivors of a given period might mutually stimulate each other's' recall in a way that the researcher cannot. Secondly, researcher interpretations remain the outsider view, and can sometimes be at variance with the survivor's actual view of events. Group reflection, with the use of theme recognition and the writing of a group record, enables the crucial initial interpretation, or first ordering, to be generated by the participants. From this more authentic base and partial corroboration (in the group), the researcher can then relate the discoveries to the other sources, such as written records of the period [5]. Further, since group reflection has similarities to other strategies, such as this, it may be fruitful to consider how it might be operated in conjunction with these other strategies. For instance, Burgess (1985b, et al 1987a/b) has used small groups (group analytic approach) prior to the formulation of a questionnaire survey.

Other major areas where the present research has relevance, or wider use, are *planning, environmental design and architecture*. The

insights into experience of the everyday environment suggest areas worth further exploration by these fields and support the thinking of phenomenological, participatory and community based architecture (eg Norberg-Schultz 1980, 1985, Harries 1983; Seamon 1986c; Coates et al 1987; Downen et al 1987). Here we must think not so much of 'crude application' of acquired knowledge, but the *responsive application* noted earlier '6'. The recognised themes in part reflect the specific situation and individuals involved in the present study, yet also corroboration by other studies suggests that they also reflect some more general qualities of environmental experience. Group themes are clearly relevant for planning, design, improvement, maintenance and appreciation of everday environments. For instance, themes such as nothingness and out-of-place, the three 'dwelling resolutions', and the group's linking of environmental experience, place and community, lend support to some of the 'discoveries' of Alexander (summarised in Coates et al 1987). Specifically, "environments are made of recurring spatial patterns of activities and events rather than things" which exist at various levels (p22); and "...beautiful places cannot emerge unless large numbers of people are involved in a participatory process of place-making which once again joins architect and user, and designing and building"(p26). In other words, the present research findings and method might contribute to bridging the divide between professionals or experts, and their theories and models, and the everyday lives and lived world of 'actual environments' or places as experienced by those living and working in them. Also the importance given to nature in and around the built environment supports the work of Fairbrother (1970, 1974).

The group reflective strategy also suggests a possible 'context' for user participation in planning, design and architecture, which could nevertheless preserve, or respect and value, the specialist skills of these professions. Further, it could allow both users and professionals to explicate actual, or authentic, needs and desires, share sensitivity and understanding of one another's positions, and maybe develop possible environmental 'solutions'. Uzzel (1982) has noted the *co-orientation problem* in planning. Perception is of a social nature, that is the planner has both his own perception and his view of the perceptions of local people or environmental users. Likewise, local people have their own perceptions, including views about other local people's perceptions, planners' perceptions, and notions of the values they think they are expected to hold. Furthermore, as Gordon (1909 p5) notes in relation to aesthetics, but of wider relevance, "people know very little about their own tastes, and are as often as not disappointed when they get what they thought they wanted. The chief purpose of aesthetics is to help us to clarify and to become conscious of our own tastes" and by extension those of others. Group reflection offers a strategy for explicating prejiduces, presuppositions, and taken-for-granted attitudes. It would seem to be a suitable 'first stage' prior to actual policy formulation and other environmental action. Group reflection could provide a forum for planners and local people, sensitising one another to each other's positions, sharing understanding so as to have a more appropriate planning, design and architecture. Such 'participation' might enable these professions to tune in to lived worlds, in contrast to the more

usual reliance on a hypothetical, abstract and formal world dominated by economic, technological and aesthetic cocerns. It might also encourage greater cooperation and understanding between these groups, and a more appreciated and satisfactory environment. However, such strategies demand wide participation by the relevant parties, but smallish groups for effective dialogue, and time and commitment for a series of meetings, and it is not just a question of sharing perceptions, but also of explicating taken-for-granted values.

This is only the beginning of a looking beyond. The few comments made here on responsive application have been highly selective and speculative, and I have focused very much on group reflection. This discussion has, however, avoided many deeper issues concerned with the purpose, use or value and ethics of research and application (see *Appendix B*). These are concerns that require far more extensive exploration than could be given here. This short essay has sought to encourage you, the reader, to look beyond the present research, and the confines of the more traditional characterisation of 'application' to a more responsive and creative progress to 'future research' and 'wider use' of both substantive and methodological findings.

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(1) In a phenomenological context, these tasks cannot be considered as separate or independent, but are entwined. Research and application are a necessary unity since each involves stopping to consider a given situation, including what it is and can be, and responding to its potentiality to be or become. Phenomenal knowledge is *process* and therefore continually maturing (Seamon 1983a).
(2) This 'experience' is ofcouse for myself and the group, but it is

also shared with the research community, that is the reader. In other words, to take up the findings in future research, a researcher must take into account *both* the substantive <u>and</u> methodological dimensions.
(3) For the story-writing technique see Keen 1984. In response to my earlier discussion paper (Rodaway 1986), Anne Buttimer suggested the value of video, poetry, painting and creative writing in environmental experience description.
(4) It is also a tool for learning group skills. The 'group review' approach also has these twin roles (Brathay Hall Trust 1987).
(5) Oral history, however, is not confined to academic research, and has been used both in television documentary and in education. In the latter, it has proved a useful tool to allow school children to explore the local history, and one which gains a high degree of commitment from them. In addition, it helps to bring older and younger people together in a sharing relationship. Note *Oral History Journal*.

(6) Christopher Alexander's 'pattern language' is also intended to be more than a mere manual of pre-set design solutions, but rather a starting point for the 'liberation of possibilities' - Alexander 1979, et al 1977; Downen et al 1987; Coates et al 1987.

3.5   PERSONALITY

Finally, it is worth returning to a basic element in experiential, or participatory, research - *authorship*. The present study has been inspired by phenomenology, which reminds us of the inevitable entanglement of the one who studies with what he studies, and how he studies with the findings he generates. Some reflections on this have already been presented in the *Individual Commentaries* (2.4) by the participants and my own reflections on the Ushaw Moor Group (see 2.5), but here I wish to consider myself. This is a difficult and problematic exercise, but I hope it will remind the reader of the significance of this 'context' in which research takes place. The present work began with the presentation of a few personal experiences (1.0) and, therefore, it seems appropriate to bring the work to an end by some reflections on the author of those experiences.

After considerable deliberation, I have chose to label this essay 'Personality', though it is probably not the most accurate title. However, here I will not offer a detailed analysis of my personality, nor consider in any great detail authorship, nor specific details of research-researcher interaction (that is personal experience of the research itself), but offer some 'hint' of the 'person behind the pen'. By now you will have formed, possibly implicitly, a notion of my personality and its influence. It is already evident within the research in the way it was conducted, the type of reflective insights

emphasized and the thesis text itself. I deliberately place this section at the end of the thesis, almost as a 'coda', both to respect your own formulation of my personality and its influence on the research, and to encourage you to reflect also on your own personality as condition when reading and interpreting this thesis.

Most broadly, personality might be taken as "being a person; existence or identity or distinctive character" and therefore "that which constitutes individuality ...". Researchers rarely report on their personality as an element in the research and a condition of the interpretation of its findings. Further, whilst some report reflections on their own experience of the phenomenon under study (eg Hart 1979; Eyles 1985), rarely do they reflect directly on their personality, or their personal experience of the research process (eg Rowles 1978a/b). In other words, three kinds of necessary self-reflection may be distinguished: reflection on one's own experience of the *phenomenon* under study; reflection on one's own *personality* in, or authorship of, the research; and reflection on the *research experience* itself. These are entwined and not independent.

Eyles (1985) devotes a whole chapter to self-reflection on his 'senses of place' through a sketch of his own biography. This is valuable as it tells us a lot about his prior knowledge, or presuppositions. However, while he puts this side-by-side with other approaches to the phenomenon - a quantitative survey and an interpretative approach - he fails to give us the 'real' integration -

himself.

In a study of *Children's Experience of Place*, Hart (1979) offers
a more thorough reflection on his own 'images' of childhood place [1].
Interestingly, he places the self-reflection at the end of the book
(as Appendix F) with the effect of stimulating one to continue
reflection on children's experience into one's own childhood
experience of place. Reflecting on various periods of his childhood,
he focuses on remembered images of places. At the same time, through a
lively style and with some self-reflections on the exercise itself, he
sheds a great deal of light, indirectly, on his own personality and
reveals his fascination with childhood places.

Rowles (1978a) gives us his presuppositions in an early chapter
(chapter 2) through presenting a review of existing knowledge, and his
speculations about the geographic experience of older people. More
importantly, throughout his book he gives us much insight into his
experience of the research process, his hopes and his changing ideas
as it unfolded, and in so doing we learn a lot about his personality,
albeit much of the time in the occasional comment and, often more
implicitly, as we see his relationships with the older people and his
research method develop (see also Rowles 1978b).

Therefore, in the present research I have tried to take account
of these three aspects of self-reflection - phenomenon, personality
and research experience - and to make them more explicit. InSection
1, I sought to 'open' to the phenomenon and reveal presuppositions,

through a short essay on my own environmental experiences (1.0),
reviews of past research (1.2; 1.3) and an outline of the thesis idea
(1.5). In Section 2, I considered the particular fieldwork strategy
(2.2) and the group experience (2.5), and so revealed something of
the research experience of myself, and the group. Therefore, in this
subsection I concentrate on aspects of my personality which might be
significant to the research as it emerged and the present work. I
choose not to write a *curriculum vitae*, nor give a detailed biography,
but reflect on those aspects of my personal interests which might
indicate those aspects of my personality most pertinent to the present
research. I hope to suggest them as influences on the research, though
I do not attempt to draw out specific causal relationships. I take
long-run interests outwith academic life as 'windows' on my
personality, but do not attempt deeper psychological self-analysis.
The exploration is, of course, highly subjective and selective, but
attempts to be honest and relevant[2].

These long-run interests can be grouped under three labels:

> 1) sound and music;
> 2) walking and climbing;
> 3) people, thought and faith.

These three interest fields might be visualised as holograms on
my personality, and interrelate with each other in belonging to a
single whole.

It is *sound and music* because my interest has always been just
that. The sense I most treasure is hearing, the ability I most

earnestly wish to continually develop is listening. We all have 'root',
or dominant, interests against which the rest of our personality seems
to pivot. Mine is this interest. My 'instinct' is listening before
looking. Only recently this was brought home to me as I stood like a
fool waiting to cross at a dumb pelican crossing while the 'green man'
flashed and other people were crossing. I dwell in listening, it makes
me think, it lingers, it defines my sense of the world, my coming to
terms with it, and myself.

I have always been interested in music from the point of view of
'sound to music'. Further, this interest is in the structure that
leads to music, the sounds brought together in some meaningful way.
This is not just structure, its form, but how it is made, or how I can
make it. For me listening is not just hearing, it is also making,
taking possession, re-creating and making something more. Here music,
is art, is a refinement of everyday experience, an expression of ones
sensitivity and understanding of reality. From childhood I've always
had the urge to share my views about sound and music, to interpret the
efforts of others, and to put sounds together myself through
instruments and paper and pen. I learnt the violin and played in an
orchestra, taught myself the organ, went to concerts, collected and
listened to records, found music on the radio - all to gain insight
into 'how to do it'. This compositional perspective means I have a
very catholic taste in music, both from Renaissance to the latest
avant garde, to the music of other cultures (notably Bali, India and
Japan); and from 'crude' to 'refined' instruments and voices, to
synthesizers and computers - though my interest in the latter is more

as tools.

Yet, at the end of the day, I get greatest pleasure from the 'symphonies of nature', or even of the man-made environment, of sounds coming together, making a sum greater than the parts. I delight in the songs of birds, the mountain stream, the wind in the trees, a bus climbing a hill, human voices, the noise of factories - not as isolated sounds but as sounds coming together, interacting, competing, combining, composing... I feel that the 'music' we hear, or experience, is our sense of reality, our own personal composition, our coming-to-terms with the world. There is a world of difference between a 'mere' soundscape, a collection of co-existing sounds, and a meaningful ensemble, or 'symphony'. In one sense we 'compose' it, yet in another we are just 'opening' to what is already 'composed' in the integration of the natural and social worlds, or places, around us. Music proper is merely a more formal and explicit manifestation of this. My interest is, therefore, both grounded in sensitivity to and delight in immediate experience, and deep thought, or critical reflection and interpretation. Relatively abstract thought about the 'architecture' of sound, 'theories of music', and how to transform or refine this into an art - a shared understanding - fascinates me. Yet, also I must hear, for music is only realised, like all experience, in the expression, the communication, the performance and the listening.

The interest is associated with a dynamic sense of ordering, one which waits with eagerness for order to emerge or unfold, which seeks to recognise order, to continually 'correct' the sense appreciated.

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This leads me towards an appreciation of the unity of parts and wholes, the sense of what I would nowadays call a 'dynamic implicate wholeness' (see Bohm 1983). My heightened experiences of sound and music arise most definitely when I can allow myself to be in suspension, 'in tune' to the unfolding, remembering and anticipating, and continually re-establishing meaning (eg 1.0). This is best done in 'solitude', whether in the street or the countryside, or in a concert hall, or best of all listening to music, or sounds, in one's own home in the dark with eyes closed. Therefore, this interest gives me a deep commitment to a receptive attitude, one that first seeks direct experience and suspends judgment (or holds as 'temporary' all assessments); and secondly, at the same time, is fascinated by structure and implicate order.

There is also an important commitment to sharing and caring. We realise our understanding, our experience, in part through expressing it. The music on the page comes to life when performed. I become satisfied with my understanding of particular sounds or musics when I can share with others my experience of them. Through my attempts to write music I have developed my sensitivity and understanding of sound and music, but also I have come to terms with my deafness and ignorance. Socrates was right when he argued that "one must learn by doing the thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try." We gain our deepest experience through both receptiveness, or caring, and with expression, or sharing. In other words, the sounds or the music seems to pass through us to the wider world and to other people. One of the greatest satisfactions is to

share the revelation of an experience of sound or music with another person. This sharing gives life a sense of depth, and roots in the world around us, and companionship with our fellow beings. The music and the fellow hearer become friends. This was most clearly brought home to me when I took an interest in *avant garde* music after a background of classical masters, and later when I began to explore music of other cultures, and more recently electroacoustic compositions. Our first hearing of these musics is one of incomprehension, it is 'pot-luck' whether we can identify with them, but as we become more familiar, as we learn to 'trust' them, to remember and anticipate, a sense is established and a love and intimacy emerges. Enabling other people also to share an appreciation of these musics can further enrich and strengthen our own delight in them.

Walking and climbing is closely linked to both the other interest fields. Here the challenge and adventure of an unfolding reality is more obvious. Like all interests, it has changed over time. Once it was the desire to climb a particular mountain or complete a certain walk, now it is more leisurely, I can enjoy a mountain even if I don't get to the top, or I'll do the same mountain time and time again. Nevertheless, as in my life in general, there is an apparent contradiction between a patience to enjoy the walking or climbing, and an impatience to get it done. I like to have a target, to push myself, to have a challenge. It is in this that the contradiction is 'closed', as I plan optimistically, inevitably fall short, and re-plan. A sense of accomplishment, of completion, 'getting somewhere', is therefore

important, whether listening to a piece of music, doing a walk or climb, or a research task. The planning or ordering sets the tasks to be made complete. Again therefore there is a sense of order and a desire to plan but also to continually revise plans responsively. It might be the climb itself: can we reach the summit by midday, which route should we take? but there is also reading a map, 'reading' a mountain, finding a route, and a 'harmonising' of your present fitness and the environmental conditions, and of course considering all this in relation to your companions' abilities, fitness and interests.

I treasure a sense of the universal, the oneness, and a companionship with the environment and with others. I would almost never climb on my own. Even though you may climb in silence and hear only your own breath, the companionship of other people is still there in the common toil. There is both a solitude and a sharing. Likewise, when you play in a string quartet, your part is unique to the music and yet you are sharing in a greater whole. It is whilst climbing and walking that I often think deeply and have the deepest sense of myself. You listen to your breathing, your heart pounding, feel the ache of your legs, or the pressure on your chest from the effort. The task and the environment seem to excite the brain, I remember a tune or make one up as I trudge along, mental puzzles gain solutions... and it was on a mountain that I came to appreciate some of the essential meanings of Christian faith. As with sound and music, walking and climbing encourage sensitivity and understanding, a sense of a more 'real' life, in contrast to day-to-day existence, or as we put it in Group Reflection, when ordinarily we are 'hurrying'. Is this why so

many people feel only to be themselves, to 'live', when engaged and relaxed in their favourite interests?

People and *thought* are closely linked since my thought, my understanding, most rapidly progresses when I am sharing with others, especially in one-to-one or small group discussions. In expressing an idea I establish understanding for myself and confirm decisions about ideas. It is in the act of communication that we get to know others, them us and realise a deeper sense of ourselves and our understanding. How often is it that we begin to understand something only at the moment when we are struggling to express it to someone else? We may not get the understanding across that time but in communicating our mind finally establishes contact with the issue at hand and understanding emerges (including an acceptance of our ignorance). Just as music is only fully realised in performance and listening, so experience is completed in sharing it, expressing it to others. A dream gains significance and gives insight much more when we tell someone about it, life doesn't seem as bad when we share our problems, joys seem greater when we share them with others.

I work best in sharing environments, where people are willing to share, trust and, as we say, 'be themselves'. I have no time for show or image. On the mountainside, designer gear and flash walking shoes are no substitute for genuine climbing experience, fitness and endurance; in music, all the finest words of the critic and theorist can never be a substitute for listening to the sounds themselves. Further, I always prefer the free-run conversation to a formal

question and answer situation. Therefore, the small group is particularly satisfying, not 'battling' in a crowd, nor spending 'too much' time alone. Within such groups I am most 'alive', both mentally and physically. Maybe this is the main reason why I felt so attracted to a group strategy. Nevertheless, not all groups are attractive. Groups dominated by one person do not attract me, nor groups in which I too easily find myself becoming dominant. I recently changed church because I felt it was not authentic to the faith, notably the teaching that calls us to be humble servants to one another. After all, life is a gift, and so it can rightly said "life is for sharing".

I have a rich sense of humour, which proved valuable in the Ushaw Moor Group but, nevertheless, it is grounded in an essentially serious attitude to life. From *faith* I have learnt to appreciate the privilege of life, its holiness and purpose. If I didn't take life as ultimately quite serious, I don't think I would be spending so much of it in deep thought, and in doing research. Like Carl Nielsen, I have a fascination that we are alive and in life. This leads me to a fundamentally questioning attitude and an eagerness to experience life in its richest and deepest sense. Faith is important to this since it opens ones eyes to the wonders of creation, to the importance of respecting all life, serving others and, significantly, to accepting ones ultimate ignorance. This demand for humility is an important check on my 'self-propulsion'. Further, the 'leap of faith', a trusting that is integral to religious belief is important. In research, and especially phenomenological reflection, one has to put a kind of trust in a largely unknown phenomenon that lies somewhere ahead, and patiently

call and wait for its unfolding. The recording of a piece of music might be played at double speed and all the notes comprehended, yet the real sense of the music is somehow lost in this rapidity. It no longer emerges naturally and freely, but is thrust forward and past, as it races into oblivion. Faith is therefore not just thought, belief, and ideas, but it is a patience, a trust, and a way of living. AS I noted earlier, for me life comes into its fullness through sharing, and so also faith comes to its fullness in a community of faith. Church, therefore, forms an important part of my life, a sharing environment whether it is services, Bible study groups, the Youth Club, or other social activities.

Finally, People and Thought gives me a positive attitude to life. I am always 'journeying', deepening my sensitivity to the world and to people, and widening and maturing my understanding. Probably this is why I'm doing research in the first place. In all the interest fields there is this, for it is the continual coming to understanding that I value. To a large extent the journey is more important, or at least equal to, the final destination; in any case my 'doubting' mind would always question whether I had arrived? Therefore, as is probably clear by now, all my interests show little respect to the work-play dichotomy, and I take all three interest areas as seriously as my research work, or as lightly, and *vice versa*.

I hope that the reflections in this subsection have contributed something to an understanding of the present research, through giving it a more personal context. With hindsight, and in the light of all

three interest areas, it seems quite natural that I undertook the present research journey, was attracted to environmental experience, took a particular interpretation of phenomenology, and spent almost a year working in the field with a small group of local people. But the questions remain: Do the insights generated by the present research enrich our understanding of experience in the everyday environment? And does the group and researcher reflection offer an effective access to the authentic nature of the phenomenon studied? I believe the answer to both questions is 'yes'; but the reflective journey has only just begun.

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(1) Hart's use of the term 'images' in his essay seems to be very similar, though not synonymous, with the term 'heightened experience' used in the present study.
(2) With reflection ,I have come to realise that inevitably any self-report on personality presents both oneself 'as-I-feel-I-am', which includes both a historical legacy and a hope in one's own becoming, and oneself 'as-others-seem-to-see-me'. I believe my report balances towards the first. Further, in choosing long—term interests as signposts to personality I assume that there is a kind of consanguinity (blood relationship) between the characteristics of one's interests and aspects of personality.

OVERVIEW

The present thesis has taken the reader through a complex
reflective progression from an initial interest in 'aesthetic
experience', through group reflection on 'heightened experience and
everyday environment' , to critical researcher reflection on the group
material and research method. Therefore, an overview provides a useful
summary and final clarification of material presented. In addition, it
represents a formal disengagement from the research task.

It is important to remember that this research is fundamentally
inspired by phenomenology (1.4), and therefore holds to "an ethos of
sensitivity, understanding and sharing" (p16). Consequently, it does
not seek to satisfy many of the popular tenets of scientific research,
such as objectivity and verifiability. However, it is probably more
accurate to argue that phenomenology redefines these and so, for
instance, verification is replaced by authenticity and corroboration,
and statistical repeatablity by a complex of unique cases each
containing elements of similarity and contrast. It is in this context
that critical assessment of research is redefined, in terms of
authenticity and corroboration, and assessment becomes the shared task
of participants, researcher and readers [1].

The overview briefly considers five general topics - thesis
structure, identifying the phenomenon, some limitations of group

reflection, researcher role, and insights into environmental experience. There is inevitably a degree of repetition of earlier material, and perhaps little that has not previously been mentioned or hinted at, but the aim of this overview is to give the reader a concise and clear picture of the distinctive contribution the present work makes to person-environment studies.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is organised into three distinct sections, each with a high degree of integration but little explicit interconnection. This structure was considered in 'Strategy' (1.1), and the section introductions (2.0; 3.0). The thesis structure is a response to both the underlying philosophy, phenomenology, and the practicalities of group reflective research. As written earlier, "I have sought to allow the method of the research and the style of report to develop in response to the phenomenon under study and with respect to those participating in it..." (pp13-14). Therefore, each main section can initially be taken as a distinctive reflective journey. The first presents my reflections on the literature prior to the empirical stage of the research. Here I search for a phenomenon worthy of study, explore the presuppositions about that phenomenon - heightened experience and everyday environment - and present an outline of an appropriate philosophical base. The emphasis on environmental aesthetics reflects my previous research experience - a landscape evaluation study in Oban (in Argyl) , Scotland), using a street questionnaire with photographs (Rodaway 1984) - and represents the door through which I came into the research field. In exploring

aesthetics (*1.3; 1.5*) I sought to make explicit the presuppositions behind notions such as 'aesthetic' and 'heightened' experience. The research statement (*1.5*), presented at the end of this section, forms a proposal *prior* to the fieldwork. I did not wish to test some prior hypothesis, nor impose on the participants a precise research task, but rather with the proposal I hoped to offer a starting point for reflection and a general topic area [2]. The aim was to allow the research idea to develop and be refined as the research unfolded in response to the phenomenon and those with direct experience of it (the participants).

The second section concentrates on group reflection and forms, as it were, a thesis within a thesis. Here I explain the method (*2.2*) and consider the nature of groups (*2.3*). The fieldwork itself, and the participants' contribution, is then presented as a group record (*2.4*). This is followed by a some informal reflections on the group (*2.5*). In this stage of the research the thesis focuses on heightened experience rather than environmental aesthetics, and the method, group reflection, rather than philosophy [3]. The group played a crucial part in the development of the thesis throughout this stage of the research. They clarified and developed the phenomenal focus, determined the aspects of the phenomenon to be explored (through their choice of topic fields), and developed the method of that exploration - in short, the specific configuration which group reflection was to take, including the style of discussion and activities engaged in.

The final section, labelled 'Significance', forms the main

researcher reflections on the fieldwork, both the method and insights gained into environmental experience. Here, I did not attempt to link the group reflections to the literature previously reviewed in the first section, but instead sought to follow some of the directions the group reflection suggested. In this way I sought to clarify and also reflect beyond the group material. This led me to consider the wider phenomenological literature on human experience, environment and place, and the concept dwelling. This reflective journey was quite independent of the group, and is but one of several possible progressions from their reflections. Therefore, the section does not assess the findings *vis à vis* the research proposal, but rather continues to develop that thesis idea. Further, Section 3 includes my critical reflections on the research as a whole, particularly the group and researcher reflection processes, the researcher role, and the potential for future research (3.3;3.4).

There is much practical value in this three part division since it separates the pre-reflection, fieldwork, and post-reflection. Although such division leads to major breaks in the reflective progression, which might be seen as weakening the overall integration of the thesis, the three sections are intended to be seen as not only distinctive reflective journeys, *but also* as stages in a larger reflective progression. The step between the first and second stages is the result of a decision to allow the group to decide their own 'definition' of the research task and generate their own style of exploration within the group framework. Such a break would seem appropriate in phenomenological research, particularly, where the

researcher has already reflected on the literature and wishes to allow those persons with direct experience of the phenomenon to explicate the phenomenon as it shows itself in itself to them. The step between the second and third stages was a determined attempt on my part to separate group and researcher reflection, that is the participant contribution from my own reflections and critical assessment. Further, this break represents a disengagement from the fieldwork.

The breaks notwithstanding, there are many links between the sections. The research proposal and philosophical position developed in Section 1 forms the starting point of the group reflective research presented in Section 2. Whilst phenomenological terminology was avoided (in part because of the complexities of its concepts to lay participants), the group was nevertheless encouraged to have an 'opening attitude', or receptivity, towards the phenomenon. A pilot study, with other individuals, in the nearby village of Quebec (Co. Durham, England) indicated that terms such as 'aesthetic experience' were problematic, and therefore the Ushaw Moor participants were introduced to the more 'open' term 'heightened experience'. In 1.5, following on from the literature review, heightened experience is presented as a surrogate for aesthetic experience and as almost synonymous with it. However, the group understanding of heightened experience has a much broader reference and refers more to memorable, treasured and sometimes quite unusual experiences, which may or may not have any 'aesthetic' significance. Further, throughout the group reflection, participants also recalled many quite ordinary, or everyday, experiences which were nevertheless important in developing

insights into environmental experience. It is partly as a result of this broadening of focus that the final thesis was given the title *Experience and Everyday Environment*.

Sections 2 and 3 are in marked contrast - as group and researcher reflections, respectively - but, there is much communication between them. The Group Record forms the basis of the gatherings (*3.1*) and the essay on 'Experience Place Dwelling' (*3.2*). The critical reflections in 3.3 develop from the participant commentaries (pp236-241) and my own reflections in 2.5. Further, the ideas presented in 'Responsive Application' (*3.4*) build on suggestions the group made during Phase 3, when the value of the research and possible future research were discussed, as well as my own subsequent reflection on the research as a whole.

Identifying the Phenomenon

The problem of identifying a phenomenon worthy of study is fundamental to any research, positivist or phenomenological. This was considered mainly in section 1 through a review of the literature (*1.2*), reflection on some of the presuppositions in the field (*1.3*), and in the formulation of a research proposal (*1.5*). However, the participants also played an important role in identifying the phenomenon, or making more specific this identification, through the preliminary interviews and initial group meetings.

The present research adopted Heidegger's definition of a

phenomenon (see Heidegger 1983 pp51-55), which can be stated as that
which shows itself in itself to us (this thesis pp87-8). In particular,
the research was interested in the phenomenon as appreciated by those
with direct experience of it (the participants). Since the phenomenon
is that which can be distinguished by the way it reveals itself to us,
the researcher and participants are called to approach the
world-as-experienced with an open attitude so as to be receptive to
phenomena as they might express themselves. A phenomenon presences
(pp108-109) within our consciousness; that is, as *Dasein* we are the
'where', or 'clearing', in which Beings, or phenomena, assert themselves
(see 1.4).

Frequently within the thesis the phrases 'local to the
phenomenon' and 'conversation with the phenomenon' are used. These
might be taken to suggest that a phenomenon is somehow a separate
entity independent from us and analogous to a thing or object.
However, this is *not* the intended meaning of 'phenomenon'. Instead, I
adopt a more phenomenological position which denies object-subject
dualism and recognises our embeddedness as Being-in-the-world.
Therefore, different phenomena are bound up within our Being, and are
only set apart from us by an act of conscious reflection. To be *local*
to a phenomenon is to have direct experience of it, which might be
consciously reflected upon. This conscious reflection on the
phenomenon forms a *conversation* with it, and is analogous to
Heidegger's "listening and hearkening". It is in the conversation with
the phenomenon that pertinent experiences are explicated and themes
recognised. To a great extent we take for granted the many phenomena

that make up our everyday lives and in the habitual stance we live in an assumed world, one that is relatively constant and stereotyped. However, if circumstances change, or the routine is broken, then we may become conscious of specific phenomena.

Phenomenology as the study of phenomena involves not just conscious and systematic reflection on agreed phenomena, but the continual exploration and explication of hitherto unrecognised phenomena or dimensions of a particular phenomenon. 'Heightened experience and everyday environment' is, strictly speaking, not a phenomenon in itself, rather this is a substantive focus or 'region' in which the phenomenon might express itself [4]. From this point of view, the subsequent group and researcher reflections (Sections 2 & 3) are the process of recognising specific phenomena, their dimensions, and possibly something of their fundamental, or essential, nature. These phenomena might include such group themes as nothingness, greenness and growing, withdrawal, and respect and responsibility. Such phenomena are clearly closely related, often interacting and interpenetrating, and therefore throughout the thesis I generally use the singular 'phenomenon' when referring to the many phenomena that are manifest in experience of the everyday environment. Furthermore, it seems that phenomena express themselves at various levels of generality or breadth. For instance, the sense of nothingness might be seen as a broad phenomenon of which the feeling of 'a peacefulness that is somehow a withdrawn quietness' is a more specific phenomenon. However, as noted in 1.4, underlying phenomena themselves are more fundamental aspects, or 'essences'. These are the general or universal

characteristics of a phenomenon common to all or most of its manifestations. The essence, or essential nature, when ultimately located, is irreducible to anything else. The group reflection largely stays at the level of phenomena and their dimensions, though future use of group reflection might encourage much deeper exploration. In the researcher reflections (3.1, 3.2), some attempt is made to go a little deeper towards the fundamental nature of human experience of environment, sense of place, and of dwelling through the gatherings (3.1) looking language, social concept, ordering regimes and aspects of person-environment engagement, and the discussion of experience, place and dwelling (3.2).

Therefore, in the present research, identification of the phenomenon is both a researcher and group task. The researcher seeks to recognise a topic area through reflection on the literature of a given field. As already noted, I entered the research via the 'door' of environmental aesthetics, explored its dimensions and sought to recognise some of the problems and issues of the field, and therefore the 'gaps' in our knowledge that might form areas worthy of research (1.2). From this I recognised a number aspects worthy of further exploration: 1) the everyday, 'lived' or ordinary environment, in contrast to the more usual focus on the special or unique environment; 2) the environment as experienced by local residents, 'insiders', or people living out their day-to-day lives in that environment, in contrast to the more usual focus on the one-off visitor or the

experience of the 'outsider'; 3) the totality of experience in reference both to the social, cultural, biographical and lifeworld context and to the multiplicity of dimensions of experience itself (including all the senses, emotions and associated behaviour) and so giving a more holistic view, in contrast to the more frequent focus on the contemplated view, and the use of the photograph, with a consequent visual emphasis. In addition, at this initial stage, the wider literature of aesthetics seemed to suggest that aesthetic, or heightened, experience would be more accessible to group, or shared, reflection (e g because they are generally salient in memory) and such experience might be especially significant as a kind of hologram of experience in general. Subsequent group reflection proved this to be so, and also that heightened experience provides a gateway to the more taken-for-granted or almost forgotten experience.

The researcher exploration led to a research proposal, which is presented in 1.5 and some of its presuppositions considered. The group then made the topic area more specific to their own situation. This is the identification of the 'region' of the phenomenon, that is where it might show itself in itself to us. This was arrived at by the participants in the preliminary interviews with the researcher and, more importantly, during the early group meetings. I have called it the 'fieldwork statement' and it ran: "an interest in our heightened or memorable experiences in which the local environment plays a part" (p124). This does not recognise an abstract 'environmental

experience', but rather expresses an interest in heightened or memorable experience which also includes reference to the local environment. Phenomenologically this is an important distinction.

Although it could be argued that I might have engaged in a rigorous 'phenomenological reduction' to identify a precise phenomenon, rather than adopting the broad and loose notion of 'heightened experience and everyday environment', I considered it more crucial to allow the group to identify specific phenomena as they manifest themselves to them, the insiders of a particular environment. In other words, I sought to   let the phenomenon (or phenomena) associated with 'heightened experience and everyday enviroment' *show itself in itself to them as they actually experienced it*. The reflections on the research literature and my own experience sought to make explicit some of the existing presuppositions that might easily be imposed unwittingly on the group and so restrict their authentic conversation with the phenomenon.

Some limitations of Group Reflection

A central part of the present research was the development of an appropriate fieldwork strategy that could allow the phenomenon to be authentically expressed and its significance explored by those with direct experience of it. This emerged as group reflection. Whilst I entered this phase of the research with the intention of having a group approach (2.1), the specific form of this was not set. Therefore, 'group reflection' emerged as the group began to take shape

and as participants began to explore their experience in the everyday environment. The specific strategy that emerged is discussed in 'Doing Group Reflection' (2.2) and some of the possible problems (in terms of the use of a group as a research tool) are considered in 'Group Research' (2.3). Both the group and myself critically reflected on the strategy. The participants' reflections are presented in the 'Individual Commentaries' (in2.4), but also form the basis of the reflections in 'Grouping' (2.5). A more extensive consideration of the limitations and problems of this strategy are presented in the critical reflections of 3.3 on the group, the researcher role, and the group and researcher reflection strategies, and to a lesser extent in the discussion of 'Responsive Application' (3.4) [5]. These critiques seek to be sympathetic and constructive, both positive and negative, and above all in tune with the underlying phenomenological position of the research. In addition, it is important to remember that group reflection is a responsive method, though also this is a 'first formulation' of the strategy, and group and researcher reflection should be considered as a whole.

The three main goals of group reflection were: 1) to provide the participants a context in which they could recall and express remembered experiences in which the local environment played a part (experience explication); 2) to encourage participants to explore the significance, or meaning, that these experiences had for them (theme recognition); and 3) to enable these reflections to be shared with others and related to the wider literature on person-environment (group record, researcher reflection). Overall, the group was clearly

effective in all these tasks and the participants themselves were clearly satisfied with the achievement of the group. The participants felt they had both gained insight into their experience of the local environment, and developed a deeper understanding of themselves and each other. The group provided a context in which the researcher could take a backseat role, removing the need for formal questions (as in questionnaires and interviews), and gave the participants freedom to recall a wealth of rich and varied experiences. It proved to be a stimulating context where recall of one participant aided the recall of another, through attentive listening by all members or the 'reminder' of other members' recalled experiences. The group also provided an effective mechanism for the recognition of common and contrasting themes, though it was less effective in the composition of a written record.

Whilst the group context stimulated more authentic experience recall and great number and variety of experiences, nevertheless, in some meetings individual experience accounts were short, truncated or broken-up by the ebb and flow of a group discussion. Preparation before meetings, such as writing down some remembered experiences on cards, and certain activities in meetings, such as the use of photographs, encouraged much more extended, continuous and fuller experience accounts. Furthermore, over the year the participants developed the ability to express themselves more fully, and to listen patiently and attentively to each others' accounts.

Theme recognition, whilst implicit in many of the earlier

meetings, had to be encouraged and made more explicit by the researcher through pointing to several themes already evident. However, once the group appreciated the task, their ability to recognise and explore themes developed rapidly. The themes are complex and overlapping, and, whilst suggestive of themes in the academic literature, cannot be directly related to them. Therefore the themes are a limitation of the present research, but probably not of the group reflective strategy itself. 'Looking' and 'Hurrying' are important structural themes, but the themes in general represent the specific shared experiences rather than indicating more fundamental and general insights into environmental experience. It was partly for this reason that the first stage of the researcher reflection is an exploration of alternative themes, or gatherings, of a more general nature.

It was originally hoped that the group would write a summary record, but in the present study (see 2.4) the researcher wrote the group record whilst the participants formed an 'editorial panel'. This was a group decision reflecting their own assessment of their abilities to write a record and their desire to have a 'professional finish' to their deliberations (and had the added advantage of enabling the record to be compiled within 3 months). The group record would seem to be capable of much improvement, though by what criteria this kind of judgment can be made is difficult to ascertain. Clearly, a vital source of criticism must come from the group itself. For instance, one participant pointed out that something of the life of the experiences was lost when they were written down. This might be

tackled by alternative record media. The editorial sessions allowed the group to discuss alternative strategies (e g video-film, diary accounts) and make inevitable compromises. In future research the group record could be composed as the research progresses rather than as an alternative to a final exercise. This might be a more authentic and effective way of writing a record, since such a continuous account would reveal the unfolding appreciation of the phenomenon. However, having the composition of a record as a final exercise had the advantage of encouraging the participants to stand back from their experiences and themes, and to consider how others - readers of the record - might appreciate their reflections and the significance their insights might have for others. Furthermore, record composition and editing formed a crucial means by which the participants could disengage from the research.

Group reflection also needs to be assessed from the perspective of the subsequent researcher reflection. As noted in the thesis, group reflection sought to bridge the gap between experience accounts and the more abstract categories of the research literature through the recognition of themes. In subsequent reflection I came to see these themes as only a first ordering, and found it productive to make a further alternative and complementary ordering - the gatherings (3.1). The merit of the themes was their generation by the group and their many interrelationships. Consequently, the themes do not hold to simple definitions but each theme seems to represent a constellation of ideas, and there is a complex interaction between them which makes it difficult to summarise them. The specific meanings and

relationships of the themes are closely linked to explicated experiences. If time had permitted, it would have been valuable to encourage the group to continue their reflections on the themes and so go further to clearer and more precise characterisations - which might be more indicative of the fundamental nature of experience in the everyday environment.

The notion of 'representativeness', whether of the group, the local environment, or of experiences shared and themes recognised, is strictly speaking irrelevant within a phenomenological perspective. First and foremost phenomenological exploration is a voyage of self-discovery and its value lies in heightening our awareness and understanding of ourselves and one another (see pp236-241). A corollary of this is the recognition of 'essences' (1.4). Whilst not aiming to be representative in the positivist sense - which seems to be something akin to the statistical average and a fictitious 'Mr Average' - phenomenological study does aim to reveal something of the more universal of human experience. When we recognise the basic uniqueness of each situation, research or lived experience, this does not mean that nothing in common exists between the different manifestations. The search for 'essences' is a recognition of this sense of something more fundamental and universal that we share in our experience. In this context, the individual study does not seek to be representative, but might be seen as a kind of window on something more fundamental ⁶·. In the present group reflection, less progress

was made towards essences, though the themes 'Looking' and 'Hurrying' appear to be more general and fundamental. Furthermore, the other group themes clearly have some dialogue with the themes in the wider literature and, when further ordered in the gatherings, are suggestive of more general and fundamental insights that need further exploration (e g looking language, social concept).

A related issue is 'repeatability', which again is strictly speaking irrelevant within a phenomenological perspective, since each research situation must be unique, having its own response to and conversation with the phenomenon. By repeatability, two ideas are usually implied: repeatability of experiment or method, and that of findings. In phenomenological research the precise method should not be repeated 'to the letter' since this imposes presuppositions and restricts the free expression of the phenomenon. Group reflection aims to be a 'responsive method' (Relph 1985b) but, nevertheless, as suggested in 'Responsive Application' (3.4), in a broader, more strategic sense, group reflection should be repeatable in both similar and different situations. Therefore, future use of the group reflective strategy would inevitably result in different configurations, but certain common structures would probably be preserved: 1) a small group made up of participants with direct experience of the phenomenon; 2) the group meeting over an extended period (anything from a few months to a lifetime); and 3) some form of the reflective stages - experience explication, theme recognition and group record.

However, future studies might develop alternative structures in addition to these - in particular, develop the activities side of group reflection (e g games and exercises, walks, film-making) - and take the reflective progression further, beyond basic themes towards the 'essences' of phenomena. If the present study had consisted of two separate groups, each allowed to develop responsively, they would no doubt have developed quite differently. Further, they would probably generate both similar and contrasting insights into environmental experience. The fact that a study with similar method, environment and participants might produce different findings does not deny the possibility of repeatability of findings, nor does it, phenomenologically, invalidate a study. As Seamon (1983 p4) writes "a major phenomenological criterion for validity is intersubjective corroboration" and more recently he has explained: "phenomenologists and other interested individuals ... must then decide if the descriptions resonate with their own seeing and understanding. This process towards clarity and objectivity is called|*intersubjective corroboration* - i e the verification of one person's experiential accounts with others'". This already begins within the group reflection itself, continues in the researcher self-reflection (which could have been further developed in the present research) and reflection on the wider literature, and in reader reflection. Therefore, different studies, each with quite unique research configurations, may have dialogue. This dialogue allows research findings to be assessed and a body of knowledge, or understanding, to develop. For instance, the present group reflection has much dialogue with themes, categories and modalities recognised by Rowles (1978a) in his work among old

people and by Seamon with his environmental awareness groups (1979a).

As already noted, phenomenology redefines 'verification' in terms of corroboration and authenticity. In the present thesis I have said little about *authenticity* since far too much rhetoric has been generated by this simple concept, and authenticity should not be seen as unique to phenomenology since it is a part of all honest scientific research. Nevertheless, within phenomenological enquiry authenticity has an especially significant role *throughout* the research. Authenticity can quite simply be defined as genuineness, sincerity, honesty and integrity on the part of the researcher, participants and reflective reader. Authentic concern is directed towards one's own experience and the experience of others, and is a respect for the phenomenon that it might show itself in itself to us. Group reflection seems to have provided a valuable mechanism for maintenance and development of authentic concern. The group with its shared reflection, extended series of meetings and environment of friendship and trust encouraged sincere and honest experience explication and careful theme recognition. Further, the focus on continued experience explication, even when recognising themes, rather than relying on opinions and more detached views, also maintained a more authentic approach to the phenomenon. The researcher reflection sought to continue this authentic concern and through dialogue with the wider literature - a kind of intersubjective corroboration - sought to assess the authenticity and significance of the group insights into environmental experience.

Researcher Role

It is evident that the present style of research necessitates a redefinition of the role of the researcher. He or she can no longer be regarded as an objective observer somehow independent of the phenomenon studied and of the mechanism of that study. In group reflection the researcher is a member of the group. However, the researcher must occupy a different position within the group from the rest of the participants due to his prior knowledge of the research literature and wider research aims (considered in Sections 1 and 3). Also, in the present study the researcher had not lived in the study locality, Ushaw Moor, and so it was not his everyday environment.

The specific role of the researcher in the present study is presented in 'Doing Group Reflection' (2.2), with further more critical discussion in 'Reflections' (3.3). His or her role within the group (i e the fieldwork phase) is characterised as that of a secretary and pupil, rather than interpreter or teacher. It is the participants who decide on 'topic fields', the pace of group reflection, recognise themes, and determine the content and final form of the group record. If the researcher does take part it must be on a limited basis, for instance, in the sharing of a personal experience of the local environment or an environment that the group members have also experienced (such as Durham city, in the case of the present study), or to encourage the discussion - as in the introduction of theme recognition. In the case of themes, the researcher should only suggest a few general labels culled from the actual words and phrases

used by the group in previous meetings. Above all the researcher must
refrain from questions and extended commmentary, but rather cultivate
a patient and attentive listening.

Everyone is privileged in relation to their own experience, and
any expression of that experience is always to some extent partial.
During the group reflection no participant loses hisorher absolute
privilege with respect to their own experience, but through expressing
and explicating their experiences, and recognising   common   and
contrasting themes, they come to share a certain portion of that
privileged knowedge. To the extent that the researcher becomes a
trusted friend in the group and in tune with their expressed
experiences and understanding, he or she also shares in   this
privileged position relative to the uninitiated outsider, such as the
reader of the record. One of the tasks of the researcher in the
composition of the record is to encourage the group to see their
reflections more from the outside, that is from the perspective of a
reader unfamiliar with their particular situation. In this way the
group might generate a record both for themselves and for others.
Further, it is the purpose of the researcher reflections (in Section
3), in which the group take no part, to clarify the group's insights
into environmental experience and to relate them to the wider
literature, and so help the reader to appreciate their   wider
significance. In the researcher reflections the researcher becomes
more an interpreter of the group material and considers the group
reflection as a whole.

It can be seen that several types of reflection exist within the research. (I refrain from considering these as 'levels' of reflection, since to some extent they coexist and interact, and to a degree form a progression). First there are the distinctions between researcher and group reflection, and between individual and shared reflection. The researcher's reflection prior to the fieldwork (Section 1) is of a somewhat different nature from the reflection following it (Section 3). This latter 'researcher reflection' seeks both to look back at the fieldwork as a whole and to look beyond to the wider research literature. Here, the researcher is more an interpreter, or translator, and seeks to recognise common elements and simplifying patterns (3.1;3.2). Within group reflection one can recognise the personal reflection of individual participants in between meetings (both in response to and in preparation for meetings) and during meetings, as well as a kind of shared reflection, as in the case of theme recognition. However, more interesting are the different *styles* of reflection evident at different stages in the research. For instance, the three phases of the group reflective fieldwork are each characterised by a different combination of reflective styles: 1) the expression of opinions and the recall of remembered experiences; 2) fuller and deeper expression of experiences ' when participants begin to generalise, recognise common and contrasting elements, which becomes theme recognition; and 3) thematic reflection, a more objective reflection, particularly associated with composing the record in such

a way that others might share an understanding of the group reflections. These reflective styles range from relatively subjective or emotive recall and reconstruction of experiences (experience explication), through thematic reflection (theme recognition) towards more objective reporting to others. However, these should not be seen as 'levels' of reflection, but as interacting dimensions of a complex process of reflective exploration.

Insights into Environmental Experience

Finally, it is worthwhile to give a summary of the major insights into environmental experience. These are closely ass\ociated with more methodological insights gained—which might give guidance to future experiential research. The research has shown that a group can provide an effective means for the participation of 'ordinary people' (for want of a better term), with direct experience of the phenomenon, and for shared reflection leading to the recognition of underlying themes, which represent or point to the phenomenal dimensions of environmental experience. Group reflection allows a genuinely phenomenological stance towards the phenomenon and reduces the role of the researcher in the primary realisation of, or contact with, the phenomenon (see Appendix A). The study revealed that lay participants can engage in relatively systematic reflection and so explore the nature of their own experience and develop a shared understanding. Further, it confirmed that people do have heightened, memorable and treasured

experiences even in the more taken-for-granted everyday environment in which they live out their day-to-day lives. These heightened experiences are much broader in their variety than that popularly understood as 'aesthetic'. Furthermore, heightened experience recall was also associated with the recall of more taken-for-granted, or almost forgotten, experience and therefore provided, as hoped, a means of access to experience in general.

A general 'conclusion' from the research is that "experience and place are fundamentally linked in our making sense of the world, both are aspects of dwelling, and are indicative of the present state and changing nature of that dwelling in contemporary everyday environments" (p291). This led to three more specific conclusions (3.2) concerning the nature of dwelling in contemporary everyday environments:

1) we dwell both immediately and reflectively (and this may be related to the group themes 'Looking' and 'Hurrying');
2) we dwell with others, that is together, and this togetherness is integral to dwelling;
3) we dwell in many different but interacting ways or styles (in the present research characterised as Insides, Outsides, and Setting).

Further insights can be recognised behind these three overarching conclusions (see 2.4;3.1).

Experiences, whilst often expressed within the language of sight

and dominated by the visual, nevertheless are inclusive of many of the
other sense modalities and emotions. Experiences are also embedded
within wider social, biographical and temporal contexts. In addition,
the meaning and depth of experience seem to be entwined with the
associated behaviour, whether contemplation or the engagement in
everyday activities. The group reflection revealed a basic and
fundamental distinction between 'Looking' and 'Hurrying' stances. This
seems to have some analogy to such phenomenological distinctions as
meditative and calculative thinking (Heidegger 1966) and, to a lesser
extent, dwelling and journeying (Jager 1975). Further, whilst Seamon's
awareness continuum (Seamon 1979a) genuinely reflects the range of
person-environment engagement, group reflection emphasises a
switching between 'Hurrying' and 'Looking', particularly when more
heightened experiences arise. 'Hurrying' seems to be always immanently
'Looking', though this may not necessarily be realised. However,
within the duration of an extended experience and, in particular, when
experience is reflected upon subsequently (both of 'Hurrying' and
'Looking'), various degrees of, and progression in, person-environment
engagement may be recognised. As the gathering 'person-environment
engagement' indicates (pp277-287) a number of aspects of encounter can
be distinguished - participation, boundedness, commitment and
belonging. Within each different degrees are evident, as in the
categories of participation which range from observational to
commitment (p280).

The review of the literature (1.2) revealed the dominance of
sight in the approach of much research. The findings of the present

research reassert that sight is a dominant factor in human experience of environment, but the researcher reflections suggest that the significance of this is as a 'looking language', or the language of experience. In other words, sight and the visual metaphor structure and translate experience into forms which can be remembered and shared with others (pp263-267). In the group reflection this was reflected in the terms look, looking, looking-out, looking-after, view, scene and so on. From the present study it is not genuinely possible to ascertain whether sight is more dominant in the outsider experience of environments and in the experience of special environments (e g the tourist and locations of high scenic beauty). However, the stance of 'Looking' is not merely 'looking', but rather a much richer, multi-sensual and emotional encounter and includes reflection on the environment and one's on-going experience. Also, 'Hurrying' is not merely a superficial concern with appearances since in subsequent reflection a hurried encounter may yield a considerably more detailed experience. Instead, 'Hurrying' seems to be literally a taking-for-granted for that moment, that is, whilst hurrying our concern is on other activities and goals beyond rather than on the environment through which we pass or the experience which unfolds in us.

The research brings out the vital importance of a 'social concept', or togetherness, in experience of the everyday environment. This is both being with others when encountering the environment, and a sense of sharing the experience of that environment - both immediately and in subsequent discussion. In the researcher

reflections a link was recognised between the group's understanding of experience and their concept of place as community. Phenomenologists frequently refer to a communality or mergence between person and world, but the present research also reveals a more immediate sense of community or sharing that world with others: our fellow human beings. Maybe it is this sense of sharing a common world that encourages us to communicate our experiences to others and make comparisons with one another's experiences [7].

Group reflection suggests that action is both an important part of the meaning of an experience, and that experiences are generative of action (the 'action imperative' p280). In other words, experiences arise when we are engaged in activities, and particular activities seem to be associated with particular types of experience (see also Seamon 1979a). For instance, riding in cars and buses is associated with a more superficial and rapid experience of visual images, whilst a walk along a country path generates a rich and contemplative experience of a complex of the various sense modes. The action-imperative of experience was associated with such group themes as respect and responsibility, and withdrawal. In other words, experience not only informs our action but encourages it. In this light the lack of repair and maintenance of property, and in particular the lack of care of communal areas, in part reflects a dominance of 'Hurrying' over 'Looking' in these contexts. Put more colloquially, familiarity breeds contempt, or neglect.

These experiential differences can also be seen in the

distinction between Insides, Outsides and Setting (3.2). It is the Outside, or the in-between, which is hurried through and neglected. This is the environment most close to Norberg-Schulz's 'flatscapes' (1969) and Relph's placeless landscapes (1976). By contrast, the Insides are given much greater care and seem to be rich in place meanings, and more akin to the concept of 'home'. The Setting seems to be a more unusual category, and is closely associated with contemplative looking, the view of the valley, country walks and outdoor pursuits and, in particular, a love of nature. Further, Setting is also associated with a sense of homeness and belonging. This distinction between Insides, Outsides, and Setting seems to be one of the most significant insights to arise from the present research. It represents three coexisting styles, or realms, of dwelling and suggests that human dwelling within contemporary residential and everyday environments is far more complex than is commonly appreciated. Further, these three broad distinctions are only those evident in the group reflection. In other contexts and for other people there may be a far greater range of such coexisting and interacting experiential realms. Something of the potential range of these is suggested in such categories as Relph's (1976) insideness-outsideness classification of place experience.

The research, needless to say, should not be seen as conclusive. The insights offered suggest areas needing further more focused exploration in both similar and contrasting contexts. For instance, the group theme 'Nothingness' seems be the phenomenal representation of the experience of 'Outside' or flatscapes, and is associated with

such themes as sameness and muchness, out-of-place, and threat. However, these must remain, for the present, ideas for future research. It is hoped that this overview has clarified the research as a whole and may   encourage the reader to reflect further on the method and insights it has generated.

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(1) In phenomenology the reader is encouraged to continue the reflection into his/her own experience. This is known as 'corroboration': "do I find in my own life-situation and experience what other phenomenologists have found" (Seamon 1983b p4).
(2) Ihde, in a phenomenology of sound, has effectively argued for a prior, partial focusing of phenomenological attention which he calls a 'region of focus'. (My use of 'topic area' has many similarities). Phenomenologically, the recognition of separate types of experience, such as visual and auditory, is problematic, since experience is considered in a holistic way. "But a purposeful selective focus upon auditory experience does, by its very distortion of the primary global character of experience, show us something. Such a selective focus functions regionally like a special *epoché* by creating a specified region of focus" (1976 p21). This does not mean that we can study auditory, or environmental, experiences in the isolationist sense of positivism, rather such regionalisations of experience are implicative of and embedded in the global character of experience. In short, an environmental experience, for instance, is an experience in which the environment plays a significant but not exclusive part.
(3) Philosophy and method are ofcourse not independent, and there is much overlap between them. In 2.2 the emphasis is on the 'nuts and bolts' of the method in practice.
(4) see (2)
(5) The group reflective strategy is considered in more general terms in *Opening Environmental Experience* (Rodaway 1987b). This paper also briefly considers the main limitations and problems of group reflection.
(6) The analogy might be drawn with the hologram, each situation being a part which contains within it a trace or image of the whole. The smaller the fragment, the more distorted or vague the image of that whole; but the larger the fragment, or the greater number of fragments, the more certain we are of the whole (see Bortoft 1985).
(7) This is ofcourse the basis of strategies such as group reflection and conceptual encounter (see Appendix A:)

APPENDIX A: GROUP REFLECTION AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

Within psychology, sociology and, to a lesser extent, geography a number of 'methods' for phenomenological enquiry have been formulated. However, there are few *group* strategies for phenomenological enquiry. In geography, Seamon (1979a) offers one particularly successful example - environmental awareness groups. Here I briefly consider two issues:

1) Phenomenology and a group strategy; and
2) Group Reflection and other phenomenological methods.

Phenomenology is, apparently, first and foremost a philosophy of the individual - of self-reflection (Husserl 1958, 1964, 1983). However, the phenomenology of the social sciences is clearly not limited to the individual but extends to social relations and communities (eg Schutz 1966, 1970, 1972; Douglas 1971). Husserl's concepts *Lebenswelt* and *intersubjectivity* offer the starting point for this 'social phenomenology'. Nevertheless, much of this work remains individual-centred and personally reflective.

Group Reflection includes personal reflection, by both the participants and the researcher, in experience explication (description) and theme recognition (ordering). Nevertheless, as a group process, through reflective conversation there is a genuine shared reflection. Is this group reflection a *phenomenological method*?

In the strictest interpretation, Husserl's phenomenological reduction may not be manifest as *group* reflection. Reduction seeks to go beyond the presupposed world and the ultimate stage, transcendental reduction, would seek to bracket-out even the self. The social dimension has long been left behind. Nevertheless, it is through communication and sharing with others that much of our world is revealed to us. The phenomenological product, a careful desciption, is clearly for sharing with others. However, can the process of phenomenological enquiry itself be a group activity? Group Reflection is more than 'phenomenological corroboration' (Seamon 1983b), that is identification with and reflection on the phenomenological insights of others. It is a kind of 'social' epistemology, or a joint and shared reflection, where *together* we seek to uncover the essential nature of the phenomenal world we inhabit.

In everyday life this is a shared world, both my world and our world, and is taken-for-granted. Many presuppositions are *shared* and socially reinforced. Part of this shared world, of reflection (thought) and communication (social interaction), is expressed through and manifest in *language*. Mugerauer (1985) has reminded us that environment and language arise together. Heidegger (1971d) sees language as epistemologically central to the question of Being, and phenomenological enquiry. Even the most personal reflection, is a social or group activity in so far as it is bound within language.

Husserl and Heidegger have shown that individual reflection can be 'purified', if we may use such a term, of presupposition through

systematic reductive reflection. Presum ably as a small group, we can help each other in such an enterprise. The group context offers a mutually stimulative and critical environment for clearer and deeper reductive reflection, that is explication of phenomena. In part Group Reflection extends 'phenomenological corroboration' back into the moment of explication itself. More immediately important, it uses the group as means of stimulation - enhancing experience explication and the sharing of understanding.

Several authors have recognised a number of phenomenological methods or qualitative strategies (eg De Rivera 1984, Wertz 1984, Seamon 1986a). Such collections of 'methods' represent a wide range of interpretations of phenomenology. Whether they are phenomenological or not is not a major concern here, but their commonality and possible dialogue with Group Reflection. Each of the recognised methods seeks some form of careful reflection on the world as *experienced,* either the researcher and/or participants. Further, each method pays at least some attention to the notion that "a crucial point about phenomenological method is that it arises in relation to the particular qualities of the phenomenon one studies.. The key point is that context and method are inseparable in phenomenology" (Seamon 1986a p8, see also Seamon 1983b, Relph 1985b).

Group strategies are somewhat rare within phenomenological research and are chiefly restricted to exploring the group phenomenon itself. The use of groups as a medium of phenomenological reflection on other phenomena, such as environmental experience, has not been

widely developed. Wertz (1984) in classifying phenomenological methods recognises three main approaches: comprehensive theoretical research, phenomenal research, and reflective empirical procedures. Under reflective empirical Wertz includes such strategies as *descriptive accounts by those experiencing the phenomenon*, individual phenomenological reflection, imaginal variation, participant observation and *group dialogue*. Seamon's (1979a) environmental awareness groups and Group Reflection would seem to fit within the label empirical phenomenology, and relate to descriptive accounts and group dialogue.

De Rivera (1984) also recognises a number of 'qualitative procedures': reflective empirical phenomenology, conceptual encounter, naturalistic phenomenology, text construction, observation of parallel processes. Group Reflection would seem to bear some relation to reflective empirical phenomenology in using tape transcripts and recognising broad themes. It would also seem to have a relationship to conceptual encounter in the dialogue between researcher and participant, and the development of conceptualisations. Naturalistic phenomenology seeks to enable others to experience what the investigator has discovered. Within the group itself, there is an element of this in the sharing of experiences, though it is an aspect which could be explored further and, in particular, through the development of activities (see 2.2). Finally, the construction of a text (eg Keen 1984) seeks to imaginatively share, through the means of story-telling, a sensitivity and understanding of a phenomenon. There is an element of this in Rowles' vignettes (1978a), and it might offer

an alternative form of report writing for the group and individual records in Group Reflection. Story-telling has the merit of 'protecting' participants' identities and situations, and it offers a distillation and apparent 'whole' understanding. It is, however, a very interpretative exercise, selective and requiring discernment and creative writing ability. Seamon (1986a p8) adds thoughtful reflection on a phenomenon (eg Jager 1985, Lang 1984), and the careful study of second hand texts such as buildings and written accounts (Eck 1983, Saile 1985). There is much work in geography on the latter, as studies of literature (eg Pocock 1981), but this may seem distanced from Group Reflection. However, the remembered experience, the main focus of group sharing, can be seen as a 'text', and to a certain extent it is a constituted, second-hand, and merely a representation or trace of the phenomenon as experienced itself.

In phenomenology a group gains special characteristics. First, it has two main tasks, experience explication (sensitivity) and reflection on those experiences to recognise themes (understanding). Second, it needs to have a stable membership, meeting over an extended period, and probably should be relatively small. Further, it need not, and possibly should not, be dominated by a researcher as leader. Rather, the phenomenological group needs to be focused around the 'experiencers' and the phenomenon itself. Two possible, though not mutually exclusive, strategies can be suggested:

1) researcher as interpreter and guide; and
2) genuine, or full, group reflection.

Seamon's groups clearly come under the first category. He

proposes the 'themes' for individual observation and group discussion, and even a number of follow-up questions or suggestions to encourage that group discussion (1979a - his Appendix C). Further reflection, or ordering, by the researcher of the group material after the meetings and some feedback to the group form important and necessary stages to the reflective exploration. Here, the researcher is a pupil but also a teacher. The participants gain personal insight but the ultimate report is the researcher's summary interpretation.

Group Reflection, by contrast, does not start with researcher 'themes', but with group—agreed topic fields. It, therefore, does not begin with the outsider's, or researcher's, questions but encourages all participants to have an open attitude to the phenomenon. The group encourages its own experience explication, develops its own ordering or themes and, possibly with some assistance from the researcher, writes its own report or group record. Feedback is not restricted to researcher interpretations, nor limited to the backward glance of an end-of-research authentication exercise. Rather, it is a continuous process, a part of the flow of conversation and group reflection, and a group process involving the participation of all members. This builds on everyday personal reflection and group conversation. Experiences are shared and interpretations developed through attempts to express one's experiences and develop a shared understanding of the significance of those experiences. We reflect on both our own and other people's experiences, seeing links and contrasts, and developing our sensitivity and understanding of both self and others. Here the researcher allows the phenomenon to speak for itself through

the group. He has a more back-seat role, is not the sole or key interpreter, being more a pupil and secretary in the group. Further, here the group record offers a statement that may stand alone as an interpretation in its own right. Further reflection on and beyond the material, both the meetings and the group record, is a separate stage and is not fed back to the group.

This contrasts with much phenomenological research. For instance Rowles (1978a) returned his initial summary descriptions and interpretations to individual participants for a response, a kind of 'authentication' or corroboration process. This feedback is dangerous since it reinforces the researcher's role as specialist, outsider and teacher. It presupposes that the researcher's explicit interpretation and view of the whole is in some way more vital and genuine than the more implicit and more partially expressed appreciations of the participants themselves. It presupposes that participants hold to their own sense of the phenomenon, and are not swayed by from this sense of the phenomenon, by the eloquence of the researcher and their perception of his view. Relative to the participants, the researcher is more distanced from the phenomenon as experienced, and therefore his interpretation will essentially be more 'outsider' and less authentic. Further, researcher feedback presupposes that a common understanding of the researcher's language is held. The group and a group record permit a coming together of personal insight and shared interpretation, and enables individuals to stand outside of the particular to gain a sense of the general. This is a partial or

incomplete record, but an explicit and agreed statement. Group
Reflection is located within a dynamic unfolding of, or conversation
with, the phenomenon as experienced. Researcher reflection, after this
group reflection, is essentially different, more contemplative and
stationary, an abstraction which considers the presented phenomenon
not the phenomenon as it unfolds, a kind of whole, and it considers it
in a wider context, reflecting beyond the participants' personal
worlds. In the present research, I feel that such further reflection
should not be fed back to the group for it is of a radically different
nature to the on-going reflection of conversation with the phenomena
by those experiencing it. (Such a distinction of course is less clear
where the researcher is direct experiencer of the phenomenon he is
studying).

Conceptual Encounter (1981), as a phenomenological method, seems
to be situated mid-way between the two group strategies (though
technically it is usually a two-person interaction). It has close
links with therapy and education. It is essentially a conversational
encounter between researcher and individual participant. The
participant is encouraged to describe experiences or situations in
which the phenomenon of study is central, for instance particular
emotional states. The researcher avoids prior categorisation and
questions, but listens to the descriptive accounts and seeks a form of
empathy, tuning in to the phenomenon as experienced by the
participant. The participant seeks clearer descriptions and the recall
of more experiences. The researcher seeks to recognise patterns or
common themes. These are presented back to the participant, during the

present and further conversations, as conceptualisations. At latter stages, the researcher and participant focus on and develop these conceptualisations, considering further experiences or situations and refining the conceptualisation until both are satisfied by their sufficiency. This is similar to the recognition of themes in group reflection, though this is a participant-centred exercise rather than researcher-centred. Further, the 'themes' are broader and more concrete than De Rivera's 'concepts'.

De Rivera (1984 p682) argues that qualitative methods usually divide into two broad groups: interviewing procedures and observational techniques. However, these positions presuppose a divide between the researcher and phenomenon studied. Phenomenology emphasizes the entanglement of these, and group strategies seem to offer a realisation of such an unity. The group provides a medium for explication of the world as we experience it. Within a group context questions and watching others are integrated within a more natural wholeness, as a coming together of 'researchers' (the group members) and phenomenon as experienced (the object of study). The group environment, that is more than three people, allows both 'interview' and 'observation' to come together.

Therefore, Group Reflection should not be seen as an isolated approach, but has many affinities with other qualitative techniques. These techniques also suggest possibilities for future development of the strategy. Further, Group Reflection would seem to be a genuinely phenomenological method, both with respect to phenomenology and those methods recognised as phenomenological.

APPENDIX B: SOME ETHICAL ISSUES

By leaving ethical issues to an appendix, I do not wish to suggest that ethical issues are unimportant or secondary. It must be emphasized that ethics is and should be a primary consideration before, during and after research. Positivism marginalises the ethical issues by seeking a position of detachment and objectivity. However, such a position is illusory for all research presupposes ethical choices. Phenomenology gives a more central and fundamental role to ethical issues. Here, I will only briefly consider the dimensions of some of these ethical issues, particularly as they relate to Group Reflection.

The dictionary defines *ethics* as "the science of morals or of the conduct of right and wrong; a system of moral principles.". Ethics is a fundamental concern of human beings, manifest in their relationship to self, world and, most importantly, to other people. Ethics in its fullest sense is closely linked to notions of truth and responsibility. *Dasein* as care is fundamentally an ethical being, knowing good and evil. For phenomenology, or the phenomenologist, ethics is first and foremost a 'letting things be', or 'sparing and preserving'. For phenomenology, therefore, ethics is closely linked to the question of 'authenticity', that is 'back to the things themselves!' as they are in themselves, genuinness and sincerity. This means allowing phenomena to express or reveal themselves to us as they are in themselves, that is in their essential nature (see *1.4*).

This exploration starts from human consciousness which has intentionality and intersubjectivity as basic dimensions. These are ethical relationships. If we impose prior and external categories, submit to presuppositions or manipulate phenomena, we hold an inauthentic position and prevent the true nature of phenomena from being revealed. Ethically this is immoral or bad. Phenomenologists seek a more meditative or presuppositionless attitude, seeking to allow phenomena to reveal themselves on their own terms. This 'sparing and preserving' allows the realisation of authentic and full being. Ethically, this is representative of the moral or good. This is of course an oversimplification, but the key point is that the ethical standard in phenomenology is not an arbitrarily defined, outside and imposed system of principles, personal or socially agreed, but a more fundamental and prior relationship with the world as experienced, and here the ethical standards are inherent in the very nature of our Being, as care.

In the practical arena of everyday life, and research, ethical issues are revealed as *choices and power* (eg Nowell-Smith 1957, Beck & Orr 1970). These choices are part of the inception of the research, its strategy and topic choice; the practice of research; and afterwards, in the way findings are presented and the 'use' that is made of them. Further, research is a taking of possession (active or passive), and at its simplest is recognition, naming and description of phenomena. This leads to, and presupposes, a position and relationship, even transfer, of power. The acquisition of knowledge

changes the researcher's position into a knower, one with power. Even the most abstract positivist science recognises the moral responsibility of choices and power. Further, as phenomenology reminds us, the research relationship, or investigation, changes the phenomena studied, either disturbing it or bringing it into a new position. Only as a third possibility, and not the sole one, the findings offer possibilities for further intervention and change. In other words, not only is the research relationship itself ethically significant, but also the purpose of the research and use of its findings.

Research might be categorised as physical and human; the first focuses on the physical world and the latter studies fellow human beings. The ethical issues of each may be similar but manifest differently. Further, human studies may 'merely' observe either directly through watching behaviour or indirectly through surrogate measures such as voting patterns, sales records and locational patterns (to name a few at random). Alternatively, the researcher may participate in the lives and communities of people in order to acquire a richer, fuller and more insider appreciation, as in participant observation (Spradley 1980, Becker & Geer 1957). The ethical issues of such *participatory research* seem most immediately pertinent to Group Reflection.

The ethical issues of human research have been particularly considered in social anthropology, psychology and sociology, but somewhat neglected in geography. Ethical concerns have been especially active in the the studies of threatened or controversial minorities,

deviant individuals and groups, and criminal activites and persons
'[1]'. Experiential geographic research needs to be more directly
concerned about ethical issues since both the method - participation
with individuals and communities - and subject matter - environmental
experience, senses of place, rootedness, homelessness and so on - are
impregnated with ethical dilemmas. A useful survey of the basic issues
is provided by Georges & Jones (1980) in *People Studying People: the
human element in fieldwork*. Many of the points raised are common sense
yet it is still vital to make them explicit. A general rule of thumb
for any researcher should first be "would I be willing to participate
in this research as a subject having only limited knowledge of the
researcher's aims?" However, this is not a sufficient question, since
the ethical standards of the researcher may be radically different to
his subjects. Trust and mutual respect therefore become important.
Also honesty and openness are desirable but may not be wholly possible
because of the research topic and method. In anthropology, psychology
and sociology there has been much concern over this. Often, in
'participant observation' (and in 'experimental psychology') it is
felt that disclosure of the researcher identity and actual aims may
militate against 'genuine' or accurate findings. It boils down to the
questions: 'do people behave differently when someone is watching
them? Can research be independent of the phenomenon under study?' (See
McCall & Simmons (ed) 1969; Franklin & Osborne (ed) 1971; Rainwater &
Pittman 1969).

Phenomenology argues it cannot (eg Seamon 1983b), that is
phenomenon and the one who studies are entangled and not independent.

A recent geographic example is provided by Rowles (1978a). In his *Reflections on Experiential Fieldwork* (1978b), he offers some basic but important observations. The relationship between participant and researcher is both a working and personal relationship, and not an empty formal transaction (p189). "Many ethical dilemmas are avoided by an attitude of scrupulous *honesty* in relationships .. It involves developing authentic, often extremely complex, relationships in which mutual dependency may develop. In such relationships reciprocally expressed emotions ranging from love to disdain, from sympathy to anger may be manifest at various times. (But) Some ethical issues, of course, cannot be resolved through honesty" (p189). There are also the problems of presenting findings, misinterpretation of the participants by others considering the findings and many other problems which are often out of the control of the researcher and participants. In all ethical issues, resolution "is largely a matter of individual judgment..." (p190) and a matter of individual conscience.

In the present research, Group Reflection, I chose to be open about my purposes, including the vagueness of them in the initial stages. As already noted, phenomenology accepts that research influences the phenomenon, which can be manifest in many guises, and the phenomenon and research will themselves influence or change the researcher(s). Authentic explication of phenomena requires openness, bracketting-out, or making explicit, presuppositions and plain honesty. At a personal level, greater trust and cooperation is gained from participants when the researcher allows the relationship to be totally open and genuine, including the purpose of the research and

one's own personal response to the research progress. This was not only ethically important to the present research, but also essential to an effective and harmonious group. For example, it is evident in Rowles' work (1978a) that where the researcher works with a small number of individuals (or a group) over an extended period and explores with them their often quite personal experiences, the honesty and respect for individual integrity is vital to maintaining a trust and cooperation, and genuine experience sharing.

It is important to remember that Group Reflection is not research into human subjects, that is their emotions or behaviours, but the group forms the *medium* through which a phenomenon, environmental experience, is expressed and explored. Nevertheless, ethical issues remain of fundamental importance in the relationships or interfaces between researcher and phenomenon; researcher and participant; participant and wider audience; and researcher and wider audience [2]. These interfaces give rise to many ethical issues. Here I will concentrate on some of those that directly involve the researcher. These fall into:

1) *within the research*, or the research process itself; and
2) *beyond the research*, or the use of findings.

Ethical issues can be reduced to two basic responsibilities. There is a need to *respect* the life and integrity of both the phenomenon and participants when engaged in research and to protect them from abuse by others as a result of the research findings. Further, there is the question of *honesty and openness* in the research relationship, particularly of the researcher and his aims with respect

to the participants, as already noted. In addition, there is a possible conflict between the many ethical issues, and between ethical and non-ethical issues. There may be conflict between access to the phenomenon under study and honesty, and between the needs of research, such as publishing results, and respect for the personal integrity of participants. Ethical issues can not be totally overcome and there are no perfect solutions; rather a series of *compromises and agreements* have to be arrived at.

In the present research, I discussed ethical issues openly with the group, and particularly where they brought these into the discussion themselves at various stages of the fieldwork. I particularly encouraged the group to become aware of the ethical issues that might be significant in the presentation of the Group Record to a wider audience. The final solution, represented in first names only and area-generalised map of Ushaw Moor, was a group decision. This differs to other studies in geography where fictional names for people and places have been adopted (Rowles 1978a, Seamon 1979a) at the cost of geographic specificity. The use of fictional labels to some extent conflicts with the phenomenological assumption that the full significance of phenomena is only found within specific contexts, lifeworlds and biographies of 'lived experience'. Hopefully, the greater openness in the present study preserves some of the value of this geographic and individual specificity.

As Georges & Jones (1980) note, a crucial question is "How did relationships between researcher and researched shape the outcome of

the investigations? How do we evaluate data from fieldwork without information on the method employed to get it?" Fo such reasons, in the present research I sought both a working relationship and friendship with participants through social events and other limited participation in their lives, as well as in the research meetings. Further, because the method is responsive and integral to the findings generated, I have sought to make explicit this method (2.2) and its operation (2.5).

'Solution' of ethical issues has been sought in codes of practice (eg Cassels 1980) and attempts to give individuals and communities a degree of anonymity through fictionalisation. It is hoped that this protects those researched but it limits the value of the research findings. It gives them a 'generalised' and non-specific status. However, the significance of many phenomena is, as already noted, somewhat lost when they are divorced from the particular situation in which they are articulated. Further, the use of fictional labels for places severely restricts the geographic value of research findings and so militates against more traditional geographic concern with 'describing places'. In the present research the group chose not to 'protect' themselves through fictionalisation but, on my advice, they withheld their precise addresses and full names from the Group Record. In any case, in the present research, as the group noted, the findings are not incriminating of themselves, nor particularly private, even though the experiences shared are personal. In addition, the study was not of the participants themselves, nor Ushaw Moor, but of experience in the everyday environment. Further, the participants

did not represent a minority, deviant or criminal, but were, for want
of a better word, 'ordinary' people.

The 'solutions', or compromises, to the various ethical problems
include:

1) *preventive*
   a. changing the strategy and method;
   b. abandoning subject matter or topic as not researchable;
   c. using surrogate measures or indicators.
2) *protective*
   a. 'scrambling the findings', or using fictional labels for people
and places;
   b. controlling access to and use of findings, in limited publishing
and codes of ethical practice.

Much of the literature on the ethics of research considers the
consequent privileges and responsibilities that particular techniques
and findings put on the researcher. These relate especially to access
to phenomena and participants, and the use of them and the research
findings. It is important to remember that participants are not
objects but people, and their lives must be respected. Likewise,
phenomenology emphasizes that the integrity of the phenomenon must
also be respected for what it is in-itself. While it is in general not
possible to gain the phenomenon's agreement to research, it is vital
to gain the participant's agreement to research and to the presentation
of findings. The risks and benefits to the participants and the
phenomenon of the research process and the findings must be considered
by both the researcher and the participants, as in the present study.
It may be necessary to point out to the participants some of the less
obvious considerations. What the researcher and the participants
consider ethically significant may not be the same, and agreement will

have to be reached. As noted, ethical issues were discussed with the Ushaw Moor Group, often in the more informal meetings such as the meals we had together. However, though friendship and trust can largely 'solve' ethical issues within the research, ethical concerns beyond the participant-researcher relationship, notably the use of findings by others, are less easy to control. The protective measures tend to reduce the value of the research, and the preventive measures limit research in the first place. In the end, therefore, the ethics remains a dilemma and to a large extent we can only hope to contain the 'potential crisis of conscience'.

Group Reflection, whilst meeeting the immediate ethical issues, remains open to the dangers of the wider risk, one not confined to participatory research but as much a concern of the major scientific discoveries, such as nuclear energy. But *if we stop to explicitly consider ethical issues maybe we will be more careful in the conduct of research and the use of the findings generated.*

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(1) For instance, Kathleen Bond (1978) considers 'Confidentiality and the Protection of Human Subjects'; and J. Cassels (1978) considers the 'Risks and Benefits to Subjects of Fieldwork' and (1980) the 'Ethical Principles for conducting Fieldwork'. Much of this debate is in terms of codes of practiee and the legal issues, especially where subjects are criminal or deviant in some way.
(2) The distinction researcher-researched is an oversimplification. In general the researcher has some control over his relationship with the wider audience and, to a lesser extent, that audience's relationship to the participants and the phenomenon. In contrast, the participant and, moreso, the phenomenon have less control, or even awareness, of actual or potential relation to the wider audience. The Ushaw Moor Group discussed this latter issue during the research, particularfywhen formulating the Group Record.

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE TRANSCRIPT

Introduction

It seems a good idea to present a small portion of transcript to illustrate the group meetings. However, selecting an example transcript is extremely difficult. First and foremost, no transcript portion is typical since the meetings differ in topics and their placing in the fieldwork period, and individual participants responded differently to different topics, and individual participation changes constantly during in a given meeting. The meetings using photographs differ from those centred round a discussion topic, the Phase 1 meetings differ from the group record meetings of Phase 3, and so on. Therefore, the two short transcript portions presented here are essentially examples and only typical in a very loose sense. I have chosen them, if that phrase is really accurate, largely to illustrate the group itself and its styles of discussion, rather than to offer a particularly rich portion of experience explication and theme recognition. In particular, they show something of the ebb and flow of group discussion, the complexities of group interaction, and the mutual support participants gave each other. Therefore, inevitably the example transcript portions are somewhat arbitrary, but hopefully contribute positively to an appreciation of the present research. The transcripts presented here are exact and continuous transcriptions of two contrasting meetings. Inevitably, out of context something of the detail may be difficult to understand, but I hope this will encourage

you to focus more on the group interaction itself.

Transcript Portion

PORTION 1:

The first portion is taken from meeting 1.3 on *sensual experience of the local environment* . This took place in Phase 1, early in December, and much of the discussion centred on the weather and the seasons. It was a lively discussion with rich contributions foom all participants. However, this portion is taken from the start of the meeting when the group was 'warming to the topic'. Interestingly, though George contributes much in the rest of the meeting, here he is largely a listener. The group came to regard George as our 'weather man', for he shared some of the most exciting experiences of the weather, for instance the snow experience included in portion 2 (below).

Eleanor
I think its always looks better in summer, because the trees, you know, and the grass, it hides a lot of the disfigurments.
Jean
Yes
Jean
And because we don't have a lot of smoke - well, I mean we don't here.
Jackie
Not now
Jean
The grass tends to stay nice and fresh looking.
Eleanor
Yes
Jean
Doesn't it? And the trees do too. At one time - I don't know what it's like down at the bottom still (in the colliery streets) where the fires are - you couldn't put your washing out, it was all...
Eleanor
I think it's still the same to some extent.
Jackie

Where there's coal fires.
Jean
But up here (Skippers Meadow, on the hillside above those streets) it
makes a difference.
Jackie
Oh it does...Clean and light, that's Spring: everything coming to
life. Whereas - I suppose anywhere's the same - where there's snow and
the grass is dying off, this weather we've had, it's not as great.
Jean
I...
George
When you look at our houses (Skippers), they look a hundred percent
better after it's been raining. Aren't they?
Jean
Oh yes they do.
George
The wood gets wet and all the houses look the same.
Eleanor
Yes
George
Because, it darkens the wood. And when it's all dried out, it looks
tatty. When it's been raining it looks quite nice.
Jean
I like my bushes at the end of here (in the garden), and I like them
especially in summer, because as they grow they spread and it stops
the kids from running through, you know. They're quite bushy and
they're, and they... In winter, when they are cut down, it's inviting
for them (the kids) to go in between and go behind. Although it's
something inviting for them to go behind in summer. During this summer
a few of them have wanted to come in and make a den, at the end wall
there, but it gives me great pleasure when I see those bushes at the
end of (Eleanor: Yes) my house.
Eleanor
Yes, I could imagine it would, I would like that.
Jackie
Yes, I think it's a nice, it's (Ushaw Moor) just a nice distance from
the city (Durham), and personally I wouldn't like to live in a city. I
think it is lovely countryside around us - to what it used to be, I
mean years ago, with the colliery (Ushaw Moor, closed 1960), the coke
ovens at New Brancepeth. You had dirty thick smoke, and the SMELL. I
think it has much improved that way nowadays.
Jean
And there is really no where in Ushaw Moor, or very few places, where
you can't look out at the countryside.
Eleanor
And see something nice.
Jean
It is fields, trees...
George
That's right.
Jackie
Yes
Jean
There's nowhere where you can't, why, just look out at the window and

see it.
(general murmur of agreement from all the group) You look up to the
hills, and it's lovely. It could be a poor morning and it is still
nice.
Jackie
You see that's NOW. Once, over there you had the pit heaps, you know,
all the waste on the hillside.
Eleanor
That's right, you could see the colliery.
Jackie
And they've cleared all that (New Brancepeth on the hillside opposite).
Ushaw Moor is just the same.
Eleanor
A friend once came to my house and went upstairs to the bathroom, you
know, and she stood looking out of the window, and says: "Ah, I love
this!". She says: "If I lived here, I would put a chair on this
landing (on the staircase) and sit", because you can see right up the
valley from the landing. Because it's the only place were I've got a
view really.
Jackie/Jean
Yes
Eleanor
You can see right up the valley, you know, and she says "I would have
a chair and sit there."
George
The air is a lot cleaner isn't it, the air up this area (especially).
You can stand in our yard, and you can look down to that area (the
village and the valley bottom) and there's a cloud in it and a shroud
of smoke right round it, because of the fires.
Jean
Yes you can see...
George
You can see the cloud hanging over the top of the houses, and you
often think that you used to live in that.
Eleanor
And no one would think nothing of it really.
George
It's never clean down there. Your walls are always dirty because of
the smoke. Where here, if you do your painting, at least they do keep
clean.
Jean
But a lot of people don't like to give up their fires. Of course, they
still like to keep a fire. They feel the comfort of a fire, they feel
it's something living, something you can focus on in a room.
(short discussion about the role of a coal fire in a room, and the
lack of such a focal point in the houses in Skippers Meadow, which
just have radiators)
Jean
I like also, I think it's nice in winter, when the snow, when it's
snowed, you know
Paul
When it's fresh and still nice and white.
Jean
Yes

Eleanor
There again the view over the valley (Jean: lovely!) when the snow's
on it is BEAUTIFUL.
Jean
And also that year when we had an awful lot of snow and people were
fast in. I mean, we had a great time watching out there; all the cars
getting stuck, people digging out. You know, and we were on holiday
(school holidays), and it was lovely. We went out. But another thing
about it was, because of all the snow, been snowing much, people went
out...
Eleanor
People went into the village didn't they? (who would normally go
shopping to Durham instead)
Jean
Yes but they went out and cleared the path and they all worked
together after a while and made a way through. And it was nice.
George
There was a lot of comradeship at the time.
Jean
Yes, the kids had like a ski-run up here. It was so high, up to the
garages, and they had their sledges and there was no fear...

PORTION 2:

The second portion is taken from meeting 2.4 *recording
experiences.* In preparation for this meeting, each participant had
written down some of their most treasured experiences. The discussion
began with each member relating one of these experiences, though not
literally reading them off the card, and the reflection progressed
from there. Many other experiences were recalled other than on the
cards, and some of the card experiences were not related until near
the end of the meeting. This meeting was therefore characterised by
longer experience accounts by individual participants and a greater
variety of topics. I have chosen a part of the discussion, from the
middle of the meeting, in which George is presenting one of his most
treasured experiences. It shows the role of the group in mutually
aiding each other's experience explication. The end of the portion
gives an brief example of theme recognition.

George

"...I was going to work one morning and it had been snowing heavy and I went down the mill way, and it was about a foot deep. On the way down, when I got to the bottom, where the gate was, it was about four foot deep and I tried to climb over the top of the gate. And when I got to the other side - it had been snowing solid for two days by then, this is about ten years ago - and when you crossed the line to where the wood is, all the snow had formed an arch across the ditch, over the tops of the trees... (much excitement in his voice)

Eleanor

Yes, it was very shallow, very narrow, wasn't it?

George

Yes, I walked underneath this archway, all the way down there. There was only me out because nobody in their right mind would go down that way.

Eleanor

(overlapping dialogue) This is where they cut down the trees at the right hand side.

George

I'd never seen anything like it. (George shifted to the edge of his seat) I went under this archway down there and when you come out at the bottom there's a bridge. Drifts of snow either side and just a little river running through the middle. And that was fantastic, seeing the sun was blazing down. I went further on, I was making up the hill towards Ivor Walter's, the way I used to go (to work each day) and the snow gradually got deeper and deeper. I was standing half way up the bank (that is, the hillside) in about three foot of snow and I was stuck there. I couldn't get out! (a kind of amusement in his voice). I was really scared! I'd never been out in anything like it in my life. I was standing there just looking around, and the sun came out and all of a sudden I was blinded (raises his voice). 'Snow blindness', I really got frightened then. And I just stood and stood, remaining there a moment standing in it. (lowering or easing of the voice) Then I ploughed my way up to New Brancepeth and carried on from there. And I don't think I have ever been so frightened as I was that time...

(latter in the discussion George returned to this experience....)

George

When you came to that archway (of snow) down there it was UNBELIEVABLE. Nobody would ever see that.

Eleanor

No

George

Because the sun came out later on and it would melt. It was all over the top (a sense of awe in his voice).

Jean

It's a good job it didn't melt while you were under it, you might have been in an avalanche (group laughter).

George

I tell you something, when I was half way up it was hard to tell if I was in or not (as the snow was so deep). And the river, when you're standing there - I stood on the bridge for a rest - and the water you

could hear it going down the stream, bubbling over the pebbles and the
noise it made; and the drifts up the side and the sun was shining on
it; and I was just standing there, looking at the trees.
Eleanor
It must have looked lovely though, George.
Jackie
Like standing on a Christmas card.
Eleanor
I mean, there wouldn't be any more footprints there, only yours
George
That was what was fantastic about it and that's what I've written on
those cards. I was the first one there (Eleanor: Yes). It was exciting
at first, but by the time I got half way up the other side it was not
very exciting.
Jean
We could call this the sense of wonder, that people...
George
(overlapping dialogue) Yes
Paul
Yes
Jean
Have had at various things.
Eleanor
I think one of my experiences could come under that, the one about the
tree, you know...

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