Expedition Cruising in Solander: An application of Ecology Without Nature

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Abstract

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In his 2007 book *Ecology Without Nature*, Timothy Morton proposes that reified Nature, the idea that nature is a set of objects separate from us, interferes with properly ecological approaches to art, culture and politics. Morton argues also that much writing about nature exacerbates this separation, even as it appears to reduce the distance between humans and the nonhuman world. One powerful mechanism establishing and maintaining the separation of humans from such reified nature is the process of aestheticisation; requiring the viewer to step back in order to appreciate the beauty of a natural object, in a way similar to imbuing a work of art with what Walter Benjamin called *aura*. Morton argues that this mechanism contributes strongly to poor environmental protection and suggests that a consideration of Benjamin’s *aura* and its companion notion *distraction* may cast some light on how to encourage the ecological thought, a truly ecological form of critique.

Expedition cruising is a form of nature-based tourism and often involves visiting areas rich in dramatic scenery, and viewing varieties of nonhuman animals that humans find charismatic. Such cruising involves individuals, who have already a sense of self, performing the role of tourist. On some of these cruises a strong *public narrative* is provided in order to demonstrate how passengers should respond to their surroundings, usually how to experience the sublime and the beautiful.

This work takes a narrative approach to illustrating a practical application of Morton’s theoretical treatment of art, nature and environment, through considering *aura* and *distraction* while expedition cruising in the waters of southern New Zealand and its sub-Antarctic islands.
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Chapter 1: Contexts

1.1 An intellectual context of engagement

Which is the better way to view how we are in the world; as individual selves characterized by our having agency over how we live our lives, or as subjects, brought into being linguistically, shaped, and collected into social and economic formations by forces largely beyond our control? These chronic tensions between self and subject imbue what follows, an exploration of how tourists, as embodied ecological subjects, experience expedition cruising in remote parts of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

This work is implicitly didactic. The reader to whom it is addressed, anyone with an interest in how daily life is informed by theory, when next (s)he engages in nature-based tourism as a customer, a tour operator or as an industry or environmental regulator, may feel motivated to examine his or her assumptions about nature and the natural world and whether the phenomena that are the focus of the tour are best regarded as somehow sacred, in the widest meaning of the word, or profane, or better understood as resources of one kind or another, particularly as natural capital.

Also, the work is a plea to end the pretence that Homo sapiens should best be kept out of certain parts of the world if those areas are to flourish.

These matters illustrate, if not in detail recapitulate, larger philosophical debates about the influences on individuals of personal agency, economic and cultural forces, including the idea of, and aesthetics of, Nature. Morton (2007) argued that:

…the idea of nature is getting in the way of properly ecological forms of culture, philosophy, politics, and art…it is in art that the fantasies we have about nature take shape – and dissolve… in particular, the literature of the Romantic period, commonly seen as crucially about nature…since it still influences the ways in which the ecological imaginary works (Morton, 2007, p. 1).

In this first chapter I will illustrate how those involved in expedition-cruise nature tourism in southern Aotearoa/New Zealand engage in such art, in this case performance art, as they narrate and act their touristic roles, and it is in these narratives that the fantasies they have
about nature take shape – and dissolve; against a backdrop of that collection of objects, that reified aesthetic, we call the sublime landscape. There is a vast literature on all aspects of the sublime but for our purposes here it is sufficient to provide the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (Sixth Edition, 2007) definition:

A. adjective
   4. Of a person, emotion, idea, etc.: of the most exalted, grand, or noble character; of high intellectual, moral, or spiritual level.
   5. Of nature, art, etc.: producing an overwhelming sense of awe, reverence, or high emotion, by reason of great beauty, vastness, or grandeur.

B. noun.
The sublime. That which is sublime, especially in nature and art. (p. 3084)

and two comments. First, Morton (2007) notes that:

Edmund Burke considers substance as the stuff of nature in his writing on the sublime…Essentialism, on the other hand, has its champion in Immanuel Kant…the sublime thing can never be represented (p. 16).

That we can actually use our minds to transcend our material conditions is the reason why the Kantian sublime is so utterly different from Edmund Burke’s version. Burke’s sublime is solid and awesome and powerful- there is no arguing with it; you just have to capitulate to it. His models are monarchy and mountains. There is too much of this kind of sublime in environmental aesthetics. It’s seductive to imagine that a force bigger than global capitalism will finally sweep it away…What if, finally, Nature as such, the idea of a radical outside to the social system, was a capitalist fantasy, even precisely the capitalist fantasy, (Morton, 2010a, p. 125, italics in original).

To avoid repetitiveness I use the term sublime as always involving the beautiful, which is how the individuals I was travelling with used the term, with one exception; experiencing the large swells of the southern ocean forced a separation between the two terms.

Laquer (2011) draws attention to the fact that with

the twin towers in flames…Karlheinz Stockhausen may have been politically tone deaf- and possibly misquoted- when shortly after 9/11 he called the attack the greatest work of art ever…he was not fundamentally wrong. Shock and awe is no less authentically heightened for being so spectacularly destructive of human life…The actual lives and suffering of real human beings are eased from the consciousness by the seductiveness of violence done at a distance and by what Burke might have called a culture of the military sublime (p. 20).

Foster (2011), with respect to the 9/11 Museum, observes that

(i)ntentionally or not, sculptors who worked in welded steel…rendered industrial production aesthetic…the whole might be mistaken for a vast installation project…The contributors to Memory Remains worry about an aestheticisation of the remains… ‘They are not sculptures. You don’t want them to be
beautiful...they are something more than beautiful. They are sacred’. This touches on the most difficult ambiguities of all- not ‘art versus document’ so much as ‘beautiful versus sublime’ (p. 17).

This linking of the sublime and the beautiful will emerge below also with respect to nature.

I illustrate also that to a large extent these performances are scripted by others; both by what has come to be labeled the transnational capitalist class (Carroll, 2010), in this case the global cruise industry, and by the government of Aotearoa/New Zealand providing ‘policy settings’ that privilege particular versions of nature, its narrative and its performance; those versions which are to be found within protected areas, specifically what in Aotearoa/New Zealand is called the Conservation Estate,¹ and its contiguous seas and oceans. I show that within, and partly because of, these protected areas tourists engage in nature-based commodity fetishism, essentially similar to the urban equivalent that Walter Benjamin described in his Arcades Project² (Eiland, 2003), when considering Paris of the 1890s, and a fetishism that characterises “tourist modes of consumption” (Goss, 2005, p. 56).

I took part in numerous trips in Fiordland, and two to the sub-Antarctic islands as a participant observer in order to gain insights into how people experience one tiny sector of the cruise industry, nature-based expedition cruising.

Conservation in New Zealand currently is enmeshed with neoliberal economic ideology, through The Conservation Economy (Groser, 2009), and a Romantic aesthetics of nature, upon which the country’s tourism industry is dependent. “(C)onservation and tourism are inextricably linked” (Shelton & Tucker, 2008, p. 198). These relationships make environmental protection³ inseparable from the functioning of the late capitalist economic system. Also, as will become evident below, what commonly is called ‘nature-based tourism’, in this case expedition cruising, may be situated within the same set of economic and aesthetic relations, that is, global capitalism and the sublime. In fact, in the case of expedition cruising, the sublime aesthetic may be subsumed by economic considerations. I intend showing that

¹ There is an immediate complication with the labeling and governance of the below-mean-high-tide-mark coastline contiguous with the Conservation Estate. I will deal with this in Chapter Three.
² “The proper inhabitant of the arcade is the stroller. For only the stroller is wordless and thoughtless enough to become the means by which the arcades dream their dream- of intimacy, equality, homelessness, return to a deep prehistory” (Clark, 2000). “The flâneur stands on the threshold- of the metropolis as of the middle class...the flâneur (stores) time as a battery stores energy” (Salzani, 2009, pp. 141-142). This figure of the flâneur, so tightly circumscribed by urban modernity, appears to act as a foil for the nature-based ecological subject but in fact both are urban consumers, even if the product consumed requires travel to in order to be consumed.
³ I agree with Morton (2007; 2010a,b) that the term environment is conceptually problematic. This issue will be subsumed under consideration of the ecological thought, below.
expedition cruise tourists may legitimately be regarded as the embodiments of an economically and aesthetically determined social formation, but, of these two forces, the primary one is economic. The marketing of the tourism product, the performances of the tourists; that is, their conscious and unconscious ‘performance art’, and the activities of the conservation organisations involved, illustrate what Morton (2007) called, pejoratively, “beautiful soul syndrome” (p. 141), where “the beautiful soul is ecological subjectivity” and is “the form of ecological consumerism” (p. 121), an enacting of late capitalist neoliberal economic ideology.

By the Romantic period, it became possible to be (or if you prefer, to act) consumerist. Consumerism is a reflexive mode of consumption. It is about how one appears as a certain type of consumer...Consumerism raised to the highest power is a free-floating identity, or identity in process. This is a specifically Romantic consumerism. Transformative experiences are valued, such as those derived from drugs, or from intense experiences...traumas that nudge the self out of its circularity and force it to circulate around something new (Morton, 2007, p. 111, italics in the original).

Davis & Monk (2007), in their introduction to *Evil Paradises: Dreamworlds of neoliberalism* quote a 1938 diary entry of Walter Benjamin: “A Brechtian maxim: take your cue not from the good old things but from the bad new ones” (p. ix). (Morton (2007) makes the same point: “before I get accused of being a postmodern nihilist, I thought I would put my heart on the...

4 By ‘conscious and unconscious performance art’ I mean the degree of insight shown by the tourists as they deport themselves, perform, under the direction of the tour operator. Edensor (2001), Schieffelin (1998) and Tucker (2007) problematise such performances and describe different levels of performer/audience distance and interaction that are possible. In this instance the roles of performer/audience/director are constantly negotiated, within certain parameters. How these negotiations proceed is described in Chapter 5. Benedetti (2007), also describing the power dynamics of performing, presents “the ‘ritual’ actor” (p. 221), influenced by Gordon Craig, the son of Ellen Terry. Craig “suffered increasing dissatisfaction as an artist (and) dreamed of an actor liberated from the tyranny of the author, the text and the director, of being an artist in his own right as a creator. His dreams were never fulfilled” (p. 224). This actor-controlled approach to performance, even if successfully instigated, still is characterized by a performer-audience binary. There is one further step that appears to be possible; what if performance were to be used ontologically rather than metaphorically? All action then would be performance. Ignoring for the moment the hollowing-out of selfhood that this reflexive use would entail (for example there would be no possibility of instigation since there would be no appreciation of there being anything to instigate) some form of reflective external agent would be required to assign the status of art to any given act/performance. The acts that would qualify as art would be limitless; perilously close to Morton’s (2007) explanation that “a metonymic series becomes a metaphor” (p. 14). If a metaphor, then (in this case performance art) is part of language and “language is far from being a substitute for real experience...by articulating the experience it constitutes it” (Hawkes, 1972, p. 62). The performer/audience or director/performer binaries remain intact. Performer/performer and audience/audience reflexivity is too problematic to imagine.

To borrow Archytas’s question about what happens when one comes to the edge of something and then reaches further (Casey, 1997, p. 101), in this case art, Terry Castle (2011) wonders about the boundaries of ‘outsider art’, “produced by those, who if not officially classed as ‘insane’ or institutionalized, are in some way mentally or socially estranged from, well...the rest of us” (p. 19). “(T)o use words like ‘fearlessness’ or even ‘joyful’, is to assume a kind of normative psychology – if not an outright intentionality – that may not be part of the mental or emotive world of the artists themselves (p. 21, italics in the original). One way of judging such intentionality is to hazard a guess at its persuasiveness. For Anderson (2011), in discussing *War and Peace*, “(t)he question, of course, is whether Tolstoy’s fictional portrait of Kutuzov qualifies as such a handsome offspring – that is, a persuasive work of art (p. 24).
sleeve of this book. It is just that I aim to start with the bad new things, as Brecht once said, rather than try to return to the good old days (p. 6). Davis and Monk describe what they view as the “terminal, not anticipatory, stages in the history of late modernity” (p. xvi). Romantic consumerism has become a global, if elitist, phenomenon. “This is nothing less than a utopian frenzy and the early twenty-first century…recapitulates many of the same mythic, impossible longings that Walter Benjamin discovered in his famous excavation of Baudelaire’s Paris. With Marx’s theory of commodity fetishism as his Rosetta stone, Benjamin unraveled the mystery of the bewitched capitalist city where human collectivity, overwhelmed by its own colossal productive powers, hallucinates its social being as a swirling ‘dream life of objects.’…(T)hese dreamworlds enflame desire – for infinite consumption…clearly incompatible with the ecological and moral survival of humanity” (xiv-xv).

Morton (2007; 2010a) offers instead ‘the ecological thought’ as a truly critical way of engaging with the world. Morton’s thesis; that reified nature gets in the way of useful thinking, has emerged in part from a careful consideration of how language is used in nature-writing, that is, the field of ecocriticism. Morton’s thesis, against reification of nature, is based within language, and not, say, grounded in objects that are the material productions of culture; books for example. Not being about things, but ideas, it may not be obvious how ‘the ecological thought’ may be applicable outside of language. In order to establish the relationship between ‘the ecological thought’ and the material world I have chosen expedition cruising and environmental protection as illustrations. But to bring to bear Morton’s insights, and explore them in a real-life situation, some specific approach to language is required; crudely, some linking mechanism between language and action. For this purpose, to be able to link language and action, I use the production and performance of narrative, specifically narratives enmeshed with environmental discourse. The idea that nature may be brought into existence through being performed is not new (Szerszynski, Heim & Waterson, 2003), neither is the claim that tourism also may be viewed as performance (Edensor, 1998; Perkins & Thorns, 2001; Seaton, 2002, Tucker, 2007).

Seaton (2000; 2002) linked language and performance through his concept of:

‘the metempsychotic text’- one in which an author or broadcaster assumes the persona of an historical traveller and repeats a journey made by him…The metempsychotic persona was viewed initially as a textual convention adopted on a temporary basis by the author, following in the footsteps of…However, … the features of metempsychosis and repetition …provoked a new set of questions. Might the adoption of, and identification with, a persona…be not just a textual convention within travel representation but a constitutive element, even, to some
extent, a pre-condition of the tourist role? Might the quest to repeat what others have done, in ways they imagine others have done it, be a central identifying and defining characteristic of the tourist? ” (Seaton, 2002, pp. 135-136).

Seaton’s transmigration of souls metaphor, metempsychosis [“the passage of the soul of a person or animal at or after death into a new body of the same or a different species” (SOED)], operates at two levels:

At the unilinear level…metempsychotic tourism may be seen as a specialist kind of tour, either packaged by the industry or undertaken as an independent tribute journey, allowing homage to be paid to the life and travel of a cultural hero or heroine.

However, metempsychosis may be conceptualized in a more profound way…as an embedded structural force in all tourism…all tourist behaviour is activated, constructed and enacted fundamentally as repetitive imitation of historical role models that are multiple, implicit and unconsciously adopted.

All tourism may be read, to a marked degree, as metempsychotic repertoire (Seaton, 2002, p. 138).

Implicit in this formulation of tourism is the concept of eternal recurrence, and its relationship with modernity. “Benjamin sees eternal recurrence as the inevitable, logical and tragic end point of modernity…‘Boredom’” (Seaton, 2002, p. 141). I think this is a misreading of what Benjamin means by boredom. Salzani (2009) provides a detailed account of Benjamin’s ‘Convolute ‘D’” and explains, from this and other sources in Benjamin’s work, how:

the question of boredom is interlocked with that of experience…in broad lines, the issue can be defined as follow (sic): in pre-modern times, experience presented a connectedness and durability which implied a relation to memory and community. The term used by Benjamin to designate this experience is Erfahrung, which etymologically refers to the verb farhen, to travel and is thus something learned from life and travels over an extended period of time and that can be narrated. Modern experience, for which Benjamin uses the term Erlebnis, is instead broken, immediate, limited and disconnected from memory and community…something with temporal and spatial limitations- ‘a single, noteworthy experience,’ explain the translators of the Harvard edition (Salzani, 2009, p. 129).

MacCannell (1976) in The Tourist: A new theory of the leisure class was:

suspicious of research that insists on the primacy and independence of social class, that does not attempt to go beyond class to discover still deeper structures that might render class relations in modern society more intelligible. It is necessary to recall that Marx derived his model of social class relations from his
analysis of the value of commodities. As new species of commodities appear in the modern world, and as the fundamental nature of the commodity changes (for example, from a pair of pants to a packaged vacation; from a piece of work to a piece of no-work), Marx’s deduction must be repeated. My analysis of sightseeing is based on social structural differentiation...roughly the same as ‘modernization’...(and including)...the mythic representation of the past to the present (p. 11, italics in the original).

Clearly, for MacCannell, presenting Erfahrung to Erlebnis constitutes just such a mythic representation of the past to the present. A misreading of Benjamin’s boredom notwithstanding, Seaton’s (2002) structure of metempsychosis is able usefully to subsume both Benjamin’s and MacCannell’s mythic representations. However, my use of Seaton’s structuralism here is limited to metempsychosis being treated as one trope of narrative production, properly able to be situated within Morton’s (2007) Romantic consumerism below. Allen’s (1997) sailing to Auckland Island to trace the route of her birth great-grandfather fits nicely here. Note that MacCannell’s ‘tourist’ is a sociological category and not ‘touristic subjectivity.’

The position I am adopting here is that such performances, of nature and of tourism, may be generated by already available narratives, both of environment and of self. Such narratives may be produced outside of the individual person, in the form of a dominant public narrative (Somers, 1994) or as a normative narrative (Rappaport, 1993). These externally-generated narratives produce spaces of performance, and make available various subject positions to be performed within these spaces.5

A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, storylines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned. At least a possibility of notional choice is inevitably involved because there are many and contradictory discursive practices that each person could engage in (Davies and Harre, 1999, p. 46).

One such space, generated by a public narrative and by a normative narrative, both situated within an ongoing loyalty to the sublime aesthetic, is a space of protection6. It is within this

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5 The variously formulated relationships between location, space, place and nature are reviewed by Wainwright & Barnes (2009).
6 A problem is; how is the individual, operating within the neo-liberal social and economic environment, best formulated; as a stable self with an identity or as an unstable self interpellated or hailed, to use Althusser’s term, into a subject position dictated by the consumerist demands of late capitalism, mediated by externally generated narratives? Equally, individuals may manufacture narratives to produce states other than protection, for example adventurous masculinity. Sir Richard Burton “grew in the desert; his senses quickened, and he felt a ‘keen
space that traditional conservation occurs, along with an uncritical acceptance of the concepts of restoration and the value of increased biodiversity. The New Zealand government’s adoption of *The Conservation Economy* (Groser, 2009), with its focus on economic return on investment, where the production of protected areas is the investment, has implications for the formation and utilization of this space.  

These externally-generated narratives occur as a form of persuasive communication, both at a societal level of formation and dissemination (Shelton & Tucker, 2008), and at the scale of the individual tourist (Shelton, 2007a). The historical space in which my enquiry operates is postmodernity, ‘the historical specificity of the present age’ (Kunkel, 2010, p. 12). This situating in postmodernity is despite the persistence of that Romantic aesthetic, ‘the tenacious sublime’ (Shelton & Reis, 2008) in most of the external and individual’s narratives considered. My approach to language is deconstructive, albeit retaining a belief in a material world (Hacking, 1999), a position consistent with Critical Theory (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, pp. 193-199). As was the case for Morton (2007), “It is to Marx and Derrida that I owe almost equal debts, for they have enabled me to create the frameworks with which the analysis proceeds” (p. 7).

This work is informed by my growing disquiet about the utility of the concept of reified nature as a collection of objects and its primacy both in conservation and in tourism (Shelton & Lübcke, 2005; Shelton, 2006; Shelton, 2007a,b; Shelton & Higham, 2007; Shelton, 2008 a,b,c; Shelton & Tucker, 2008; Shelton & Reis, 2008; Reis & Shelton, 2008; Shelton & McKinlay, 2008; Shelton, 2009 a,b,c; Shelton, 2010; Shelton & Reis, 2010; Reis & Shelton, 2011; Shelton, 2011a,b; Shelton, 2012). These historical contributions have acted as a series of rehearsals for the issues that are engaged with here; expedition cruise tourists enacting the

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7 Within the normal business model of *adding value* and *extracting revenue* the production of protection, which transforms the status of land and sea, constitutes the process of adding value. Revenue is then extracted from the tourists who are attracted by the protected status. These issues of economics and governance are what Julian Rappaport (1977) called issues of ‘loot and clout.’

8 I note here Walter Benjamin’s insight that knowledge of ‘the character of the historical moment in which we live- (is) in fact denied to us’ (Jennings, 2008, p. 11).
tensions that permeate the relationship between the beautiful soul, ecological subjectivity, and the ecological thought, all the time operating within the global expansion of late capitalism.

For any writer steeped in a Western intellectual tradition there are certain influences that are impossible fully to escape and Cartesian dualism must rank as the most pernicious of these. Everything presented here is predicated upon there being an unbridgeable gulf between the human animal and all other animals;9 the human body and all other structures in the world, living and not alive. “The opposing terms seem at once necessary and overblown, starkly distinct yet hopelessly entangled” (Huggan & Tiffin, 2010, p. 2).10 This is not to say that this Cartesian legacy is to escape critique here, far from it, but it is to accept that no other system of thought has managed successfully to bridge the binary nature of so much of our thinking.11 Dualism and its binaries currently may be unsettled, knocked off balance, worried away at, staggered, but to date remains standing. Morton (2007) offered Walter Benjamin’s concepts of aura and distraction as useful notions, worthy of exploring as productive ways of engaging

9 In view of the concept of ‘animality’ or animal nature, many theorists have questioned whether there actually is a shared essence or set of shared characteristics binding all animals together. Much like the critique of essentialism in feminism, queer theory, and race studies, theorists in animal studies seek to track the ways in which the concept of ‘animality’ functions to demarcate humans clearly from animals and establish homogenities among what appear to be radically different forms of animal life (Calarco, 2008, pp.2-3).

10 Morton, in Ecology as Text, Text as Ecology (2010b) discusses Derrida’s claim that “Darwin forced a great humiliation upon humans—literally, a bringing closer to the earth—by calling to mind the displacement from an ontological center that constitutes the human as such” (p. 3). The earth, though, should not be considered as an environment since

(1)texts have environments. These environments are made of signs, yet the matter-sign distinction breaks down at a certain point, because one of these environments is the environment…we cannot distinguish between what counts as an entity ‘in’ an environment and an entity ‘in’ a text…we end up with Derrida’s famous formulation ‘Il n’y a pas d’hors-text’, ‘There is no outside-text’. No textuality can rigorously distinguish between inside and outside, because that is precisely what textuality both broaches and breeches (p. 3).


capturing ‘environment’ in some medium or other remains the most important and even the only mission of art that would be environmental…environmental art might itself be philosophical and theoretical: more a literature of ideas, for instance, than a literature premised on the centrality and…the veridical nature of individual experience… Morton takes as his point of departure definitions of ‘nature’ and, more particularly, of ‘environment’ that are so very broad and so very abstract that they will seem workable only to certain philosophers and cultural theorists (pp. 152-153).

My response to this is that Phillips must, in turn, dispense with the problem of the metonymic list that bedevils pragmatic and common sense notions of nature. Phillips is dismissive of poststructuralism “which for all its skepticism about philosophical concepts continues to embrace philosophical modes of argument, and to see the philosophical as somehow fundamental to any argument whatsoever” (p. 157). It is not my intention here to attempt to resolve the philosophical issues Phillips raises but rather to illustrate that nature and environment are the subject of robust debate.

11 Deep ecology (Devall & Sessions, 1985), ecofeminism (Plumwood, 1993), dwelling (Ingold, 2000) and cyborgs (Haraway, 1991) are attempts to overcome the binary. Although at first glance these approaches seamlessly integrate the human animal and human body into the context of the nonhuman none escapes the fate of achieving little more than reinstating dualism, slightly differently described (Reis & Shelton, 2011).
with nature and the sublime, and what follows is intended to comprise a minor contribution to such an exploration; another act of worrying away at dualism, the beautiful soul and the ecological thought as explored through the notions of *aesthetic distance* and *critical distance*, the nature of which will be considered below.

**1.2 The Conservation Economy: a neoliberal context for the nature tourist**

New Zealand is a country with a population of around four million persons (Statistics New Zealand, 2010) and of its landmass of 268000 km$^2$ (Statistics New Zealand, 2010) approximately one third enjoys some form of protection above and beyond that offered by the Resource Management Act (1991), the key piece of legislation governing planning and development in the country (Department of Conservation, 2010). Nevertheless, “…it would be naive to believe that the present (Conservation) estate boundaries are somehow sacrosanct, or that some future government may not allow extractive industries to operate within the estate” (Shelton & Tucker, 2008, p. 203).

This statement proved prescient when, in 2009, Tim Groser, Minister of Conservation in the newly elected centre-right National-led government, announced that the New Zealand economy would be transformed into the *conservation economy*:

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12 Italics for *aura* and *distraction* indicate that these words are referring to Benjamin’s concepts rather than their everyday meanings.

13 Expedition cruising so far has taken advantage of the collapse of the Soviet economy by chartering the newly-surplus research vessels and converting them to carry passengers but the industry will decline as this window of opportunity closes:

There are some likely developments to the current pattern of operations. In the short term, the rising, unstable or unpredictable price of fuel may act to increase the number of passengers required to reach the break-even point for profitability on any given voyage. Such a development inevitably would differentially threaten the viability of smaller ships, which, as they age, will face also increasing maintenance requirements and expenditure. Replacement with larger vessels will not be a simple matter. The very tight market for chartering, the most common method used by tourism operators in procuring suitable vessels, has led to successful outright purchase becoming a cause for celebration (Aurora Expeditions, 2008). Such ownership offers the possibility of more flexible international itineraries (Mortimer, 2008). As the expedition cruising market matures, it is likely that New Zealand’s sub-Antarctic islands increasingly will become a destination in their own right, and not be just one feature of a trip to or from the Ross Sea. A combination of larger vessels and a transition to becoming the primary destination will produce changes in itineraries which will inevitably result in requests for more extensive onshore access for larger numbers of tourists than is currently permitted. Typically, operators plan their itineraries two- to three years in advance of delivering the proposed product and this lead-in time will allow the Department of Conservation to plan how to respond to such requests for greater access for larger numbers of tourists. The fees that operators are charged per-passenger provide significant income to the department and if the tightly controlled New Zealand sector becomes unprofitable, operators may well shift to another sector of operation. Papua New Guinea is an example of an emerging destination. The completion of the widening of the Panama Canal is expected to trigger a worldwide reconfiguration of the cruise industry. It may well take several years for the effects of this reorganisation to affect the Expedition
When I talk of the conservation economy, the danger here is that some will incorrectly read into that phrase a lack of appreciation of the traditional and intrinsic conservation values – running the whole gamut from the preservationist view (and there must be a place in this wonderful country for the preservationist view to hold sway) to more mainstream public views. But in trying to highlight the very considerable economic stake New Zealand has in conservation, my real purpose is to broaden the long-term level of public support for conservation. I want to see New Zealanders encompass the conservation economy, so that they come to appreciate that conservation is not only in our hearts and minds, but is also the lungs of our economy…The most easily understood connection between conservation and the economy is through tourism…Our environment is a huge part of our brand. Climate change awareness, resource shortages, and intolerance of environmental degradation are playing a part in the choices that tourists make—especially those from wealthier markets…The government will work to protect the resources that tourism providers rely on—clean air, clean water, and unique landscape…The logic is simple enough. Healthy natural biodiversity means healthy ecosystems, and healthy ecosystems deliver well-functioning ecosystem services. Together these things form natural capital (Groser, 2009, p. 2).

The text of this speech on the conservation economy, yet another discursive form “in a world suffused in discursive forms” (Mels, 2009, p. 385) could have been delivered to any number of audiences in any number of countries; it has the hallmarks of an approach to conservation consistent with neoliberal reform and easily sits alongside other features of conservation for a new generation (Knight & White, 2009), specifically:

The creation of capitalist markets for natural resource exchange and consumption … privatisation of resource control within these markets…commodification of resources so they can be traded within markets…withdrawal of direct government intervention from direct market transactions; and…decentralization of resource governance to local authorities and non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Fletcher, 2010, p. 172).

The idea of capitalist markets for natural resource exchange has been well described:

A common response to the misuse, abuse, or misdirection of market forces is to call for a retreat from capitalism and a return to heavy-handed regulation. But in addressing these problems, natural capitalism does not aim to discard market economics, nor reject its valid and important principles or its powerful mechanisms. It does suggest that we should vigorously employ markets for their proper purpose as a tool for solving the problems we face, while better understanding markets’ boundaries and limitations (Hawken, Lovins & Lovins, 1999, p. 260).

The stated goal of “better understanding markets’ boundaries and limitations” is one of those neoliberal ambitions that prove difficult to critique; on the face of it they seem sensible,
logical and uncontentious, but nonetheless arouse suspicion when applied to situations involving ecosystem services (Kumar & Kumar, 2008) or the possible exhaustion of irreplaceable assets (Henry, 1974). By the time market understanding is achieved there may well have been avoidable and irreparable ecosystem damage caused; for example, widespread species extinction events. Just as “(t)he emergence of life changed the Earth to make it more favourable to the survival of life. It didn’t intend to. It just did” (Pretty, 2007, p. 5), so may major changes to Earth make it inimical to life forms that we have come to take for granted (Eldredge, 1998). Morton, in his promotion of the ecological thought, is suspicious of natural capitalism:

Environmentalism, inheriting economic ideas from the long eighteenth century, runs the risk of being a rebranded version of regular economics. Paul Hawken’s ‘natural capitalism’ takes account of a wider view, without changing the basic model...Since it looks like capitalism is about to use an ecological rhetoric of scarcity to justify future developments, it is vital that we recognize that there are serious problems with imagining an ecological view based on limits...What if the problem were in fact one of a badly distributed and reified surplus? (Morton, 2007, p. 109).

These concepts of scarcity and surplus currently are being examined more closely:

(s)carcity is not merely a natural phenomenon that can be isolated from planning models, allocation politics, policy choices, market forces and local power, social and gender dynamics...Homo economicus is neither universal nor desirable. The scarcity postulate (in other words, that needs, wants and desires are unlimited and the means to achieve these are scarce and limited) that unpins modern economics need not be universal. Needs, wants and desires do not have to be endless and unlimited...‘scarcity’ has emerged as a totalizing discourse in both the north and south with science and technology often expected to provide solutions, but such expectations embody a multitude of unexamined assumptions about the nature of the ‘problem’, about the technologies and about the so-called institutional fixes that are put forward as the ‘solutions’ (Mehta, 2010, p. 2).

Mels (2009), in Analysing Environmental Discourses and Representations notes that environmental discourses draw attention to how the production, circulation and justification of meaning within particular constellations of power permeate all social practices and thereby always enter into the constitution of the biogeophysical environment (p. 387).

This comment is important in that the conservation economy may be treated as one such strategic form of representation; one with its own set of implicit relationships with scarcity and surplus. These strategic representation of scarcity and surplus recently was brought to the fore when new ways were proposed for viewing mining and conservation.
Gerry Brownlee, Minister of Economic Development, proposed removing from protection conservation land then exempt from mining, under Schedule Four of the Crown Minerals Act (Brownlee, 2009). These actions, merging conservation and economics, made explicit a process that had been in train implicitly since the neoliberal economic reforms of the Fourth Labour Government of 1984 and the formation of the Department of Conservation (DOC) in 1987. DOC’s function was, at its inception and has ever since been, a mixture of conserving and making available, ‘fostering recreation and allowing tourism on conservation land, providing the use is consistent with the conservation of the resource’ (Department of Conservation, 2009). The legislative birth of the conservation economy can be set at 1987, when the Department of Conservation was created and charged with its dual function of protecting/making available, although tourism itself had been a conspicuous economic activity for a century before that (McClure, 2004), if of only minor importance compared with pastoral farming until “the advent of long-range jets in 1960 brought a worldwide resurgence of interest in the South Pacific (and later) wide-bodied jets dramatically increased the number of tourist arrivals” (p. 3).

Prior to 1987 there were parts of three government agencies involved in environmental conservation; the Wildlife Service of the Department of Internal Affairs, the Forest Service and the Lands and Survey Department (Young, 2004). Individual Boards governed and managed individual National Parks, with no national strategy for the management of unwanted introduced species, particularly mustelids (stoats, ferrets and weasels), the Australian brush-tailed possum and deer, or for the development of facilities for visitors, or for visitor impacts management. The Department of Conservation was formed in order to combine and rationalize the conservation functions of these disparate agencies. The department was, and remains, strongly branded; all employees wear a uniform and all signage, until recently, used the same green-and-yellow colour scheme. Alongside its conservation role DOC, as the organization quickly became known, operated also as a supply-side provider of ‘visitor assets’ for nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation, in the form of huts, tracks and heritage site management throughout what became known as the Conservation Estate. Since its inception in the nineteenth century, New Zealand tourism always had been associated with scenery and hunting (Hunter, 2009; McClore, 2007) and DOC’s utilization of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) (Clark & Stankey, 1979)

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14 This proposal was withdrawn on 20th June 2010. “Mr Brownlee said that of 37,000 submissions on the issue, most said no land should be removed from schedule four. ‘We heard that message loud and clear,’ he said” (NZPA, 2010, p. 2). “Environmental Defence Society chairman Gary Taylor said mining would have clashed with New Zealand’s ‘clean green brand and image’” (Bennett, 2010, p.1), a quote best situated within a New Zealand imaginary (see below).
and zoning; front country, back country, wilderness (Lesslie & Taylor, 1985), as management tools set in place an infrastructure that was able easily to be integrated with Tourism New Zealand’s ‘100% Pure New Zealand’ campaign when it was launched in 2000 (Tourism New Zealand, 2010).

It is important to note here the history of the ‘100% Pure New Zealand’ campaign. When first introduced in 1999 ‘Pure’ was intended to mean essential; thus an opportunity for a visitor to watch a rugby game would qualify as ‘100%, pure New Zealand’ i.e. an opportunity to engage with an essential element of New Zealand culture. “100% Pure New Zealand, the tourism brand that’s almost as quintessentially Kiwi as Tip Top (a brand of ice cream) or jandals, entered the world in 1999” (Tourism New Zealand, 2010, parenthetic explanation mine). The popular reinterpretation of ‘100% Pure New Zealand’ as ‘New Zealand, 100% Pure’ and its entering the vernacular occurred through extensive misquoting over time and has never been part of the tourism marketing campaign, although neither has it ever publically been disavowed. Many of the illustrations used in the campaign are of individuals and couples alone in a sublime landscape (Shelton and Reis, 2009). The term ‘Clean and Green’, again a term that has entered the tourism and conservation discourse has never enjoyed any form of official status although it has wide currency as an unofficial, although inaccurate, descriptor of the New Zealand environment.

These linkages, and the recent overt championing of The Conservation Economy makes it now unavoidable “to recognize that capitalist policies and values, and often neoliberal policies and values, pervade conservation practice” (Brockington, Duffy and Igoe, 2008, p. 3). The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) has presented Insight 15: Conservation and Mining (NZIER, 2010), which states:

If more funding were available, the additional revenue could be used to acquire new lands of greater priority for protection and to shift the portfolio of conservation lands away from the current preponderance of mountain, rock and forest to include more of the scarcer and more vulnerable lowland habitats.

A change in mindset is required

To do this, however, requires moving away from the notion that once land is acquired for conservation it is closed for all future development other than the most low impact tourism or recreation uses that are deemed compatible with

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15 Campbell (2010) has pointed out that ‘(a)fter the Seville Expo in 1992, clean and green New Zealand entered mainstream economic discourse as a serious strategy for branding products’ (p. 14). It would be difficult to apply the clean and green brand to tourism as an export industry when every long haul passenger produces tonnes of CO2 even before they disembark.
This idea that conservation land may be redesignated to allow other than low-impact activity, and particularly to allow mining, proved anathematic to prominent conservation organizations, for example The New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society (Wards, 2010) and groups who recreate within conservation areas, including the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Barnett, 2009; Mitchell, 2009). Rightly or wrongly, an emphasis on economic considerations in the processes of the creation, management, retention or disestablishment of protected areas, and in particular the application of neoliberal market models to these processes, was perceived by these conservation organizations as putting the whole notion of conservation at risk. Hacking (1999) points out that the term ‘economy’ is of recent popularity and reflects the recent historical privileging of the explanatory primacy of economics. Brauer & van Tuyll (2008) in Castles, Battles & Bombs claim to show how economics explains military history “yet this splendid icon, the economy, was hard to find on the front pages of newspapers even forty years ago. Why are we so unquestioning about this very idea, ‘the economy’?” (p. 13). Also, Mitchell (2007) believes that:

(d)uring the second half of the twentieth century, economics established its claim to be the true political science. The idea of ‘the economy’ provided a mode of seeing and a way of organizing the world that could diagnose a country’s fundamental condition, frame the terms of its public debate, picture its collective growth or decline, and propose remedies for its improvement, all in terms of what seemed a legible series of measurements, goals, and comparisons. In the closing decade of the century, after the collapse of state socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the authority of economic science seemed larger than ever (p. 1).

Clearly, the recent bringing into being of two discursive forms; the economy, and conservation for a new age, constructs a favourable and receptive historical period for launching The Conservation Economy. Such junctures have happened in the past and before moving on to further consideration of the one currently occurring in New Zealand it will be rewarding to deviate to North America and explore ideas of nature in the context of Reagonomics.

It is at such periods in history, marked by low-trust of government intentions on the part of conservation organizations, that what I refer to as ‘Cronon’s dilemma’ occurs. As Cronon (1996) discovered, offering a critique of a core conservation concept at a time of crisis is as unpopular as it is necessary. At this distance it is difficult to conceive of how radical a notion
was the social constructivism presented in *The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature* (Cronon, 1996, pp. 69-90). Cronon was acutely aware of the issues involved in his critiquing and was indeed criticized for questioning the value of a shibboleth, in that instance wilderness, at a time when “a Republican-dominated Congress … quickly distinguished itself as the most hostile toward environmental protection in all of U.S. history” (Cronon, 1996 p. 19). A similar dilemma applies now; should the preservationist model of conservation, as it is widely, if inaccurately, understood to operate in New Zealand, be critiqued at the very time that a neoliberal political agenda is so forcefully being pursued? Cronon’s answer - “that we should be willing to question some of our own moral certainty in an effort to understand why we ourselves think of nature as we do, and why others do not always agree with us” (Cronon, 1996, p. 21) -- is that such times of crisis are exactly when critique is most needed, in order for well-informed debate to occur, and ultimately to ensure more effective environmental protection.

1.3 Environmental protection as context

Central to any conception of conservation is this notion of protection, whether achieved through preservation or through wise use. Accepting Brockington, Duffy and Igoe’s (2008) proposal that conservation in the twenty-first century is well and truly enmeshed with neoliberalism, “speaking comfortable truths to power” (p. 3), then it is inescapable that protection be viewed as part of the late-capitalist economic production and consumption.

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16 Characterising certain years or collections of years as constituting a ‘period of time’, for example times when various governments were sympathetic or unsympathetic to environmental protection, is always problematic. Bendix (2002) states that “(t)he present debates over whether our age is postmodern, poststructuralist, post-Fordist, modern, or reflexively modern are, perhaps, futile in their insistence on a periodization of human experience measured by technological and political change” (p. 480). The thinking of Fredric Jameson informs much of the conceptual aspects of this work. Benjamin Kunkel, reviewing Jameson’s (2010) *Valences of the Dialectic* for the *London Review of Books* has provided a sympathetic but probing analysis of: ‘Jameson’s career as the main theorist of postmodernism, stretching from about 1983…to 2008…this period of neoliberal ascendancy – an era of deregulation, financialisation, industrial decline, demoralization of the working class, the collapse of Communism…’ (Kunkel, 2010 p. 12). Kunkel presents Jameson’s position as: ‘Always historicise…one cannot not periodise’ (Kunkel, 2010 p. 12).

17 It is useful to foreshadow, here, that Morton (2007), below, uses the same justification, better protection, when arguing for *ecology without nature*.

18 Meant here as a plain language descriptor but adopted as ‘Wise Use’ by a United States lobby group (Worster, 2007).

19 One critique of a focus on conservation and protection is situated within the concept of ‘environmental justice’, specifically that: ‘The dominant narrative of the environment has been framed by these NGOs around issues of wilderness and nature conservation, rather than the priorities of racialised groups: urban and polluted environments and indigenous land rights.’ (Scandrett, 2010, p. 186).
system, where the production of protection is an economic act. The claim by the NZIER above, that New Zealand’s is a commitment to a (United States) model of protected areas that will ‘become obsolete for its conservation purposes’ must be taken seriously, and this organisation is not a lone voice. In order to engage with the debate over how best to produce comprehensive environmental protection it is necessary to grasp the major historical positions that have emerged.

There are two major traditions implicated in approaches to environmental conservation; one based in economics and the other reflecting values that are other than economic. The first tradition eschews religion, preservation and consumerism, but not protection, and is centered in debates about land use, where “questions about how to shape and steward landscapes are among the most important asked by individuals and communities” (Shearer, Mouat, Basett, Binford, Johnson, Saarinen, Gertler & Kahyaoglu-Koracin, 2009), and in presenting economic arguments to support ideas such as sustainability and biodiversity. This tradition, involving the wise-use of land, and economics, may be informed by the principles of either of two broad intellectual histories; Marxism and capitalism, albeit both of them in modern and sometimes confusing guises. The soft version of Marxism, sometimes referred to as ‘Marxian’ (e.g. Smith, 1984), is predicated on the claim that there can be no universal environmental protection, without concomitant social justice. Thus, poverty reduction through a reallocation of resources is a central plank of any conservation strategy emanating from this tradition. Marxism seemed not to lend itself to fruitful engagement with matters of conservation until the appearance of Neil Smith’s (1984) Uneven Development, Ted Benton’s (1996) The Greening of Marxism and John Bellamy Foster’s Marx’s Ecology: Materialism and nature (2000) paved the way for an analytic project allowing a soft Marxian engagement with environmental protection, although not all sharing exactly the same critical positions.

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20 Setting aside land to produce ecosystem services would be an example of the production of protection. These services, commonly the provision of clean water and air, are allocated a monetary value. Currently, parts of the Conservation Estate are having their ecosystem service values computed. Fiordland National Park supplies services worth millions of dollars and Te Papanui Conservation Park annually provides water worth $136 million (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2006).
21 Many economists would not accept this distinction, since values routinely are treated as having ‘a dollar value’, just as goods and services have. At this stage of our discussion the distinction between economic and non-economic, or intrinsic, value will be retained but it will gradually yield to the demands of the Conservation Economy. Tisdell (2010) provides a useful wide-ranging review of resource and environmental economics.
22 The myriad nuances and contradictions in the environmental philosophies and personal actions of seminal nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States ‘naturalists’ (for want of a better word) and the impossibility of rigidly separating their wise-use, conservation and preservation positions, are illustrated in the biographies of Aldo Leopold (Meine, 1988), John Muir (Worster, 2008), Theodore Roosevelt (Brinkley, 2009) and Gifford Pinchot (Miller, 2001; 2007).
Developing in parallel with this Marxian critique has been an alternative project which explores novel ways of using land in order to optimize conservation outcomes and outcomes for other economic interests, for example pastoral farmers, through a process of ‘win-win’ negotiation (Fisher and Urry, 1981). Under this approach, environmental protection still is linked with social justice but the justice referred to reflects the efficient functioning of market forces, and the freedom to make personal choices rather than the intra-national and international redistribution of wealth. This approach to protection is predicated on the principle that geomorphological landforms and their constituent parts, including water, flora and fauna, are best thought of as natural resources to be managed, albeit managed increasingly with conservation outcomes built into economic outcomes (Knight, 2009). This focus on effective management requires significant changes to the policies and practices, not only of traditional resource management institutions and agencies (Cheng, 2009), but also of conservation organisations (Hilty & Groves, 2009). Jamieson (2008) noted that, despite their philosophical differences, Marxist and neoliberal environmental analyses share the feature of economic determinism.

The second major tradition implicated in approaches to environmental conservation has to do with non-economic forces, for example Christian ideology informing a Romantic aesthetic of the sublime, which in turn produces a particular formulation of nature, natural processes and the natural world (Glacken, 1967; Nash, 1998; Cronon, 1996). In this vein, Jamieson (2008), in his introduction to environmental ethics, presented White’s (1967) argument that “ideas have consequences” (p. 22), and consequently that Christian ideas have environmental consequences. Christianity, though, in White’s view, has unique features that make it inimical to environmental conservation. A central tension in this tradition is how humans, on encountering God’s work, that is, specific features of the natural world, may view it as sacred, and hence worthy of awe and preservation, while simultaneously viewing it as a cornucopia of divine gifts to be consumed, or transformed and then consumed; the world as man’s dominion, eventually allowing the claim that “(t)he modern version of the Garden of Eden is

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23 The collapse of the global banking system in 2008 has been identified by some authors as marking the end of free-market capitalism as a credible economic system. Stiglitz (2010) points out that “Bruce Greenwald and I had explained that Adam Smith’s hand was not in fact invisible: it wasn’t there” (p. 17) while Chris Harman’s (2010) _Zombie Capitalism: Global crisis and the relevance of Marx_ and Terry Eagleton’s (2011) _Why Marx Was Right_ comment positively on the current utility of Marxian economic and social theory.

24 Although not necessarily misleading, Jamieson’s (2008) presentation of the nub of White’s (1967) _Science_ article is incomplete. White went on to offer Zen Buddhism as an example of a philosophy of religion sympathetic to reified nature. Eckel (1997) argued that, far from being sympathetic to reified nature, the concept has no meaning in Buddhism. Also, Stott (2000), in a foreword to a reprint of White (1967) argues, “(no), the _dominion_ God has given us is a responsible stewardship, not a destructive dominion” (p. 8), thus offering an alternative reading of Christian Scripture.
the enclosed shopping mall” (Merchant, 2004, p. 167). Merchant may seem to be drawing a rather long bow in her claim but it does fit well within the idea of the sacred, however antithetically profane shopping malls may at first glance appear. This notion of the importance of the idea of things is what led Oelschlaeger (1991) to state that “the idea of wilderness in postmodern context is...a search for meaning—for a new creation story or mythology—...And if that new creation story is to ring true in a postmodern age, then it must have both scientific plausibility and religious distinctiveness” (p. 321). Western society’s move to the secular25 in no way banishes religious-like belief (Taylor, 2007) or the celebration of the sacred in new ways, in particular in ways involving environmental protection (Geering, 2005). Worster (2007), an environmental historian, rejects economic determinism also, claiming instead that “(m)ore reliable indicators of whether nations become active in preserving wild places are the state of personal freedom, the degree of social equality, and the sanctity of human rights” (p. 266). Nash (2001) reverses the order of effect; “(w)ilderness was the basic ingredient of American culture. From the raw materials of the physical wilderness, Americans built a civilization” (p. xi). Nash argued also that “civilization created wilderness” (p. xi).26 Selections of the ensuing debate about wilderness, and by

25 In his review of a group of four books on this topic Benthall (2008) stated ‘all the books under review reflect the withering away of the “secularization thesis” that prevailed in sociology thirty years ago.’ (p. 3) and notes that “(F)aith-based” environmental … agencies … are now attracting considerable attention from international policymakers” (p. 4). These faith-based agencies reflect an increasing environmental awareness amongst some previously unsympathetic religious groups. For example, Evangelical Christian churches have developed and published a guide to environmental stewardship, based on non-economic values of care (Berry, 2000) and have stated a commitment to a “New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good” invoking Genesis 2:15 and Revelation 11:18. “Scripture mandates that we care for and protect the earth” (Cizic, 2010, p. 14). Other pro-environmental statements involving Judaism (Soetendorp, 2010), Christianity (Bauckham, 2010), Buddhism (Ariyaratne, 2010; Ikeda, 2010), the Orthodox Christian Church (Bartholomey, 2010) and Hinduism (Paranjape, 2010) are predicated on the claim that “a broadened definition of religion is helpful for understanding this convergence of world religions and ecology. Religion is more than simply a belief in a transcendent deity or a means to an afterlife. It is, also, an orientation to the cosmos and our role in it. Religion thus refers to cosmological stories, symbol systems, ritual practices, ethical norms, historical processes and institutional structures that transmit a view of the human as embedded in a world of meaning and responsibility, transformation and celebration. Religion connects humans with a divine or numinous presence, with the human community and with the broader Earth community. It links humans to the larger matrix of mystery in which life arises, unfolds and flourishes. Nature, meanwhile, provides a revelatory context for orienting humans to abiding religious questions about the cosmological origins of the universe, the meaning of the emergence of life, and human responsibility for life processes. Religion thus situates humans in relation to both the natural and human worlds with regard to meaning and responsibility” (Tucker, 2010, p. 2). Tucker’s revelatory role for nature invokes immanence (Crist, 2008) and involves a human-nonhuman dualism. This position is in contrast to: “There is no word for nature in my language. ‘Nature’, in English, seems to refer to that which is separate from human beings. It is a distinction we don’t recognize. Audrey Shenandoah, Clan Mother of the Onondaga Nation” (Soka Gakkai International, 2010). Shenandoah’s statement is problematic in that its utility is limited. It is not clear which of Soper’s (1995) versions of nature is being referred to, the metaphysical, realist or lay, or whether the term refers to Morton’s (2007) all-inclusive metaphorical list.

26 Nash’s book cited here, Wilderness and the American Mind, appeared in 1967 and in subsequent editions in 1973, 1982 and 2001. The work invites a social constructivist reading; ‘that civilization created wilderness’ (p. xi), ‘wilderness is an entirely human concept, an invention of civilized man’ (p. 270) but contains also the statement ‘(w)e didn’t make wilderness, it made us’ (p. 387) which, by implication, proposes a reified phenomenological wilderness with ‘objects that compose a wilderness, such as wild animals, virgin forests, even rivers’ (p. 270). This is at odds with Oelschlaeger’s (1991) ‘idea’ of wilderness. This apparent contradiction is in
extension nature, were presented in *The Great New Wilderness Debate* (Callicott and Nelson, Eds., 1998) and *The Wilderness Debate Rages On* (Nelson and Callicott, Eds., 2008). Despite Nash’s (2001) claim that “(w)hat was new as the end of the twentieth century approached was the realization that the future of wilderness on earth depended as never before on the promulgation of a convincing philosophy” (p. 257), ‘the wilderness debate’, as presented in these two volumes, has resulted in a philosophical impasse. In important contributions to the debate Eileen Crist (2004, in Nelson and Callicott, 2008) presented the Kantian ‘immanence of nature’ position in her chapter “Against the Social Construction of Nature and Wilderness” (pp. 500-525) and J. Baird Callicott (2003, in Nelson and Callicott, 2008) explored the implications of the “‘Shifting Paradigm’ in Ecology for Paradigm Shifts in the Philosophy of Conservation” (pp. 571-600). Crist’s concerns about the immanence of nature not needing to be part of any social constructivist position relate to how social constructivism allows an endless process of formulation and reformulation of how Knight’s (2009) ‘natural resource management’ should be implemented; “(n)ature becomes narrated, theorized, inventoried, and comprehended- birthed into significant existence- by human activity” (Crist, 2004, p. 503). Callicott’s concern is with how “fields of endeavor that have been informed by ecology will have to take account of the paradigm shift in ecology (from a ‘balance of nature’ [e.g. Suzuki & McConnell, 1997] to a ‘flux of nature’ paradigm) that is now virtually complete” (Adams, 2003; Callicott, 2003, p. 571). Taken together, these two concerns underline a fear that a combination of social constructivism and a lack of a scientific model of fixity removes authoritative support for environmental protection.27

The passion and bitterness of this United States-based debate over wilderness has not been exported to New Zealand. Turner (2007) suggested that:

(t)he great new wilderness debate was framed as a broad critique of the American wilderness ideal. Yet, for all of the debate’s merits in raising questions about the

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27 In New Zealand, a good example of these processes at work is the ‘beech gap’ on the West Coast region of the South Island. ‘Beech forest is absent from south-central Westland today but is widespread to the north and to the south of this region. Previous pollen records from Westland have suggested that this ‘beech gap’ was narrower prior to the Last (sic) interglacial than today...(and) it has been suggested that suppression of beech in this region is due to the combination of severe conditions during glacial stages and the competitive dominance of podocarp forest during interglacial stages...showing successional development towards a podocarp forest climax...’ (Newnham, Vandergoes, Hendy Lowe and Preusser, 2007 p. 527-8). This process of succession and climax fits within a ‘flux of nature’ paradigm. The obvious question for loggers to ask then is why not extract the millable timber from successional forests now, given that they are destined to disappear anyway?
assumptions that underlie the modern wilderness ideal, many scholars overlooked the historical contingency of wilderness in American environmental thought. In many regards, however, the great new wilderness debate marked a specific reaction to the new wilderness fundamentalism of the late 1980s, not a general reaction to the more pragmatic concerns that guided wilderness advocacy during the rest of the twentieth century…The wilderness politics of the last forty years…emerged out of unique circumstances that reflected the changing place of wilderness in American environmental thought and politics (Turner, 2007, pp. 258-259).

The contingencies affecting environmental protection in New Zealand, and its discourse, have elements in common with those operating in the United States and also significant points of difference. The North American preoccupation with wilderness is not replicated. There is a discussion document *The State of Wilderness in New Zealand* (Cessford (Ed.), 2001) and a protected areas category of *Wilderness Area*, but discussions and policy-making lack the passion that resulted in, and have emanated from, the passage of the United States’ Wilderness Act of 1964. One example of the pragmatic approach in New Zealand to wilderness is the acceptance that management practice may outstrip policy formation.

According to the Rakiura National Park Management Plan (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2010) the Tin Range area of the National Park is likely to be considered for designation as a Wilderness Area and one implication of this, according to policy (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2010) is that all signs of human use should be removed, which would include removing a set of stone cairns erected by trampers (Shelton and Reis, 2010). In practice, even if such a Wilderness Area were to be designated, such vernacular material productions of culture would be left *in situ* (DOC manager, pers. com, 2010).

Wilderness studies have come a long way in the short history of wilderness management in this country. Indeed, wilderness studies have come further than the formal establishment of new Wilderness Areas…it may be time to expand the focus of wilderness…to consider ‘wild lands’ of New Zealand (Lucas, 2001, p. xiii).

One aspect of the production of protection that has been receiving increasing attention over the last thirty years has been that of ethics, in particular the nature of proper ethical relationships between humans and all of the nonhuman world. It is worth noting at this point

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28 Mels (2009) in *Analysing Environmental Discourses and Representations* notes that “environmental discourses draw attention to how the production, circulation and justification of meaning within particular constellations of power permeate all social practices and thereby always enter into the constitution of the biogeophysical environment” (p. 387). This comment is important in that *The Conservation Economy* may be treated as one such strategic form of representation.

29 This statement supports Morton’s (2007) concept of “properly ecological forms of culture philosophy, politics, and art” (p. 1) rather than ones based on some aspect of reified nature. Paradoxically, it supports also the neoliberal elements of *The Conservation Economy* since a redesignated Tin Range was one of the areas being considered for mining, in this case, not surprisingly, for tin.
that two approaches are available; either, a particular approach to ethics may be identified, for example Kantian ethics, and its application to environmental protection explored or, environmental issues may be identified and the ethical positions of possible responses to them discussed. Jamieson (2008) offers an analysis situated in the latter approach and, having described the ethical tensions inherent both in economically deterministic and ideas-based conceptions of environmental protection, is adamant that conservation effort may be expended ethically without such analytic tensions having been resolved; “we do what we can, when we can” (Jamieson, 2008, p. 24). Just as, in North America, wilderness has operated metonymically for ‘nature’, so has ‘the bush’ functioned in this way in New Zealand.

What do New Zealanders mean when they talk about ‘the bush'? What does it evoke in their imaginations? Is it a particular type of vegetation, a place to visit, something to save, a source of identity or a refuge from modern life? ... 'Going bush', the deliberate act of escaping modern life or leaving unannounced, is also a quintessential New Zealand myth and reality…The bush is a bountiful starting point for a history of nature’s meaning and significance in New Zealand’s culture (Ross, 2008, p. 1).

1.4 Colonial and postcolonial: context of the contemporary

To reiterate, in New Zealand “conservation and tourism are inextricably linked” (Shelton & Tucker, 2008, p. 198), and how ‘nature’s meaning and significance’ have been constructed is central to the ‘tourism product’ that is offered. The Christian, liberal democratic, Marxian and neoliberal approaches to conservation manifest in the way in which the tourism industry operates. Tourism in New Zealand’s protected areas is situated both within Christian ideology expressed as the Romantic aesthetic, and within complex social processes governed by a set of economically determined historical contingencies. Straddling White’s (1967) ‘ideas have consequences’ approach to history and Marx’s economic determinism has been the process of colonization, the “making (of) settler colonial space” (Mar & Edmonds, 2010, p. iii) and the...

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30 Although Jamieson (2008, p. 22) is dismissive of Marxist-informed economically-determined environmentalism his report of its death may be premature. ‘(N)one figure seemed to embody more than Fredric Jameson the peculiar condition of an economic theory (Marxism) that had turned out to flourish above all as a mode of cultural analysis…an intellectual tradition that had arrived at some sort of culmination right at the point of apparent extinction.’ (Kunkel, 2010, p. 12)
31 Morton (2007) refers to the ‘metonymic list’ of figurative language that constitutes nature. ‘Wilderness’ and ‘the bush’ are examples of entries in this list.
32 Within the New Zealand tourism industry the term ‘product’ is used in two distinct ways. To say that a country, city or region has ‘good product’ is to acknowledge that there are raw materials present that are promising for the development of individual tourism operators ‘products’. New Zealand, with its abundance of geomorphological features that may be used to construct a sublime landscape, would be described as ‘having good product’.
current indigenous renaissance focused on “'(u)nsettling’ settler society” (Bennetts, 2008, p. 122).

Whether or not postcolonial critique may legitimately be subsumed within other analytic traditions, or demands the establishment of a tradition of its own, is moot. In contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand essentialist notions of ethnicity are enshrined in the Treaty of Waitangi “whereby all activities of the Crown, and by implication the Department of Conservation, must take into account Maori aspirations” (Shelton and Tucker, 2008 p. 202), and thus are part of the structure within which academic activity, conservation effort and tourism development are situated. Just as the chronic non-economic values/economic-determinism tension alluded to above need not paralyse conservation activity, neither need this postcolonial/other-traditions tension prevent a fruitful attempt being made at developing a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in providing a bicultural critical reception to the notion of The Conservation Economy, necessarily centered on tourism (Amoamo & Thompson, 2010). This is not to claim that a change in worldview to the postcolonial will actually change the world; as in Whyte’s (1967) claim the ‘ideas have consequences’, such a notion “is deeply rooted in the Romantic period, as is the notion of worldview itself (Weltanschung)” (Morton, 2007, p. 2). Nevertheless, tourists in New Zealand are better understood as performing themselves as interactive visitors rather than as simply gazing at sights and sites, the bane of indigenous tourism product (Larsen, 2010; Perkins & Thorns, 2001). The same landforms, for example mountains, presented to be performed as sublime nature as part of a European tourism product may equally be presented as ancestors demanding, in part as an act of indigenous resistance (Hokowhitu, 2010), a performance of respect as part of a Maori product.

Underlying such products there is an ongoing tension between available environmental narratives. Geoff Park, in Theatre Country: Essays on landscape and whenua (2006) presented a euchronian indigenous narrative, a form of utopian narrative. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, parallel to the Eurocentric normative narrative of modernity and progress, is the indigenous narrative of pre-contact euchronia, and its future reinstatement. This situation has led to a unique process of rewilded ecosystems, where the Crown pursues an environmental future articulated as utopian (but based on effective markets) and Maori are complicit in this by agreeing to postpone indefinitely claims for the cultural harvesting of currently protected species. Rewilding sounds ideal for those societies where modernity is complete, but in a postcolonial bicultural society modernity can never be complete, only constantly negotiated.
Perhaps it's also worth splitting the brand 'rewilded NZ', into a eutopia (the good place: 100% pure New Zealand), and also as utopia, the 'lost' wilderness one kind of visitor seeks out, and also - in Jameson's re-positioning - as a place that has the 'deeper vocation' of underlining our inability to imagine this future environmental relation/scene. This split then allows us to make some sort of connection with the indigenous material: the two accounts of the same place don't just contest it but also are expressions of a contradiction in reality about differing approaches/social realities that the place then conjures.

Thus, Jameson’s idea of being able to migrate between utopias cannot happen within Aotearoa/New Zealand since the ontological positions of colonisation mean that the two utopias would be performed incompatibly.

1.5 Nature as context

Nature, a transcendental term in a material mask (Morton, 2007).

Expedition cruising is enmeshed with what is commonly called nature, and nature and its conservation is a problematic concept economically and socially (Scandrett, 2010), philosophically (Soper, 1995; Jamieson, 200833), linguistically (Morton, 2007; 2010a,b) and as a basis for environmental analysis (Castree, 2009; Mels, 2009). This is the case regardless of whether one is in the United States, engaged in ‘the wilderness debate’ (Cronon, 1996; Crist, 2009), or in Aotearoa/New Zealand seeking recreation and solace in ‘the bush’. As noted already, “(t)he bush is a bountiful starting point for a history of nature’s meaning and significance in New Zealand’s culture” (Ross, 2008, p. 1). Here, popular (mis)conceptions of the bush as pure have been imposed on a tourism promotional byline. It is clear, then, that the New Zealand government, with its policy of The Conservation Economy, however vaguely articulated, and New Zealand Tourism, through its ambiguous association both with ‘100% Pure NZ’ and ‘Clean and Green’, have intimate relationships with nature, whatever nature is and however it may be represented or portrayed. It is opportune here to expand on our earlier mentions of Soper (1995). Kate Soper is an environmental philosopher who discussed:

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33 Jamieson’s (2008) approach to the relationship between philosophy, specifically ethics, and environmental problems is that “I will assume that among their many dimensions, environmental goods involve morally relevant values, and that environmental problems involve moral failings of some sort…I will explore the idea that environmental problems challenge our ethical and value systems. If I am right about this, our thinking about the environment will improve by thinking about it in this way, and our moral and political conceptions will themselves become more sophisticated as a result of their confrontations with real environmental problems. Now, on with the show” (p. 25).
(H)ow it would seem important to recognize the multiple roles which ‘nature’ can be called upon to play in ecological discussion…the ‘metaphysical’, the ‘realist’ and the ‘lay’ (or ‘surface’) ideas of nature.

Employed as a metaphysical concept, which it mainly is in the argument of philosophy, ‘nature’ is the concept through which humanity thinks its difference and specificity…One is invoking the metaphysical concept in the very posing of the question of humanity’s relation to nature. Employed as a realist concept, ‘nature’ refers to the structures, processes and causal powers that are constantly operative within the physical world…Employed as a ‘lay’ or ‘surface’ concept, as it is in much everyday, literary and theoretical discourse, ‘nature is used in reference to ordinarily observable features of the world: the ‘natural’…This is the nature of immediate experience and aesthetic appreciation; the nature we have destroyed and polluted and are asked to conserve and preserve (Soper, 1995, p. 156).

Soper goes on to submit that:

(When) the Green Movement speaks of nature, it is most commonly in this third ‘lay’ or ‘surface’ sense: it is referring to nature as wildlife…(b)ut when it appeals to humanity to preserve nature…it is also of course employing the idea in a metaphysical sense to designate an object in relation to a subject (humanity), with the presumption being that subject and object are clearly differentiable and logically distinct. At the same time, by drawing attention to human transformation (destruction, wastage, pollution, manipulation, instrumental use of) nature, it is, at least implicitly, invoking the realist idea of nature (p. 156).

Morton again:

So “nature” occupies at least three places in symbolic language. First, it is a mere empty placeholder for a host of other concepts. Second, it has the force of law, a norm against which deviation is measured. Third, “nature” is a Pandora’s box, a world that encapsulates a potentially infinite series of disparate fantasy objects (Morton, 2007, p. 14).

Soper’s concepts are considered here as spaces, where space is inscribed onto place (Casey, 1997), itself a social construct superimposed or anchored on location, where location is

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34 When ‘place’ is moved from the naïve sense of location “‘place’, in the usual sense of significant geographies of recognition” (Cartier, 2005, p. 11), interesting things happen. Time and movement are implicated: “Place…slows time down, stops it, and can even – by offering the possibility of return – reverse it…place is the means most readily at hand to overcome this sense of ceaseless flow” (Tuan, 2004, p. 53). “All places have the same structure…consisting of three interrelated components…The three are: the in / out of place rules…spatial flows or interactions, and the issue of surface and depth or appearance and reality” (Sack, 2004, p. 245). As well as time and movement, identity-as-belonging becomes involved, “(t)he relationship between the construction of the identity of places and the construction of terrains of belonging” (Fortier, 1999, p. 42). Linking time, movement and identity, Jones (2005) asks:

If we are all vast repositories of past emotional-spatial experience…can we recollect past emotional-spatial experience for the purposes of some attempt at representation? Can we go back to the past terrains and past encounters which are mapped inside us and which colour our present in ways we cannot easily feel or say? (p. 206).
some feature of the material world (Hacking, 1999) represented by some sort of map, where map may include certain kinds of written or verbal descriptions.  

Brockington, Duffy and Igoe (2008), in an attempt to model the concept of nature, distinguish between “the black box of productive nature” (p. 187) and “the black box of consumptive nature” (p. 189). This approach facilitates analysis of certain economic and power relationships but these authors, though, do not attempt to critique the very notion of nature itself; metaphysical, realist or lay, as being too problematic to be useful for critiquing the relationship between humans and the nonhuman world. Morton goes further and claims that ‘nature’ in fact interferes in any attempt to develop a properly ecological approach to understanding human activity. As noted, Morton reminds us that mimetic writing about nature, ecocriticism, remains primarily and inescapably an act of writing, and is therefore a work of art, informed by an aesthetic, which in the case of nature remains the Romantic. This aesthetic, as with any aesthetic, is itself generated by an ideology, albeit often one that remains unacknowledged. To move from ecocriticism to ecocritique, a first step in developing a truly ecological future, these influences must be acknowledged and made transparent. This first step requires an important shift of focus, from merely performing the work of art, that is,

To the extent that the ‘adventures’ of others, laden in the telling with the spirituality of the day, become our own vicarious ‘past emotional-spatial experience’, so too do they generate the desire-to-become, through visitation. One function of the visitation may be to provide a location through which later to remember “being-in-place”, or subsequent “remembering through place” (Jones, 2005, p. 213), or representations of place, like photographs and diaries. These “powerful elements of emotional geographies of the self” (p. 213) conceivably have the capacity to link the spirituality infusing previous representations of place with the contemporary visitor.

The complexities of such acts of cartography are considered when we engage with George Hartley’s (2003) book The Abyss of Representation: Marxism and the postmodern sublime. For now, I will do no more than to serve notice of my disagreement with Franz Kafka’s position when he, I suspect disingenuously, wrote, as if representation were a neutral act:

I have vigorously absorbed the negative element of the age in which I live, an age that is, of course, very close to me, which I have no right ever to fight against, but as it were a right to represent (Kafka in Medin, 2009, p. 7).

Central to Morton’s thesis is the question of whether this allowed representation of Kafka’s or, more pressingly, our own negative elements of the age in which we live should be explicitly theorised: To theorize ecological views is also to bring thinking up to date. Varieties of Romanticism and primitivism have often construed ecological struggle as that of “place” against the encroachments of modern and postmodern “space.” In social structure and in thought, goes the argument, place has been ruthlessly corroded by space: all that is solid melts into air. But unless we think about it some more, the cry of “place!” will resound in empty space, to no effect. It is a question of whether you think that the “re-enchantment of the world” will make nice pictures, or whether it is a political practice (Morton, 2007, pp. 10-11).

As political practice, “(t)he “thing” we call nature becomes, in the Romantic period and afterward, a way of healing what modern society has damaged. Nature is like that other Romantic-period invention, the aesthetic” (Morton, 2007, p. 22). The ecological subject is engaged in this restoration but, for it to be effective, “(s)ubject and object require a certain environment in which they can join up together” (Morton, 2007, p.22).
writing, to engaging with the subject/object of the work, that is, acting politically. This move, from the aesthetic to the political, will become evident in Chapter Four when Walter Benjamin’s notions of aura and distraction are introduced.

1.6 Beyond nature and protection: the ecological thought

Morton (2007) developed his idea of the endless metonymic list of nature to the point of proposing that nature is no more than “an arbitrary rhetorical construct, empty of independent, genuine existence behind or beyond the texts we create about it” (pp. 21-22) and one implication of such a disavowal of nature is the possibility of escaping from being trapped in the dystopian present, where many ‘environmentalists’ are; trapped in a despoliation narrative (Shelton & Tucker, 2008), and moving instead toward a utopian future, where ecocities accommodate the world’s burgeoning urban population, in a properly ecological manner, and the protected/unprotected dichotomy gives way to a world where various kinds of protection are afforded all locations, flora and fauna, on the grounds of their interconnectedness.36 Morton (2007) labels this process as moving from the Hegelian “beautiful soul syndrome” to “the ecological thought” (p. 81), an argument he revisits in The Ecological Thought (Morton, 2010a).37 Whether or not neoliberal economics persists, even if “dominant but dead” (Castree, 2009),38 in order to avoid dystopia, protection still will need to be incorporated within production in a way that avoids the creation of ecological ‘winners and losers’.39

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36 Morton’s argument appears to have a superficial resemblance to that of the ecologist Barry Commoner but in fact is unrelated since Commoner’s work was situated within, and emanated from, scientific ecology while Morton’s contribution has its origins in the sublime aesthetics of the Romantic period. A spectacular misreading of Ecology Without Nature is provided by McIntosh’s (2008) review of the book. Morton argues for “properly ecological forms of culture, philosophy, politics, and art” (Morton, 2007, p. 1). McIntosh states: “Since Morton’s book, he says, is about art above all else it would be effrontery for a retired ecologist to review it in its entirety” (p. 262). Nevertheless, McIntosh risks such effrontery and concludes that if, as Morton claims, the old metaphor of the book of nature has returned, then it is a book “certainly unread by Timothy Morton” (p. 263).

37 Soper (2011) provided an unsympathetic review of The Ecological Thought: It is, then, a ‘Big’ and very embracing thought, and one whose thinking is presented as a condition of salvation or redemption. But I have to confess that coming across this kind of condensed account of it at an early stage in Morton’s book was for me not propitious, indeed put me rather too much in mind- fittingly perhaps, for a ‘dark’ ecology- of one of those long nights in which all cows are grey. The mist descended and I was left groping around for conceptual guidance (p. 55).

38 Here, Castree is echoing Habermas’s epithet that ‘Modernism is dominant but dead.’

39 That both neoliberal economic policy and fortress conservation create ‘winners and losers’ is argued by Brockington (2009). A relevant academic literature that deals with aspects of such winning and losing is that of ‘environmental justice’. ‘Environmental justice has no agreed definition, but involves tackling the social maldistribution of environmental damage (and benefits)’ (Scandrett, 2010 p. 186).

The claims of the environmental justice movement amount to two distinct versions of justice, what Fraser calls redistribution and recognition justice, which are not reducible one to the other. Not
The implications for the material world of the ecological thought are what interest us here. What could the role of expedition cruise tourism, and the ideologies and aesthetics of such tourism, in the utopian vision of the ecological thought illustrated by the narrative and economic origins of the embodiment of the thought; the nature-based tourist. I will end these introductory remarks by quoting from Morton (2007); “ecological criticism must politicize the aesthetic” (p. 205). The Ecological Thought and The Conservation Economy no doubt would approach ecocritique and the politicizing of the sublime differently.

What I suggest is that the myriad things, processes, and relations we call environment, how they work, and how we should act towards them, are inherently discursive problems (Mels, 2009, p. 386).

The very awareness of discursive forms awakens a feeling that the environment presented ‘as-it-really-is’ may not be all that natural, but the exact expression of manipulable, authoritative discourses (p. 385).

The term discourse has frequently been associated with a broad range of more or less strategic forms of representation (maps, imagery, narratives) mobilized within the ongoing struggle over spaces and places (p. 387).

Through an analysis of the concept of nature we have become aware that it is one such discursive form. While nature is itself discursive, when reified into an ‘authoritative discourse’, it in turn becomes one of the formative elements of another discursively produced notion; the ecological subject. Other discursive forms presented here, and impinging on the formation of the ecological subject, include the economy, including the collapse of the Soviet Union’s ‘economy’, making no-longer-affordable ice-strengthened research vessels available for nature-based tourism.

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only is the movement demanding a redistribution in environmental quality and absence of pollution, but also a recognition of different social constructions of the environment…A stronger interpretation of environmental justice relates to substantive justice, or a socially just outcome to…decision making.’ (Scandrett, 2010, pp. 187-189).

This latter, stronger version, when leveled at large environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs), or ‘Green Inc.’ (McDonald, 2008) historically was commonly articulated as ‘no environmental justice without social justice’, later appropriated as ‘We declare that there is no social justice without environmental justice, and no environmental justice without social justice’ (Green Party of Canada, 2009). Underpinning such declarations is a unitary conceptualization of environment. Mels (2009) concludes “The Environment Is No More” since “environmental discourses are power systems, which seek to systemise, capture and fix what is constantly mediated, in process and getting away. As soon as it looks as if all the shapes are in place and audiences convinced, the environment has somehow always already made its escape, only to return in a different guise” (p. 397). Morton (2007) is more blunt: “There is no such ‘thing’ as the environment, since, being involved in it already, we are not separate from it (p. 163). If the concept of environment is problematic in these ways then the concept of ‘environmental justice’ must be similarly fraught. As a consequence, when dealing here with the implications of implementing ‘the conservation economy’, yet another discursive form “in a world suffused in discursive forms” (Mels, 2009, p. 385), I will not make recourse to arguments situated within environmental justice.
Summary of Chapter One

The chapter served to set the scene for later, more detailed enquiry. In the realm of the history of philosophy, Cartesian Dualism was identified as an unavoidable and inescapable influence on all research effort. This dualism serves to separate the human animal from all other elements of the material world. In particular, in the Romantic period, dualism strongly affected ideas of nature, and these Romantic ideas are influential still. The ‘ecological subject’, a term used to imagine a group of beliefs and values embodied in the individual, is a problematic legacy of the Romantic era. One manifestation of the ecological subject is the nature tourist as a subject who performs the role of nature tourist. Such performances are forms of art.

Tourism has been contemporaneous with the emergence of economics and neoliberal economic determinism and, having situated the performance of tourism within art, the chapter then situates it within neoliberal economics through the introduction of the concept of the conservation economy marrying neoliberalism, nature and tourism.

Environmental protection then is treated as an economic issue involving resources as capital. In response to, and challenging, the ‘ecological subject’ this chapter presents Timothy Morton’s idea of the ‘ecological thought’, an ethic of sustainability based in connectedness rather than in separation. The ‘ecological subject’ is shown to be discursively produced and one discursive contributor to the ecological subject is the production of narrative, and its representation, particularly narrative representations of self and nature. The characteristics and effects of narrative representations will now be considered. Specifically because of its reliance on such narrative representations of self, nature and the sublime, tourism in Southern New Zealand and the sub-Antarctic islands for which New Zealand has administrative responsibility provides a useful setting within which to explore these issues. We will visit there in Chapter 5 but first, narrative.
Chapter 2: The Nature Tourist as context: narrated selves, narrated subjects

2.1 Self and identity: a narrative approach

To pursue a little further Parks’s (2006) metaphor of *Theatre Country: Essays on landscape and whenua*, so far I have focused on the stage about which the actors move; the landscape. What of the actors themselves; how do they view themselves, if at all? What if MacCannell’s (1976) *tourist* is just another of Mels’s (2009) discursive forms? What if the actors write their own parts; are their own biographical authors, instead of having their scripts written by someone else? In order to understand the roles of the actors in our theatre it is important to ask; of what are they constituted? Naively, self and identity spring to mind. The notions of self and identity that are of interest here are those related to Morton’s (2007) ‘ecological subject’ embodied here in the early twenty-first century western nature tourist.\(^{40}\)

(T)he modern Western sense of a self or a person…as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action, organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively against other such wholes” is in truth “a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world’s cultures” (Geertz, 1984).

Also:

’The self” stands for a very particular understanding of personal identity, one that presupposes an essential core of selfhood characterized by psychological depth, or interiority, which is the bedrock of unique, expressive individual identity (Wahrman, 2004, p. xi).

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\(^{40}\) Gillett (2011) expounds on issues common to theoretical construction of subjectivity. In embodying the ecological subject within the tourist I am acutely aware of issue five. To avoid the ‘illusory reification’ Gillett mentions I would rather say embodying the ecological subject onto the tourist but this may not help. The *first* problem we face in this theoretical task is a tendency to see the human subject as an object with an essence or fixed nature…
Second the subject (acknowledged to be subjective, dynamic, and changing) is a relational being configuring him/herself in multiple ways within a discursive milieu that is itself culturally and historically located…
Third, the subject as a relational and quasi-stable being-in-relation cannot merely be documented as an individual plus a cluster of relationships because the relationships themselves are subjectively moderated by the subject…
Fourth, the multiple inscriptions that arise from the subject’s being-in-relation are not only cross-grained with respect to each other but interact with each other in diverse ways…
Fifth, the self-as-embodied-subjectivity is often subject to misconception and illusory reification in ways that reflect the climate of values in which it is elaborated…
Through appreciating this complexity, we realize that the human subject is best construed according to Aristotle’s dictum that *the soul is to the body as sight is to the eye* and that, as somebody, one has to be open to all contingencies of life. It is characteristic of a self-making and self-knowing thing to be able to transform those contingencies in various ways even as one is affected by them (pp. 107-109).
Although our interest in self and identity is limited to tourism in late modernity the topic has been the focus of longstanding enquiry.

(T)he nature and meaning of selfhood have been recurring questions…in practically every known human time and place. Nowhere has the debate been more full-blown or more intense than in the modern West, the locale in which individuality has been most fervently celebrated and most ardently denounced (Seigel, 2005, p.1).

Seigel argues cogently that, for any compelling model of self, each of the material, relational and reflective dimensions is necessary, while none is sufficient, in particular that “the relational dimension of selfhood cannot be the sole source of the reflective one (p. 25), an important claim with respect to competing notions of the self’s primarily embodied or social, intersubjective, construction and situatedness. Some commentators, for example, situate the late- or postmodern self purely within the relational dimension (Gergen, 1991). Nonetheless:

(S)cholars, except perhaps for the most traditional Cartesians, are in agreement that self-conception is profoundly shaped by cultural and material conditions. We should expect people to understand and perform themselves differently from place to place and time to time (Crang, 2002, p. 1).

This assertion is explored (Hermans & Kempen, 1993, pp. 1-10) in an imaginary debate between Descartes and Vico, which serves to illustrate a twentieth century intellectual history of the idea that the self is socially situated. Most importantly, Seigel’s proposition of a multidimensional individual selfhood that is both modern and interdependent is a major departure from recent orthodoxy; Taylor’s (1989) notion that the loss of the soul in modernity demands either a communitarian approach to selfhood, or unpalatable individualism. Using Seigel’s multidimensional framework does not guarantee easy access to a comfortable selfhood: “(O)ften personal integration remains problematic or incomplete…it can be a lifetime project for some…testimony to the troubles and vicissitudes that balancing the diverse constituents of self-existence entails” (Seigel, 2005, p. 8).

From the late nineteenth century on, and across the western world, scepticism about ‘progress’ and fear that unprecedented social and economic changes were destroying the possibility of ‘authentic’ experience (and even undermining the bases of selfhood itself) shaped social thought and cultural expression across a wide ideological spectrum ( McKay 1994, in Hjartarson 2005, p. 215).

Allegranti (2011) offers “embodiment as a process and one that changes according to our lived body experiences over time…highlighting autobiographical, relational and political aspects of our selves as interwoven (p. 2). This formulation privileges Seigel’s ‘bodily and material’ dimensions in the same way that Gergen privileges the ‘relational’ dimension. Seigel’s point is that formulations of the self that privilege any particular dimension by suggesting that it subsumes others is necessarily only partial.
Seigel (2005), as above, postulated that:

Since the time of Descartes and Locke...the basis of selfhood in Western culture has been sought primarily along or within three dimensions, ones that are familiar and should be easily recognizable to anyone. We will call them the bodily or material, the relational, and the reflective dimensions of the self (p. 5).

With respect to the reflexive dimension,

Hegel reminds us that reflectivity can also be given a developmental form, exhibited in a different way by some recent accounts of the self as ‘narrative,’ weaving a pattern of continuity out of the moments or stages of its own evolving being...ideas of the self fall into two broad categories; what we will call multi-dimensional and one-dimensional accounts of the self (Seigel, 2005, p. 7).

None of the three dimensions of self may stand alone;

(t)hat reflectivity cannot constitute the self on its own is one reason why its manifestations in actual life are seldom independent of bodily needs or social ties...reflection often draws energy from bodily passions and urges, or from an individual’s relations with others, operating ‘ideologically’ in the service of desire or interest (Seigel, 2005, p. 30).

2.2 The narrated self

Seigel concludes The Idea of the Self (2005) by placing Freud at the centre of influence over twentieth century formulations of selfhood:

Freud’s was a theory of the self that gave close attention to all three dimensions, but in a way that simultaneously assigned crucial tasks to reflectivity and heightened the power that bodily being, in tension with social existence, exercised over it...In this way, the stage was set for struggles over his legacy between ego psychologists who would draw out the elements in his work that pointed toward a greater role for both social relations and rational reflection in psychic life; ...and Lacanians who would read Freudian theory as a brief for the dissolution of subjectivity; giving it an affinity with vanguard aestheticism and Derridean deconstruction (Seigel, 2005, p. 650).

Deconstruction fits well with the narrated self, allowing textual analysis of the self-narrative as the individual engages with the social and material world. Before moving on to consider the tourist as narrated self or occupier of a discursively-constituted subject position we must construct a context for narrated selfhood.

Of all the constructs the modern era championed, none has been more problematic for people in the postmodern era to consider than ‘the self’...Kenneth Gergen (1991) in ‘The saturated self” asked us to reflect upon our ‘romanticized notions’
of a coherent and ever agentive self…narrative understandings of self opened up a compelling view of lives lived in a flow of constructed meaning…lives that could be appreciated in historically intelligible ways…though analyzing lives in narrative ways always posed questions about the comprehensiveness of any story of the self, and the contextuality of such stories (Strong, 2000, np).

2.3 Constructing and situating the narrated self

Normative narratives (Rappaport, 1993) are stories that are held in common by groups of people, and personal narratives typically involve stories that explain an individual’s life history and current ways of experiencing the world. Contributions to this last class of narratives, a field strongly associated with the work of Jerome Bruner and Dan McAdams, often are referred to under the title narrative constructions of self. As examples of a literary form these different types of narratives may be subjected to interrogation using the usual tools of literary analysis, specifically close reading, reading against the grain, and deconstruction.

With respect to deconstruction, Morton states that:

I do, however, distinguish between postmodernism, as a cultural and ideological form, and deconstruction…which searches out, with ruthless and brilliant intensity, points of contradiction and deep hesitation in systems of meaning (Morton 2007, p. 6, italics in original).

One form of presenting narrative is through writing and

(f)or the later Kristeva…I(t)riting is now viewed as an affirmation and exploration of subjectivity, however problematic, endangered or uncertain it may be. This rehabilitation of experience and meaning is also a rehabilitation of the value of storytelling (Davis, 2004, p. 76).

This modern position harks back to the much older position of the self in the religious literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when:

for all his concessions of uncommunicability and the inadequacy of human language, and the provisional character of the experience of union with God on earth William’s (William of Saint-Thierry) choice of language suggests a direct access to the divine in the affectus and the experiential” (van’t Spijker, 2004, p. 234).42

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42 The affectus and experientia of William of Saint-Theirry (van't Spijker, 2004) are constructs open to investigation as psychological phenomena. Environmental psychologists have pursued a project intended to provide an understanding of how affectus operates in response to human relationships with various aspects of nature; particularly how personal identity is shaped by experientia involving, for example, trees (Sommer, 2003), and in particular trees in the city (Austin & Kaplan, 2003). The considerations elaborated by these authors are pertinent to the possibility of transformation of self through encounters with nearby nature, a concept explored extensively by Rachel Kaplan, amongst others (e.g. Kaplan, Ryan, & Kaplan, 1998). The transformations reported in the nearby nature literature involve the experience of psychological benefits from exposure to an enhanced everyday environment. The continuity/discontinuity of such experiences with the kinds of self-

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In other words, William of Saint-Thierry felt that he could narrate himself. Part of being able to narrate oneself involves being able to recall past episodes involving oneself.

If our identities derived solely from where we were at any one time, we would become extremely confused, not to say mentally exhausted with the effort of placing ourselves. Thus we construct for ourselves workable biographies, reflections upon our lives through which we interpret our aging as it happens. Each of us needs to connect with our own past. At the same time we can only assemble our agency from the resources locally available to us (Blaikie, 2005, p. 167).

This grounding of narrative self in memory raises the question; what are the developmental characteristics of the remembered self? Such a developmental aspect of narrative construction of self is captured by this quote of an eleven-year old telling a researcher about a life-changing event: “(y)ou know when you were younger how everything seems so like happy and stuff?...You kind of wake up” (Reese, Yan, Jack & Hayne, 2010, p. 23). These authors ask; “(a)t what point in development is it possible to ‘have’ (and to tell) a life story?” (p. 23).

Telling, or rather, writing one’s life story at a later stage of developmental maturity has its complications:

There is, however, an irony involved in writing about your early years in Wordsworth’s reflective manner, since the act of writing itself distances you from the pre-literate, unreflective child, testifying to your loss of Edenic innocence at the very moment you mean to recapture it. The child enjoys a kind of freedom the adult lacks; yet because he does not meditate on this freedom, and because this carefreeness is actually part of it, there is no depth of experience there to be re-created in later life. You’re only happy when you don’t know it (Eagleton, 2010, p. 31).

Opening up these spaces of recollection, reminiscence and inquiry invites consideration of the kinds of structures that may be at play. Parker (2007), introducing his The Self in Moral Space, explained:

(t)his book is premised on a particular view of what it means to be a self or agent in the world. It begins with the notion that behind every autobiographical act is a self for whom certain things matter and are given priority over others. Some of transformations reported while travelling deserve thorough investigation. Jamal & Hill (2002) point out: “(w)hen it comes to the tourist’s experience, the search for authenticity is an intersubjective, emotional, ethical/moral and spiritual quest” (p. 101). Morton (2007) is suspicious of intersubjectivity:

The re-mark is the fundamental property of ambience, its basic gesture...that makes us aware that we are in the presence of (significant) marks...A re-mark differentiates between space and place. In modern life this distinction is between objective (space) and subjective (place) phenomena (pp. 48-49).

The play of the re-mark devastates ‘new and improved’ fusions of subject and object, such as the idea of intersubjectivity, which seeks to do away with the dilemma of specifying the boundary between inside and outside. It becomes impossible to distinguish between the intersubjective field and ‘the Body,’.
these things are not merely objects of desire or interest, but command the writer’s admiration or respect. These are the key ‘goods’ the writer lives by, shaping her acts of ethical deliberation and choice. Such goods may include ideals of self-realization, social justice, equality of respect, or care for certain others. We can say that commitment to these goods orients her morally, or, in the words of my title, constitutes her as a self in moral space. Such goods also inevitably shape the stories she tells when she projects her future or construes her past or present. In short, these goods are at the heart of life narrative, necessary constituents of it (Parker, 2007, p. 1). 43

Such a self in moral space, as well as construing the present, inevitably acts in the present, and these sedimented acts of the present produce a sense of identity:

Identity is the sense of who one is in the world, distilled from a lifetime of experience. From the collective perspective, identity consists of the life course as a cultural construct: socially normative and collectively outlined and accepted life-course statuses and transitions. But at the individual level, every person creates for herself a particularised version of the collective life course, a life story, depending upon her specific experiences and the meanings she attaches to them (Rubinstein, 1992, p. 144).

Transforming the Hegelian idea of the developmental form of personal reflectivity (Seigel, 2005, p. 7) into the notion of the narrative self sits comfortably within the narrative turn; a current period in history (to follow Jameson and periodisation) characterized, in part, by inquiry into “the relation of the study of stories to the idea of validity” (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 471). Polkinghorne’s epistemological position is “that if narrative modes of representation are to be used in social science research then they must aspire to more than good storytelling. To warrant the status of research, narratives must be able to make valid knowledge claims” (Rosiek, 2007, p.447).

When we attempt to situate self also within history there is an obvious tension between Jameson’s (2010) periodising contention, that postmodernity is the historical specificity of the present age, and Benjamin’s (1989) suggestion that we may not be aware of whatever historical specificity is operating, and within which we live our lives. Where we situate ourselves with respect to this tension affects our sense of self and identity.

It is useful to invoke Jameson’s concept of Totalisation, where:

Totalisation might be defined as the intellectual effort to recover the relationship between a given object- a novel, a film, a new building or a body of philosophical

43The claim that “(s)uch goods may include ideals of self-realization, social justice, equality of respect, or care for certain others” places Parker’s ideas within Taylor’s communitarian ethics. Taylor’s thesis, elaborated both in Sources of the Self (1989) and A Secular Age (2007) is that “even non-believers, if they don’t block it off, will feel a powerful appeal in the gospel, which they will interpret in a secular fashion” (Taylor, 1989, p. 520).
work- and the total historical situation underneath and around it…(S)tarting in the early 1980s, Jameson produced what remains the most imposing account of the culture we all still inhabit. Postmodernism, he argued, did not spell the end of ‘metanarratives’, as Lyotard had claimed. It was better understood as the recruitment of the entire world into the same big story, namely the development of global capitalism (Kunkel, 2010, pp. 12-13).

Postmodernity often is situated alongside the neoliberalism characteristic of this global capitalism.

The power of the neoliberal project is contained in its claims that class is no longer a restrictive bond, that we are our own biographical authors. This creates an epistemological falsehood that effectively ascribes agentic potential and devolves responsibility to the individual. People are implicated in their own decline and are responsible for their own self-governance and regeneration (Paton, 2010, p. 206).

The key phrase here is: “that we are our own biographical authors”. Do we in fact script our own lives (narrative selfhood) or are various scripts provided for us to negotiate (narrated subject position)? If the latter, who provides the available narratives and who controls how much we as selves may contribute to the formulation; if the former, how might we each develop and present: “a narrative that is linear, integrated, and coherent, with all the facts about your life neatly tied together with a golden thread, a single narrative voice. I think this assumption is problematic” (Raggatt, 2006, pp. 15-35).

Accepting Raggatt’s claim that narrative coherence is problematic, what are the consequences if we move “beyond narrative coherence” (Hyvärinen, Hydén, Saarenheimo & Tamboukou, 2010, p. 1)? This idea of the deconstruction of personal identity narratives may be applied to wider issues of adhering to a social category because of one descriptive feature. Somers (1994), for example, challenged the idea that:

(a)ll the members of a single category of actors...should behave similarly and have the same interests with respect to [in her example citizenship] regardless of differences of residence, family or gender…But why do we premise or limit our understanding of people to their work category? Why should we assume that an individual or collectivity has a particular set of interests simply because one aspect of their identity fits into one social category- in this case their place in the production process? To let “class” stand as a proxy for experience is to presume what has not been empirically demonstrated- namely that identities are foundationally constituted by their categorization in the division of labor (p. 624).
2.4 Narrating the tourist

For our purposes here, “members of a single category of actors” refers to expedition cruise nature tourists. But does such a collection of individuals, considered *en masse*, where expedition cruising is only one aspect of each of their identities, constitute a social category? McCabe (2009) argued that “the idea of a tourist has taken on cross-cultural and cross-contextual ideological significance as a pejorative term with implicit political and moral implications in its use…Tourist as a categorization device can be subjected to analysis…” (p. 40, italics in the original).

Such a categorization device produces expedition cruise nature tourist as an identity that, although easily enough imposed on the travelling individual, may or may not be accepted by her, within the parameters of the cruise, or afterward. We may modify Somers’ statement above to read; to let “expedition cruise nature tourist” stand as a proxy for experience is to presume what has not been empirically demonstrated—namely that identities are foundationally constituted by their categorization in the division of labour. Somers (1994) then offered a solution by suggesting that:

(s)ubstituting the concept of narrative identity for that of interest circumvents this problem. A narrative identity approach assumes that social action can only be intelligible if we recognize that people are guided to act by the structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by the stories through which they constitute their identities…people act in particular ways because not to do so would fundamentally violate their sense of being at that particular time and place. In another time or place, or in the context of a different set of prevailing narratives, that sense of being could be entirely different because narrative identities are constituted and reconstituted in time and over time (p. 624).

This relational approach to narrative identity that Somers advocated, one that rejects the notion of ‘foundationally constituted identity’, survives Paton’s (2010) critique of neoliberal sleight-of-hand with respect to agency. For Somers, individuals are able to be their own biographical authors, but only when the structural and cultural relationships within which they are embedded already allow such authorship or, such authorship is engendered by an act of resistance, and the narrative identity that results is ontologically acceptable to the individual, in a specific circumstance. Somers presented the notion of relational setting where:

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44 Such ideological significance is of course inseparable from the performance of an aesthetics of tourism.
45 I recognize the potential difficulty involved in situating being an expedition cruise nature tourist within ‘the division of labour’ and will shortly offer the Lacanian notion of subject position in order to allow the performance of such tourism to be considered as a form of labour within the late capitalist production/consumption system.
a relational setting is a pattern of relationships among institutions, public narratives and social practices. As such it is a relational matrix, a social network. Identity-formation takes shape within these relational settings of contested but patterned relations among narratives, people and institutions (Somers, 1994, p. 626).

The expedition cruise ship provides such a relational setting, metonymically related to wider tourism, and in turn social and economic, structures. The ship is the institution, the patterned relationships are between all of the individuals on board, and the narratives are a collection of tourists’ ontological narratives, their narratives of self and identity, the subject positions operating and available to be filled, and the public narrative provided by the operator and the state. The expedition cruise ship constitutes one kind of institution or structure. Another institution or structure is class. Specifically with respect to nature, formulated both as Soper’s (1995) realist and lay concepts, Vlachou (2001) made a case also for class; in Somers’ sense an institution, being a determinant of attitude. “Different class structures influence the people caught up in them to form different attitudes toward nature and one another, and these attitudes likewise affect the natural environment” (p. 105).

To the extent that attitudes are articulated through personal identity narratives, this position places any story of nature firmly within discourse and such a combination, of story and politics, constitutes narrative. “Most narratologists agree that narrative consists of material signs, the discourse, which conveys a certain meaning (or content), the story, and fulfill a certain social function” (Ryan, 2007, p. 24).

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46 Somers’ relational setting encompasses Seigel’s (2005) essential material and reflective components of selfhood.
47 I include in this term institution both the physical structure of the ship, the procedures used to operate it, the economic and legislative setting in which it operates and the social practices that occur within it.
48 Vlachou’s contribution to the volume Re/Presenting Class: essays in postmodern Marxism (Gibson-Graham, Resnick & Wolff, Eds., 2001) is titled Nature and Class: A Marxian value analysis, and although the author does not develop her use of the term attitudes it is reasonable to link it to Morton’s (2010) explanation that “(b)y ‘attitude’ I mean what Lacanian ideology theory calls ‘subject position’” (p. 139) Morton’s comment, “(o)nly now, when contemporary capitalism and consumerism cover the entire Earth and reach deeply into its life forms…” (p. 5), amongst other of his comments, situates his critique firmly within a Marxian tradition.
49 I am not claiming here that attitudes are closely related to performance or behaviour more generally; what I am claiming is a strong relationship between attitudes and personal narrative, since attitudes must in some way be articulated and it is this articulation, being of necessity political, that constitutes narrative.
50 Lanchester (2011) commented: Back when I was at university the only people who ever used the word ‘narrative’ were literature students with an interest in critical theory. Everyone else made do with ‘story’ and ‘plot’. Since then the n-word has been on a long journey towards the spotlight- especially the political spotlight. Everybody in politics now seems to talk about narratives all the time…We no longer have debates, we have conflicting narratives…It’s at the level of narrative that the UK’s economic figures for the last quarter of 2010 are likely to prove most consequential. According to the Office for National Statistics, the economy contracted by 0.5 per cent (p. 24).
Also, there is general agreement with Bruner’s (1994) contention that individuals construct narratives about themselves; narratives involving memory, and thus selectivity and time; a kind of personal politics. Olney (1998) offers Rousseau as an example of how such a personal politics may affect the temporal sequencing of the narrative. “Rousseau set out to write a single, all-inclusive and thoroughly unified text in which the man and his book, the life and the writing, should be inseparably, seamlessly one” (p. 101). Nevertheless, despite the intentions of the author, the production of the autobiography remained an act of writing and not a state of being.

2.5 Narratives of nature within which the individual tourist may be situated

Shelton and Tucker (2008) offered five environmental narratives of Aotearoa/New Zealand that could be performed or enacted in different ways:

*The indigenous narrative*: Before contact with European colonisers the Maori people lived in harmony with and within nature, knowingly practicing conservation of resources and sustainable extraction: “…200 to 300 years before Pakeha (Europeans) arrived, Maori had already developed and put into practice a comprehensive environmental ethic” (Ruru, 2002). The rat introduced with the arrival of the Maori, the Kiore (Rattus exulans) was, in this narrative, environmentally benign, and is itself worthy of being conserved. This period in history has alternatively been labelled “the golden age that never was” (Hutching, 1998, p. 17).

*The sublime/pristine narrative*: New Zealand is fortunate in having large areas of virtually pristine natural environment of such grandeur that being exposed to its wonders can be personally transformative. This narrative informs the marketing activities of the New Zealand tourism industry (Tourism New Zealand, 2005).

*The despoliation narrative*: Since the arrival, about one thousand years ago, of Homo sapiens the flora and fauna of New Zealand have sustained significant species extinctions and depravations caused by habitat loss, ecosystem modification and predation by introduced pests, to the point where today there is virtually no unmodified landscape remaining. This tragic outcome is irreversible and is a natural consequence of Homo sapiens being outside of nature, and

Lanchester’s point is well taken. Hacking (1999) and Mitchell (2007), as mentioned above, noted the historical novelty of the notion the economy, now reified to the point of its’ being able to shrink. The subsequent political debate about the economy quite properly then can be referred to as contested narratives. The Conservation Economy similarly is reified and variously narrated.

51 Any autobiographical narrative clearly is influenced by the ontological position of its author. Noy (2002), in his account of being a backpacker, states that his being Israeli decidedly shaped his narrative since he knew always that it would be expected to be recited when he returned home.
inevitably having a disastrous effect on natural systems. This narrative is typical of the commentaries of ecotourism guides (Redgrave, 2002, p. 25).

The multiple-use narrative: Ecosystems can be sustainably managed through ‘wise use’ to achieve simultaneous conservation, economic and employment aims. This approach is associated historically with Gifford Pinchot and continues to be articulated as the main alternative to more purist preservationist approaches to ecosystem management (Pinchot Institute for Conservation, 2005). Primacy is given to locally-based environmental decision-making, consistent with the ideas of John Wesley Powell (Worster, 2001) This style of environmental management is the antithesis of the centralised approach afforded the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

The restoration narrative: Although there is no part of New Zealand’s natural environment that is absolutely unaltered by human activity, however remote the source, many areas are sufficiently unmodified to be worthy of conservation. Some other parts are worthy of restoration to a position of comprising traditional flora, and few introduced predators, to the extent of being able to support traditional fauna. This narrative informs the activities of the Department of Conservation (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005a) and their vision, Restoring the Dawn Chorus (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 1998). This vision is central to the long-term viability of tourism in New Zealand since environmental preservation, conservation and restoration facilitate the continuation, and possible expansion, of nature-based tourism (p. 198).

Although this treatment of narrative in Shelton and Tucker (2008) provides a useful rehearsal for what follows below, one aspect of their formulation is misguided and another outdated. First, the restoration narrative should more accurately be identified as a transformation narrative. This change makes clear that what is being described is a transformation to a conservation landscape, which will include humans, even if only as distant managers. Even if the restoration produced an integrated set of ecosystems, clearly the outcome of such a totally faithful restoration must be a simulacrum. Also, what historical date would be chosen to be represented by the restoration simulacrum, and what process would be followed in choosing such a date? If a date were chosen that pre-dates human influence, how then is the human influence in implementing the restoration explained? How may we go about restoring nature “when nature won’t stay still” (Adams, 2003, pp. 220-246).

Hegarty (2009) in Jean Baudrillard: Fatal Theories (Clarke, Doel, Merrin & Smith, Eds.) states (F)or Baudrillard we must consider the real as historicized, a category. Instead of being an actual existing reality, beyond description, epistemology or conceptualization, it comes from those things, and it does this differently in different periods, or, as he calls them, ‘eras of simulation… For me, symbolic (or impossible) exchange is neither inside nor outside of simulacra, rather it is simulation’s Other, with which it is always intertwined, often as that which is lost, or fails to come to be (p. 136).

Hegarty’s chapter was addressing the “Fate of the Animal” but landscapes reward a similar consideration.
Second, Groser’s (2009) launching of The Conservation Economy, a kind of environmental metanarrative, subsumed the narrative possibilities listed above. There is no narrative position that The Conservation Economy, as presented by the Minister, cannot accommodate and thus it is difficult to imagine how to influence policy or practice in a principled way and not just in an ad hoc way, contentious case by contentious case.

Although I now believe that transformation narrative is a more useful concept than restoration narrative, it is helpful to present the story of the restoration narrative, since it has an almost mantra-like status both within the lay community and a significant sector of the scientific community. This public and normative narrative is foundational and canonical and informs conservation practice. One implication of the authority this narrative has gained is that robust debate about conservation strategy, for example suggesting farming native species, is stifled; the backdrop of reified nature is always present but unacknowledged. The narrative is as follows.53

Prior to the arrival of humans New Zealand had been isolated from the other constituent parts of the supercontinent of Gondwana for long enough to have evolved as a landmass dominated by birds. Mammals were limited to bats and marine mammals, and as a consequence various highly-specialised birds had come to inhabit the ecological niches elsewhere filled by mammals. Also, the forest floor supported a flora and fauna un influenced by the predations of large or small mammals. Maori brought with them both Kiore (Rattus exulans) and a companion dog, Kuri (Canis familiaris). Over a period of a few hundred years a combination of deliberate and accidental fires, hunter-gathering and the effect of rats had significantly compromised the initial environmental cornucopia to the point where New Zealand fur seals (Arctocephalus fosteri) were locally extinct along much of the North Island coast, New Zealand sea lions (Phocarctus hookeri) were locally extinct in the south and the previously abundant Moa (Dinornis sp.), a genus of flightless bird ranging in size from a chicken to an ostrich, was extinct everywhere. Extinction of the Moa, and a probably deliberate policy of extermination, then led to extinction of the world’s largest-ever eagle, Haast’s Eagle (Harpagornis moorei) (Kirby, 2005). Maori had no reason to feel well disposed towards this bird since it quite likely took the occasional baby or small child as prey. The companion dog Kuri’s diet, previously varied, was to become over time severely restricted (Anderson & Clark, 2001). James Cook’s arrival in 1769 saw the beginning of a long process of Europeans transforming the already modified ecosystem to be more useful to their purposes and pleasing

53 This section is modified from Shelton & Tucker (2008).
to the Romantic eye. Cook’s deliberate liberation of pigs and geese was designed to enhance the food supply previously available and heralded a long list of such liberations, to the point where today exotic flora and fauna have penetrated almost every kind of habitat, more or less successfully. This situation, this mix of the endemic, native and introduced flora and fauna, modified and unmodified habitat and landform, commonly is referred to as hybrid nature.

An uncritical acceptance of the inevitability of universal hybrid nature became problematic when social sensitivities changed dramatically, starting in the 1970s, and moved from blaming the victims of extinction for an inability to adapt, a common and deep misunderstanding of Darwinian evolution, to a wide acceptance of a moral duty to promote biodiversity. The Stewart Island Snipe (Coenocorypha aucklandica iredalei) had become extinct as recently as the 1960s and the Chatham Island Robin (Petroica traverse) was critically endangered. The idea that rats alone could cause island extinctions had been rejected by the country’s leading conservation scientist and it wasn’t until the fact that they could was proved on Big South Cape, in part through the extinction in 1967 of the Greater Short-tailed Bat (Mystacina robusta) (Hutching, 1998), that official policy could begin to accommodate a new logic (Young, 2004). If islands that through good luck rather than good management had remained rat free were also havens for endangered fauna it was conceivable that if islands that were currently rat infested were cleared of their rodents then they could be restored to being suitable conservation habitats. The hunt was now on not only for islands that could be kept rat-free, but also for those that could be made rat-free again. Also, the common adage that rat populations were kept in check by populations of feral cats was challenged to include the proposition that cat populations may in fact be being in part controlled by the available rats. It now made sense to consider removing all exotic plants and animals from certain habitats and reintroducing species previously found there. Not all pest species were universally regarded as such. Attitudes to deer, for instance, have fluctuated over the years, and to this day different ‘normative narrative communities’ (Rappaport, 1993), e.g. conservationists and hunters, hold incompatible positions on the place of deer in the conservation estate. For example the sentiment that: “Deer are the bushman’s friend, supplying him with venison and opening up the bush with their tracks, and they are excellent route finders in the rugged country…For most tourists, the sight of a deer in its natural surroundings can ‘make’ the trip” (Howard, 1966, p. 129, italics mine) does not sit well within a restoration narrative, and yet retains currency. So as not to leave the restocking of pest-free islands to chance, an off-site breeding programme was required at a facility that had the resources to engage in long-term projects. Such a process historically has been referred to as captive breeding.
Two of the central features of the concept of captivity are those of spatial circumscription, or boundedness, and human management:

Captivity means that living wildlife is held in a controlled environment that is intensively manipulated by man for the purpose of producing wildlife of the selected species, and that has boundaries designed to prevent animal, eggs or gametes of the selected species from entering or leaving the controlled environment. General characteristics of captivity may include but are not limited to artificial housing, waste removal, health care, protection from predators, and artificially supplied food (United States Government, 2003).

In the traditional zoo setting captivity was signalled by iron bars. Modern practice attempts to impose spatial control by the use of either invisible barriers, such as a sunken enclosure, or by the utilisation of a behavioural characteristic of the target species, for example surrounding otherwise unrestrained spider monkeys with a moat in the knowledge that they are averse to immersion. The essence of such practices is the prevention of individuals leaving a specified area, which is almost always smaller than that species’ home range and, that has been decided upon by humans. Restored offshore islands share this management goal, although, in these settings, other containment techniques are possible. Unfenced mainland islands, in contrast, possess the possibilities and limitations afforded by having permeable boundaries. The boundaries of fenced mainland islands are permeable only to flighted birds.

Extinct organisms cannot be restored to any habitat. Hence the most pressing aspect of enacting restoration is to halt further extinctions. Nonetheless, Kiwi (*Apteryx sp.*) continue to become locally extinct (Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, 2005a), the victims of predation and habitat loss. Many other species require urgent attention in order to be preserved. Currently there are various kinds of facilities available, offering different levels of containment. Facilities like Pukaha Mt Bruce (National Wildlife Centre Trust, 2005a) are pivotal to any nationally-organised restoration project. Such a centre acts as a ‘refuge of last resort’ where critically endangered species can be bred and await transfer to less restrictive, and consequently less secure, environments. The physical environment here resembles a conventional aviary but the management intent is to breed and release. The practical difficulties and nuances of such a project cannot be overstated. For example, the last wild Kokako (*Callaeas cinerea wilsoni*) from Taranaki spent five years at Pukaha Mt Bruce without mating with another bird from the neighbouring Waikato. Their differing dialects prevented effective communication. When the male’s own call was recorded and played back to him he mated successfully to beat off the imagined competition (New Zealand Department
of Conservation, 2005b). Such ingenuity has resulted in New Zealand scientists gaining a reputation for being world leaders in ‘bringing species back from the brink of extinction’. Such recognition, of course, is celebrated only reluctantly. ‘Back from the brink’ ideally is only the first stage of a more comprehensive species recovery programme (National Marine Fisheries Service, 2005). Although breeding at Pukaha Mt Bruce takes place within enclosures, and individuals are not free to leave until the management team decide a suitable habitat is available, the breed-and-release concept challenges traditional notions of captivity in that the intention all along is to restore individuals to traditional settings. The centre is very popular with domestic and international tourists, being visited by over thirty thousand visitors each year (National Wildlife Centre Trust, 2005b). These visitors are made aware that the birds are destined for release, thus differentiating this nature-based tourism product from traditional aviaries where the birds on display are not intended ever to be released back to their region, or even country, of origin. As the demand increases for repatriation-ready individuals, so some traditional aviaries and zoos are able to consider adding a restoration function to their truly captive ‘cabinet of faunal curiosities’ role. This breed-and-release role-expansion adds a vibrancy and dynamism to a facility, that enhances the nature of the tourism product able to be offered, for example breeding the ‘living fossil’ Tuatara (Sphenodon punctatus) at a museum (Southland Museum and Art Gallery, 2004). Shelton (2011) describes this tourism development as a move from ‘last chance to see’ to ‘back from the brink’.

The considerable cost of predator-proof fencing, that is, providing a boundary that is impermeable to everything from deer to mice, requires multi-million dollar funding, often as a partnership between the Department of Conservation, a specially-formed site-specific Charitable Trust, and commercial sponsors. To date such projects have been limited to areas of outstanding ecological value (Maungatautari Ecological Restoration Trust, 2005). These facilities usually are smaller than many of the resident species’ home ranges and employ supplementary feeding stations as an incentive to retain those (flighted birds) who could otherwise venture out into the unsafe surrounding area. Nesting boxes may also be provided. To date, since often they are well away from popular tourist routes, these projects have had mixed success in attracting visitors directly or being included on nature-based tour companies’ itineraries.

Conservation effort in ‘Mainland Islands’ (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005c) rely on intensive predator control to establish and maintain a safe habitat suitable for the enactment of the restoration narrative. These refuges are sufficiently large to be able to
provide a naturally-occurring home range for many of the resident or re-introduced species. Also, it is intended that once particular species become numerous within the island they may either colonise surrounding unprotected or only partially protected areas, or be captured for transfer to a more-recently-restored habitat. The term mainland-island is consistent with the North American concept of ‘islands’ of conservation within surrounding development (Manning, 1999). It is unlikely that these areas will ever be able to support significant tourism activity since they are not clearly demarcated from the surrounding countryside and lack infrastructure.

A large number of offshore islands (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005e) or groups of islands are in the process of restoration (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005d). These islands are situated both near to major urban centres and at the most remote uninhabited part of the country. Most importantly, to be suitable for restoration, islands must be able to be cleared of unwanted predators, and be beyond swimming distance of those pest species that may reinfect the newly-restored habitat. This distance is about 1km for stoats and rather more for deer so it is important to couple any restoration management plan with an ongoing management plan to prevent reinfection. Sometimes it is essential to limit the breeding of other species, for example Black-backed Gulls (*Larus dominicanus*) on Matiu/Somes Island, in this case by injecting formaldehyde into their eggs, in order to foster other species that have been identified as targets for restoration. Some flightless birds (e.g. Weka (*Gallirallus australis*)) are excellent swimmers and need to be encouraged by feeding to remain on the intended island. The Short-tailed bat (*Mystacina tuberculata*) has a strong homing instinct yet its being reduced to perhaps three hundred individuals on the mainland qualified it as a prime candidate for relocation to an island sanctuary. Twenty five pregnant females were collected and housed at Pukaha Mt Bruce. The offspring were transferred offshore at the point of weaning and the mothers returned to their original habitat. The hope was that the young would come to call the island home, and not attempt to fly ashore (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005f). This hope has been only partially fulfilled; natal fidelity proving to be a strong force. There is available a map of restored islands (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005d) and of these only a handful, for example Tiritiri Matangi and Rangitoto near Auckland City host significant domestic and international nature-based tourism (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005g), although others, for example Secretary Island and Resolution Island in Fiordland, are available for independent tramping.
The restoration narrative is complicated by the fact that some cities in New Zealand, by historical chance, have areas of habitat left, close to the city centre. Although logged in the nineteenth century, and thus modified, the mix of remaining flora in these refugia is visually appealing and still contains many fruiting species of significant value to birds and invertebrates. These urban areas are ideal either for predator-proof fencing (Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, 2005) or intensive predator control (Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, 2005b), allowing for reintroductions, sometimes with supplementary feeding. So successful has the greening of cities been that “(They) ...will soon turn on a better dawn chorus than…many of the wild places previously associated with native birdsong” (Young, 2004, p. 232). Whether or not this possible future eventuates, and the implications of such a development for those areas of the conservation estate not included in intensive restoration, depends to a large extent on political processes not directly concerned with conservation. For example much of the funding for the control of Possums (Trichosurus vulpecula) relates to their role as a vector for bovine tuberculosis, and not primarily for their destruction of the forest canopy. If the tuberculosis problem is solved it will be much harder to convince future governments to allocate many millions of dollars just to prevent browsing, given the success of restored islands in showcasing charismatic fauna. Similarly, feral deer are controlled as much to stop tuberculosis being transferred to domestic herds as they are to protect the forest. Measuring conservation achievement is guided by a set of general principles (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 1999), able to be applied to specific settings (Stephens, Brown, & Thornley, 2002). Economic achievement is measured differently. The tourism industry can still thrive in a significantly degraded socially-constructed surroundings (MacDonald, 2002), especially when the natural environment serves mainly as a backdrop to other activities, for example participating in one or more of the Great Walks (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005h). Which of the many competing narratives has the power to produce which conservation and economic outcomes depends in part on how each fits within the existing and future matrix of power relations. Discussing such power relations moves consideration of the foundational restoration narrative from the anti-modern to the post-modern. Power relations have been operating since the beginning of human settlement but in New Zealand were situated specifically within a progress/conservation binary in response to a proposal to raise the levels of lakes Te Anau and Manapouri, both lying within Fiordland National Park (Peat, 1994, Young, 2004, Shelton, 2011).

Describing boundaries is an act that takes place within the context of power relations. The repeatedly-proposed South Pacific Whale Sanctuary (Governments of Australia and New
Zealand, 2002) was an attempt to set aside an area of ocean that would be unavailable for whale hunting. Not only was this proposal defeated at the International Whaling Commission but Japan has since proposed adding Humpback whales to its list of species to be hunted (Benson, 2005). Thus, the tourist industry’s whale-watching activities in Australia and New Zealand, ironically popular with Japanese visitors, may be denied the raw material upon which a major source of export income is based. This is an international example of an unsuccessful attempt to export the restoration narrative that now characterises the New Zealand and Australian governments’ attitudes to cetaceans. Japan’s proffered alternative narrative, of killing whales for scientific and research purposes, wise use, is almost universally regarded as disingenuous, yet a concerted effort by that country to link the granting of aid contingent upon pro-whaling voting by the recipients, often poor Pacific-island nations, has proved successful.

At a national level, conflicts between and within several sets of power relations affect the successful enactment of the restoration narrative. Some of these tensions are ongoing and show no signs of being amenable to permanent resolution; others, although representative of larger issues, seem able to be settled case by case.

There are chronic and significant tensions between the restoration narrative and indigenous narratives. New Zealand is unique to the extent that there is one treaty, the Treaty of Waitangi, that permeates all interactions between the indigenous Maori people and the Crown (strictly Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II but to all intents and purposes the New Zealand Government), a relationship currently described as a partnership, whereby all activities of the Crown, and by implication the Department of Conservation, must take into account Maori aspirations. Historically the Treaty was observed most often in the breach but over the last thirty years the indigenous voice, and consequently indigenous narratives, have become prominent. One Treaty-based feature of the conservation estate is that Maori have not relinquished their right to extract an economic return from the land from which National Parks were created. Feasibility studies have been undertaken with respect to a gondola development crossing part of Fiordland National Park (Norris, 2005) and/or a tunnel to shorten the journey from Queenstown to Milford Sound (Roxburgh, 2011). It is conceivable that the evolution of such currently-banned tourism products, coupled with a successful negotiation of traditional harvesting of wildlife, could see the conservation estate significantly altered. Again, mainland- or offshore-islands, where protection was absolute, would assume premium conservation and nature-based tourism value. In the meantime Maori and Pakeha
have combined in several restoration-only projects, typically involving the erection of predator-proof fencing around significant remnants of ecosystems (Maungatautari Ecological Restoration Trust, 2005). The possibility still exists of such areas eventually being able to sustain traditional cultural harvesting.

But indigenous narratives impinge on the restoration of offshore island settings too. To non-Maori, one rat species is as unwelcome as another, excepting that *Rattus norvegicus* takes bait back to its young in the nest while *Rattus rattus* does not, thereby making mass eradication of Norway rats possible in situations where ship rats would persist, for example in the ground-breaking work on Campbell Island (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2005i). To Maori, Kiore (*Rattus exulans*) is a taonga, or treasure, whose enjoyment is guaranteed under the Treaty. Thus, rat eradication involving Kiore must include cultural as well as technical and logistical considerations. Kiore then is situated not only in a naturally-occurring relationship of subordination to Norway rats, but also within an indigenous/colonist tension. Any discussion of breeding-for-release, harvesting or eradication is necessarily framed by these considerations.

There are tensions also between the restoration narrative and the multiple-use narrative. New Zealand was unusual in its practice of removing almost all of the existing built environment from newly-created national parks and only recently has a successful case been made for the retention of representative vernacular structures. The case of the detritus of extractive industry in Preservation Inlet is discussed below. A common description of much of the conservation estate’s being managed in this way, towards restoration of its pre-human state is, by its detractors, that it is ‘locked up’, and therefore unavailable for co-existing extractive industry. This concern has been expressed with respect to mining an estimated multi-billion dollar resource of platinum, copper, nickel, gold and coal (Wallace, 2005, and see above). Demands for review of this policy can be expected to increase as ‘the view from Hubbert’s peak’ increasingly sharpens the nation’s focus on local sources of wealth and energy (Deffeyes, 2001, 2005). Already, ore-bearing parts of the conservation estate have been swapped for other areas of equal ecological significance. Thus, it would be naive to believe that the present estate boundaries are somehow sacrosanct, or that some future government may not allow extractive industries to operate within the estate, albeit with some requirements for environmental restoration. Parenthetically, it is worth noting that the felling of five- to eight-hundred-year-old trees is irremediable, in the short term.
Long-haul tourist arrivals, and extensive FIT mobility within New Zealand, would also be severely curtailed under the Peak Oil future (Association for the Study of Peak Oil & Gas, 2005). This most pessimistic future scenario implies that both species-conservation and nature-based tourism in the conservation estate (excluding sites popular through scenery alone) may end up occurring only within a number of tightly circumscribed locations, specifically the mainland- and offshore-islands. If the conservation estate were given over to multiple uses the restoration process of wild-capture, followed by breed-for-release in a safe environment followed (more ambitiously) by recolonisation of original, now pest-controlled, habitat would be much more difficult. Also, there would be more pressure for a retain-for-display approach, to allow those people who could no longer afford to travel to restored habitats an opportunity to view charismatic species. Internationally, this process is illustrated already by the Bronx Zoo now having probably the only viable population of Western lowland gorillas, their original habitat no longer expected ever again to offer safety (Bronx Zoo, 2005). This chronic narrative tension, conservation vs development, is situated within local, regional, national and international economic power relationships. In New Zealand, at the moment, the conservation/restoration narrative is dominant and is enshrined in legislation.

Currently New Zealand has a number of approaches to conservation and restoration that involve a much more nuanced formulation than the captive/wild dichotomy. Many species are legally protected from close approach, handling, capture or disturbance. The conservation estate, one third of the country, is actively managed with respect to varying levels of predator control and habitat protection. Individuals of seriously endangered species may be removed from their home range, placed in a breeding facility and then replaced either back to where they came from or into a mainland island, or onto an offshore island. Over its lifetime an individual may experience varying levels of containment for varying periods of time. Nature-based tourism, conservation of endemic and native flora and fauna, and energy futures are inextricably linked. It is reasonable to assume that purist notions of extensive habitat restoration, as currently practised there, will become increasingly difficult to promote and sustain within a political environment beset both by acute and chronic energy shortages and the likely consequent massive disruption to employment opportunities.

Multiple-use approaches to managing the conservation estate, already articulated as part of individualist conservative political thought, may be enacted. Such developments would almost certainly hamper any attempt to restore species unfettered to their pre-human home ranges and population distributions. In anticipation of the possibility of such developments it
seems prudent to entrench clearly circumscribed areas that are widely perceived as possessing sufficient public good to guarantee their continuation.

Offshore islands, surrounded by ocean, hosting a wide variety of charismatic megafauna\textsuperscript{54} close to major cities, perceived as important by a range of stakeholders and easily able to be visited, seem the most likely to retain the restoration narrative as their dominant narrative. Nonetheless, all narratives are contestable (Harrison, 2005), and wax and wane in their influence. The same object of conservation need not be managed in the same way at different sites (Shackley, 2005). The philosophy of island restoration, though, has the potential to be implemented in other settings; for example it is being considered for use in the Aleutian chain of islands. These offshore island sites most closely resemble traditional notions of captivity, as they are currently curated in enlightened zoo practice (Goodzoos.com, 2005).

Mainland islands, circumscribed only by lines on a map and dependant on intensive predator control for their integrity, are more vulnerable to budgetary fluctuations. These settings most closely resemble traditional notions of the wild. Major, perhaps even catastrophic (Diamond, 2005), environmental and social change must be factored into any consideration of possible futures. The broad issues identified here with respect to notions of captivity, narrative tension, conservation, development, tourism and power will no doubt continue to evolve and fluctuate in their manifestations. What is certain is that ‘born to be wild’ no longer is the natural inheritance of our endangered species. ‘Managed to be (occasionally) semi-wild (and occasionally wholly- or semi-captive if necessary)’ is a much more realistic expectation.

Clearly, narratives of nature are performative, in that they produce different natures; although Crist would argue that they bring about different manifestations of immanent nature. The subject/object aporia remains.

\textbf{2.6 From performance of self to performance as subject}

In order later to engage with Benjamin’s notions of \textit{aura} and \textit{distraction} it is essential to establish here either that a tourist’s performance of the narrated subject may be considered art or to expand the concepts to which \textit{aura} and \textit{distraction} may be applied. Ideologies and

\textsuperscript{54} This term was first used in Kleiman, D. & Seidensticker, J. (1985), Pandas in the Wild, \textit{Science}, 275, p. 228.
aesthetics of nature and environment, presented in the literary form of the narrative, are granted embodied performance by the nature tourist, the professional environmental manager, and the nature-based tourism operator. Individuals perform specific narratives of environment in these embodied roles, thus inescapably engaging either explicitly or implicitly with some system of philosophy of environment, including an ethics of environment, however muddled, involving their relationships with landforms, flora and fauna, including the other humans present. The sum of ordinary and extraordinary human activities on tour, and at work on tour, may be treated as such embodied environmental narratives; and thus as art since poetics, here used in its broadest sense of literary theory, has expanded to include scripted performance of narrative (Bauman & Briggs, 1990).  

55 Scripted is a complex idea that may be approached through a consideration of Live Art (Keidan, 2006), specifically:

the kind of place in which Live Art practices are made and, …the kind of place in which Live Art practices are presented…The term Live Art is not a description of a singular form or discipline but a cultural strategy to include processes and practices that might otherwise be excluded from more established curatorial, cultural and critical discourses. A strategy to acknowledge ways of working that do not fit easily within received structures and strictures…art that invests in ideas of process, presence and experience as much as the production of objects and things; art that is immediate and real and art that wants to test the limits of the possible and permissible…Live Art is synonymous with practices and approaches that cannot easily be accommodated or placed, whether formally, spatially, culturally or critically: practices and approaches that could be understood as being placeless simply because they do not necessarily fit, or often belong, in the received contexts and frameworks art is understood to occupy, and particularly the galleries, theatres and cultural centres where the representation and experience of art is contained and controlled…Few contemporary practices are as alert and responsive to ideas of context, of site and of audience or have a more heightened sense of place than Live Art, and this is increasingly evident in Live Art’s slippage out of galleries, theatres and restricted cultural places…and into the public sphere, or rather, the real world (Keidan, 2006, pp. 9-11, italics in the original).

55 Cascardi (2010), in Art and Aesthetics After Adorno begins Prolegomena to Any Future Aesthetics by noting that Adorno made:

ambitious claims about what aesthetic theory ought to be as a form of critique if it is to meet the demands made by artworks…the class of objects- meaningful, sensuous, and particular – that we have come to recognize as ‘works of art.’ But the forward-looking horizon of Adorno’s Aesthetic Theory was the world of high modernism, where the existence of ‘art’ had already come into question…Much has happened since then both in practice and in theory…The particular lability of aesthetic theory has no doubt been a consequence of the fact that the social practice of ‘art’ was itself in flux during the period that aesthetic theory began to take shape. Aesthetic theory developed in tandem with it. Such instability appears all the more striking now that the domain of art includes a much wider range of practices than ever before. If aesthetic theory is thought of as tied to the existence of ‘art’ as a special class of objects set apart from the rest of existence then what becomes of aesthetics in an age when art seems intent on refusing that separation…the suggestion that art can stand as an example of what may be called ‘embodied meaning’ seems all the more important in the world of global media capitalism (pp. 9-10).
This looks promising, but in Keidan’s account still there is an artist/audience distance; a binary that is just as problematic as is the dichotomy of nature/culture. Live Art attempts to break the artist/audience binary through the presentation of “a participatory event such as Barby Asante’s *Wig Therapy* (2004, Hayward Gallery)” (Keidan, 2006, p. 11) or *Fragrant*, where:

some came to *Fragrant* because it was art, others to be involved in a community event and others to see displays of flower arranging, and in the process the project generated interaction and stimulated dialogue across cultural borders, blurred distinctions between spectator and participant, and rendered meaningless the distinctions between popular and restricted culture (Keidan, 2006, p. 14).

Live Art’s politics are made obvious:

(S)ublimely bleak early theatre-based works…guided us through the hopeless, hideous Britain of the eighties and nineties, and…constructed the kind of performance experience a younger generation of audiences desired to negotiate the collapses and collisions of facts and fictions of a (new) media world (Keidan, 2006, p. 12).

In taking any performance-based approach to expedition cruising it is tempting to view the product provider as the performance artist, as director, more or less controlling the performances of the paying tourists, who can never fully escape being audience, no matter how fully they are invited to participate. In this approach the politics of the operator/artist informs the script that is constitutive of the performance. Missing, though, is any consideration of the narratives of self that the audience members bring with them to the operator’s performance. These narratives of self may be utilized to subvert any individual’s performance of the public narrative. The combination of operator/artist/director scripted performance and tourists’ performances produce an ensemble piece, suggestive of Brecht. Every individual and collective element of this ensemble production is situated within the global capitalism of late modernity, with each individual’s deliberate or unconscious complicity or resistance. This is an acknowledgement that some form or other of economic determinism brings about the transformation from self to subject. To use Althusser’s term, the subject position available within the economic system beckons the individual; an act labelled

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56 Such disparate motivations characterize also expedition cruise tourists and the staff onboard.
57 One problem with economic determinism is its teleological nature. Recall above; that Jamieson (2008) makes the point that both neoliberalism and Marxism share the characteristic of economic determinism; that is, that the ultimate explanatory framework will be economic. This concern is shared by Hacking’s (1999) comments on the rise of the concept of the economy and Mitchell’s (2007) claim that “economics established its claim to be the true political science.” As with nature, art and God, if everything can be subsumed within economics, and explained in terms of economics, then really nothing has been explained.
interpellation. Seigel’s (2005) framework; “the bodily or material, the relational, and the reflective dimensions of the self” (p. 5) must be revisited in order to postulate the implications of the acknowledgement of the primacy of the economic in moving the individual from self to subject. Only then may we decide what form of ensemble performance best fits expedition cruising.

2.7 A narrative approach to performance as subject

Narrative and art have been attributed to common evolutionary origins (Boyd & Hall, 2005; Gottschall & Wilson, 2005), which makes it attractive to conceive of performed narratives of individual selves legitimately as art. This is similar in the case of the performed narratives of subjects, who are discursively constituted members of social formations and collectives of various kinds. Seigel’s (2005) “bodily or material self” (p. 5) can be interpellated from self to subject and there is an ever-expanding supportive literature on how bodies are economically constructed. Seigel’s (2005) “reflective dimension” (p. 5) overtly inhabits the tension between individual choice and determinism as it moves from self to subject, illustrated, say, by Hollinshead’s (2009) worldmaking below, where individuals may believe that they are shot of economic determinism, and accordingly construct an imaginary world. Narratives of self are thus transformed into narratives of subject, even though the individuals concerned are unaware of the transformation of selfhood into an imaginary. Seigel’s (2005) “relational dimension” (p. 5) lends itself equally either to economically deterministic and non-deterministic sets of social relations so the transformation need not jar. The move, then, from

58 Jamal, Everett & Dann (2003) brought Althusser into Tourism Studies, particularly with respect to natural area destinations. These authors identify “the performative and ideological nature of language (and) how subjects are ‘interpellated’ by language…discursively produced as a subject through the performative speech-act…The ‘subject’ is enacted through language (hence should be thought of as a linguistic category)” (pp. 158-159).
59 Cascardi’s (2010) ‘embodied meaning’ (above) becomes important here. Although it may seem an odd place for an author sympathetic to the notions underlying poststructuralism to find support, part of Lutterbie’s (2011) Towards a General Theory of Acting: Cognitive science and performance proves fruitful, if read ‘against the grain’:

Most of what I knew about acting came from being a director. When dealing with texts, I tried to help actors make connections and develop scores that would result in performances that transcend an audience’s expectations; or, on occasion when the work was devised, I tried to create a performance based in the performers’ experiences and that allowed their work to guide the structuring of the final piece (p. 6).

In Chapter Five I will illustrate how the tourism operator and the Department of Conservation unintentionally collude as directors to give the tourists ‘embodied meaning’; veritable instructions on how to act the sublime. At this point, though, the question is whether individuals can unsuspectingly produce art.
60 Marx began this literature with his account of workers whose bodies literally were shaped by the industrial processes they were engaged in (Castree, 2008). In On the Waterfront (Kazan, 1954) the Rod Steiger character shows how one arm is longer than the other through years of pulling with a cargo-hook.
narratives of self to narratives of subject seems to be unproblematic. In making this claim, though, I remain aware that Robert Eaglestone, in reviewing Terry Eagleton’s *Literary Theory: An introduction* noted that the book: “smacks a little of sleight of hand, while the conjuror, while explaining away others, refuses to explain how he does his own tricks” (Eaglestone, 2009, p. 13). Here, there is no trickery intended. First we must accept that economically determined subjects, interpellated into particular economically determined subject positions, legitimately may be the basis for narratives based in figurative language, particularly metaphor and metonymy. Then it is possible to engage with the literature on tourists’ performances of these figurative narratives alongside the literature on individual persons’ reported changes in self brought about by being a tourist. In particular the work of Chaim Noy, an Israeli backpacker, illustrates how personally-apprehended experiences of self-transformation are situated also within, and constituted by, contemporary Israeli culture, and mix spiritual and Romantic elements (Noy, 2003). Noy uses the term “narrative identity” (p. 84) to describe his formulation of his participants’ senses of self; a term that moves self closer to a figurative subject. Israel is presented as a religious society; the West as secular, yet the cultural embeddedness and spiritual/Romantic mix in the vocabulary of tourists’ reports of self-change are strikingly similar. A simple example would be where someone whose narrative identity included loving animals (self), while engaged in a nature-based tourism product, was hailed by a tour operator to be one of many assisting at a whale stranding (subject). Later, she would tell people that ‘it was like the whale was communicating with me; it made me a different person.’

The literature on tourist performance (Crouch, Aronsson & Wahlström, 2001; Edensor, 2001; Perkins & Thorns, 2001; Crouch & Desforges, 2003;) is marked by a move from Urry’s (1990) focus on gazing to focusing on other types of involvement. Sensory and perceptual involvement has been expanded to include smell (Dann & Jacobsen, 2003) while cognitive and affective involvement has expanded to involve imaginaries, that is, ideas and desires associated with geographical and political entities, and transforming them into touristic places and spaces:

(What places, and formative processes of place, generate and sustain significant desire, what are their material landscape qualities and how should we theorize and narrate their conditions? …these places, their landscapes, and even their histories, are dynamic and contested, changing in relation to transformations in society and economy…whose draw owes to multiple sites of possible experience and sensory encounter (Cartier, 2005, p. 2).
Central to Cartier’s considerations of desire-formation is the notion of the
touristed landscape…places whose larger, a priori significance arguably initiates
desire to experience, tour, travel, and explore, rather than those where tourism
economies have been explicitly created…

This landscape is a place where locals and visitors negotiate identity, seeking
renewal or exploration, the possibilities of alterity and liminal identity shift.
Understanding experiences and meanings of the touristed landscape depends in
part, then, on understanding subject positions and subject formation of the
touring, the toured, and those who would work at being both or neither, and from
one moment or place to the next. In such contexts, ideas people hold about places
substantially inform identity formation, human agency, and questions of
subjectivity (Cartier, 2005, pp. 3-4).

Here, desire is central to considerations of narrative engagement with the sublime. The
sensory, perceptual, affective and cognitive components of narrative are available to be
appropriated by economic ideologies, and then individuals interpellated61 into the resultant
subject positions. The fact that tourism at the beginning of the twenty-first century is the
archetypal industry governed by neo-liberal principles means that figurative narratives
generated around that industry, whether by tourists, providers of tourism products,
environmental managers or organizations providing governance will to a certain extent fit
within a neo-liberal worldview, or will offer resistance to it.

Stewart (1984) introduced the related concept of longing, which Bendix (2002) phrased as the
question:

How can we explain…craving for the new? Longing is encoded in objects that
contain within them narratives or memories of experiences had or wished
for…Within longing, though, there are aspects that are inexpressible, either in
narrative or objects…Naturalists and explorers as well as philosophers of the
sublime in the 18th century assisted their contemporaries in uncovering the

Stewart’s longing, with its elements of the inexpressible, is analogous to the Welsh hiraeth and
the Portuguese saudade. Each is aporetic in that the subject is convinced the feeling can be
communicated but any and every attempt to explain serves only to defy representation. These
objects in which the longing is encoded clearly include the human body. Narratives, as well as
being spoken and written, are able also to be presented within some other artistic medium,
including bodily performance. “Human bodies do not just experience stories in space, they
also interact within the materiality of narrative texts” (Page, 2010, p. 10). Page’s claim opens

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61 Interpellated, as used here, is not exactly as Althusser meant the term to be used but I feel this novel use is
consistent with the original meaning of figuratively being ‘hailed’.
up the issue of the status of any truth claims implicit in such bodily performance; is it art? *The Conservation Economy* metanarrative clearly establishes an opportunity for the production and performance or, production *through* performance, of narratives that ultimately are the product of the authors’/performers’ choices of how possibly to represent contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand as tourism product. Such selection is a form of worldmaking\(^62\) where:

> [worldmaking] is the creative and often ‘false’ or ‘faux’ imaginative processes and projective promotional activities that management agencies, other mediating bodies, and individuals strategically and ordinarily engage in to purposefully (or otherwise unconsciously) privilege particular dominant/favoured representations of people/places/pasts within a given or assumed region, area, or ‘world’, over and above other actual or potential representations of those subjects” (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140).

Also, “Such is the declarative and clearly pungently political force of tourism as it is deployed in worldmaking fashion in concert with (or at times, wholly against) other co-productive and co-generative narrative-issuing mediating forces in and across society” (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140).

Given that in *The Conservation Economy* “the most easily understood connection between conservation and the economy is through tourism” (Groser, 2009, p. 2) it is clear that the political force of tourism easily could work to produce narratives in concert both with government and its agencies; for example *Tourism New Zealand* and the Department of Conservation. There is an obvious circularity involving promoting a New Zealand imaginary to visitors and their then demanding the opportunity to experience this imaginary; a demand now filtered through whatever narrative-of-subject they have accepted, as a result of the promotion. Central to this process of worldmaking is the construction of place and the production of space; both part of the performance of the worldmaking narrative and needing to be attractive to, and make sense to, the tourist as ecological subject.

### 2.8 Narrative ontology, methodology and epistemology

To reiterate; “(t)o warrant the status of research, narratives must be able to make valid knowledge claims” (Rosiek, 2007, p. 447). This epistemological demand elevates the philosophical status of narrative to that of methodology. Engaging in the discourse surrounding any narrative is performative (Law, 2000); taking part in, analyzing, reflecting-on

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\(^62\) Morton (2007) includes also ‘the environment’ as such a made-world.
and studying narrative brings about that which is being studied. One central issue is that, in the move to postmodernity and the postcolonial, the nature of the knowledge claims that legitimately may be made by narrative approaches to the world have changed;

(t)he contextualist rejection of structuralist abstraction led to an increased interest in the situated and process-oriented nature of narrative… A wealth of what might be termed ‘critical narratology’ emerged, exposing connections between narrative and ideology…the move from ‘poetics to politics’… Critically, studies influenced by sociolinguistics also sought to theorize the social function of narrative, for example, as a means of managing interpersonal relations or performing identity work…The innovative nature and social impact of recent technology developments mean that that the question of digital media and its role in narrative processing has come to center stage, prioritizing the place of media in narrative studies more generally… By this I mean that we should not assume that the dominance of the verbal mode thus far in narrative theorizing means that it is fully adequate to explicate the contribution of other modes (be they visual, verbal, kinaesthetic, or related to conventions such as dress codes) (Page, 2010, p. 2).

Within narrative epistemology there are no truth claims existing outside of the language used to produce them; “the subject formed within language” (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 38). This, then, is an opportune point at which to introduce and situate the author. Somers’ (1994) ontological narrative, the story of the individual’s being, emerges from a series of relational settings where, as we know:

a relational setting is a pattern of relationships among institutions, public narratives and social practices. As such it is a relational matrix, a social network. Identity-formation takes shape within these relational settings of contested but patterned relations among narratives, people and institutions. (Somers, 1994, p. 626)

So it is with the author. At this juncture there must be a relationship established between the mindless self-indulgence of unimportant autobiographical material and the mindful necessity of identifying the constitutive role in the research of the author’s ontological narrative. Law (2000) raised the issue of the personal:

I have been puzzling for some time about the problem of ‘the personal’ in social science writing: how it works; what it does. My puzzle presents itself in my own writing. The question is whether I should rigorously try to keep the ‘personal’ out. This would be the most common response. But supposing it were let in, then there are other questions: how should it be done? How might it be handled? And what kind of job should it be doing there anyway? (p. 1)

Somers’ (1994) notion of relational settings and separation of ontological narratives from public narratives informed a previous publication on sub-Antarctic tourism (Shelton, 2007a). The wider field of the role of narrative in describing and presenting lives was reviewed recently in two edited volumes, McAdams, Josselson & Lieblich (2006) and Bamberg (2007). Of the former, the editors state that “we conceive of ‘narrative’ in a broad sense, encompassing approaches and traditions that focus on personal experience as expressed or communicated in language (p. 4). “that enlargement of literary criticism…into all-purpose theory which made the discussion of all these things in the same breath established academic practice” (Kunkel, 2010: p. 12).
Law goes on to state that: Stories, effective stories, perform themselves into the material world—yes, in the form of material relations, but also in the form of machines, architectural arrangements, bodies, and all the rest. This means that one way of imagining the world is that it is a set of (pretty disorderly) stories that intersect and interfere with one another. It means also that these are, however, not simply narrations in the standard linguistic sense of them. I want to hold the question of the ‘personal’ together with the performative character of storytelling and its material embodiments (p. 2).

This position is consistent with that of Page (2010):

Above all else, multimodality insists on the multiple integration of semiotic resources in all communicative events. From this perspective, all texts are multimodal…Monomodality in comparison is not an actual quality of texts but rather a way of thinking about individual semiotic resources once abstracted from the communicative ensembles in which they occur (Page, 2010, p. 4).

Situating the author’s ontological narrative, and thus Law’s ‘performative character of storytelling and its material embodiments’ in the present work involves the production of an imaginary, an act of worldmaking, sparked by a childhood reading of Castaways of Disappointment Island (Endicott-Davies, 1911) and the consequent desire not only to visit that island, but also to engage affectively and intellectually with the wider imaginary that reading this book, and subsequent books, engendered. In order to fulfill Rosiek’s (2007) condition, to qualify as research this ontological narrative of desire must be able to be constitutive of valid knowledge claims. These knowledge claims involve, in this case, establishing how my desire, as researcher and author constitutes, and is constituted by, other passengers’ experiences of expedition cruising, and how my and their desire is performed and narrated64. The process for this generating of these knowledge claims, within language, is known formally as “interactive narrative development” (Quasthoff, 1997, p. 51), involving “conversational narrative” (Quasthoff, 1997, p. 58). It is usual that:

(following terminological conventions in linguistics, narrative discourse units are distinguished from other kinds of discourse units (e.g. argumentative, explanatory, descriptive) by both content and form. In terms of content, they refer to a singular event (as opposed to a recurring procedure) that happened in the past in which the narrator was involved in the role of either agent or observer. In terms of form, there are (at least) two possible global forms (or discourse patterns) in which both narrator and listener, in a joint achievement, realize the narrative discourse unit on

64 Fullagar (2002), linked desire and narratives of travel when she explained that:

I take up the Hegelian tradition of theorizing desire as a social relation that structures the everyday dynamics between self and other, self and world…desire moves us towards that which is different, unknown and other to the self. It is also a relation that constitutes a desired otherness through the metaphors of a western, and specifically post-colonial, imagination (Fullagar, 2002, p. 57).
the linguistic surface: the report pattern and the replaying pattern. The latter actualizes the past event strictly from the perceptual and experiential perspective of the narrator in the participant’s role (Quasthoff, 1997, pp. 58-59).

Here, argument, explanation and description are included within narrative discourse since undoubtedly they are elements of Somers’ (1994) public narrative and ontological narratives, Law’s (2000) ‘personal’ and Page’s (2010) multimodality. Performance is included also since “(t)he relationship between materiality and multimodality draws attention to the physical work involved in narrative processing, both in the use of tools and technology, and also by the human body and its sensory organs” (Page, 2010, p. 7). Recall, “(h)uman bodies do not just experience stories in space, they also interact with the materiality of narrative texts” (Page, 2010, p. 10).

Traditionally, conversational narratives are analysed within formal, laboratory-like settings but here the interactive conversational narratives of visitors, staff and operators were engaged with in naturalistic settings. There have been attempts to represent such naturalistic settings in the laboratory, for example through Conversation Party (Hatton, McGurgan & Wang, 2010), a multimodal interactive conversational investigation into what is possible within Ryan’s definition of narrative being “a mental representation of casually connected states and events that captures a segment in the history of a world and of its members” (Ryan, 2004, cited in Hatton et al 2010, p. 202). “These worlds can be different than our own. Importantly, this means that story offers a new way of being in a world by providing the opportunity to envision environments and experiences through another’s eyes or ears” (Hatton et al, 2010, p. 202).

My ontological position then, while authoring this work, is co-constituted by my personal narratological sense of being in the world and by others’ senses of being in the world, interaction by interaction. Of necessity, even though in my study I did not leave New Zealand waters, in this bicultural society of Aotearoa/New Zealand what I write may be viewed as a form of colonial travel writing, where:

In the field of postcolonial studies, travel writing has often been demonized. Critics have, at times, aligned travel narratives with other textual practices associated with colonial expansion- mapping, botany, ethnography, journalism and so on- to suggest that travel writing disseminated discourses that were then used to justify colonial projects (Edwards & Graulund, 2011, p. 1).

I have tried constantly to be mindful that the very notion of holding an ontological narrative is a product of reflectivity and not reflexivity and therefore is consistent with a colonising
discourse. Nevertheless, reflexivity, once lost, can never be regained, so the indigenous subject must involve this loss and, however reluctantly, be reflective, that is, ontological, about this loss. Mourning for a lost reflexivity is inherent in the indigenous subject, just as is melancholy in the Romantic subject. The subject is able to incorporate nostalgia for euchronia, at a whole-of-society scale; the Romantic for arcadia and the indigenous for the pre-contact period.

With respect to method, in this case others’ desire as a component of others’ narratives was inferred by the author from observing the other visitors’ performances of self, as nature-based tourists, including my making extensive video recording, listening to their everyday conversations with one another and conversations with me. Also constitutive were daily efforts to produce a collective narrative through the utilisation of what Foucault may well have called ‘technologies of the group’. These efforts included a daily wildlife identification list and a trip report. Also, I wrote; reflecting on what I wrote as I wrote it.

“As I write” (Morton 2007, p. 30); that slippery piece of language that is supposed to transport me out of language, in order for me to provide perfect reportage, unaffected by the act of writing the report. Well, as I write, my intention is to trace my personal memories of nature and wilderness, caught now as I am between reminiscences of these concepts as physical things, and my later realisation that these terms are reifications that sat uncomfortably within my maturing thinking, until now, when I regard them as no more than rhetorical devices. Before now, I could not have dispensed with nature, or wilderness, without losing my sense of self and identity. Nature was very important to me, as a Scottish immigrant, a pakeha, living in a bicultural country where the indigenous people traditionally did not differentiate themselves from land. Most importantly, I need to explain why I, along with countless others, felt for years that the greatest privilege possible was the opportunity to enter nature, to be at one with the natural world, and then felt, simultaneously, that there was no possibility of being granted entry. Of course, such a desire presupposes that we were all somehow outside of nature to begin with (O’Reardon, 1975). This is my intention, to explain, but I am not so naïve as to think that such authorial intention is unproblematic. As I write, I become more fully aware of the import of Morton’s point. I have memories of pertinent events, insights and attitudes, but they are spread over a lifetime. They deserve to be presented, alongside the story of the project, but how? Ideally, I could treat each memory as a voice, my own voice at different ages, but Morton says that the better able I am at presenting that voice now the less genuinely that voice is articulated and the more my present writing
skills are privileged. Kathleen Jamie (2011) provides her response on first reading, in 2010, Gavin Maxwell’s (1960) *Ring of Bright Water*:

> I opened it nonetheless and read the first lines: ‘I sit in a pitch-pine panelled kitchen-living room, with an otter asleep upon its back among the cushions on the sofa, forepaws in the air, and with the expression of tightly shut concentration that very small babies wear in sleep.’ I kept reading: how could I not? All that dancing consonance! That deft alliteration! Then came a sentiment to choke on, for political, not aesthetic reasons… *Ring of Bright Water* is beautiful, magic, crazy, sad, hair-raisingly funny, but it’s hardly about otters. Underneath the idyll, it’s about men and women and the lithe-limbed boys Maxwell hired, it’s about sexuality and class (pp. 38-39).

All I can do is write the memory, that is, the memory I have now, shaped as it is by recent study, and superimposed upon or, more accurately, amalgamated with previous memories of the same events. I have included above, and will below, some autobiography; that form of imaginative fiction most satisfying for authors. Needless to say, we must assume the unreliability of the narrator, however well-intentioned he may appear. The intention is that when autobiographical material is presented it be read simultaneously with the personal narrative it accompanies. Of course this is physically impossible.

**Summary of Chapter Two**

This chapter presented the concept of narrative and how this notion affects, and in turn is affected by, ideas about Self and Identity. The idea of the self as a stable, life-long deep-seated psychological construct has evolved into the idea of the labile self. This labile self may be considered to be a narrated self; the subject/object of storytelling, although to be available as a legitimate focus of study the labile self must make valid knowledge claims. The sense of being able to be the author of one’s own life fits well within current neoliberal economic and social thought.

Closely related to Self and Identity is the concept of the Subject and the chapter discussed in detail the problems involved in the theoretical construction of subjectivity. Subjectivity inevitably involves some form of social relations and the chapter covered Somers’ claims that ‘categories of actors’, involving social relations, are based on experience, not necessarily on class and consequently on the division of labour. The category of actor introduced in the chapter is the expedition cruise nature tourist; a category that imposes a subject position but
allows a level of narrative freedom within that position. Class, then, may be influential in determining the narrative produced within these structural constraints.

There are various environmental narratives; stories about nature, and within these narratives the nature tourist performs the role of ecological subject. Such subjectivity is based on desire, where desire is understood to be another social relation, in this case a longing for new experiences. This ecological subjectivity fits well with Hollinshead’s notion of the tourist subject engaging in worldmaking; to be elaborated upon in Chapter Three.
Chapter 3: A Context for visitation: A Romantic imaginary; Solander

Thomas Hardy, the English novelist, faced with the problem of producing a landscape large enough to host the lives of his characters, created Wessex, a fictional location, place and space; an imaginary. Within Wessex was enacted the full range of experiences that constitute the human condition. Expedition cruising in Fiordland and the southern oceans of New Zealand requires a similar imaginary in order to do justice to all of the elements of the Romantic sublime involved in this form of tourism in this collection of locations. Producing such an imaginary utilises Hollinshead’s (2009) worldmaking, in this case informed by the concept of the tenacious sublime (Reis & Shelton, 2009; Shelton & Reis, 2009), a term coined to complement Morton’s (2007) argument that “the literature of the Romantic period…still influences the ways in which the ecological imaginary works” (p. 1). The tenacity of the sublime is attached to nature, both as Burke’s collection of objects and Kant’s, metaphorically united in ‘Mother Nature’.

[worldmaking] is the creative and often ‘false’ or ‘faux’ imaginative processes and projective promotional activities that management agencies, other mediating bodies, and individuals strategically and ordinarily engage in to purposefully (or otherwise unconsciously) privilege particular dominant/favoured representations of people/places/pasts within a given or assumed region, area, or ‘world’, over and above other actual or potential representations of those subjects (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140).

This imaginary may, with good reason, be called Solander, which involves: “(t)he semiotics of tourist spaces, landscapes and destinations” (Jaworski & Pritchard, 2005) and “(t)he discursive construction and representation of the tourist experience” Jaworski & Pritchard (2005) informed by a normative narrative of the Romantic and an aesthetics of the sublime.

3.1 Solander: a context of late-capitalism

*The Conservation Economy* performs very effectively the Althusserian transformation from self to subject, that is, from conservation-minded nature tourist to late-capitalism Romantic consumer through interpellation ultimately based on a global excess of capital. This excess

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65 The term, imaginary will consistently be used as a noun.
66 It is pointless to draw attention to the fact that when Mother Nature, personified as a hurricane, does damage to trees she is damaging herself.
currently is being used to provide expedition cruising to previously unvisited destinations.

The process occurs as follows. One narrative position (acknowledging and applying Brockington, Duffy and Igoe, 2008, p. 3), is that ever since the extensive economic restructuring of 1984, conservation in New Zealand has been enmeshed with the resulting neoliberal economic ideology coupled with an already existing Romantic aesthetics of nature. These relationships, through the use of tourism as a driver of economic growth, have made endangered species’ protection inseparable from the functioning of the late capitalist economic system (Shelton, 2011, p. 39).

The neoliberal narratives dependent upon this inseparability of capitalism and conservation are tackled head-on in the recently published Ecological Rift: Capitalism’s war on the Earth, (where) John Bellamy Foster and his Marxist co-authors refer to the identification … of nine ‘planetary boundaries’ that civilization transgresses at its peril. Already three- concentration of carbon in the atmosphere, loss of nitrogen from the soil and the extinction of other species- have been exceeded (Kunkel, 2010, p. 14).

Foster, Clark and York (2010), do indeed present a ‘narrative as morality tale’ or fable based on the notion that the capitalist system of economic organization has the power to exceed environmental parameters and cause environmental catastrophe. The Conservation Economy narrative counters such an alarmist claim by pointing out that environmental protection is essential for such an economy to succeed. Another narrative that challenges the idea that The Conservation Economy will sustainably be tourism-driven is that of the crises and repeated failures of capitalism over its history. In the same extended essay where he cites “Foster and his Marxist co-authors”, Benjamin Kunkel reviews David Harvey’s contributions to the analysis of the nature and economic role of capital, as presented in Harvey’s A Companion to Marx’s ‘Capital’” (2010) and The Enigma of Capital: And the crises of capitalism (2010).

For our purposes, focusing on the expedition cruise sector, Kunkel’s critique of Harvey is useful in that the sustainability aspect of The Conservation Economy narrative is subverted through an analysis of ‘capital overaccumulation’.

Ground rent, in other words, is a form of fictitious capital, or value created in anticipation of future commodity production. ‘Like all forms of fictitious capital, what is traded is a claim on future revenues, which means a claim on future profits from the use of the land or, more directly, a claim on future labour.’ From the need to realise ground rent stems capitalism’s whole geography of anxious anticipation. Capital overaccumulated in one place can flow to another which appears to boast better ultimate prospects of profit (Kunkel, 2010, p. 12).

Cruise ships, as items of accumulated capital, ideally would wish to be able to move without restraint but:
Typically, the very small number of ships involved in this sector move their operations seasonally as well as year by year. For example Zegrahm & Eco Expeditions, operating Clipper Odyssey, visited in 2005, not in 2006 or 2007, and plan to return for one visit only in late 2008, but not 2009 (Zegrahm, 2008). Aurora Expeditions, operating their recently-purchased Marina Svetava out of Hobart, and Heritage Expeditions, operating Spirit of Enderby out of Bluff, visit several times annually, although only Heritage Expeditions offers the islands as a destination in themselves. There are some likely developments to the current pattern of operations. In the short term, the rising, unstable or unpredictable price of fuel may act to increase the number of passengers required to reach the break-even point for profitability on any given voyage. Such a development inevitably would differentially threaten the viability of smaller ships, which, as they age, will face also increasing maintenance requirements and expenditure. Replacement with larger vessels will not be a simple matter. The very tight market for chartering, the most common method used by tourism operators in procuring suitable vessels, has led to successful outright purchase becoming a cause for celebration (Aurora Expeditions, 2008). Such ownership offers the possibility of more flexible international itineraries (Mortimer, 2008). As the expedition cruising market matures, it is likely that New Zealand’s sub-Antarctic islands increasingly will become a destination in their own right, and not be just one feature of a trip to or from the Ross Sea. A combination of larger vessels and a transition to becoming the primary destination will produce changes in itineraries which will inevitably result in requests for more extensive onshore access for larger numbers of passengers than is currently permitted. Typically, operators plan their itineraries two to three years in advance of delivering the proposed product and this lead-in time will allow the Department of Conservation to plan how to respond to such requests for greater access for larger numbers of tourists. The fees that operators are charged per-passenger provide significant income to the department and if the tightly controlled New Zealand sector becomes unprofitable, operators may well shift to another sector of operation. Papua New Guinea is an example of an emerging destination. The completion of the widening of the Panama Canal is expected to trigger a worldwide reconfiguration of the cruise industry. It may well take several years for the effects of this reorganisation to affect the Expedition sector and it is possible at this stage only to speculate on what these effects may be on demand for sub-Antarctic product. Similarly, if and when international air travel, currently exempt, is levied for carbon emissions there will be a further large-scale reorganisation of global travel patterns (Shelton, 2011, p. 244).

The cruise ship industry thus may reasonably be nominated as a metonym for mobile global capital. Land, metaphorically, may be moved around the globe. This option is most clearly illustrated when cruise ships are pressed into service as temporary stationary accommodation; for example, using cruise ships to house those displaced by Hurricane Katrina allayed the need to reallocate land for the provision of tent cities and using cruise ships to accommodate sports fans on tour overcomes the need to construct hotels. Admittedly, ‘ground rent’ is paid in the form of berthage, according to the length of wharf to which the ship is tied-up, but such berthage is cheap by comparison with other forms of ground rent.
The relationship between credit and commodities is in this way translated into spatial terms as an uneasy rapport between one kind of capital, highly mobile or liquid, and another kind- ‘fixed capital embedded in the land’- defined by its inertness. Here, in the latent conflict between migratory finance capital and helplessly stationary complexes of fixed capital … Harvey has found a contradiction of capitalism overlooked by Marx and his heirs … Overaccumulated capital, whether originating as income from production or as the bank overdrafts that unleash fictitious values, can postpone any immediate crisis of profitability by being drawn off into long-term infrastructural projects, in an operation Harvey calls a ‘spatio-temporal fix’ (Kunkel, 2010, p. 12).

The construction of cruise ships is one such ‘spatio-temporal fix’, where the expected economic life of the ship is calculated before construction begins.

So what are the ‘limits to capital’? Harvey’s answer, disappointing as it is honest, is that a system bent on overaccumulation will not collapse of its own top-heaviness. Should the world market fail to generate the ever increasing surpluses that form its only rationale, it can always enlarge its borders and appropriate new wealth through … what Harvey proposes to call ‘accumulation by dispossession’… This field for gain would be exhausted only with universal commodification, when ‘every person in every nook and cranny of the world is caught within the orbit of capital’ (Kunkel, 2010, p. 13).

The expedition cruise sector delivers every person and every nook and cranny of the world’ to be commodified, just as it interpellates the nature tourists into Morton’s Romantic consumers. Traditionally, capital is regarded as scarce: “(f)or capital creates and co-exists with non-capitalist forms in which material provision and corresponding notions of scarcity prevail” (Fine, 2010, p. 88), within “narratives of scarcity” (Hartmann, 2010, p. 51).

3.2 Solander: a politics of the biophysical world

The place we are calling Solander has been the site of repetitive and competing narratives ever since Cook’s 1769 visit in Endeavour.

The past four weeks had been contentious enough, with a fruitless chase after an imaginary land Gore swore he saw and heated debate about the so-called continent, but now an open quarrel broke out. Though the officers had already likened the towering cliffs to the daunting fjords of Norway, banks proposed that Cook should sail up one of the deep, narrow, clefts, so he and Solander could go ashore and collect rocks. Cook, quite properly, refused. Not only would the prevailing wind trap the ship in the long, winding rift, but the cliffs were steep-to, so it would be almost impossible to find a secure anchorage…after naming a small barren rock after Solander, Cook headed north (Druett, 2011, p. 176).
Solander Island, this small barren rock, actually two small barren rocks, today largely is ignored apart from the recent attention of scientists. Nonetheless, these rocks are well qualified to be the real-world anchor of our Solander imaginary since they are a volcanic geomorphological link between the South Island of New Zealand and the more southern volcanic peaks of the sub-Antarctic islands (Lewis & Landreth, 2010). With respect to how these sub-Antarctic islands may be narrated, there are two possibilities, involving vertical or horizontal integration (Shelton, 2010, 2012). Horizontal integration involves creating a circumpolar narrative that unifies all such islands.\(^{67}\)

The forum was founded upon the conviction that the Sub-Antarctic islands and surrounding seas should not be viewed as a subdivision of Antarctica but as a distinct circumpolar domain which has its own unique character, scientific significance and management issues. We believe that this may well have been the first forum to comprehensively develop this perception of this special part of the world (The International Forum on the Sub-Antarctic, 2010).

Vertical integration, in contrast, may be expressed as “(t)hese sub-Antarctic islands, although interesting in themselves, are _en route_ to Ross Sea. These sub-Antarctic Islands are of the South Pacific“ (Shelton, 2010, np).\(^{68}\) This vertical approach relates well with Antarctic cruise tourism, while horizontal integration, the circumpolar band, has little relationship with current patterns of tourism which are concentrated in two distinct vertical corridors, one from Ushuaia to the Antarctic Peninsula and the other from southern Australia or southern New Zealand to the Ross sea region (Shelton, 2011, 2012).

_Solander_, then, contains the northern part of the Australia/New Zealand-Ross Sea vertical corridor, although in this work the islands of interest are limited to those administered by New Zealand. These islands, the Snares, Campbell Island and the Auckland Islands were listed with UNESCO in 1998 as a World Heritage Area (Peat, 2003). Fiordland National Park, another constituent of _Solander_, already had been listed in 1986 and again more stringently in 1990 (Peat, 2007). Recently, the seas around Campbell Island have been protected as a

\(^{67}\) One of the difficulties in producing a circumpolar sub-Antarctic region is the need to integrate “cool temperate islands” (Cooper, Ryan & Andrew, 1995, p. 59) as far north as Tristan da Cunha. Each rationale for inclusion generates a corresponding rationale for exclusion. This problematic has been reflected in the presentations at the 2006, 2009 and 2011 sessions of the International Forum on the sub-Antarctic.

\(^{68}\) When constructing an imaginary such as _Solander_ it is important not to be limited by geographical considerations of location. “These sub-Antarctic islands, although interesting in themselves, are _en route_ to Ross Sea“ (above) reflects the narrative construction used by Australian providers in their marketing (e.g. Aurora Expeditions, 2011) and fits better with a Mawson imaginary, at least around those products associated with centenary of his expedition, specifically Mawson’s Centenary Celebration. Fig.1 presents a visual illustration of the geographical overlap and separation of _Solander_ and Mawson. Any figurative relationship must be constructed by the individual passenger. “These sub-Antarctic Islands are of the South Pacific” (above) reflects the narrative of the sole New Zealand provider, Heritage Expeditions and their product Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific (Heritage Expeditions, 2011).
Marine Reserve (Ministry of Fisheries, 2011). The third constituent of Solander, Bluff Harbour, has no specific form of environmental or heritage protection over and above that afforded by the Resource Management Act (1991); legislation which regulates most forms of development activity in New Zealand. Visitors’ experiences of Solander as a place interact with the physical features of each of this imaginary’s constituent parts, the locations to be mapped onto (Reinjders, 2010)\(^\text{69}\) and these components are managed to provide settings for various kinds of engagement.

3.3 The politics of the production of protection in Solander’s constituents: Fiordland

Fiordland National Park comprises almost the whole of Fiordland and is managed under The Fiordland National Park Management Plan (Department of Conservation, 2007). Part 5 of the plan, Visitor Management, outlines Recreational Opportunities in various Visitor Settings. Of most interest to expedition cruisers are the Remote Settings they will encounter, specifically Doubtful Sound Remote Setting and Southern Remote Setting.

Given that Southland Regional Council is responsible for marine activities in Doubtful Sound the Department of Conservation must attempt to influence that council’s management to make it reflect the values of a Remote Visitor Setting:

\(^{69}\) Reinjders’ point is that, typically, visitors offer resistance to engaging wholeheartedly with the imaginary but rather they struggle to impose or anchor space onto location. Reinjders uses the term place when describing a particular imaginary. In their Key Thinkers in Space and Place, Hubbard & Kitchin (2011) present a range of positions on these notions. These authors state that:

> it was arguably not until the work of the Marxist theorist Henri Lefebvre (1991) that this notion of space as socially produced was convincingly (if sometimes obtusely) articulated. Lefebvre implied that absolute space cannot exist because, at the moment it is colonized through social activity, it becomes relativised and historicized space…a trialectics of spatiality which explores the differential entwining of cultural practices, representations and imaginations (pp. 5-6).

However, “Lefebvre’s oeuvre was eclipsed by Louis Althusser’s ‘Scientific Marxism’ in which the base-superstructure division was a privileged element of a structural analysis of the repressive forces and institutions of the capitalist states” Sheilds (2011, p. 282). For cruise tourism and the experience of the imaginary, Solander, this structuralist/poststructuralist tension revolves around the nature of the subject, particularly the Lacanian/Althusserian ‘subject position’ and the process of interpellation presented in Chapter 1. My position is that Solander is indeed brought into being through Lefebvre’s trialectics, even if the process is circumscribed both by economic determinism and state control. The Department of Conservation, an arm of the state, issues or refuses to issue the permits to land and the concessions to operate within most of Solander’s constituent parts, but, as discussed below, on those occasions when landing was cancelled due to adverse weather this did not appear to affect the visitors’ satisfaction with the trip; in fact, this experience of the tenacious sublime in action, the iconic storm, acted to enhance the experience.
5.3.6.4 (4). Recreation and tourism concessions to the Shelter Islands, Nee Islets and Seymour Island should not be permitted. Advocate to Southland Regional Council that no anchoring will occur within close proximity to these islands. The public will be discouraged from accessing these islands (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2007, Fiordland National Park Management Plan p. 159).

These *Remote Visitor Setting* values, stated in section 5.3.6, involve it being:

important to recognize that the majority of Fiordland National Park is managed to maintain and protect remote recreational experiences. Along with the fiords and wilderness visitor settings the large expansive remote experiences are what make Fiordland unique among other national parks in New Zealand (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2007, Fiordland National Park Management Plan, p. 149).

What may threaten these remote recreational experiences?

The connections between the visitor settings…and the recreational opportunities available within the fiords are inextricably linked. To retain the remote experiences of most of the land which surrounds the fiords it is essential to advocate to other resource managers the need for consistent management. There is growing pressure from tourism activities on the fiords, particularly commercial boat operations of varying sizes that can affect how people perceive the recreation experience offered in the adjoining land (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2007, Fiordland National Park Management Plan, p. 149).

Both the land- and sea-based activities fit directly within *The Conservation Economy* (Groser, 2009) and the politics of the production of protection in this case involves not the protection of biodiversity but the protection of a particular kind of visitor experience. This is a key development and signals a move further away from a protectionist mindset.

The Department of Conservation’s description of land-based *Remote Visitor Settings*; “large, expansive, remote, unique”, well describes the experiences sought also by the sea-based expedition cruise passengers. Visitation in both settings, recalling that the two settings are separated by an imaginary line quite literally in the sand, is motivated by an induced desire to experience a sublime aesthetic, and of course cruise passengers go further ashore in these remote locations, becoming temporarily land-based, so there is a certain Althusserian irony in the managerially-located sublime subject position being the focus of an inter-state apparatus politics of the production of protection.
3.4 The politics of the production of protection in Solander's constituents: the sub-Antarctic Islands

The notion of the sublime is at the heart of visitors’ experiences of Solander and crucial to this tenacious sublime is the manner in which this constituent of the imaginary is narrated. In his *Land of the Blue Sunflower* Fell (2002) provides an individual reminiscence:

Today, the Galapagos Islands are no longer the lost world that Darwin discovered…Everywhere on Earth, it seems, the spread of humankind has shrunk or tainted the wilderness…It became an obsession of mine to see a blue sunflower growing on the slopes of one of the most isolated islands on earth (Fell, 2002, p. 13) … like a meadow garden orchestrated by some superhuman power (p. 58). … it is the vast alpine meadows spangled with megaherbs and tussock grasses, that keep calling me back to Campbell Island. Not just the flowers themselves, impressive though they are, but a powerful feeling of being surrounded by turbulent ocean and being close to the dawn of creation (p. 132). …Also special is the sublime silence, and the purity of the atmosphere constantly cleansed by wind and rain. All these sensations induce a strong, spiritual, uplifting state of peace and contentment, a strong sense of freedom… (p. 133).

Fell (2002) thus offers the blue sunflower wrapped in purple prose and allows his imagination to wander, supposing that Disneyworld has leased the island: “Dear God…please keep Campbell Island as unspoiled as possible” (p.63). He is not alone in being enamoured of the island: “Glad I am that I came, I go home a different person” (Birchall 1996, cited in Fell 2002, p.134).

Also, there are more formal structures:

The public narrative (Somers, 1994) of the voyage *Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific #2293*, which departed Dunedin, New Zealand, was a mixture of written material and staff performance, as is the case for all such voyages. Placed on every bunk was a complimentary copy of Neville Peat’s (2003) *Subantarctic New Zealand: A rare heritage*. This book is an informatively written and generously illustrated introduction to those islands for which New Zealand has responsibility. Deliberate provision of such a publication reduces the need for potentially intrusive on-site interpretative material (See above; Peat’s 2007 *New Zealand’s Fiord Heritage: A guide to the historic sites of coastal Fiordland* for a similarly produced book which states this intention explicitly). It is here, in Neville Peat’s book, that the public narrative of the islands is presented. 70 “Public narratives are those narratives attached to cultural and institutional formations larger than a single individual” (Somers, 1994). The public narrative presented runs thus: Relatively late to be discovered, having been missed by both Cook and Bligh, the resources of the islands were rapidly exploited. There were numerous ships

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70 In fact, Peat’s book is better described as the most stable written component of the public narrative, given that other components, e.g. daily handouts explaining the places to be visited that day, may be changed in response to weather conditions and other operational factors.
wrecked and tales told of derring-do on the part of the castaway crews. After eventual abandonment of all commercial activity, other than strictly controlled tourism, the islands were the subjects of innovative ecological restoration, culminating in the eradication of rats from Campbell Island. This public narrative of discovery, exploitation and subsequent restoration and appreciation is able to accommodate many illustrative stories. Central to this public narrative is the fact that the islands are now uninhabited, despite a long history of human activity, at least insofar as any European endeavour in the antipodes can be described as having a long history. The presence of conserved and preserved artefacts, cemeteries, landmarks recognisable as having been described by erstwhile settlers and a restored coastwatchers’ hut all support the nature of the narrative (Shelton, 2007a).

This narratived production of protection, both of biodiversity and of visitor experience, is situated within a politics of conservation, preservation and restoration. This politics is not always obvious. When the Conservation Management Strategy for the Subantarctic Islands was approved in 1998:

an island categorisation system was developed; visitor impacts (including tourists) were closely controlled on a precautionary basis; the status of *Olearia lyalli* as a naturally occurring species rather than a weed was established; and the eradication of pigs and cats was explicitly stated as an objective (Roberts, 2006).

The clarification of the status of *Olearia lyalli* is particularly interesting. This species of tree daisy comprises the dominant cover of the Snares Islands, well to the north of Enderby Island and Auckland Island, and is now colonising the northern part of the Auckland group, displacing the existing Southern rata *Metrosideros umbellata*. The decision to treat *Olearia lyalli*’s colonisation as a natural process was the end result of political lobbying by individuals and groups with different opinions on how the situation should be formulated and managed.71

### 3.5 Engaging with the distant sublime

Morton’s claim above that, referring to the sublime, “the literature of the Romantic period...still influences the ways in which the ecological imaginary works” (Morton, 2007, p. 1) begs the question of how is the sublime ecological imaginary performed by the tourist?

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71 At issue was not just that a species from another island was colonizing, but how it got there. If it arrived by bird then was it important whether or not it was a native bird or an introduced one who brought it? Behind these debates always is the idea of *naturalness*, etymologically linked closely with Kantian *nature* and manifest through one or other of Burke’s objects.

72 After “Cassius Longinus, whose *On the Sublime* is the most important work of ancient literary criticism between Aristotle and Augustine” (Kulikowski, 2011, p. 13) there was a long break in interest until Burke’s (1757) *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* which has come to be regarded as the break between neo-Classical and Romantic aesthetics.
Chaudhuri (1995) uses the term “Geopathy: The painful politics of place” (p. 55) to introduce the notion that:

The problem of place- and place as problem- informs realist drama deeply, appearing as a series of ruptures and displacements…the most fundamental dislocation is…that between humankind and nature, which…makes nature a mere setting- “scenery” (Chaudhuri, 1995, p. 55).

The performance of the narrative self within the sublime imaginary Solander is such realist drama; tourists’ bodies jointly and severally move in location, place and space according to sets of rules. Any such consideration of place must include an account of the Situationists (Macfarlane, 2007) whose maxim may best be rendered: “Open your mind, let the guiding metaphors of the walk find you…(in order to)…disrupt …choreographed obedience to the sign-making habits of capitalism” (p. 3). This walker, this dérivedeur, “on the hunt for workable metaphors” declares “(o)ur walk made something happen, happen to us…we were transformed…We re-lived their histories and remade our own” (Sinclair, 2005, cited in Macfarlane, 2007, p. 3). The Situationists, though, are engaged in a larger project; “to achieve a revolutionary transformation of everyday life” (Macfarlane, 2007, p. 3). The dériveur, in describing these two transformative processes, is overwhelmed to the point where “the language becomes unstable, and thereby performs its own subject…It performs, too, the historical layering…the past existences, in the same geographical space” (p. 4). The dérivedeur introduces the performer who may well, in her performance of her ontological narrative, attempt to subvert the rules involved in performing the public narrative.73

Here, Jameson’s dictum, always to historicise, is apposite; historically, self and subject are strongly gendered concepts. The technologies of self and subject (to paraphrase Foucault), and the ontological narratives available to construct the contemporary female self and subject, are distinct from those previously available. For the eighteenth-century woman letter-writer:

(t)he secrétaire guarded a lady’s secrets and advertised her claim to thoughts of her own. Private spaces, private property, and private thoughts were interconnected … (L)etter-writing emerged as the primary site of female reflection on subjectivity and society. The writing desk is the ‘furniture of the Modern Self’ (Vickery, 2010).

Also, personal reflection upon, and performing of, both the public narrative and one’s ontological narrative simultaneously or sequentially, requires an enduring sense of personal identity, and interiority. In this way, the individual who performs tourism in this setting is similar to a character in a novel but “(t)he novel, as a form, is unsure whether it is a story, told

73 The dériveur is distinguished from the flâneur since the former acts; the latter merely stands on the threshold.
by a single teller, or a play enacted by a number of actors. It is both static and theatrical in its systems, a sphere in which a single controlling voice operates, or many competing voices” (Tóibín, 2011, p. 14).

These interrogative metaphors of the performance of tourism, novel or drama, single voice or multiple voices, interact with wider issues of self and subject to provide a useful way to situate various narrative positions, particularly with respect to engaging with the sublime. In The Abyss of Representation: Marxism and the postmodern sublime (2003) Hartley opts for the metaphor, or figure, of the theatre:

That figure is the theater, by which I mean both the theater in its usual sense as a dramatic art of the stage as well as its figurative sense as a stage for the performance of various modes of subjectivity, various calls or interpellations that transform the spectator into an actor…Performativity, then, is a tropic-concept that attempts to represent the process of presentation itself…Such a trope…offers a way of extending the seemingly innocent questions proper to philosophical discourse into certain political questions. The way we conceive of the social or political space in which we stage the ideological performances proper to certain political questions will influence the ways we conceive of those political questions themselves (Hartley, 2003, p. 182).

To what extent, then, is engaging with the sublime a properly political question? Clearly, engaging with the sublime must involve a politics of nature, since nature is, and always has been, at the heart of the sublime (that is, nature aestheticised from terror and awe to thing of beauty). Redgrave (2002) added a politics of gender when she adopted a feminist frame of reference within which to situate her description of expedition cruising to Preservation Inlet. Morton (2007) is in no doubt that politics is involved:

A consideration of the aesthetic is vital, since the aesthetic intertwines with the idea of the surrounding environment or world. The idea of a ‘good’ aesthetic is based on the notion that there is some intrinsic goodness in perception, neither captured nor perverted by the aestheticization process (p. 26).

74 Redgrave (2002) recruits and then rejects a movie metaphor: “In many ways, the seven-day boat trip I’ve just been on down the South Island coast from Doubtful Sound to Preservation Inlet has distilled in my memory like scenes from a movie…So this is not a movie I’m playing for you but a voyage I am taking you on- to a distant place” (p. 14) but remains faithful to the sublime aesthetic.

(A) sheer glacial mountain rushing sharply skyward from black, tannin–stained sea, for instance. Or dolphins jumping playfully around the bow of our boat. Water the colour of red wine flowing down a creek and onto squeaky-clean, unmarked sand. Layer upon layer of mountain peaks peeling away into blue sky like a stairway to heaven. Or the sensation easily recalled of feeling utterly humbled as our boat twists into the bowels of the earth beneath mountains just too huge and majestic to describe (p. 14).

Morton’s (2007) ‘Romantic consumer’, seeking “(t)ransformative experiences…such as those derived from drugs, or from intense experiences” (p. 111) clearly is at work.
Establishing what constitutes that ‘intrinsic goodness’ clearly is an ethical question; deciding whether or not it has been neither ‘captured nor perverted’ by the process of aestheticization, the production of the sublime, clearly is a political question.

Above I have argued that the way a tourist comports herself in a location, even though scripted and directed partly by others, qualifies as art; performance art\(^{75}\) and narration, typically not entirely of her own making. This art is reproducible by technological means; the advertising brochure, passenger photographs, the log of the voyage, the nightly entry into a journal recording the number of species observed during the day; in other words various examples of Foucault’s ‘technologies of self’. If the presentation of self is art then these technologies of self are mechanisms for the technological (re)production of self. Social media like Facebook are the contemporary novel presentation of self, situating the networked self in a connected world.

The self, in late modern societies, is expressed as fluid abstraction, reified through the individual’s association with a reality that may be equally flexible. The process of self-presentation becomes an ever-evolving cycle through which individual identity is presented, compared, adjusted, or defended against a constellation of social, cultural, economic, or political realities (Papacharissi, 2011, p.305).\(^{76}\)

Papacharissi’s ‘process of self-presentation’ is reminiscent of Goffman’s dramaturgical approach to the presentation of self, applied to tourism by Larsen (2010).\(^{77}\) Whatever the nature of contemporary selfhood, the expedition cruise passenger, one way or another, is inextricably entwined with the sublime aesthetic, usually apprehended as nature, and engaged with at an aesthetic distance. Can this aesthetic distance be reduced, or even eliminated? Walter Benjamin’s notions of *aura* and *distraction* offer one way of approaching this question and it is to Benjamin that I now turn.

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\(^{75}\) Sawyer (2001) develops Goffman’s dramatalurgical metaphor for everyday life and its parallels with scripted conventional theatre, suggesting instead that a better metaphor is improvisational performance: “scripts and improvisations are not mutually exclusive opposites...both play a role in everyday performance...Exploring the nature of this tension between script and improvisation can result in a more robust performance metaphor” (p. 2). Turning a ‘performance metaphor’ into art remains a challenge, unless ‘art’ equally is metaphorical.

\(^{76}\) Papacharissi (2011) goes on to say “Goffman (1959) described this as an information game”, an approach to the performance of self that has been picked up later and related by other sociologists to contemporary historical developments, which render the self more liquid (Baumann, 2000; 2005), reflexive (Giddens, 1991), or self-identity a process (Jenkins, 2004). Self-identity in public or private life thus traverses distinct yet connected planes of interaction or networks. Technology may provide the stage for this interaction, linking the individual, separately or simultaneously, with multiple audiences. Online social networks constitute such sites of self presentation and identity negotiation (p. 304).

It is odd that Papacharissi omits Gergen’s (1991) *The Saturated Self*, a work that engages with the idea that essentialist notions of self, often referred to as a ‘true’ self, have not survived the move into postmodernity.\(^{77}\) *The Performance Turn* is well reviewed by Larsen (2010).
Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter introduced the concept of the *imaginary*. Just as, in Chapter Two, the Subject was introduced as a linguistic construct, so too is the *imaginary* linguistic, rooted in language and comprising the semiotics of tourist spaces, landscapes and destinations and the discursive construction and representation of the tourist experience. Thus, the *ecological imaginary* permeates the *ecological subject*. The *imaginary* has a relationship with late capitalism by being available to be commoditised within an economics of scarcity; in this case the sublime landscape.

The imaginary has a relationship with the biophysical world, through the provider and consumer of tourism experiences, and a relationship with the politics of the production of protection, through the producer of sublime landscape, in this case by the Department of Conservation.

In the chapter I presented Morton’s idea that the literature of the Romantic period still influences the way the ecological imaginary works and explored how the sublime ecological imaginary is performed by the tourist. The answer is: as theatre. This theatre, partially scripted and directed by others, still allows the individual tourist to present themselves in a dramaturgical sense through what qualifies as performance art. The appreciation of this art, though, requires there to be an aesthetic distance between the performer and the audience. The chapter closes by noting that conceptualising this distance is problematic and suggesting ways to approach the problem.
Chapter 4: Aura and Distraction: Walter Benjamin and the sublime

Hobsbawm also thinks that Gramsci is the most original thinker produced by the West since 1917. Perhaps he means the most original Marxist thinker, but even that is dubious. Walter Benjamin is surely a better qualified candidate for that title (Eagleton, 2011, p. 13).

So far, we have interrogated the notion of self and settled for the idea of the narrative self as a useful notion. Also, we have interrogated the contemporary use of an aesthetic, the sublime, which forms a direct link with that same Romantic historical period. Narrated selves construct narratives about nature and the sublime and commonly these narratives create a desire for proximity to the sublime object. Expedition cruise tourists in the Solander imaginary perform their tourism informed both by their ontological narratives of self and identity and also contingently through the public narrative presented to them. Sometimes, there is a tension between the performance demands of these narratives. The protected areas that form the geographical locations in which the cruising takes place are supplied by agencies of the New Zealand government, and proximity to the sublime, and direct personal experience of this aesthetic, are supplied by the cruise operators. The whole enterprise is situated within the neoliberal space of The Conservation Economy.

Does the imaginary, Solander, have boundaries? There is no way of representing Solander by drawing lines on a map, just as there is no way similarly of inscribing the physical boundaries of Hardy’s Wessex. The boundaries of imaginaries exist only in the imagination. Even when there seem to be good reasons for producing boundaries, such as in the horizontal versus the vertical organization of the sub-Antarctic islands, discussed above, the exact nature of the boundary remains elusive. For the expedition cruise tourist, as subject, experiencing the sublime requires a certain distance to be observed between subject and object, the thing available to be experienced. This being distanced from the object is what allows the aestheticization of the object.

Distance and proximity are aestheticized terms. They imply a perceiving subject and a perceived object. They are part of Immanuel Kant’s language of aesthetics— in order to have aesthetic appreciation you have to have an appropriate distance towards the aesthetic ‘thing’ (Morton, 2007, p. 28).
When the nature tourist subject engages in Hollinshead’s *worldmaking*, it is open to debate whether an essentialist, immanent Kantian sublime world is made, or a sublime world more akin to one filled with Burke’s objects. The tourist will “purposefully (or otherwise unconsciously) privilege particular dominant/favoured representations of people/places/pasts within a given or assumed region, area, or ‘world’, over and above other actual or potential representations of those subjects” (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140).

Granted, the Kantian sublime traditionally is not manifest, and Hollinshead’s world eventually is made up of objects, but contemporary naïve, lay or vernacular aesthetics of nature (and much professional philosophy) still is Kantian (Kuhn, 2010) in that, for the expedition cruise tourist, sublime nature is everywhere immanent. This immanence pervades objects that would not qualify for the Burkean sublime, for example a calm sea at 50º South, since they are not awesome enough, but that is only because they were experienced on a good day; the terrible storm is only one weather forecast away. But, need this be the case? For the aesthetic of *The Conservation Economy*, based on tourism, to be part of Morton’s (2007, 2010a) concept of the ecological thought, a truly ecological aesthetics, the subject/object binary needs to be collapsed. This collapsing eliminates the aesthetic distancing that lies at the heart of the sublime, and at the heart of the tourism industry and the collapsing, by implication, renders redundant the dichotomy between land that is protected, and unprotected land. This collapsing of the binary demands a universal environmental sensitivity, achieved through a just and fair political process unconstrained by the demands of global capitalism.

In order to explore the possibility and implications of such a collapsing I turn to the thinking of Walter Benjamin and his concepts of aura and distraction. Bendix (2002) discussed how:

> Walter Benjamin associated the term ‘aura’ with the originality inherent to the work of art... The – often religious – placement and veneration bestowed on a work of art endowed it, according to Benjamin, with an irresistible attraction: it brought into material proximity what was felt to be inaccessibly remote... In successive periods of secularization, art lost its cultish aura (in Benjamin’s argument this was of course facilitated through technological reproduction). People began to satisfy their craving for authenticity – that is, for a however brief experience of the inaccessibly remote – less and less through a culturally offered, collective religious framework and more and more through material possessions and individual experiences.

> Travel conveniently inserts itself here, as it offers both of these options at once: the experience of what has never been experienced before and making available token representations of that experience in the form of souvenirs and photographs. The most powerful evidence of the search for the singular, unique, and authentic within tourist experience, however, is narration. Goethe’s enlarging of the soul –
the physical thrill experienced in anything from a first sighting of an ancient tomb to rappelling into the depths during a first cave exploration – lasts but a moment (Bendix, 2002, p. 473).

*Aura* contains the originality and persistence of the (socially constructed) sublime landscape, particularly with respect to tourists’ performances within it (Reis & Shelton, 2008; Shelton & Reis, 2008). *Aura* also is implicated in the reception of acts of reporting on nature through technologies of communication; the television nature documentary, Disney cartoons and feature films, and writing. Morton (2007) wishes to replace the traditional analysis of writing about nature, ecocriticism, and its implicit reification with *ecocritique*.

Ecocriticism is barely distinguishable from the nature writing that is its object...Ecocritique is critical and self-critical. This is the proper sense of critique, a dialectical form of criticism that bends back upon itself... As well as pointing, in a highly politicized way, to society, ecocritique points toward itself. There is always further to go...In the name of all that we value in the idea of ‘nature’ it thoroughly examines how nature is set up as a transcendental, unified, independent category (Morton, 2007, p. 12).

Morton, though, recruits Benjamin for a wider, more explicitly political, purpose:

Ecocritique needs a figurehead as significant on the left as Heidegger has been on the right. It needs to be able to argue for a progressive view of ecology that does not submit to the atavistic authority of feudalism or ‘prehistoric’ primitivism (New Age animism). It requires, instead, that we be nostalgic for the future, helping people figure out that the ecological ‘paradise’ has not occurred yet.

An ecological use of Benjamin would develop his key notions of aura and distraction (Zerstreuung)(Morton, 2007, p. 162, italics in the original).  

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78 “Reification, in its most simple form, occurs when a living entity or transitory state of affairs – be it places, people, life, thought, or objects – is understood or treated as if it were an immutable and isolated Thing. They are no longer recognised as the products of past, present or future human activity in a constant relational process of becoming” (Mels, 2004, p. 9).

79 Benjamin would have agreed:

a series of further significant and influential ramifications resulted from the encounter between Benjamin and Brecht in the years in Berlin from 1929 to 1932, their common denominator being an attempt to influence public opinion. At the time it was not always clear whether they were ever more than playful speculation…1. The Plan, in 1930, ”to annihilate Heidegger here in the summer in the context of a very close-knit circle of readers led by Brecht and me”…to get to grips with him in their putative (anti-Heideggerian) journal (Wizisla, 2009, p. 41).

Wizisla’s book, *Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht: The story of a friendship*, contains an interesting error; in a Mark Twain moment the dust-jacket promises a report of “Benjamin’s reaction to Brecht’s death” while p. xxiv more accurately records “1941…Günter Anders brings BB, just arrived in the USA, the news of WB’s death.” That Benjamin’s political position would be antithetical to Heidegger’s was obvious from his very first writings, in 1910, when “as a young man (he) was ripe for a proud and radical mode of thought” (Eiland, 2011, p. 2, emphasis mine).
Being “nostalgic for the future” requires engaging with an environmental narrative of hope, rather than with a narrative of declension. Engagement with narratives of declension necessarily involves nostalgia for the past. Bendix (2002) clearly was alert to the dangers of narrating aura:

> The process of narrating the experience recovers the moment, if not its experiential singularity, and allows for a communicative restaging and its ever new mental savoring. What is more, narrative license can transform the moment with ever more extravagant vocabulary and additional detail and seduce audience and narrator into believing touristic memories that never were (Bendix, 2002, p. 473).

Consideration of expedition cruising raises the fact that “(t)he tantalizingly brief and very suggestive remarks on aura in Benjamin’s writing on technical reproducibility use the analogy (but is it an analogy?) with an (aesthetic) experience of the natural world. The environment evoked in nature writing is itself this aura” (Morton, 2007, p. 162, italics mine).

More than this, Ryan’s (2007) definition of narrative (above) allows that the tourists’ performances of the normative narrative may be deemed auratic; to the extent that the normative narrative informing such performances provides clear and unambiguous instructions on how to perform the sublime aesthetic. This point will become important in Chapter 5 when such performances are considered.

_Distruction, Zerstreuung_, on the other hand, has a complex relationship with narration. Morton (2007) claimed it:

> de-distances and thus de-aestheticizes the object, dissolving the subject-object dualism upon which depend both aestheticization and the domination of nature. Zerstreuung also undermines the capitalist-ideological difference between work and leisure, which attenuates the notion of labor and is a reflection of alienated labor. When people are involved in their work, they experience, and produce, and produce as experience, a dissolution of the reified object and, for that matter, the reified subject. Involvement in the world is a negation process, a dissolving. There is no such ‘thing’ as the environment, since, being involved in it already, we are not separate from it…Zerstreuung invites relaxed but critical awareness…to maintain a critical sense even in the very moment of perceiving things as ‘soft’ and ‘distant’- as auratic and aestheticized…Zerstreuung is the product of contemporary capitalist modes of production and technologies. Yet precisely for this reason it holds a utopian aspect, a quality of nonstupified absorption in the environment, conceived not as reified nature ‘over there’ outside the city or factory gates, but ‘right here’ (pp.162-164).
But, distraction is the subjective form of the collapse of aesthetic distance. There are two types of distraction, and there is a knife-edge of discrimination between them. This makes distraction a very dangerous concept…The first type of distraction is the ignorance born of living in a channel-surfing, easy-clean environment…the second type of distraction is critical absorption (Morton, 2007, p. 165, italics mine).

Here, Morton is developing Eiland’s (2003) categories of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ distraction, although Eiland warns that “the notion of distraction operates in a peculiarly slippery manner, such as very likely makes this one of the most elusive of Benjaminian topoi” (Eiland, 2003, p. 52). For example,

*Zerstreuung*…might also be translated…as ‘entertainment’…*Zerstreuung* thus has the sense of ‘divertissement’…of complacent diversion (p. 52). This entertainment, the “theater of convention”…caters to a ‘sated class,’ as he (Benjamin) says, for which everything it touches becomes a stimulant” (Morton’s Romantic consumer). In the epic theater, on the other hand, a certain concrete pædagogics takes the place of sensationalism … and instead of distraction (of the entertainment variety) there is ‘group formation’ which refers to the formation of both a well-informed audience and a highly trained ensemble of performers on the basis of a set of shared social and political concerns translated on the stage to a series of radically distinct, thought-provoking ‘actions’…epic theater engenders critical distance; rather than soothing or warming its audience, it seeks to astonish them through the well-known ‘alienation effect,’ which, by making ordinary objects and actions seem strange, renders them conspicuous and encourages audience and actor alike to reflect on them. Discovery through alienation…where performance becomes critique (Eiland, 2003, p. 53, parenthetical material mine).

One significant tension, then, in this second kind of distraction centered around critical absorption, involves aesthetic distance versus critical distance. The use of the term distance in both cases threatens confusion and requires clarification. Specifically, the critical absorption of the second kind of distraction is antithetical to the aesthetic distance central to the production of *aura* and replaces aesthetic distance with critical distance, since such critical distancing, engendering, for instance, the elimination of any affective response to an allegedly sublime landscape, reduces or eliminates *aura* and robs it of its power to be an aesthetic response experienced by western tourists, almost without exception. Here is distraction in action: “a function of the allegorical structure of the works themselves: that is, of the breach between the seemingly uncommunicative surface of the image and the textual accompaniment it seems to demand…typical of postmodernism” (Schwabsky, 2011, p. 23, italics mine), and “the small gap between the explanation of a picture and a picture itself provides the only possible perspective on painting” (Rugoff 2011, cited in Schwabsky, 2011, p. 23).
Aura may in and of itself inadvertently produce *distraction*. ‘The Sound of Silence’ is the name of the procedure when, during nature cruises on Doubtful Sound, the ship’s engines are stopped and everyone is asked to maintain silence for a few minutes. The guide explains that once, the forest was full of birds ‘whose song was deafening’\(^{80}\) but now it is silent, and we are invited to listen to the silence. On every trip, as on ours, several passengers become tearful at this point. Many others, though, become aware of a critical distance being formed, asking themselves: ‘what is silence’, ‘how loud was deafening’? These questions would not have concerned them had the guide not drawn to their attention the, now breached, aesthetic distance that was required of them (Tucker & Shelton, 2008).

Eiland’s (2003) linking of distraction and epic theatre is appealing; nature-based cruise tourism has a pedagogics, there is the opportunity for group formation, with a set of shared set of environmental concerns translated into visits ashore, ‘actions’ by the operator. The tourist is not soothed or warmed, but provoked; ordinary objects and actions are made to seem strange The public narrative provided “may be read as an exercise in *consciousness raising*, to borrow an apposite term from the environmentally-informing second wave feminism of twenty years earlier” (Shelton, 2011, p. 3). The pressing question is; does performance, in this metaphorical epic theatre, become critique? That question will now be addressed.

**Summary of Chapter Four**

This chapter established that the *ecological subject* desires proximity to the sublime object. Proximity, though, as with distance, generates an unacknowledged aesthetic, that which occurs between the perceiving subject and the perceived object. When *worldmaking* takes place, the tourist subject inevitably privileges certain representations of *nature*, either as immanence (Kant) or as a collection of sublime objects (Burke). These representations still are situated within a subject/object aesthetic binary. The notion of the *ecological thought*, a truly ecological aesthetic, requires the collapse of the subject/object binary.

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\(^{80}\) This phrase has entered everyday renditions of the despoliation narrative but is problematic. Even allowing for birdsong ever being deafening, the chorus occurs at dawn and to a lesser extent at dusk. Using the comparative naturally-occurring silence of early afternoon as a sign of reduced numbers is disingenuous, despite the fact that bird numbers have declined significantly through predation by stoats and rats.
Walter Benjamin’s concepts, *aura* and *distraction* are useful analytic tools for investigating the process of reducing or eliminating the aesthetic distance between subject and object. This investigation, though, requires a style of writing different from the usual ecocriticism, that is, writing descriptively about nature; what is required is *ecocritique*, a critical engagement with the concept of nature, informed by Marxist economic analysis and powered by Derridean deconstruction. Similarly with the nature tourists’ performances; are they consumption-driven performances of the normative or public narratives of nature or are they enacted and embodied critiques?
Chapter 5: Being There While Stepping Back: Critical Immersion in Solander

One of the criticisms Phillips (2010) levels at Morton is “to attempt arguments conducted in more than one register at once, arguments too often sealed with a witty one-liner in lieu of a well-reasoned conclusion” (p. 157). This chapter involves such a change of register, to more discursive and introspective reportage, although without any witty one-liners. Also, the chapter introduces material that has not been foreshadowed. Often this material comprises insights that occurred onboard ship or on a remote island; sudden realizations; for example a sudden awareness of the neoliberal subject, the impact of which would have been lessened by being introduced earlier in the text.

I have drawn attention to the fact that a central aspect of the expedition cruising product in Solander is the opportunity for individuals to engage with the sublime landscape; that landscape being a socially produced imposition on the geomorphology, flora and fauna of the region. This opportunity-to-engage may be formulated within exposure-to a reified aesthetic comprising a set of objects situated, literally and figuratively, at a distance from the tourist. Aura is the result of establishing and maintaining this aesthetic distance while distraction is a way of establishing a critical distance from this sublime landscape; for example, by constantly considering how stable historically have been the elements of the landscape (although of course this example is weakened by the fact that God may be implicated in any geomorphological changes and therefore aura is retained). Also, aura must be considered differently when being applied to the individual self, where individual and social psychological issues operate, or the subject, which supports a more abstract approach. This

\[81\] Rosa Luxemburg bewailed “the fact that people, ‘when they are writing, forget for the most part to go deeper inside themselves”’ (Rose, 2011, p. 9). Writing in a register that allows such interiority is problematic in that it runs the risk of theoretical incoherence, containing, as it does, its own negation. A year earlier she (Luxemburg) had included these lines from her favourite Polish writer, the Romantic poet and dramatist Adam Mickiewicz…

If the tongue were true to the voice and the voice to the thought
How then could the word keep the lightning of the thought in bounds.

Words deceive because thought is boundless. ‘Do you know what I mean?’ she beseeches her friends. How could they? When she has just laid on the page the fragment of her own failed understanding? (Rose, 2011, p. 12).

Here, evidence of my own failed understanding of the second kind of distraction would be to propose a self-generated “new and improved” version of “beautiful soul syndrome” as “the ecological thought”.

83
abstraction is illustrated when considering aura in religion at the time of the Protestant Reformation:

…Catholic clergy showed little compunction about taking over former pagan sanctuaries and appropriating their numinous aura…The medieval countryside was made into a text conveying spiritual truths…(and)…(t)his sacralised landscape was dealt a devastating blow by the Protestant Reformation…By systematically demystifying the landscape they are usually thought to have taken a decisive step towards what Max Weber called ‘the disenchantment of the world’ (Thomas, 2011, p. 13, italics mine).

Expedition cruising, in producing a public narrative consistent with the idea of the immanence of sublime, aestheticised nature, serves to re-enchant the world. In this chapter I present how aura and distraction are performed within expedition cruising in Solander; particularly in relation to how these performances are related to public and private narratives. I use my own performance as a conceit, an heuristic; in order to provide an example with which to

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82 Thomas (2011) raises an interesting point, with implications for Morton’s idea of nature as metonymic list and Crist’s notion (above) of the immanence of nature.

Holy spaces…presuppose that divinity is immanent in the world, but in a localized way…(then)…(l)ike the early Christians, the reformers attacked the very notion of the immanence of the holy…one place was as holy as another and that prayer was as effective in a field as in a church…(and there was)…the widespread tendency of early modern men and women to regard the natural world in purely secular terms. For many people the landscape was a commodity, an object of private ownership and an economic resource to be exploited. In the 17th century the parson-poet George Herbert lamented that it was very difficult to get country folk to see God’s hand in the workings of nature. They thought that crops grew because of their own efforts, not divine providence (pp. 14-15).

‘God expanding to being everywhere and everything’ was being supplanted instead by ‘nature expanding to being everywhere and everything’.

83 Conceits of this kind are common in travel writing. Here, I situate myself travelling alongside my companions and I am accompanied by them, both spatially and temporally. In contrast, Redgrave (2002) reaches in order to choose a companion to supplement her contemporaries:

One of the inspirations for our decision to join Fiordland Ecology Holidays Seven-day Southern Adventure came after I read the diary of Victorian traveller Constance Astley. At the end of 1897, 46-year-old Constance…and her friend Margaret Shaen…spent four months in New Zealand (and) the two women set out from Bluff aboard the Union Steamship Company’s SS Waikare…Like Becky and me, they were joining a group of strangers for a seven-day cruise into Fjordland…Constance wrote diaries and letters and sketched on the journey, whilst Margaret used a box camera and tripod to take black and white photos…I thought it would be interesting to let the historical wake from Constance and Margaret’s journey cross over into ours (p. 17).

This historical wake is worth riding. Constance Astley states that, during her 1897 trip to Fjordland: there is no herding, or abominable guides, & (sic) certainly our fellow passengers were not only harmless but many of them pleasant and interesting; still it is impossible to escape the atmosphere of a sort of almighty picnic, & though I fully realized the enormous grandeur & magnificence of the scenery, still I did not experience the same emotions that I would at Coruisk for instance, -also, the size of the ship seems to keep one away from it, as it were (Astley, 1897 in De Fresnes, 1997, p. 64).

Constance feels she needs more time, staying in a small Milford Sound lodge between scheduled ship-visits: “to let the grandeur & awesomeness of it sink into one” (p. 64). Self-transformation was not available to Constance in this setting, experienced in this way. The picnic-like atmosphere, the intrusiveness of the size of the ship (at 3071grt and 310ft [94m] the Waikare was rather smaller than another, more recent, Milford Sound visitor QE2, at 70327grt and 963ft [293m]), and the lack of opportunities for solitude, conspired to deprive Constance of “the
tourist moment” (Carey, 2003), when she may have had the opportunity to experience “a spontaneous instance of self-discovery and communal belonging” (p. 63). The diary entry hints strongly that such a moment had already occurred, while visiting Coruisk, and that this moment would be available to Constance on repeat visits. Her heart (and sense of self) was indeed forever in the Highlands of Scotland, even though she was aware that a protracted time in Milford Sound may make the Fiordland aesthetic of the sublime available to her. Constance, who grew up amongst “many of the leading thinkers of the day: socialists, Utopians and humanitarians such as William Morris and his Pre-Raphaelite group…also leading Unitarians” (Dawson, 2001, p. 101) considered her family’s Scottish estate, Arisaig, as her “Earthly Paradise” (De Fresnes, 1997, p. 9). According to Suvantola (2002), for Constance, the “experience of the place…(Fiordland) would remain…the experience of the other” (p. 24), since “the distance can only be overcome by intense involvement with it over a considerable period of time” (p. 24). For Madelene Allen, this intense involvement over a considerable period, with the notoriously inhospitable Auckland Island, had occurred off-site. Even so: “The years of studying maps, photographs and written descriptions could only partially prepare us for the stark reality before us. I had seen the cliffs in those aerial shots…but the sight of those sheer rock walls rising straight out of the sea was enough to strike awe into the most courageous… (Allen, 1997, p. 84). Carey (2003) claims:

the tourist is a subject constructed in and by discourse, as well as represented by narratives that are “always already” culturally defined in languages and images specific to the individual. In recounting a tourist moment, then, the tourist is never a narrating subject, but rather the subject of narrative (p. 66).

By Allen’s own account she is saturated by narrative before she experiences the tourist moment, through having been immersed for years in maps, photographs and written descriptions. Little wonder then, that she utilizes the vocabulary of the deity, “to strike awe”, so reminiscent of Rev. Escott-Inman’s story of survival, on nearby Disappointment Island; one of the written descriptions so frequently cited in her own book.

Capt. James Cook and his accompanying scientists on the Resolution in 1773, although deeply touched by Dusky Sound, did not report being transformed by it. In fact, at this time, the language required to describe such a change in the self may not have been available, since the entire concept of self and identity in eighteenth-century England, particularly essentialist notions of an integrated self, were in the process of radical development. Capt. Cook may easily have believed that even skin colour was a matter of personal choice (Wahrman, 2004, p. 99) rather than a fixed attribute. Park (2002) suggests that Georg Forster (a German natural scientist travelling with Cook) found that it “defied the powers of description” (p. 55). Dusky Sound was “antediluvian” (p. 36), a term Forster used almost certainly metaphorically. A new form of landscape painting was required, one which addressed itself to those who considered themselves to be men of science. William Hodges provided such just such a representation of nature (Simmons, 2002), situating humans in Fiordland in a way that was to be re-presented through photography (Hall-Jones, 2002), and almost precisely re-enacted, when, in 1996, the replica of Cook’s Endeavour tied up to the apparent same tree as Resolution had in 1773 (Hall-Jones, 1997, p. 103). A photograph of Hodges’ painting lies opposite (Hall-Jones, 1997, p. 102) (see below for more on this event). Representations of New Zealand have always served ideological purposes (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002) and in this case an acceptable and rewarding way for visitors to ‘perform’ (Schieffelin, 1998) Fiordland was provided with an instant representational history of 223 years. Hall-Jones’ books are available for purchase throughout New Zealand at bookstores popular with tourists. At this time, amongst these men, it is unclear to what extent the experience of entirely new things affected their notions about themselves, or about their degree of belief in the personally constitutive role of an interventionist God, however religious their descriptive language.

Similarly, Morris-Suzuki (2010), travelling in Northeast Asia, chose an historical guide:

I could travel in the company of Norbert Weber, a learned German Benedictine monk who visited the mountains in 1925. In the end, however, the guide I chose for my journey was a woman who came to the mountains almost exactly a century earlier than me…Emily Kemp was an artist, writer, and erudite traveler…Kemp and her companion Mary Macdougall… (pp. 7-8).

These examples of ‘letting historical waves cross’ (a metaphor appropriate for Redgrave but less so for Morris-Suzuki, who travelled mainly by train) raise interesting points. There may be a shade of difference between ‘choosing an historical guide’ and ‘following in the footsteps of’ to inform reportage or the two acts may simply be variants of the same conceit [Seaton’s (2002) metempsychotic text]. My feeling is that ‘following in the footsteps of’ more properly belongs to retracing the steps of European explorers; for example Christopher Ondaatje’s (1996) Sindh Revisited: A journey in the footsteps of Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton or Chris Duff’s (2003) Southern Exposure: A solo sea kayaking journey around New Zealand’s South Island. Duff followed in the footsteps of Paul Caffyn, an internationally recognized kayak adventurer (Caffyn, 1979), determined to improve on Caffyn’s performance:
compare others’ possible transitions from *aesthetic distance* to *critical distance*, and I situate my aesthetic transition within a larger personal narrative transition from an internalised despoliation narrative of reified nature to a critical engagement with *the ecological thought* and its implications. There is a significant issue to be confronted; I, the researcher, even before taking part in the first voyage, had come to understand that “the truest ecological human is a melancholy dualist” (Morton, 2007, p. 186); that is, melancholy is “an irreducible component of subjectivity” (p. 186) rather than a psychopathological state experienced by the individual. The dualism is a reluctant acceptance of an interspecies aporia. 84 This philosophical position prohibits mourning environmental destruction since the mourner is part of that environment. 85 I hoped to be able to formulate the other passengers’, operators’ and environmental managers’ philosophical positions as individuals, as well as abstract subject positions.

This preface is intended to provide a key to my selection of participants’ material to present. I wish my efforts to be consistent with Poststructuralism’s tradition of providing:

- a thorough disruption of our secure sense of meaning and reference in language, of our understanding of our senses and of the arts, of our understanding of identity, of our sense of history and of its role in the present, and of our understanding of language as something free of the work of the unconscious (Williams, 2005, p. 3).

We have then three aporia: subject/object, reflexivity/reflectivity and *aural distraction*, with nature as a red herring whose scent has been drawn across all three. To avoid tedious

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84 Writing *interspecies* grates; knowing that duality, my goal, is similar to Isaiah Berlin’s pluralism; a gesture against monism. “He knew that there existed the potential to find a current of pluralism in fifth-century Greece…but left the depth and reach of that current unassessed. This is my starting point: the handful of tantalizing allusions made by Berlin to the possibility of Classical pluralism” (Apfel, 2011, p. 3). Also, Morton (2010b) illustrates the political nature of determining species. Here, the starting point is *the ecological thought*. Seaton’s (2002) usage may be similarly read: “Walter Benjamin, who dealt with issues of repetition and recurrence in that *melancholic* compendium known as *The Arcades Project*” (p. 141, italics mine).

85 Davis (2004), in *After Poststructuralism: Reading, stories and theory*, discussing Spectres of theory states:

> It is also particularly ironic that one of the principal accusations made against theory in the guise of poststructuralism is that it claimed to explain *too much*…This is one of the points which separates poststructuralism from structuralism. Whereas structuralism aspires to the impartiality of science, poststructuralism shows a predilection for excess, transgression, residue, paradox and aporia. Far from trying to bring everything under the authority of a single reading, it characteristically focuses on what resists totalizing interpretations. So to accuse poststructuralism of attempting to explain too much precisely replicates its own principal objection to structuralism (pp. 151-152).

My position is that the relationship between structuralism and poststructuralism is itself an aporia; a dance. This position is both and neither structuralist and/nor poststructuralist, admitting Derrida, Jameson and Althusser, hopefully without slipping into theoretical incoherence.
repetition, I will attempt to let my text speak for itself and I will refer to these underlying aporetic tensions only when essential for the sake of clarity.

In order to provide useful accounts of individuals’ performances\(^{87}\) of their discursively constructed subjectivity I present contemporaneous observations, daily personal reflections, videotape (later edited into Shelton, 2008b, 2009) diary entries, conversations, audiotape, and reading from onboard libraries and visitors’ books. Also, there is material generated from my original reading, later reading and re-reading after-the-fact, of the relevant literatures. The contributions are presented chronologically and are structured around my developing insights, both at the time and upon later reflection, into the processes that were occurring. Direct quotes from material written at the time are left in the present tense.

5.1 Being and Critiquing in Fiordland\(^{88}\)

*Secretary Island Restoration Project*

Arriving in Doubtful Sound elicited complex emotions. I was there to spend a week as a volunteer on board the Department of Conservation vessel *Southern Winds*, working with environmental managers from DOC. This was my first visit, although for many years I had wanted to explore the area. Doubtful Sound was interesting in that access must be by floatplane, helicopter or boat and this costliness had always made it seem unlikely that I would ever visit.

Some years earlier, at nineteen, I had worked at Milford Sound, the most spectacular and northernmost of all the fiords, and at the time had been determined not to be affected by its geomorphological features, however picturesque.\(^{89}\) Then, on the coach trip in to the hotel, and

\(^{87}\) Apart from Lance, who gave permission for his name to be used, and who it would be pointless attempting to disguise since he is named and quoted in Redgrave (2002), all other names are pseudonyms.

Participant observation has the potential to mislead those who are taking part in the research project if it is not made clear what is involved. As a Category ‘B’ project there were no formal interviews or personal information gathered. All passengers were supplied with written material about the project when they booked and invited to indicate whether or not they wished to take part. I introduced myself at the beginning of the voyages and wore a University of Otago top throughout. I described the project as an enquiry into how people experience nature-based expedition cruising. Passengers were invited to discuss the nature of the project if they wished to; none did.

\(^{88}\) The experiences described here no longer are available. Real Journeys now operate *Breaksea Girl* and offer only day cruises: [http://www.realjourneys.co.nz/Main/SmallBoatCruises/](http://www.realjourneys.co.nz/Main/SmallBoatCruises/)

\(^{89}\) It would be fruitless, purely for the sake of style, to attempt to expand on the small range of adjectives available when describing the sublime landscape so I have chosen instead to use the adjective which best
after passing through the Homer Tunnel, I refused the driver’s insistent recommendation to visit The Chasm; a spectacular must-see. As an arriving employee of the Tourist Hotel Corporation, and as a disaffected young male, the last thing I wanted to do was to behave as a tourist (or follow the driver’s suggestion).

Walking down the track to the wharf where Southern Winds was moored I heard the strains of The Tennessee Waltz sung, rather incongruously I thought, by Leonard Cohen. The sound boomed out around the anchorage and took me back to adolescent wrist-slitingly maudlin appreciation of Cohen’s (1967) Suzanne. Just as Milford Sound had not fitted my preconceived ideas, neither, now, did Doubtful Sound. The skipper was grumpy at having to spend extra weeks “stuck” there covering for a colleague’s leave and Leonard Cohen at full volume gave voice to his irritation. As Southern Winds headed down Doubtful Sound I busied myself packing away our week’s victuals. Kerry, from DOC, suggested I may wish to see Commander Peak as we passed: the most imposing of the many mountains, rising directly from the water. I carried on unpacking, determined not to succumb to the response demands of the sublime. I wanted to be a useful member of the team and having the sublime pointed out to me reinforced my status as an outsider. The skipper served dinner; crayfish dropped off from a fishing boat and silver beet, slapped onto our plates. Each crayfish would have cost at least $80 as a restaurant main course but here constituted the everyday. This was not the time to explain that the cray was wasted on me or to state my belief that the best place for crayfish is the ocean floor. It was clear no other food would be offered so I dispatched the large tail, pondering the power dynamics that were operating. It wasn’t going to be dark until 10pm, and then not truly dark, and we sat at the table waiting for the 8pm “sched” (scheduled radio contact), when all the DOC teams in Fiordland tune in to the radio and each reports in and describes the day’s events as they relate to whatever work plan is being followed.

describes the effect of the feature on the viewer and not necessarily the feature itself. Matthew Arnold’s (1853) Homeric simile in Sohrab and Rustum: An episode is hard to beat: “That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk snow”.

McClure (2004) describes Milford at that time:
In the competition for space, the fishermen were winning…Tourists who had left the working world behind to enjoy pristine scenery were confronted by a rough workplace which could not be sentimentialized in the same way as the Maori craftsmen who were reviving a vanishing form of work at Rotorua…In one of the worst of these confrontations, a fisherman attacked and wounded Alec Withington, the hotel manager (p. 240).

References to slitting wrists may seem odd but I feel the inclusion is legitimate. At the time of Cohen’s debut album, Songs of Leonard Cohen, 1967, a common expression of despair was, “It would make you want to slit your wrists”, transposed by Woody Allen into “I bumped into my ex-girlfriend the other day but I didn’t recognize her with her wrists closed”. This is neurotic despair as “an irreducible component of subjectivity” and was in part a response to Rachel Carson’s (1962) Silent Spring, not only because of the newly-recognised threats that DDT posed to what was then called ‘the ecology’ but also because of a recognition of the range and effectiveness of Monsanto’s dirty tricks deployed to destroy Carson’s personal and professional credibility (Quaratiello, 2004).
One report came from the team at *Noon Extreme* on Secretary Island, named by the 1851 *HMS Acheron* survey. Although I was now here in Fiordland, on a vessel in the failing light of a windless evening, suddenly I wanted to be there, at *Noon Extreme*, just that little bit further removed. I enquired if we would be visiting there and the answer was that there was no point; the other team with another volunteer were all that was needed. After the sched it was time to play a DVD: *Pirates of the Caribbean*. A few minutes viewing convinced me better to spend my time reading the various documents that governed our project. Secretary Island was in the process of having removed those animal species deemed by the *Fiordland National Park Management Plan* to be unwanted. Specifically, we are marking trap lines for stoats (*Mustela ermina*). Deer have their own document: *Secretary Island Deer Eradication Scoping Document* (Brown, 2005). I knew it was important what language I used when discussing this project. O’Brien (2006) noted that, “though popular, campaigns against exotics have been criticized for their troubling rhetorical parallels with nativism aimed at human immigrants” (p. 67). Warren (2007) echoed these sentiments, demonstrating how any native-alien binary is problematic conceptually, spatially and temporally. Onboard, there was agreement that terrestrial alien species should be eradicated, a position endorsed for the coastline by the *New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010* (New Zealand Government, 2010) under Policy 14 (c) (ii) “encouraging natural regeneration of indigenous species, recognizing the need for effective weed and animal pest management” (p. 18).

As ‘dinghy-boy’ my job involved using the dinghy and GPS to mark sites for trap lines every 200m along the coast and then to nail to a tree an orange triangle for when the trap-laying party took over. These parties comprised young men, mainly agricultural workers, in their off-season.

Over the week Fiordland National Park for me became a place of work; I became aware of the ‘technologies of management’ (again to borrow from Foucault) that were operating and that this was a ‘professional conservation space’ for those who worked here. By chance, a lone trampler appeared on Secretary Island, intending to tramp its length and utilizing the newly cut tracks. One of my new colleagues expressed regret that the infrastructure that had been intended as a management tool was now to be used for recreation; “if only we could keep

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92 The 2009 *Minding Animals* conference I attended in Newcastle NSW marked a major development in my appreciation of the problematics of labeling species as endemic/native/exotic/introduced. Before then I had been happy to use the term ‘pest species’ as a descriptor for what I now believe are better described as *individual animals and animal species unwanted by particular people in a particular location at a particular time*. Potts (2009) described the role of language in producing pest status for the brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), a species demonised (through figurative language) in New Zealand and protected (through figurative language) in Australia. Changes in figurative language also may lead to changes in the legal status of a species; for example, the stoat (*Mustela ermina*) went from being a farmed resource to a prohibited pest species.
people out, then we would have a much better chance of some good conservation outcomes.” I had been exposed to such reflexive thinking before; in my years as a nature guide, when it was common for young German tourists to express the view that the places I took them were too precious to be visited by any tourists, other than themselves.

For three days we shared the Sound with two Haines Hunter recreational boats. The very fact that they were there was noteworthy; it would have been expensive to have transported them on a barge from Manapouri to West Arm and then over the Wilmot Pass to Deep Cove. The owners were using the same radio frequency as Southern Winds so we were privy to their boat-to-boat conversations. One evening the two families discussed celebrating a successful day’s fishing by ‘having a feast’. The accentless-accents of the speakers identified them as middle-class professionals, probably having attended a certain school, and the childlike old fashioned Englishness of the expression triggered much mirth and exclamations of ‘good show, what!’ and ‘jolly hockey sticks’. I fully understood the antagonism and resolved to attempt to formulate it. Although broadly sympathetic to this belittling of representatives of the aspirational middle class (in any setting) I knew that for me their offence was other than that they had gate-crashed the sanctity of nature through signs of an unwelcome culture. I had similarly imposed culture the previous day. While working the dinghy up and down the coast of Thompson Sound I came across a tiny natural harbour hidden by bush. My first thought was to GPS it as a suitable destination for a kayaking trip but this was followed immediately by a cultural memory of Swallows and Amazons (Ransome, 1930) and an evaluation of this site’s suitability for an adventure. This had been my opportunity to engage with Benjamin’s aura and distraction. Morton’s (2007) “two types of distraction and there is a knife-edge of

93 Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain (1998) elaborate on the concept of the figured world; “those cultural realms peopled by characters from collective imaginings” (p. 51). The environmental managers with whom I worked while on Southern Winds had such a collective imaging centered around the restoration of a pre-human nature, couched in the language of management; ‘conservation effort’ and its relationship to ‘conservation outcomes’. These managers had spent years working together, often in remote and arduous settings, and they displayed strong interpersonal bonds and shared values. Verbal communication often was direct and to the point. One person came aboard later in the day than the rest of us. During the night the dinghy became wedged under the waste pump from the heads and subsequently by morning was filled with effluent. We jokingly discussed who would hose it clean and this woman said, “I haven’t crapped since I got on board late so none of it is mine so count me out”. Momentarily, and for the sake of others, I felt embarrassed by the earthiness of this statement but a quick glance around assured me that no social norms had been breached. Compared with other workers with a similar degree of expertise, these managers were poorly paid and resented that, although none could imagine working in any field other than conservation. Within this figured world the suggestion ‘let’s have a feast’ couldn’t have been more discordant.

94 Marc Miller (2007) described the ludic, or play aspect of coastal and marine tourism with respect to environmental protection. For me, one element of such play is the literature of childhood that presents adventure unconstrained by parental restrictions. In the discursive construction of my-self We Didn’t Mean To Go To Sea (Ransome, 1937) was formative; a more mature version of Swallows and Amazons and a work I know I carry in my head. Lamb (2001), feels no need to explain his allusion, when describing Cook’s exploration of Dusky Sound; “(i)t includes the adventure of Goose Cove, an episode in an antipodal Swallows and Amazons … (p. 242).
discrimination between them” (pp. 164-165) would come later. It struck me that DOC’s neoliberal managerialist approach to conservation had the potential to produce a critical distance in its staff, but seemed to do so incompletely, if at all; aura persisted. In this group the relationship between aesthetic distance and critical distance was complex, certainly the two co-existed. As we returned to our berth at Deep Cove Breaksea Girl came into view and already I was anticipating my next voyage, this time not with professional environmental managers, but with tourists.

**Milford Sound to Doubtful Sound**

“‘You can’t build buildings big enough to take Fiordland’s art,’ says Lance” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 23).

In this section it is my intention to present my companions as individuals, with individual characteristics, concerns, and political sympathies. I hope to illustrate that, during the trip, these individuals were coached by the operator, more or less successfully, on how to perform being ‘neoliberal Romantic consumers’.

On Wednesday, the beginning of the first Breaksea Girl trip,95 I was picked up at the backpackers. I was immediately surprised by how elderly the people already in the van seemed. We then proceeded to an expensive B&B to pick up an American couple, David and Liz, and again I was rather alarmed at how stereotypical they were. When we got there they weren’t ready, and they fluffed around trying to get ready. Then we got a phone call to pick up another couple, Brian and Kirsty. Brian is a Kiwi, Kirsty is from London, a floor manager for television news. We then proceeded to Milford Sound, stopping at the usual tourist spots: Mirror Lakes, Lake Gunn walkway and the Chasm. Our guide told yarns: a couple of bawdy stories about Australian honeymooners being delayed in the bush, and he did imitations of Japanese tourists’ idiosyncratic use of English. Also, he constantly talked up Fiordland: “you should have been here yesterday when there was no cloud – wait until you see what’s round the next corner.”

95 Of my numerous Fiordland trips, three were on Breaksea Girl; Milford Sound to Doubtful Sound; Doubtful Sound to Dusky Sound return and Doubtful Sound to Preservation Inlet, disembarking at Bluff. Another seven-day trip was on the Department of Conservation vessel Southern Winds working with DOC staff on Secretary Island, Doubtful Sound and Thompson Sound. I did several mass-tourism day trips with Real Journeys in Milford Sound (400 pax per trip) and Doubtful Sound (Patea Explorer: 100 pax). These mass tourism products are problematic in that they are marketed to international visitors but still are informed by a sublime aesthetic which is not necessarily shared by the visitors, or able to be delivered well. At Milford Sound, the commentary may be in as many as five languages, provided sometimes by the crew of the vessel and sometimes by the tour guide accompanying a particular party. Often, by the time the fifth language is employed, the attraction, for example the seal colony, has long since passed.
I was impressed by the way we stopped and had billy tea at the Lake Gunn walk way. The billy tea was a nice touch with the Thermette and Brent constantly saying how he talked too much and would shut up if you wanted him to, but was of course absolutely desperate to talk about his own experiences in the wildlife service, and climbing, and also referred to many other parties he'd brought through and the characteristics of the other parties. He then talked up what we were about to experience on the Breaksea Girl and we arrived at Freshwater Basin where Lance was waiting to meet us.

Lance is an interesting character, very impersonal when we arrived and he put on a sort of a grumpy Captain Pugwash persona, herded us aboard, took us below, explained how the toilets worked, then herded us into the saloon and explained the rules, and then after all this was done, said welcome to the Breaksea Girl, a twelve-berth motor-yacht. I noticed he presented as if he was running the ship for his own convenience. This observation was confirmed later, when Lance explained to me that he provides the boat and it is up to the visitors to get what they can out of the experience; except, the route was carefully planned, particularly in Doubtful Sound, to avoid seeing any of the other boats that most certainly were around. In Milford Sound, which is much busier, such contact can’t be helped so we didn’t linger there, even though it is pretty well recognised as the most impressive of the Sounds and would have repaid a ‘Tiki Tour’, given that the overseas people on board hadn’t been there

A Thermette is a simple, upright fire-tube boiler originally constructed out of used shell cases by New Zealand troops in North Africa during WW2. It is safe to use in dry, windy conditions and has become a ‘material production of popular culture’. Specifically, this device recalls the pre-Vietnam War halcyon days of the 1950s and 1960s when the way New Zealand society was organized was influenced strongly the structures of wartime, either inadvertently or deliberately. The family picnic, commonly involving brewing a cup of tea in the Thermette, at once negated and affirmed the object’s origin. The performance here is of theoretical interest. Kjeldbæk (2009), in The Power of the Object enters the conversation on whether the object can “deny the power of language to contaminate history with its own uncontrollable meanings” (Nancy Partner (ND) quoted by Speigel, 2009, cited in Kjeldbæk, 2009, p. 11) by asking “could this mean that the objects found in a museum magazines (sic) and exhibitions now attract interest because of their materiality, the feeling they give of direct access to the past?” (p. 11). Brent used the Thermette to boil the water and then poured the boiling water into a billy and added tea leaves. Next, Brent swung the billy in a circle, at arm’s length, in order to make the tea leaves sink to the bottom. There are two objects working here: the Thermette and the billy. The billy has the longer history and traditionally would be hung over an open fire (forbidden in the National Park). Brent, in order to perform authentic ‘billy tea’ for the tourists, must hybridise the iconography of his performance, gesturing simultaneously to the early days of ‘settler society’ and to the later ‘soldier society’ but not to the post-Vietnam ‘student society’ (Brooking, 2004). Surely, this hybrid performance of the object is situated well and truly within ‘the linguistic turn’ since any power that may be afforded the billy and the Thermette is discursively constituted and must include cultural elements of which the performer is unconscious (unless he was performing ironically, which he was not). Kjeldbæk is correct to claim that one possibility could be that the objects give direct access to the past but the narrative of the past to which access is given is incoherent. However problematic the performance, most of the visitors, while thanking Brent for the proffered tea, alluded to some form of nostalgia for childhood family experiences. Such is tourism as entertainment.

Vernacular for being taken to view popular but degraded icons. The tiki is a Maori talisman, traditionally made of greenstone (jade) but often the version sold to tourists is manufactured in China and made of plastic.
before. The itinerary promised a remote experience and that was what we were to get, no matter what. It was at this point that it struck me that we weren’t going to get any commentary, nothing about Sutherland (an early resident) for example, which disappointed me since I had just finished reading John Hall-Jones’ *Fjords of Fiordland* and felt well prepared to build on that knowledge. Later I would realise that social history is not part of the product. When I re-read Tess Redgrave’s account of her voyage, *Going the Distance*, I realised how well written it is, capturing Lance: “a delightful mixture of passionate, greeny conservationist and fun-loving, easy-going, piratical seaman” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 17) and the way the trips are run, in a very generous way. It is also typical that Lance claimed that he hadn’t read the book and could not remember the author. Annie, who constituted the crew on this voyage, knew of Tess and spoke of her even though she hadn’t crewed for that voyage. I also re-read Chris Duff’s (2003) account, in *Southern Exposure*, of meeting Lance at Acheron Passage: “A tall, gray-bearded fellow appeared from the port side of the pilothouse” (p. 164).

In her 1997 book, *From Knowledge to Narrative*, which I had read before departing, Lisa Roberts presented a change in museum curatorial practice and I used it to attempt to formulate Lance’s being guided by passenger interests rather than by an itinerary but it struck me as problematic, since in fact he does have an itinerary but keeps it hidden until close to, or landed at, a suitable location. Redgrave commented on this: “‘I’m not really into all this Cooky stuff’ Lance tells me back on board *Breaksea Girl*...’But some people come to Fiordland just to see historic Cook places…and we will always make it a part of our trips’” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 21). The metaphor struck me of Fiordland as a real-life Natural and Social History Museum, with Lance as the curator, moving through the displays on *Breaksea Girl*, following a particular, hidden but deliberate, curatorial process or approach.

The weather closed in at the entrance to Milford Sound, and we headed south in a reasonable swell and couldn't see the coastline at all and I got to chat with the other passengers; a retired naval officer Leith and his wife Donna, David and Liz, who were visiting American academics, Alan and Liz, both Kiwis, and Ian, Liz’s step-something, sharing a cabin with me right in the foc’sle. We spent our first night in Bligh Sound but Lance didn’t mention Wild Natives River. Most of Hall-Jones’s books, covering these events, were available in the ship’s

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98 Titus (2002) reports on his trip on *Milford Wanderer*, “(w)e are getting into Captain Cook territory and we will visit several of the key places he was at…Captain Cook’s presence here is almost tangible…Pickersgill Harbour…to stand at this spot is to experience a deep connection with a heroic past. “It’s like a shrine,” Ron says, and it is” (p. 3).
library but no attention was drawn to them. Again, it was much later that I recognized that the public narrative we were to be exposed to was focused elsewhere.

Day 2 was spent in George Sound. We took a walk up the Katherine River, for me the highlight so far. This was my first experience of river crossing using a three-wire bridge. Previously I had viewed these tracks, advertised in the Te Anau DOC Centre as involving three-wire bridges and river crossings, with trepidation, but by then I felt quite relaxed about them. This confidence came from having been previously on Secretary Island as a DOC volunteer (above), seeking to understand the workings of the Regulatory Authority and the field staff members’ attitudes to tourists. Walking from Dea’s Cove to Open Cove, and the walk into Hub Creek had significantly increased my confidence when in the bush. I was not worried about getting lost, and was confident about what to do if we did end up somewhere other than anticipated.

When we went up to Lake Katherine we really should have had a mountain radio, or even a Personal Locator Beacon, given that it was a pretty rough track and accidents could easily have happened. I’d go so far to say that the walk really should have been a guided walk, for all the emphasis we got on board during the safety briefing, then we were dropped at the beach to walk for 2 hours, through quite dense bush, with a reasonably but not extraordinarily well marked track (I had to resist explaining that I had been nailing up the same kind of orange markers on Secretary Island and could anticipate where the next one would be since I understood the rationale for selecting a particular tree) and rivers that could easily flood. The whole experience, although a highlight for me, was fraught with danger. The older passengers turned back at the three-wire bridge, citing “the halt and the lame”, but stayed to watch Alan, Liz, Kirsty, Brian and me cross. We passed one spot where a tree avalanche had destroyed the track and we were forced to negotiate our way around the damage. When we were within twenty minutes of arriving at Lake Katherine, Kirsty declared that she was exhausted, but for us to go on ahead and she would stay behind and wait for our return. The response from Alan, Liz and me was instant and unified; either we all turned back or we all proceeded, there could be no separation. This response originated in our shared background of outdoor education at school and I was interested that Brian didn’t comment either way. How well I remembered the rule that if one needed to pee it had to be announced to the whole group, who would then stop and wait while the task was accomplished; such a rule made for strong bladders. What surprised me most was that the joint response was so definite, a unanimous laying down of the law. I realized also that there was strong group dynamic operating; in the course of the
tramp from the boat the three kiwis had assumed control of the activity, being more at home in the bush.

I realised also that the older passengers already had a well-established and robust sense of self in other areas of life and were more or less immune to the sublime landscape we were passing through. One was a retired physician, totally confident in who he was, who planned the trip deliberately to reconnect with this particular landscape which had taken on a deeply personal meaning for him since visiting in 1960 to cope with a traumatic life event. The retired naval officer also was very confident in who he was, a right-of-centre monarchist, and it was interesting to note that Lance was very sure of who he was, a no-nonsense down-to-earth skipper who saw his job as skippering the boat, not hosting its passengers (Here it is important to note that this disavowal of the hosting role was actually just one performance. In fact, Lance behaved as a thoughtful and attentive host. The performance of the role of host was summed up for me by a stock comment on Day 1 about the fruit bowl: “My job is to keep it full; your job is to empty it”). There's no interpretation, there's no commentary, there's quite a grumpy answer to questions. There's a quoting of conservation claptrap from Greenpeace, that Milo is genetically modified therefore it's not served on the trip, whereas Bournvita isn’t, and so is. And then last night there was a conversation amongst Leith and Lance and, unfortunately, Alan about how the country's going to the dogs, young people aren't trained properly, the government is too PC, the nanny state is taking over, not allowing people to take risks; the usual gamut of the politically reactionary, so well lampooned by Stuart Lee’s (2007) *Political Correctness Gone Mad* stand-up joke.

There's none of the people on board that I can ascertain gets any sense of self from this location or this activity. The American academics I can't fathom at all; they are obviously well educated, perhaps politically conservative Americans but they tend not to talk about the location; they talk about other issues, and other locations, for example East Africa. Liz is in nursing administration and she's enjoying the sense of isolation, the big sky, the stars, enjoyed getting into the bush this afternoon; she hadn't done it for 15 years, and Alan was expressing how privileged we were to be able to go into the bush and tramp the way we did. Alan feels you need to do this sort of thing every now and then and then to be true to your New Zealand heritage, but I suspect it is the bush that is the attraction and not necessarily the Fiordland bush. Brian and Kirsty are just a young couple really enjoying the experience of being here but not seeing it in anyway adding to their sense of self. It seems that none of the people have read anything about the area, and coupled with a lack of commentary and a lack of interpretation this means
they are left to focus very much on the social interaction rather than the issues of place and space and so we're seeing the social dynamics being much more important. Leith really is being a bit of a bore, and his wife Donna keeps telling him he's missing all of the scenery, but he's been asking about what wildlife lives in the bush, he's got a very wide knowledge of natural history, farming practice, politics, current affairs, European issues, European regional history, Nigeria; he knows a lot about English politics, introduced species throughout the world, and they've worked all over the world, Penang, Nigeria, everywhere, Germany and he has a vast knowledge and a vast repertoire of stories which he's keen to tell but he's very much aware that he could be boring people, and he's also very keen on the running of the ship and the procedures that Lance goes through. Obviously he's a bit concerned by what he sees as slightly cowboy procedures (we are coming into Charles Sound now), perhaps relying very much on local knowledge, using the self steering, motoring blind, in what is now almost complete darkness. (In fact there was another yacht moored sufficiently nearby to be of concern but we didn’t see it until the following morning). Although I'm disappointed that these people are not really in search of self, I guess that's the nature of tourists, they're not doing this activity to deepen their understanding either of their surroundings or of themselves. I'm certainly not going to interview them separately because that would be quite pointless; what they're discussing, what they're talking about to each other is more interesting, but it's very hard to translate that quickly onto the tape recorder. Tracy, who's doing the cooking, doesn't really interact with the passengers either and when she does it's in quite a brusque manner.

This is the early morning of day 3 and we’re in Emelius Arm of George Sound. It really is very hard to find any privacy on this boat so I'm up at 7am, well before anyone else. Today is a sleep-in day and I’m down at the aft end of the boat ...skylights are open and you can hear whatever's going on very easily. I've just used the heads and because we're requested not to flush them overnight, with being first on both mornings, it's an extremely unpleasant experience. Lance has some down-home sayings for toilet use: ‘if it’s yellow let it mellow’. In fact the first thing he explained when we got on board was how to use the toilet, ‘no artwork in the bowl, Picasso might appreciate it but it wouldn't be appreciated by the other passengers so clean it.’

99 The problem of human waste must permeate ideas of sublime nature since it inescapably accompanies human visitation. As I understand Morton’s (2007) caution on distraction as critical absorption: “unless we are rigorous about perception and the philosophy and politics of distraction, it is likely that distraction will become a political version of the ‘new and improved’ syndrome” (p. 167) proposing human waste as distraction is problematic since drawing attention to it forces a reflective distance from it. Lance’s Picasso comment is particularly apt; human waste as art and therefore able to be situated within an aesthetic, even if the response to such a
I talked in bed last night with Ian about endemic orchids and one of the interesting things for him that you find on these trips with Lance (this is his third) is to hunt for orchids, and he's tried to grow them at home. He knows them very well; he knows the genera and the species; can describe and identify them. Lance’s saying that I read in Redgrave (2002) about ‘Fiordland always provides’, (p. 17) has been dropped into the conversation in a fairly random, meaningless manner.

It's interesting to note who follows the chart; Leith and Alan and I follow it very closely, and David and Liz pay no attention to it at all, it's just a pleasure cruise for them. Kirsty and Brian are young and she's very keen to see New Zealand. They've been to Stewart Island, they've walked the Queen Charlotte track, and this really is a time of discovery for them; discovering a new country. As for the others; certainly Ian is very, very keen on photography and Kirsty and Brian are very keen on photography. Leith and Donna aren't really that interested, just taking some snaps to remind themselves of where they've been. David and Liz have taken some photos; Liz is very keen, she's got an old SLR and a digital, in fact, several people have got multiple cameras. For some reason Lance insists on calling the dinghy the car, “the car being the affectionate name he gives Breaksea Girl’s custom-built, aluminium-reinforced, 4.5 metre, deep, V-hulled dinghy” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 20) and after sending us up to Lake Katherine yesterday we got back at 1726 rather than 1630 when he'd arranged the pickup and he was quite grumpy, hurrying us up aboard so he could hear the weather forecast at 1730. Tracie was back on board anyway, and also, she could have worked the dinghy. There were deer hunters in the hut at Lake Katherine track and Lance ignored them and didn’t mention them. Later when he was asked about the competition he had, offering charters, he said that mostly there was no one else offering what he offered, mostly others offered “fishing and drinking grog, raping and pillaging the environment” and there were “21 competitors stuffing it up for him”.

I asked Kirsty about the lack of commentary, or interpretation, and how this form of guiding suited her. She said she thought it was great and that she really liked it. Alan thought Lance was a bit of a hard case. Ian and Leith have got his measure and David and Liz seem to

presentation is one of disgust. Chaucer was no stranger to scatological material and the internet has ‘scat porn’ (see: ‘two girls, one cup’, allegedly a popular search in US colleges but where it is the responses to the [usually unseen] scatological material that is the subject). Both sources contain material intended to offer an anti-aura, which is a form of aura and not distraction. “The problem with human beingness, declared Sartre and Lacan, is the problem of what to do with one’s slime (one’s shit)” Morton, 2007, p. 159).
encourage him to say some of the more outrageous things. Whether or not they agree with what he says I'm never too sure.

Just been talking to Kirsty and Brian about ideas of self, and they're both quite clear that their sense of self is something that developed in their teenage years, perhaps up to their early 20s. Before that, they tried to emulate other people, and tried to do things that they thought were cool because other people had defined them as cool; then they became themselves. Visiting here has given Kirsty a sense of isolation; she's never been anywhere so isolated and remote and this has triggered a certain interest or perhaps commitment to conservation but the trip really hasn't had any influence on who she is, nor does she think it's rejuvenating. She finds it more of an interesting experience of remoteness. Brian said he formed a sense of self in his teenage years, and once you've established your true self, then it's very hard to change that.

We've just turned off the engines at Snug Cove, First Arm, Doubtful Sound, having come down from Milford Sound via Thompson Sound and around Secretary Island. It was interesting to note that we past Blanket Bay without acknowledging it.\(^{100}\) It was clear that Lance was opposed to drawing attention to any signs of human use, past or present.

It's raining very heavily and was stormy on the way down, with a big roll. We took a couple of waves over the stern. Had a good chat to Lance about how he started out in the fishing industry and predicted how it would work out with them taking the wrong size of crayfish. He's now been vindicated with the way things have gone. Then he started this business. People told him that he couldn't make it but he has, and it's taken him nine years to make it happen rather than the six that he predicted and they're quitting next year (but the website is booked for next year and the boat is getting a $50 000 new mast in two weeks and [later] other people have told me that he’s been going to quit for years). But he's not going to sell it to some “overseas mongrel” who's going to ruin the sounds and the two identity characteristics are now coming across very clearly; the concept of being a battler and having no particular motivation to critique existing personal values. When we were in Charles Sound we went down Emelius Arm to the Irene River where we woke up this morning, and once the tide was on the way in we got in the dinghy and went up the Irene River, ended up at the Irene

\(^{100}\) Blanket Bay has a wharf and a building used by fishermen, on a small island just off Secretary Island; in fact there was a fishing boat tied at the wharf as we past, and these dilapidated structures have been the subject of a dispute about whether they should be removed or allowed to remain. The basis of the dispute, that is, the management of built structures in Fiordland National Park was of interest to me, having visited previously on *Southern Winds*, the Department of Conservation vessel, while learning about issues in management of the park.
Falls where we went ashore...and then we went further upriver and disembarked on a stony bank as far as the dinghy would travel with the outboard and it was during this trip that I realised just how dedicated he is to presenting himself as having little knowledge of the natural history of the area or the social history of the area, or interest he has in those topics. Now that I've had my chat with him I understand his personal history and aspirations I can much more easily see why there is no commentary or interpretation - he was insistent during our talk that people should be left to do their own thing. That could perhaps be spelt out a little more clearly at the beginning but it explains why the operation is run the way it is.

(Later, as I re-read Going the Distance I realised that the author, Tess Redgrave, has very cleverly, yet generously, described Lance and that the trip to Dusky Sound ended up with three nights in Doubtful Sound, based on the same concern that the weather may pack up. I now wonder if the three nights in Doubtful is going to happen regardless and this, plus Lance’s remarks that he “gets all the Cook stuff out of the way quickly so he can concentrate on the real purpose of the trip” has made me change my mind about a trip to Dusky with him. This approach leaves ‘following in the footsteps of Captain Cook’ as an undeveloped product niche [Seaton’s (2002) “unilinear” suggestion for his metempsychotic tours (p. 138)]. Darkin’s (2007) On Cook’s Trail: A holiday history of Captain Cook in New Zealand mentions Dusky Sound (p. 80) but gives no instructions for getting there. Robson (2000) provides an attractive map (p. 2.05) but again, no instructions.

In Somers’ (1994) terms there is no public narrative being presented, only Lance’s ontological narrative, but the Cook anti-narrative is interesting.

It turns out that Donna is related to a well-known sportsman, a climber, and has a long association with New Zealand; in fact was born in NZ before moving as a baby to the UK. That revelation sparked quite a discussion about the British Empire and the importance of being a British subject and how unfair it was that an Englishman who was born in South Africa couldn't get a British Passport because he was South African, or English people who were born in India had difficulty getting British passports, even though they were obviously English and not Indian. Coupled with Leith's monarchist leanings (Donna admits to a soft spot for dictators in that they get things done and produce stability), there's quite a new issue for me in terms of identity; there's still identity as an Englishman and some discussion about how the new inferior European passport has been forced on them to replace the English passport and how much worse it looks. I've just been talking to David and Liz - what they've been looking for is product; it's product that fits their requirements, that's off the beaten track, a bit
quieter. Money's not a problem; time's a problem but this trip fits their expectations, of which they claim to have none. It's the first time in a boat for Liz; David's keen on boats, but in no way is this trip connected with who they are or how they see themselves, and the scenery or the experience hasn't had any bearing on that at all.

We're actually back near Deep Cove, and the Wilmot Pass road is visible (not that I am going to point it out) and even though the map's on the wall, we've still got no sense here of being any closer to civilisation than we had in the other sounds, which is quite a good way of doing things. Rather than there being 'a willing suspension of disbelief’ there is a willing suspension of the desire to know where one is. Perhaps when in a sublime landscape being concerned about where one is constitutes the beginnings of a more general critique. Certainly I feel an ethical urge to explain to my companions how this experience is being manufactured (not necessarily in a negative sense) and managed (all the way up to the legislation that created the National Park) but doing that would spoil their enjoyment of the performance. My playing the fool is more likely to induce irritation than critical distance.

The morning after Snug Cove we visited the Seal Colony at Nee Island and then anchored at Shelter Islands for a dive. No-one was keen since it was chilly and damp but in the end Alan talked us round, Kirsty, Liz and me. It was a first for Kirsty and a first in a 7mm suit for me. Kirsty loved it and Alan and Liz really enjoyed it. I had a leaky mask and wasn’t quite weighed down enough to get deep but it was fun. Lance and I had a blokey heart-to-heart in the dinghy waiting for the others and he proved himself to be a shrewd and observant host who had formulated his guests in ways that helped him deliver what he perceived to be what they wanted from the trip. Back on board Annie poured welcome hot water down the necks of our suits.

We've just been ashore via a little creek very near the entrance to Bradshaw Sound, opposite Seymour Island. We went in from the creek into some bush that had obviously had deer through it. Lance gave us a talk about how the forests had been, and are being destroyed by deer and how all the palatable species are being taken and it was making the forest now consist more of Rimu which are unpalatable, and then he called for people to decide whether or not to take action by joining something like Greenpeace or WWF. International banks were ripping us off but of course we were all overdrawn at the most important bank of all, Planet Earth. This address is reported almost word for word in Redgrave (2002, p. 25) and so must be treated as a public narrative for the trip. During our matey chat I had asked what he would
do when he sold the business, but now he wasn’t going to be selling it as a business, he was
selling the boat separately and would close the business (as has subsequently occurred) for
fear of “cowboys taking over; rape, pillage and plunder merchants, one of the bad guys” and
then we were left for either 1 or 2 hours to wander the forest. It's a very good site and a good
idea, letting people wander freely; there's another creek about 300m along the beach and
there's a steep hill behind so the area is nicely circumscribed and no one can come to any
harm. Ian and I saw some native orchids, which he identified for me as *Earina autumnalis.*
Their sickly-sweet foetidity dominated the beach in a way that was strangely pleasing; my
first experience of what I knew could be labeled a tourist smellscape (Dann & Jacobsen,
2003). I had seen another orchid, *Thelymitra sp.*, on Secretary Island and had asked the DOC
person about them. The mere act of his telling me the scientific name of the plant moved the
experience from being purely aesthetic to being situated also within the metanarrative of
science. I asked Ian how he felt about the doom and gloom narrative, the despoliation
narrative, planet earth in crisis, and he said he'd heard it before on the last trip he was on, at a
different location in the Camelot River. Essentially he believed it but he saw it all as some
ongoing modification of flora and fauna which was irreversible; the offshore islands were a
good way of trying to combat it or manage it, and Leith said we were fortunate to have the
amount of relatively unmodified forest that we do have, and that certainly it was desirable that
predators be managed to whatever level that they could be managed to, so I take both of those
as a management narrative, certainly not a return to the pristine, and certainly not an
ecospiritual narrative. While we were in there we were invited to take our shoes off and
wander barefoot or to go up the hill and take our clothes off and wander the mountain naked.
There were no takers for this invitation. Perversely, I sought out and photographed a couple of
*Pseudopanax sp.*; plants that we were told are no longer to be found there thanks to the
depredations of deer. I know from my time on DOC’s *Southern Winds* that deer are being
managed to certain densities and that my being able to find two *Pseudopanax* so quickly
demonstrated that this control programme was working; the forest is regenerating, not
decaying. I am very conscious that I am working to subvert the desired performance of the
despoliation narrative and that my photos constitute a visual critique. Now we’re looking
forward to a roast dinner, one of a long line of excellent meals.

I’ve just been talking to David about Lance's ‘overdrawn at the bank of planet earth’ talk and
he said it was very passionate and we need passionate people like that. The message is
unachievable: we have to be looking at management, setting priorities, costing based on
scarcity, for example we now value New Zealand birds because there are so few of them. In
New York, deer were valued because there were so few of them; now they're being overrun by them, they're suddenly a pest. It's very much a management narrative, enjoying the bush, but not really seeing reversal or the doom gloom narrative as particularly powerful in identifying that the biggest problem on the planet is too many people, and until we tackle too many people, there's no way of changing high productivity agriculture because what are we proposing; that people go back digging with sticks? It's very much an island restoration, setting aside reserves, costing out the alternatives and then implementing a management plan for the final decision, and he reminded me that wilderness is now at a premium therefore it's popular whereas in the past, go back to the 18th Century, there was so much wilderness that order was to be admired and that's why people had formal gardens. It struck me that David’s narrative was informed by a mixture of scarcity and poorly-distributed-surplus economic positions and one which anticipated *The Conservation Economy*.

Just now talking to Kirsty who said that she was almost in tears as Lance was giving his presentation and she agrees with it whole-heartedly and now feels morally bound to join some sort of conservation organisation and thought it may have been deliberate that we were put ashore to walk to Lake Katherine through dense bush and then shown the contrast of this fairly high density deer area and so she and Brian are in agreement that the planet in crisis narrative is the appropriate one but that by joining some sort of conservation organisation something can be done to mitigate the worst effects. I listened without commenting, acutely conscious of Christine MacDonald’s (2008) *Green Inc.: An environmental insider reveals how a good cause has gone bad*. Polemical exposés such as MacDonald’s fit within Morton’s “new and improved beautiful soul syndrome” since, contrary to appearances, they reject a truly political engagement with the issues raised. I don’t want my companions to reject an overt form of beautiful soul syndrome only to embrace a covert one, operating in the guise of critique.

Just now spoken to Liz about the doomed planet, planet in crisis narrative and she said it was preaching to the converted, everyone agrees, it's a very complex problem, and there's no simple solution and that, when you look into the eyes of a deer, it's not it's fault so she can't really raise herself to the bloodlust for deer that would be required to reverse completely the doomed forest scenario. It strikes me how far apart we are culturally. I had grown up believing the public narrative about introduced animals; either farm them or eradicate them, no bloodlust required, and had struggled to critique this position (see *Minding Animals* footnote above).
I was talking to Kirsty late last night about the effect of the location and from the conversation wondered perhaps does location, in this case the sublime landscape, affect most powerfully those people for whom “often personal integration remains problematic or incomplete…it can be a lifetime project for some…testimony to the troubles and vicissitudes that balancing the diverse constituents of self-existence entails” (Seigel, 2005, p. 8).

I have begun to formulate Kirsty in this way despite her previous statements, about having formed a stable self, to the contrary. We mentioned the dolphins that had jumped around the boat in spectacular fashion during that day, and the dolphin video shown earlier in the evening; another ‘planet in crisis’ narrative. For the others it was not really interesting, it was clear that none of them was wholly convinced by the video; they'd seen it as a video, a piece of didactic instruction, but Kirsty shed tears of despair over the video, as she had shed tears of joy over the real thing.

It was striking that everyone on board, apart from Kirsty and her husband, used some sort of technique to establish and maintain a critical distance from the material on the video. The next morning we visited the spot again but you cannot step in the same river twice and the experience was different; the comments were about familiarity and how the location had been experienced the day before. In terms of the production of space we had moved overnight from novelty to nostalgia.

It struck me the anti-government anti-bureaucracy anti-‘the nanny state’ positions taken by everybody on board are self-indulgently blind to the fact that ACC (the government compulsory, no-fault accident insurance scheme) protects the employer concerned from being sued in the case of an accident and provides cover for tourists while they are in the country. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), a government organization, provides safety standards and certification for the protection for the provider and DOC issues concessions, eagerly sought after and jealously guarded by the operator. Environment Southland controls the Sounds and gave Lance someone to complain to when a cruise ship anchored in Bradshaw Sound, against its conditions-of-visiting permit. The national Rescue Coordinating Centre, based in Wellington, is involved in all search and rescue operations, with ultimate responsibility belonging to New Zealand Police. Lance’s position is that “Search and Rescue should be left to the locals” and he delighted in organising an operation and was able to tell Wellington, when they contacted him, that it was all over and the man had been helicoptered
out (this informal operation leaves open the question of who is to pay for the helicopter).\(^{101}\)

My personal left-of-centre politics begins to intrude and I must make a conscious effort to view the world through neoliberal eyes.\(^{102}\)

We have a skipper looking after the boat fulltime and the passengers are a distraction and sometimes even a bit of an irritation. I’m thinking about going to Dusky to talk to a charter skipper about Captain Cook fans, and there are such people, but no attempt is made here to cater for them. As the evenings go on there is a more pressing agenda, which is saving the planet. I wonder how satisfied people would be if the goal of their experience really was ‘following in the footsteps of’: offering more opportunity for transformation of self; re-exploring an area that gives few obvious signs of having changed since 1770. This rediscovery narrative could, but need not, engage with either despoliation or restoration, and could emphasise locations and actions, for example going ashore or navigating with a sextant and chronometer; the story told in *Longitude* (Sobel, 1995).

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\(^{101}\) Duff (2003), during his kayak circumnavigation of the South Island, was wrecked very shortly after leaving Milford Sound, then rescued by helicopter:

With the bags of gear and the boat safely stowed in the corner of the hangar, there was one more bit of business to take care of, paying for the flight out. Jeff was in his office filling out some paperwork when I walked in.

‘Well, Jeff, what do I owe you for the flight?’ I asked.

He looked at me as if I had sand in my head from the surf landing and said, ‘You don’t pay me, the police will. They called for the flight. I’ll bill ‘em. That’s their policy.’ …When he realized I wasn’t leaving until I had paid the $600 bill, he relented and told me he’d explain it to the police (p. 211).

Who is to pay for the helicopter raises interesting issues about individuals’ narratives of self. Lance’s and Chris Duff’s narratives are of self-sufficiency, which are challenged in an emergency. There is an accepted protocol for using areas of the Conservation Estate designated as Remote Experience or Wilderness Areas and this involves filling in the Intentions Book at the nearest DOC office, specifying an exit date. Some users of designated wilderness areas either neglect to fill in the book or request that if they are overdue no search is organised. DOC, however, is obligated to search for anyone overdue. To accept helicopter evacuation but then to insist on paying for it is one way of resisting acknowledging the fact that activities on the ocean or in Wilderness Areas are subject to whole-of-society norms, of which being rescued by the whole-of-society, in the form of the police, is but one. There can be no exiting of culture and escaping into nature, no matter how much the adventurer wishes it were otherwise.

\(^{102}\) In Aotearoa/New Zealand it is impossible to separate neoliberal thinking from masculinity. *Man Alone* (Mulgan, 1939) is a novel which has metamorphosed into a trope. Fox (2008) says of his exploration of masculinity in contemporary New Zealand fiction:

I focus on the point of intersection where the codes and practices of local New Zealand cultures…that seek to ‘interpellate’ men as the social subjects of particular discourses come into contact with the psychic processes that produce the subjectivities that the authors concerned depict as taking place in the individual man. In addition, I show how fictive representation itself is used by these authors as a vehicle for ‘subjectification’- the process that produces the self as an object in the world, and which brings into being the subject’s relation with himself (p. 14).
It is interesting that Ian was talking last night and this morning about his life and some quite personal issues, explaining how going to Milford in 1960 when his life was in some turmoil, had been very beneficial and of course he's come back to Doubtful now twice and I think this strengthens my idea that place at a crucial time can be transformative of personal narrative and then perhaps having been established as a transformative factor can then be visited as a way of gaining reassurance and of course with him now in his 80s a way of rounding off his life. Ian’s visitors’ book entry was, ‘Here I am for a second time. I wonder if there will be a third’?

Liz was just explaining how upstate New York, (she explained that Fiordland didn't do it for her), but upstate NY at the beginning of Spring was where she got her spiritual renewal, and for David it was East Africa. They both felt that East Africa had done it, and he had fleeting ideas of living there and if it weren’t for the practicalities of life he would have been happy to move to East Africa and live there and he's all in favour of resorts and the containment of certain circumscribed boundaries because if that's what most people want they can get the experience without spreading out impacts on a wider area; so they're quite sophisticated travellers. For Liz, it was the appearance of the frogs eggs on the ponds at the end of winter, and the willows poking through the earth in upstate NY that did the trick, the transformation of winter self into spring self, and also that it was so accessible and could be sought-out as required. I was reminded of Camus’: ‘In the depth of winter I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer’; such a strong statement of structuralist selfhood. So far no one has shown any inkling of being a discursively-produced narrativising and performing subject; everyone holds firm to selfhood.

For our final night aboard, Lance ensured that we would not observe other people, by listening to the radio traffic and gleaning that the Real Journeys’ overnight vessel Fiordland Navigator would be spending the night at Precipice Cove. We altered course to avoid being anywhere near the larger boat. On the morning of the final day I was aware that we were almost at the wharf, hidden now only by Commander Peak, the final, and perhaps most spectacular element of the sublime landscape. Still, Lance gave no indication of proximity. We turned, and there was civilization. During the trip I had encouraged Leith to talk about his navy days and in return I told him of my experiences with the naval reserve, particularly on a particular class of vessel; the name of which escaped me. As we approached the wharf Leith turned to me and said: “You will recognize those lines”, referring to a charter boat. I didn’t understand. “Underneath all that rubbish is a Fairmile HDML, the name you have been
searching for.” He was correct; on closer inspection the lines were unmistakable. I realized that for Leith, the ‘ex’ in ex-Royal Navy wasn’t a descriptor central to his identity. There remained the bus trip over Wilmot Pass and the water taxi across Lake Te Anau and these were mundane enough to break any spell but after we disembarked at Manapouri, Kirsty explained how she was close to tears when we were heading in because she was so upset at leaving the boat and the people and the landscape; “leaving paradise and going back to London”, but for the others it was a pretty standard goodbye. I reflected on the paradox that the trip had been situated within a sublime aesthetic (including beauty) and yet the accompanying narrative had been one of almost hopeless despoliation. I have neglected to mention the crew-member, who arrived in Fiordland four years ago intending to stay four months. Her life was a bit of a mess then and she now sometimes drives into Milford just to settle herself down; something about the place makes her feel OK.

That trip set the scene for the subsequent two; Lance performing as old salt forced reluctantly to accommodate visitors, and the visitors performing themselves as they felt befitted the setting. Over a total of twenty-eight nights aboard, sharing a confined space with some eccentric and forceful characters, there were only two minor episodes of interpersonal irritation, and these were between passengers who were travelling together. Only one was about not properly performing being a tourist. David raised a laugh when he told a story about a landlady on a holiday he and Liz had once had but Liz corrected him and said it hadn’t happened that way; stripping the anecdote of its humour. David appeared annoyed and told Liz that she had spoiled the story. It struck me that David believed that, in these circumstances, his performing as a tourist, that is, his embodiment of the narrative, required him to spin humorous travel yarns, even at the expense of their accuracy; never let the facts get in the way of a good story. Lance occasionally subverted his own narrative positions, both the competent and safe sea dog one and the one based on being uninterested in Cook. On the voyage to Preservation Inlet there is a particularly hair-raising section where the course runs inside Melanie’s Reef toward a large mid-ocean rock that seems to be blocking passage. Lance set Breaksea Girl’s course directly for the rock and then casually disappeared down the hatch to the engine room. I had seen a similar trick played in Dusky Sound, when, in a narrow channel, Lance had turned the engine off and then gone below, apparently to fix it. In the nick of time he re-emerged and casually altered course. I had been observing closely and could see that a combination of tidal flow and the handling characteristics of the vessel gave a window of about two minutes between required course corrections; ample time to complete the disappearing act. Nevertheless, the stunt was well received by those of us who are sailors and...
could admire the technical skill displayed, and caused suitable consternation amongst the non-yachting visitors. Similarly at Melanie’s Reef, Lance’s reappearance and course adjustment was timed almost to the second, the rock slipping away very close to port. This time the consternation was sequential; from the most nervous passenger to the next-most-nervous. Two passengers asked how I could seem so relaxed in the circumstances and, in order to safeguard the dramatic impact of Lance’s subversive performance I muttered some commonplace. Of course, the effect of this voluntarily truncated subversion of the competent skipper narrative was in fact to strengthen it. Allen (1997) reports a similar incident off the west coast of Auckland Island:

But here we were, no more than 50 yards (46m) from the foot of the cliffs. At one point Lance calmly left the wheelhouse and went forward, leaving the wheel to gently oscillate. I stepped over the bounds when I expressed some concern and was firmly put in my place: ‘I can read the waters just as you read a book- so stop worrying.’ I did- almost- as we drew closer and closer. Sometime later I realized that it was the back swell that kept us from duplicating the fate of Grampa Holding (Allen, 1997, p. 85).

With respect to Lance’s claim that he “gets all the Cook stuff out of the way quickly so he can concentrate on the real purpose of the trip”, one counter-example will suffice. Observation Point and Pickersgill Harbour in Dusky Sound are central to the Cook story in this area. The passengers on the trip I was on (Doubtful Sound to Dusky Sound return) were a mixture of marine scientists studying dolphins (Shelton, 2009) and volunteers who paid to take part in conservation work. We anchored off Observation Point and were (apparently reluctantly) landed by dinghy with instructions to be back on the beach in fifteen minutes time. After fifteen minutes exploring the point we began listening for the sound of the dinghy’s outboard motor, which appeared thirty minutes later. The forty-five minutes we had been granted was sufficient for us to have constructed Observation Point as place; certainly in Tuan’s sense of location plus meaning (Rodaway, 2011), but I feel a more productive formulation of place is Casey’s (1997) linking of site and place, where “place is to be recognized as an undelimited, detotalized, expansiveness, resonating regionally throughout the unknown as well as the known universe...Place is not entitative- as a foundation has to be- but eventmental, something in process, something unconfinable to a thing” (pp. 336-337). Once back on board we waited for the vibration of the motor starting but instead Lance broke out the jib.

I will not expand here on Casey’s notion of the place-world; Morton (2007, pp. 169-181) lends Casey’s objection to the reification of place to ecocritique:

Rather than wondering how to bridge the unbridgeable gap between the beautiful soul and the world, ecological thinking might pose another kind of question. Indeed, to pose a question is to reveal how our sense of place and what we mean by terms such as question, aporia, or wonder, are interconnected. What if globalization, via an ironic negative path, revealed that place was never very coherent in the first place? (p. 170).
Despite myself I couldn’t suppress my excitement when I realized what was to happen next; we negotiated Crayfish Passage under sail, just as Cook did in 1773. Again, Lance had subverted his own narrative position by delivering a first-class Cook experience. Had the wind been blowing from a different direction the manoeuvre would not have been possible and so whether or not to attempt it had to be a last-minute decision. In the classic sense Lance had ‘under-promised and over-delivered’; so unlike the over-promising and under-delivering that had accompanied us on the first day driving into Milford. No-one else apart from Lance and myself seemed to be aware of our re-enactment, and he remained silent. Against my better judgment I explained to the others the significance of what we were doing. I should have saved my breath, and suddenly I understood why on these trips there was no commentary, no interpretation and no educational focus. Each trip took on a unique, passenger-driven dynamic, and this affected the way individual roles were performed. I realized that on this trip I was now ‘the Cook expert’ without, as I explained to anyone who would listen, ever having met the man.

**Doubtful Sound to Dusky Sound**

This trip involved a different mix of people and a different product. The first trip had forced me to examine the formation of nature tourist/provider as partial neoliberal subject, suffused by an unconscious Romanticism, alongside the more familiar politically muddled, sentimental Romantic. I say partial neoliberal subject because, despite the sympathy for active environmental management, no-one had suggested that the Conservation Estate should be operated as a business; the logical implication of neoliberal thought.

The purpose of the trip was to establish the abundance of bottlenose dolphins in Dusky Sound (Currey, Rowe, Dawson & Slooten, 2008) and this involved a group of scientists and a group of volunteers. The volunteers paid a discounted fare on the understanding that they would act as dolphin-spotters. Once spotted, the dolphins were approached using ‘the car’ and, once within range, were photographed. This activity struck me as uncomfortably reminiscent of commercial whaling (Shelton, 2009) in that the narrative elements were so similar; searching and spotting (hunting), approaching (chasing), and photographing (harpooning). One of the scientists and two of the volunteers subscribed to a philosophy of nature very close to Gaia and this position’s attribution of agency to planet earth (Reis & Shelton, 2011). Gentle probing revealed that there was no perceived difficulty adhering to a science narrative (or metanarrative) and a Gaia narrative simultaneously, although these explanatory stories seem to me to be mutually exclusive. The sublime aesthetic was superimposed on these
epistemological narratives, albeit unconsciously, and this made me aware of one aspect of critique; that there is no requirement to suggest an alternative to the phenomenon one is critiquing. There is an anchorage called Sportsman’s Cove and it is invisible in passing. Of course Lance knew it well and steered us directly at the bush-clad shore, only for a narrow, angled passage to open for us, as if by magic. Once inside, the entrance again merged with the bush and we seemed to be on a pond. On waking, snow had fallen almost to sea level and we wrapped ourselves in our warmest clothes. It simply was not possible to imagine a more sublime, beautiful, picturesque setting. I feel the sublime as somatic knowledge; it is embodied, a knot in my stomach and must be written over by my head.

Critique is misleadingly easy; with a copy of Graham McFee’s (2011) *Artistic Judgement: A framework for philosophical aesthetics* at hand we can situate the scene as perceived or, more importantly, as misperceived within a well-articulated set of possible relationships between art and beauty but, in doing so, I feel a sense of loss. A lifetime of naïve appreciation of nature, the aura of aesthetic distance, is being traded for the distraction of critical distance. I summon ‘McFee (2011, p. 9) in an attempt to replace, but do not and cannot replace this comment in the visitors’ book: “I flick my eyes over what others have written and linger on Bob’s entry. ‘A truly fascinating and informative adventure,’ he writes. ‘Thank you for opening a small window onto creation’” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 29). I must superimpose the ecological thought upon the beautiful soul, but fail entirely to obliterate it; “the mind is its own palimpsest…you never fully know yourself or the other (Rose, 2011, p. 10). There can be no short aside offered to deal with this situation, where something seems to be so beautiful one’s body ‘aches’ at its contemplation and, as Bob mentions above, a small window of appreciation may be opened and new meanings gleaned. John Burnside (2011) experienced such insight when first he met Madeline:

The very first time we met…I had fallen in love with her- and I’ve been in love with her ever since, in various guises…she was the one who made me see that the lyrics of all the love songs I’d heard…actually meant something. I’d thought they were just words, snippets of gibberish and hyperbole that nobody could possibly take seriously, but now I knew different because now, I was in love, and love felt very odd to me, like hearing the first few lines of a story I would never read to the end, because the end belonged to somebody else (p. 22).

The transience of such beauty has been well-represented, as has the temporality of the narrated self, but what of art? McFee (2011) stresses that philosophical aesthetics “gives an

104 Can we differentiate spiritual phenomena, like Bob’s, from Wang’s secular phenomenon of “existential authenticity” (Wang, 1999) or Graburn’s equally secular, but metaphorically epiphanic tourist experience as ritual (Graburn, 2001)?
account of art which permits critical commentary on artworks to be true, partly by giving due weight to the intention of artists…(and)…it treats those truths as mutable under forces in history in general and especially in the history of art” (p. vi). Art, then may, under certain circumstances, cease being art. What about the person? Eakin (1999), while:

reluctant to speak of ‘the self’, for the definite article suggests something too fixed and unified to represent the complexity of self-experience” acknowledges that “my thinking about autobiography and identity formation has evolved so gradually that I can trace the change only if I look back by decades (p. x).

Gray & Gómez-Barris (2010) ask, “if we were to trace such a trace, how would we do it?” How could I trace the effect of adolescent reading of Swallows and Amazons and We Didn’t Mean to go to Sea that had inculcated in me an ‘aesthetic of the sea’ and how it was this aesthetic that I brought on board Breaksea Girl. McFee (2011) explains that:

the beginnings of philosophical aesthetics as we understand it broadly coincides with the articulation of a distinctive concept of art (as ‘fine art’), and with a distinctiv valuing of both such a concept and the objects to which it applies- a valuing distinct from their beauty, monetary worth and so on (p. 1).

It may be drawing a long bow to claim Arthur Ransome’s yarns for ‘fine art’ or to label them objet d’art but they are constitutive of the artistic discourse, if only to the extent that their trace affected my performance of myself at that time of contemplating the snow in Sportsman’s Cove. What of that trace; is it a trace of art or a trace of something else, and if of something else, of what? McFee (2011), after attributing the subject-matter of aesthetics to Burke, goes on to explain that:

On such a view, then, philosophical aesthetics begins in the period where concern with a distinctive conception of the artistic…makes sense: then, the appreciation of nature…is implicitly contrasted with that of art. Not, of course, that philosophical aesthetics was (always) primarily interested in art- Kant, for instance, certainly was not! But his interest in, say, natural beauty must be understood against a back-drop provided by art: the contrast between free and dependent beauty is, in effect, one tool here…Further, arguing that the philosophy of art…can…be treated independently of the philosophy of natural beauty (as perhaps Hegel did) also marks such a contrast…between what I call the artistic and the aesthetic (p. 2, italics in the original).

McFee goes on to elaborate the distinctiveness of art versus aesthetics by considering value but that wider discussion need not engage us here. It is more fruitful to pick up on Benjamin’s The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. Benjamin equates authenticity with uniqueness:

The uniqueness of the work of art is identical to its embeddedness in the context of tradition. Of course this tradition itself is thoroughly alive and extremely changeable. An ancient statue of Venus, for instance existed in a traditional
context for the Greeks…that was different from the context in which it existed for medieval clerics. But what was equally evident to both was its uniqueness— that is, its aura (Benjamin, 2008, p. 24).

“In even the most perfect reproduction (of a work of art) one thing is lacking; the here and now of the work of art— its unique existence in a particular place” (p. 21, italics in the original, parenthetic material mine). Benjamin argues that this lack of being-in-place distracts from the aura of the original. “But as soon as the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applied to artistic production, the whole social function of art is revolutionized. Instead of being founded on ritual, it is based on a different practice; politics” (p. 25).

Postmodernity, and its identification of the political in every aspect of life, has rendered the notion of authenticity deeply problematic. Ignoring authenticity, what if the mechanical reproduction were to achieve political ends by producing a novel, alternative aesthetic; what I am calling here the aesthetic of protection, brought into being through the production of protection? Such production of protection, for example writing or revising a National Park Management Plan, acts to reinstate aura, this time aura of the feature that in the meantime has become an element in the relentlessly reproduced postmodern tourist landscape that still is presented and experienced and performed by tourists as a sublime object or as God’s handiwork and therefore a work of art. Pickersgill Harbour provides a rich example. On Cook’s second voyage, on Resolution, Midshipman Elliot and Third Lieutenant Pickersgill kept logs, edited and published as one volume by Christine Holmes (1984). The logs contribute not only to Cook scholarship but also inform tourist operators’ interpretation and commentary, however slipshod. Pickersgill describes:

running thro’ a narrow passage between two very high Lands, which just admitted the ship…after getting thro’ this passage we opened one of the most enchanting (sic) little harbours I ever saw…wher we fastened her to the trees, the branches of which in many places hung over her (Pickersgill, 1775-1780 in Holmes, 1984, p. 68).

Elliot describes Pickersgill as “a good officer and astronomer, but liking ye grog” (Elliot, 1813 in Holmes, 1984, p. xxx) and describes that, when leaving what by then had been named Pickersgill Harbour, “we sailed out by a different way, so near the shore sometimes as to touch the Trees with our yards and Ensign staff” (Elliot, 1813 in Holmes, 1984, p. 18). This is the exit used by Breaksea Girl and referred to above. On board Resolution was William Hodges, the official artist, and, while skirting Antarctica, Hodges had produced:

a suitably bleak wash-and-watercolour image of Cook’s flagship looking frail as it passes a vast tabular iceberg…Reaching Dusky Bay in New Zealand provided the
weary seamen with relief. Yet Hodges, painting the luxuriant Pickersgill Harbour in April 1773, covered his iceberg picture with an image of an oddly isolated figure wandering along a gangplank below dark, abundant foliage (Cork, 2004, p. 18).

“Hodges…died of ‘gout of the stomach’ at the age of fifty-three but a laudanum overdose was suspected and it may be that he committed suicide” (Cork, 2004, p. 19). Setting aside the obvious question of whether Hodges took gloom to or from Antarctica, View in Pickersgill Harbour, Dusky Bay, New Zealand has received critical attention. Simmons (2002), enlisting Appleton’s predatory view of landscape and prospect-refuge theory, offers a postcolonial deconstruction of the painting.
Appleton asserts that the aesthetic values of landscape are…related to environmental conditions favourable to biological survival…a visual field of violence…(i)the standard picturesque landscape…is pleasing to the eye because it places the spectator in a protected, shaded spot (a ‘refuge’)…In this attempt to valorize the body as an agent of cognition we are moving close to an understanding of the reflexive role of a landscape as a kind of ‘bodyscape’ (Simmons, 2002, p. 101).
Perhaps Hodges painted over his Antarctica painting since, while there, Resolution offered no refuge,\textsuperscript{105} the location was available to be represented as the sublime but not as beautiful or picturesque. Cork (2004) notes that even when Resolution did afford refuge, as in Cape Town, Hodges’s painting made “the white buildings of Cape Town itself look diminutive and vulnerable… The painting surely reflects Hodges’s own anxiety, as he wondered what would lie ahead after Cook led his vessels away from the coast into the unimaginable vastness beyond” (p. 18).

This ‘visual field of violence’ accords with “Adorno, for whom art was a place where the ‘violence’ of (contingent, political) choice assumed its full being, albeit one that was redeemed by the special status and qualities of art” (Morton, 2007, p. 192, parenthetic material mine). Implicit in Simmon’s valorisation of the body ‘as an agent of cognition’ is the body also as agent of affect. Simmons refers to “Hodges’s perilously perched figure in the landscape…eventually to retreat to his ship and sail away” (p. 106); a figure that struck Cork (2004) as “oddly isolated” (p. 18) and strikes me as abject, his body bent and needing the support of the rail. If he is a surrogate for the artist then I suspect Hodges carried his gloom and fear with him wherever he went; anxious in Cape Town about what was to come, terrified in the southern ocean about what was, and bitterly disappointed on arriving at what was to be; Eden. If the figure is a surrogate for the viewer then certainly there is violence being done to the viewer’s body.

The technicalities of Simmon’s analysis are that “…the structure of the painting can be thought of as the intersection of two axes:

\textsuperscript{105} Margaret Cohen (2010), in The Novel and the Sea points out that “the sublimation of the sea was a process that occurred in the visual arts as well as literature…maritime genre painting flourished in the seventeenth century, where the sea’s portrayal was from the vantage point of its practice…the rigging of the vessel…the maneuvers taken by mariners in this heavy weather” (p. 119). This genre approach was in contrast to “(t)he Romantic evacuation of the sea (which) entails not only removing human agency from the content of the scene but also evacuating the informational function of marine landscapes. Marine landscapes had this function not only in genre painting, but also in the images made by mariners to record views of unknown coasts in the course of navigations, such as the images by William Hodges, the artist on Cook’s second expedition, as in this pen and ink sketch of Dusky Bay” (p. 119). Clearly, Hodges was producing two distinct types of work, with different functions, expressive and descriptive. His melancholia, so evident in Pickersgill Harbour, is absent from Dusky Bay. This psychological complexity is lost if these two pieces generate, or are attributed, aura in equal measure. The former is akin to a short story while the latter resembles the kind of currently popular computer-enhanced tramping or sailing guide; according to Cook “as will convey a better idea of it (the entrances to Dusky Sound) than can be expressed by words” (p. 119). This brief consideration of the nature and function of the two works acts as distraction in that it generates critical distance and stimulates debate about the aesthetic qualities of Dusky Bay. May a plan, a blueprint or a working drawing be art, and therefore aural? Post-Adorno, yes; but, before that, Dusky Bay may have been hanging in art galleries under false pretences.
There is the primary axis along which the interaction of subject and object develops, which involves a play of identification and distancing that joins the painter (or viewer) to the landscape, or to its representation on canvas…The lure of the structure is in its suggestion that the two axes are not unrelated and can serve as an emblem of tensions that separate the viewer/painter outside the frame from those that divide the surrogate (viewer/painter) inside the frame, and, indeed, that which separates the surrogate figure from the landscape inside the frame itself…Imbedded in Hodges’s *mis en scène* are all the paradoxes, complexities and uncertainties of the colonial encounter…All colonial texts are tourist texts of travel and with them there can be no illusion of closure, for a tourist place, as it was for Hodges and the crew of the *Resolution* is simply something you see on your way to somewhere else” (pp. 102-103). Similarly, with respect to four years earlier, anticipating the *Endeavour* voyage, Banks pronounced: “‘every blockhead’ did the European tour, but ‘my Grand Tour shall be one around the whole globe’” (in Schaffer, 1996, cited in Scott, 2011).

Simmons concludes:

But on Friday 29th April 1773…Cook had his men fire the section of podocarp forest on Astronomers (sic) Point and fell the remaining trees… Perhaps in truth, the most influential and lasting legacy of Cook’s visit to Doubtful Sound was to be those four or five canvases and watercolours painted by Hodges as the *Resolution* sailed northwards (p. 107).

These canvases and watercolours have been reproduced many times (e.g. Lamb, 2001, p. 241; Hall-Jones, 2002, p. 14). Benjamin’s position would be that the *aura* of these four or five canvases and watercolours, particularly *View in Pickersgill Harbour, Dusky Bay, New Zealand* has been lost and they now do political work and are no longer works of art, and even though they fit within a particular aesthetic, that aesthetic is saturated with ideology; “the politics of aesthetics” (Rancière, 2009, p. 5). “Romantic environmentalism (the surface or naïve reading of Hodges’s works, celebrating the abject fate of the anti-natural human figure) is a flavor of modern consumerist ideology” (Morton, 2007, p. 172, parenthetic material mine). If, as Simmons claims, the four or five works are “the most useful and lasting legacy of Cook’s visit”, in what way is this so? Simmons claims that the rigorous and legitimate readings available (my terms) of Hodges’s works identify the “paradoxes,
complexities and uncertainties of the colonial encounter”;\textsuperscript{106} and clearly his use of Appleton and the deconstructing diagram is an attempt to de-distance the artist, and viewer from ‘nature’. By occupying a reflexive refuge (Simmons’s words), there is the opportunity for being absorbed into the ambience of landscape, to the point where eco-critique seems possible; but Morton (2007) rejects this position: “(e)ver since the Romantic period, ambience…has generated ever more virulent forms of aestheticization” (p. 164).\textsuperscript{107} Indeed, Hodges had produced a new aesthetic: “(w)hatever the causes, Hodges transcended his classical training.\textsuperscript{108} Back in London the resulting exhibition was a failure…his pictures all appear as if they were unfinished…(w)ithin the metropolis this could not be imagined…Hodges’ paintings were outlandish” (Scott, 2011, p. 187).\textsuperscript{109}

One aspect in which Hodges’ paintings appear unfinished is in their lack of an erotics; they are devoid of any suggestion of desire.\textsuperscript{110} Dreyfus (2010) explains that:

\begin{quote}
Lamb (2001) offers the artist’s intention for View in Pickersgill Harbour:

\begin{quote}
I want briefly to consider Cook’s arrival at Dusky Bay as exemplary of the views, rhetoric, and feelings of patriots in paradise…(Pickersgill’s) harbour was made the subject of one of William Hodges’s finest plein air oils, in which a single figure trudges over a gangplank made by a fallen tree, moving from the amphitheatre of a primeval forest to the domestic comfort of the Resolution, whose spars and gunwales form the right-hand border of the composition…It is a maritime ha-ha joining the nonworld of a woodie Theater to the world of the ship, linking savagery to all the advantages of civilization. Every impression of importance at Dusky Bay will traverse these two points (pp. 240-241).
\end{quote}
\end{quote}

The key word here is ‘trudges’: “paradoxes, complexities and uncertainties of the colonial encounter.” Lamb’s metaphors; amphitheater, ha-ha, woodie Theater (Paradise Lost 4.139).

\begin{quote}
Once Morton’s point is understood the reader becomes sensitized to this form of aestheticization. McCaughey (2011), commenting on the landscape artist Eugene von Guérard claims: “He brought with him (the German Romantics’) reverence and immersion in the natural world” (p. 17, italics mine). Immersion, as used in this way, may reasonably be understood to mean ‘lacking aesthetic distance’ or being reflexive, something a landscape painter never can achieve since (s)he requires an aesthetic distance in order to construct the landscape in a way that is suitable for painting. Guérard’s style, realism, is no less constructed than any other style.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Scott’s comment corresponds with Smith’s (1985) point, in European Vision and the South Pacific that “Hodges broke free from many neo-classical ideas of landscape to achieve a more direct representation of the new landscape encountered in the South Seas” (Mayhew, 2009, p. 392). Mayhew uses ‘landscape’ here both in a realist and social constructivist sense.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Rodger (2011) provides a fascinating review of Scott’s (2011) book, When the Waves Ruled Britannia. Considered as a conventional monograph, therefore, this book is slapdash, opinionated and astonishingly old-fashioned- but from another perspective it is a piece of modish cultural history…Those who have taken the cultural turn will find it exciting and stimulating: those who have not may find it frustrating. If it does not always treat its subject objectively, it is clearly because Jonathon Scott prefers to make a personal statement (p. 7, italics mine).
\end{quote}

As with Morton’s work and its critical reception, it is interesting to observe the formation of discourse in situations where the author and the critic inhabit almost non-overlapping ontological and epistemological positions.

\begin{quote}
With respect to a desire to acquire, Campbell Island, who’s weather is too extreme for trees to grow, has a solitary pine, planted to commemorate the visit of a Governor-general of New Zealand. “The image of the solitary tree has a long history in western culture…The tree is thus, amongst other things, a signpost or marker announcing the presence of western man and claiming the land” (Hjartarson, 2005, p. 214).
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
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\item[107] Once Morton’s point is understood the reader becomes sensitized to this form of aestheticization. McCaughey (2011), commenting on the landscape artist Eugene von Guérard claims: “He brought with him (the German Romantics’) reverence and immersion in the natural world” (p. 17, italics mine). Immersion, as used in this way, may reasonably be understood to mean ‘lacking aesthetic distance’ or being reflexive, something a landscape painter never can achieve since (s)he requires an aesthetic distance in order to construct the landscape in a way that is suitable for painting. Guérard’s style, realism, is no less constructed than any other style.
\item[108] Scott’s comment corresponds with Smith’s (1985) point, in European Vision and the South Pacific that “Hodges broke free from many neo-classical ideas of landscape to achieve a more direct representation of the new landscape encountered in the South Seas” (Mayhew, 2009, p. 392). Mayhew uses ‘landscape’ here both in a realist and social constructivist sense.
\item[109] Rodger (2011) provides a fascinating review of Scott’s (2011) book, When the Waves Ruled Britannia. Considered as a conventional monograph, therefore, this book is slapdash, opinionated and astonishingly old-fashioned- but from another perspective it is a piece of modish cultural history…Those who have taken the cultural turn will find it exciting and stimulating: those who have not may find it frustrating. If it does not always treat its subject objectively, it is clearly because Jonathon Scott prefers to make a personal statement (p. 7, italics mine).
\end{footnotes}
if one compares literary novels- erotically tinged rather than erotically saturated-with painting, the written word enjoys a slight advantage over an image in creating an erotic aura. For in prose forms like the novel, which introduces characters with whom readers identify, the very absence of a visual dimension, no matter how meticulous the physical descriptions, allow readers to appreciate erotic experiences that extend beyond their repertoire of attractions (p. 8, italics mine).

Viewers of the paintings may well identify with the broken creature returning to the ship, but they will desire not to be him. Hodges’ work supports the claim that “(l)andscape painting has always been about what it is like to be in the world and in a particular condition” (Neve, 1990, p. vii). Benjamin attributes aura to the original; aura based in ritual, and politics to the reproduction. Nevertheless, with respect to the ritual generating the original, what of the politics of the ritual? Is it the case, as Eileen Crist, above, argued for nature, that there is an immanent politics in the ritual, needing only to be identified and released, like anti-Semitism in Europe during World War Two, of which Benjamin was only too well aware, or is it that the politics of the context of the ritual are imposed on the ritual by the powerful, the enfranchised; those not on the margins of influence, even as the dominant meaning and performance of the ritual change. Morton’s suggestion more fully to investigate Benjamin’s aura requires an aura of postmodernity rather than an aura situated within modernity; as ‘unique’ and ‘authentic’ most certainly are. But, as hinted earlier, the expedition cruise tourist, while performing postmodern narrative selfhoods, clings to the sublime.

There is other evidence of the tenacity of the sublime (Reis & Shelton, 2008; Shelton & Reis, 2008). Hansen (2011), in reviewing an exhibition of Richard Senna’s sculptures, asks “(w)hy is it that sculpture with such a powerful vernacular-industrial resonance is so often discussed in terms of the sublime?” (p. 20). The sculptures are self-consciously about distraction and not aura:

Senna messes with the set square in your head. Abstract Slavery …is off square. As soon as your eyes register the irritant, the discrepancy between the horizontal of the floor and the rising edge of the drawing, you are immediately pulled into the life of the work, into an engagement with its materiality (p. 20).

Aura may evict distraction or, if not evict, crowd out, or otherwise manipulate, making both aura and distraction dynamic and manipulable. Burt (2011) shows how something as apparently static as ‘fragment 87D’ of Sappho can have its aura increased by how it is presented on the page; for example by “reliance on white space”(p. 19) and how “emptiness and apparatus surround short classical texts and explore their aura, so that we encounter a book full of spaces where poems cannot be, spaces that say what we cannot have” Burt (2011,
Through an intense focus on boosting the *aura* of the work of art, the poem, which is the work of art, has been displaced and a new work of art, the poem in whiteness, has been created. The apparatus Burt is referring to is textual apparatus; for example the ‘re-mark’ highlighted by Morton (2007). What apparatus are available to describe and analyse performance art? How could tourists’ performances, as art, or as theatre, interact and respond to dynamic aspects of *aura* and *distraction*? Perhaps it would be fruitful to look for irritants that affect the tourists’ performances but the National Park management and the operator combine to erase any such irritants before they have an opportunity to disrupt the performance of the sublime.

Clearly, Dusky Sound would be at the centre of any tourism product self-consciously centered on Cook’s voyage on *Resolution*. The site is ideally suited for re-enactments and retracing; ‘following in the footsteps of’. The fact that to reach it is expensive situates the product safely at the top end of the market (alongside Joseph Banks’s self-funded 1769 world tour), and the location, within bush that looks at first glance like it did in 1773, suggests authenticity. The place re-produces *aura* through being visited by an affluent elite. To date, the most compelling reproduction was in 1996, when a replica of *Endeavour* berthed in Pickersgill Harbour.

![The Endeavour replica moored alongside Astronomer Point, Dusky Sound.](image)

*Figure 5: “The Endeavour replica moored alongside Astronomer Point, Dusky Sound.”* (Hall Jones, 1997, ff. p. 96). It was *Resolution* who moored here.

The ship is lying rather further off than did *Resolution* but the similarity with Hodges’ work is uncanny. The tree branch is serendipitous and required only a bit of focus-pulling to appear to
be the same branch that the defeated crewman negotiated. The *Endeavour* replica broke its journey around the New Zealand coast into stages and carried passengers in every stage. Gisborne was visited by *Endeavour* in 1769, and was a popular stage of the re-enactment: Queen Charlotte Sound, visited by *Endeavour* and later *Resolution*, was popular also, but Dusky Sound, not visited by *Endeavour*, provided the image that subsequently has been most used. Broadening Benjamin’s idea of the reproducibility of a work of art, if we allow that the photograph of the *Endeavour* replica may be viewed as a reproduction of Hodges’ painting, in another medium, what political work does it do?

The voyages of Captain Cook remain tremendously significant in public historical imaginings in New Zealand, Australia, and Britain. Many people continue to celebrate the navigator’s accomplishments for their maritime heroism and for their foundational place in the beginning of colonization. Others condemn the voyages for a related reason; they inaugurated a violent history of intrusion. Whereas Tamatea, or Dusky Sound, is now wholly uninhabited- and is now visited regularly only by fishing boats and small chartered vessels carrying hunters and tourists- Queen Charlotte Sound is a popular holiday spot (Adams & Thomas, 1999, pp. 7-8).

The photograph elides these complications, and provides an apparently unproblematic setting within which the tourism imaginary can be performed. It is entirely celebratory of colonisation, with no overt mention of, or covert allusion to contemporary indigenous identity politics. “Maori have not relinquished their right to extract an economic return from the land from which National Parks were created” (Shelton & Tucker, 2008, p. 202). This elision situates the photograph and its aura within the politics of reaction, much as, earlier, ritual could legitimately be situated within deep conservatism. If nostalgia were operating during the 1996 visit, it could have been nostalgia for an era of uncomplicated, uncritiqued but well-recorded exploration. The earlier Polynesian migrations, although every bit as adventurous, were not recorded in a way that allows them easily to be re-presented within twenty-first century tourism. Tupaia, Cook’s Polynesian navigator, offers the possibility of cultural celebration through re-enactment but only if his subaltern status is ignored or in some way overcome. Adams & Thomas (1999) note that “It is true that Cook’s encounters with Maori have been narrated in different ways with markedly different inflections…some of these histories are more contrived than others; some are absurd” (p. 8).

One passenger on the *Breaksea Girl* trip stated confidently that Maori were not indigenous, but had displaced an earlier people. This claim, a hoary old chestnut with no scholarly support, allows Cook’s encounter to be just one more invasion in a string of invasions, and fits within the “some are absurd” category of history. Nevertheless, since there was no attempt
by the operator to present a well-informed ‘public narrative’, such pseudo-history went unchallenged. Constructivism has never necessitated or tolerated epistemological or ethical relativism (Hacking, 1999). The opportunity to present a contrarian position in this way, as if it is of equal value to the pejoratively labeled PC version which is supported by rigorous theorising and empirical investigation, is the privilege of the neoliberal subject. The identity politics of biculturalism permeate all aspects of New Zealand life. By the tourism operator avoiding engaging in ‘all that Cook stuff’ from any particular politics that could be interrogated the default position is of the right.

There was only ever one, culturally complex, attempt to subvert Lance’s performance as host. On boarding for any of the trips we were asked to write our names on sticky labels and to wear them until Lance could learn who was who. With one exception, this request was complied with, as a trivial piece of housekeeping. The exception involved one person’s suggestion on one trip that we all write ‘Bruce’ on our labels and enjoy Lance’s response to this. The suggestion met with general approval but I felt strongly that this prank would cause offence and refused to comply with the suggested noncompliance.111

For me the key experience on this trip was the transformation of the meaning and status of beautiful objects. At one end of Acheron Passage is a waterfall and when it is, or has recently been raining, as is usually the case, it is possible to nudge the bow of a boat into the cascade and allow passengers to be drenched. This photo opportunity is provided by most of the operators in all of the sounds, irrespective of the size of vessel. For two of the volunteers, being drenched in this waterfall had become a sort of rite-of-passage, given that they had indulged in the activity several times over the years, while working on eradicating unwanted animals from nearby Breaksea Island.

111 A reading available if this situation is that it carried complex cultural meanings involving status, power and gender. The request to write our names on the sticky labels was part of Lance’s performance as host but also as a person having the power to make such requests of all the passengers. The suggested subversion, that we all write ‘Bruce’ on our labels, stems from John Clarke’s comic character ‘Fred Dagg’, whose mate ‘Bruce Bayliss’ told him; ‘Fred, we just don’t know how lucky we are’ (Clarke, 1976). These characters, and numerous ‘Trevs’ (Trevors), populate Clarke’s rural landscape and are intended to portray the clichéd, non-reflective performance of masculinity that was the target of second-wave feminism. In ‘Feminism? That’s so Seventie’s, Press (2011) explains: “feminists of the third wave seek to avoid the second wave’s essentialism” (p. 117). The suggestion that everyone label themselves ‘Bruce’, however trivial a prank it seemed, very much belonged to a sexual politics of the past. I anticipated that Lance would be mystified as to its meaning but would understand that something about his performance of masculinity was the butt of the joke. Fred Dagg-inspired humour had moved from rightly being situated within sexual politics to belonging within nostalgia even by the time Fred Dagg’s Greatest Hits was released in 1976.
Redgrave (2002) includes a colour plate of her experience of standing under the waterfall, the tourist moment, and these visitors ironically replicated Redgrave’s pose. Later, opposite Cooper Island, we nudged alongside a vertical cliff from which spouted another waterfall. This time the opportunity offered was to look directly up the cliff-face. A variation of this feature also is available in other locations. Most tellingly, we travelled up Wet Jacket Arm,
where Cook took a cutter, and it rained and he got a wet jacket. This arm is famous as the putative last bastion of a herd of moose, an individual of which was photographed in 1952. This herd has taken on mythical status and we all kept half an eye on the shore just in case we should spot one. After five days of searching for dolphins in Acheron Passage, Wet Jacket Arm and around Cooper Island, the aura of the waterfalls and of the moose had disappeared; no longer did we wish to be close to them, we had become indifferent, familiarity breeds contempt, and distraction. The many photographs we had taken on the first day now were photographs of something else; of parts and features of the work environment, interesting but no longer beautiful or God’s works of art. Without conscious effort, we had achieved a critical distance; experiencing an intellectual engagement now rather than an aesthetic engagement or, more accurately, we were experiencing an aesthetic appreciation of the everyday, of the workplace. “On Day 1 it was hard to look for dolphins; on Day 5 it is hard to look interested. This is now the workaday world and I feel that I belong” (EJS audiotape clip 10028). “The waterfall by Cooper Island is now just a waterfall” (Shelton, 2009).

This collapsing of the subject-object aesthetic distance hinted at, or gestured to the ecological thought, though it hinted also at a new and improved version of beautiful soul syndrome, with the everyday simply absorbed. A Lowry painting of stick-people, with smoke-belching tenements and a factory behind (Street Scene, 1935; Rohde, 2001); dark satanic mills and not mountains and waterfalls, comes closer to offering an opportunity for ecocritique. Neve (1990) noted that: “Lowry was well versed in loneliness…I doubt if he realized the extent to which loneliness was his subject” (p. 107); indicating that he, Neve, had achieved a critical distance. But, just as how in wilderness “(c)ites are present in the negative” (Morton, 2007, p. 173), so in Lowry’s dystopic urbanism, reified nature is present in the negative, its total absence hysterically announcing its presence. The beautiful soul reasserts itself; only this time the aesthetic distance required is whatever is the lowest-altitude Google Earth view that will transcend the scale of the streetscape and allow nature into the frame, to be gratefully received. Basing Benjamin’s aura of the original within ritual still is problematic since, although the erotics of the original are clear, a desire for human contact, the politics both of the reproduction and the original are unclear. The dance involving dualism partnering duality clearly is not an easy one to remove from the programme, and who should lead?
5.2 Doubtful Sound to Preservation Inlet

This final trip on *Breaksea Girl* involved visiting Puysegur Point lighthouse; the stormiest spot on the New Zealand coast. The voyage is weather-dependent and the early part took place in Doubtful Sound, visiting sites of interest but ready always to bolt for the open ocean and a storm-free coastal passage south. The passengers were predominantly middle class Kiwis, with an Australian couple and one man from Japan. One of the Kiwis, David, was a retired merchant seaman, turned conservation volunteer, who dedicated almost all of his discretionary spending to these trips. David spoke little and preferred to sleep on deck. The Japanese man had seen a television programme in Japan, featuring Fiordland, and had booked to come; he was to report back to his colleagues and they would book or not book on his recommendation. Having decided to come, he went to an ‘outfitters’ in Tokyo and was kitted out in safari-style clothes, including a mesh hat, for protection from the sandflies.

It was obvious from the ensuing conversations that the other passengers found this presentation disconcerting; he wasn’t ‘doing’ expedition cruising right, in the same way that Judith Butler’s (1990) *Gender Trouble* demonstrated how an individual may not ‘do’ gender right. Apart from David, the rest of us dressed more or less uniformly, in layers of Polyprop, Icebreaker and GoreTex. The key difference was that everyone had worn their garments on previous outdoor activities and had a wardrobe of such items from which to choose; some near new and some ready to be discarded. The sight of an ensemble of brand-new gear, and reflecting on its incongruity, underscored the performative nature of the expedition cruising tourist identity. David was exempt from comparison because of his existing seagoing credentials. David’s performance of ‘ex-merchant navy’, which clearly influenced how he moved, ate, conversed, slept, seemed so automatic that it was at the reflexive end of the reflective/reflexive aporia, just as had been Leith’s performance of ex-Royal Navy.

For our purposes, the most interesting aspect of Preservation Inlet is aesthetic. There are ten managed historic sites either of local or national importance.

The Department of Conservation has developed conservation plans for each of these sites. The plans outline the significance of each site, describe threats and management issues, and recommend any remedial work or maintenance. The aim of this management is to preserve and interpret the ‘meaning and importance’ of each site for present and future generations (Peat, 2007, p. 40).

At some sites, for example Cuttle Cove Whaling Station, a Site of National Importance, “regenerated forest now hides evidence of the station and its settlement” (Peat, 2007, p. 51).
Left alone, all traces of this industrial process will disappear. How should we respond to this event? Trigg (2006), states: “we seek to assert the future of decline through aesthetic contemplation, so establishing a bond between subject and object. In a post-rational existence, the task of affirming the manifestation of decline is critical” (p. 118). Can Trigg be read as proposing that the ‘meaning and importance’ of this site for future generations is that it be erased? Perhaps he can:

In our age, however, the merger between consumption and pessimism has become synonymous with our late capitalist post-industrial culture. The dynamic between cultural pessimism- a world conscious of its decline- and a world still hungry for survival by capitalist consumption is especially evident in the last four decades of the twentieth century…as capitalism develops, the sites of previous activity, unable to exploit the profit of capitalism, lie dormant on the urban landscape (Trigg, 2006, pp. 119-120).

Preservation Inlet was an urban landscape in microcosm. It is difficult to keep in mind, when faced with a site currently so remote, that all of New Zealand was once like this; Auckland, a city of over one million inhabitants, started like this, in some cases post-dated the industrial activity that went on here. It is primarily because of the gazetting of the national park that Preservation Inlet looks as it does now. In other countries, certainly in Australia and the United States, this post-industrial site would host a residual collection of social isolates, cranks and fossikers. Their presence would decrease the sense of remoteness but increase the sense of dereliction. The reclaiming of the site by forest would not be the only process operating to produce landscape. The reclaiming forest acts to obliterate the ruin and in the process imposes a reactionary politics on the site, through the clear privileging of reified nature as the dominant aesthetic; a reified nature that will allow us, the human visitors, to celebrate the elimination of the human from where we are visiting. This act; bringing the human tourist to celebrate the absence of the human, is common to ‘ecological’ touristic approaches to nature (Reis & Shelton, 2011).

Other sites though, for example Alpha Battery Quartz Mine, are actively managed as ruins. “(P)roduction dropped away and by 1907 the mine had closed…Phil Dorizac rediscovered the site in the early 1960s” (Peat, 2007, pp. 63-64). Vegetation is cleared and ironwork conserved through the application of a preservative coating. Something has changed over the fifty years since the plant was abandoned; a different aesthetic is operating. Trigg explains:

The double life of the ruin, as a shadow of its former being, now subverting that presence, means that we only recognize the totality of the place once its existence is threatened. The emergence of a past time in a present time reinforces the notion of the ruin as haunted. Central to this haunted spatiality is the delayed recognition of the ruin’s past…Together with the uncanny, Freud’s notion of Nachtraglichkeit
(deferred action) captures the disrupted temporality of the unfinished past (Trigg, 2006, p. 133).

We, the tourists, were exposed to “the representation of dynamic stasis (which) causes a radical collision between episodic moments. The ruin attracts the discards of time…we are able to recognize the entire history of space in a site while simultaneously recognizing the future absence of that history” (Trigg, 2006, p. 133).

Trigg is clear that it is this opportunity for simultaneity that gives the ruin its magnetism. Some of these episodic moments are of a similar scale of linear time. Peat (2007) illustrates “(s)luicing equipment at Sealers Creek No. 2. A major effort was required to construct a water race to this site and after a couple of weeks’ sluicing, with no returns, the site was abandoned” (p. 62). In the absence of detritus, fittings for the sluice pumps, two weeks’ industrial effort would not attract interpretation other than as an event, and then only if it were of significance; for example the shortest-lived mine as metonym for the transience of extractive industry in the area. Trigg offers the post-industrial sublime as the aesthetic of the ruin, where we observe…formlessness overpowering the presence of reason. If the enforcement of reason by way of detached (formal) contemplation gives way to aesthetic pleasure, then in reason’s inverted formulation, formlessness triumphs, not reason…the ruin is still becoming, thereby precluding detached spectatorship (pp. 149-150).

As expedition cruise tourists, put ashore at Preservation Inlet, we were confronted by incompatible aesthetics. Up to that point the rules of how to perform our narrative selves were clear. We had been exposed to the ‘overdrawn at the bank of planet earth’ address and we had listened to the despoliation narrative being presented as the public narrative. We were encouraged to be melancholy dualists. The sight of the bush erasing signs of human use was to be celebrated as evidence of nature in action within the sublime landscape. We had voyaged to the stormiest site available, to be confronted by chunks of late nineteenth century industrial machinery; heritage items, some allowed to be absorbed back into the bush, to corrode and disappear, and others arrested in their “dynamic of ruination” (Trigg, 2006, p. 141) by protective coatings and by treating contiguous native and endemic flora as weeds, to be cleared away. This incompatibility of aesthetics, the sublime and the post-industrial sublime, imposed narrative incoherence on the ecological subject. No one seemed to mind; the sheer novelty of visiting a long-since-abandoned silver mine with a rare design of horizontal brick chimney won the day.
This coastline used to be an important shipping lane for clippers clearing Melbourne for the Horn; who would head south from here, and was central to the whaling and sealing industries, who headed south also. Both of these factors meant that Solander, the imaginary, must include the sub-Antarctic islands.

5.3 Being in the sub-Antarctic

Superlative natural values are only part of the story, however. Mix in an air of mystery nourished by the outpost nature of the islands and a history of sealing, whaling, shipwrecks, ill-fated enterprise and human frailty and you have a truly unique region (Peat, 2003, p. 8).

During Heritage Expeditions’ voyages #2293 and #2294, to New Zealand’s sub-Antarctic islands, I encountered the similarities and differences of visitors’ experiences, compared with those of the trips in Fiordland. Breaksea Girl accommodates twelve passengers; Spirit of Enderby nearly fifty. The public narrative was delivered much more forcefully and it became of interest how such narratives are proffered, and how they are embraced, resisted and subverted. On #2294 I shared a cabin with a man who had visited Antarctica over seventy times, as a guide, and who had written books for the Antarctic Education Service (Parker & Parker, 2000). Even though this was his first trip to New Zealand’s sub-Antarctic islands we shared the professional habit of interrogating whatever narratives were presented to us. There were seven Germans on board, travelling as a group; the oldest member being ninety-one, and it transpired that they had gone to a travel agent in Hanover and asked for the product that would take them as far away from Germany as it was possible to go. Another German was a keen photographer. The small number of Americans on board wished simply to experience a different kind of product and it was almost by chance that they had ended up on this voyage.112 The ship’s library catered well for the passengers whose thoughts strayed further south, especially since commemoration of Mawson’s exploits involving the South Magnetic Pole were then receiving attention in his homeland of Australia. The fact that Mawson probably was mistaken in his belief that he had reached the South Magnetic Pole served only to add poignancy to the discussions of his efforts.

112 As an aside, it is interesting to note that when Adventure Philosophy members (Adventure Philosophy, 2007) have addressed public meetings, while reporting on kayaking around South Georgia, they have found that Australasian audiences indicate familiarity with the history of southern polar exploration; in contrast to North American audiences, who do not (Graham Charles, Adventure Philosophy 2007 pers.com.).
On board #2293 were two of the men who, in 1975, had been employed to remove sheep from Campbell Island. These men personified the change in how the island has been perceived and managed, from a God-forsaken site of marginal pastoralism to a God-given opportunity for ecosystem-level restoration.

Kerry, one of the shepherds who shot the feral sheep sees Campbell Island now as different, and probably better, but there is a lack of articulated passion amongst all the Kiwis. This must not be confused with a lack of passion, or evidence of a distancing, just a lack of articulation (EJS audiotape 10003).

Apart from these two passengers, and several of the Department of Conservation staff on board, no one in the group had ventured into the sub-Antarctic before. Curiosity was the single most common motive for booking the trip, especially amongst the more affluent passengers. Relative affluence was easily calculated from the content of conversations: who had travelled where; how many houses they owned, and where in the world; whether or not paid work was required to sustain their current standard of living. One characteristic of these well-travelled individuals was the habit of comparing what happened on this trip, Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific #2293, with previous travel experiences. It soon emerged that, for the most part, what was being compared was the public narrative of this and other settings. Certainly, Peat’s (2003) book provided material-in-common for discussion. In contrast, several of the New Zealanders on board, myself included, had read The Castaways of Disappointment Island (Escott-Inman & Prater, 1911) as children and had ever since nurtured a desire to visit the vicinity of this event. “For Wanda it is spiritual, and my cabinmate John finds it spiritual and he read the same wax paper bound version of ‘Castaways’ as a child as I did (EJS audiotape 10002)”. Also, a smaller number had read Madelene Ferguson Allen’s (1997) Wake of the Invercauld, an account of one woman’s secular pilgrimage to Auckland Island as a consequence of discovering the identity of her birth family. A sense of pilgrimage characterised these groups, and was most powerful in the less affluent Australasian passengers, for whom the trip represented considerable expenditure. As a result of years of reading and thinking about the area these individuals had constructed an imaginative version of the islands, an imaginary, and were engaging in the never-to-be-repeated experience of making that imaginative world tangible. Stormy weather significantly curtailed the shore activities of #2293. Exploration of Auckland Island was limited; landing at Enderby Island was cancelled and exploring the coastline of the Snares also was cancelled. Despite these bitter disappointments the pilgrimage passengers remained stoical; after all, Disappointment Island had not been named in jest. These individuals stated that their sense of obligation to visit the area had been fulfilled by the very act of trying. Such deeply personal motivation; of
duty to self and wider society, fits within Somers’ (1994) concept of “(o)ntological narratives...the stories that social actors use to make sense of—indeed, to act in—their lives” (p. 618). It was these ontological narratives, which contain already an interpretive framework within which to situate the phenomena of the islands, which most directly subverted the public narrative that was presented. The pilgrimage passengers already had a strong sense of the meanings that could, and/or should, be attached to the various features that they anticipated encountering. These reported experiences, gathered in a manner that accessed intensity of emotion, are not incompatible with those reported a decade earlier (Cessford & Dingwall, 1996), and resist facile attempts to situate them within a framework of economic determinism. I will return to this in the next chapter.

Unlike the Fiordland trips, the trips to the sub-Antarctic make extensive use of interpretation. Such interpretation can be considered in two ways. Either, objects or events of interest can be viewed as possessing an intrinsic truth, or essence, and the job of the interpreter is then to identify that essence for an audience, or, visitors may be assumed to bring to the interpretation event existing narratives of their individual lives, and then to use these narratives to situate objects and events within a personal, themed plot. Rejecting the usefulness of the notion of authenticity and working instead with the concept of narrativity raises major difficulties for interpretive practice. There is no getting away from the fact that a well-presented public narrative, like Peat’s (2003) Subantarctic New Zealand: A rare heritage, provides many readers with enjoyment, a sense of understanding, and a structure for conversations about the topics described. The nature of interpretative material that will respond to, or in fact partially be formed by, the emplotted narratives that individual’s bring to events is difficult to imagine. Whether by accident or design Peat’s (2007) New Zealand’s Fiord Heritage: A guide to the historic sites of coastal Fiordland steers a course in that direction; presenting an approach that is antithetical to distilling the essence. The combination of the stated aim of the book; that

The Department of Conservation envisages this guide obviating the need for on-site interpretation panels in locations where maintenance demands would be challenging because of climate or remoteness, and where the presence of panels might well detract from the visitor experience (Peat, 2007).

and the indigenous narrative sidebars (p. 9 & p. 15) gesture towards a possible basis for non-essentialist interpretation of the future. Tilden’s (1957) principle that provocation should be central to interpretation stands; only now the provocation must be, not of the visitor to recognise any particular essence, but of the visitor to identify elements of her own ontological narrative and how these are acting to shape interpretation through the attribution of meaning.
Forgotten Islands of the South Pacific #2293 had the power to facilitate this process for a small number of passengers. More than one person, myself included, experienced a strong sense of homecoming on arriving at Port Ross on Auckland Island. It may be that there are certain elements of the voyage which have particular potency when combined with certain characteristics of any particular passenger. On this trip those passengers who had emplotted a sub-Antarctic pilgrimage into their individual ontological narratives found much that resonated with their expectations. The fact that the Russian crew did not speak English and did not interact much with passengers may have helped. Passengers had no other expert narratives available, such as that of the English-speaking contemporary seafarer, to add to, compete with, or detract from, the Department of Conservation ones. One DOC staff member described Campbell Island to me as a “weed-infested rat-hole”, a comment not in itself subversive of the ‘restoration and appreciation’ narrative position but indicating simply that there is still much to be done.

The unique elements that make up individuals’ stories remain to be explored. For example, referring to one of the young people who were travelling on #2294 through a Heritage Expeditions’ Scholarship: “Mel’s grandfather was wecked on the Dundonald in 1907; she has her own narrative” (Shelton, 2008b, np). Mel was very keen to visit all the sites associated with her grandfather’s stay on the island. The short-lived settlement of Hardwicke and its cemetery were central to her pilgrimage. In order to minimise adverse physical impacts, Hardwicke is allowed to be on the tourism itinerary every second year, and this was an off-year. Ensuring adherence to these concession conditions is the responsibility of the New Zealand Government Representative on board; usually a DOC staff member, and on this occasion he closed his eyes to Mel being taken to Hardwicke that evening by inflatable dinghy. I expected at least some of the other passengers to object to this exception being made but, over dinner, there was universal approval. Mel’s visit was not viewed as being subversive in any way.

That last major wreck, of the Dundonald, on Disappointment Island in 1907, produced its own narrative of death, hardship, ingenuity (the survivors built a coracle and sailed to stores left on Auckland Island for castaways) and personal transformations (Escott-Inman & Prater, 1911). One narrative of the Dundonald with the Auckland Islands is that constructed by the great-granddaughter of a wreck survivor (Allen, 1997). This author’s desire to visit, and to tell her forebear’s story is situated within a previously-described longing to discover her birth-family. Thus, what at first seems like a straightforward ‘following-in-the-footsteps-of’
itinerary evolves into a personal journey, undertaken now by a dériveur (this is no place for
the flâneur), following another, yet constructing ‘a road of her own’ (Macfarlane, 2005);
changing history (through the discovery of the forgotten manuscript that stimulated her
imagination) while at the same time being changed, being found by the guiding (personal)
metaphors.

As I watched the succession of grey waves sweeping towards us, passing under
the ship and continuing on- to die somewhere in the Pacific- I pondered the long,
long road that had brought me to this point in my search for Robert Holding,
seaman. This was, in essence, the second part of many years of searching; the first
search was for my birth family…here was the chance of a real adventure, here
was the opportunity to go to the ends of the earth, with a purpose (Allen, 1997, p.
66).

For Allen, the distance travelled in search of self, however disguised it is as a search for
Robert Holding, acts to strengthen the eventual experience. Allen did not begin her journey
without cultural baggage. Canadian nation-building, particularly representation of landscape,
has been a distinctly gendered process (Hjartarson, 2005, p. 42). Allen’s theoretically naïve
viewing of Auckland Island as naturally occurring sublime landscape must be set against the
insights of feminist scholarship:

For years, feminist theories have differentiated vision- pleasure in looking- from
the notion of seeing as a process of perceiving in the real world. The image and
the act of looking are now understood to be relations highly mediated by fantasies
that structure and are structured by sexual difference. Visual space is, in the first
instance, a set of social relations; it is never innocent (Deutsche, 1996, p. 197).

Parallel to Allen’s physically personal journey, like Mel’s, yet inhabiting the same location, as
tourism context, is the ecotourism offered by expedition cruising. The location remains a
touristed landscape, constructed by tourists, and other personal journeys are narrated within
the ‘restoration and appreciation’ normative narrative (e.g. Marr, 2003). “(N)ature-society
relations, whether material or as geographical imaginaries, remain central to landscape
formation” (Cartier, 2005, p. 3). What if these nature-society relations are historical, that is,
constructed in the past to suit the social mores of the time? How much may these historical
constructions, in this case, of the spiritual dimensions of the experience of landscape,
influence the present-day tourist experience? This is the central issue to be addressed in the
wide use of Escott-Inman & Prater’s (1911) account of the Dundonald’s 1907 wrecking.
There are other, lesser-known narratives. Eunson (1974), after telling of repeated attempts to
recover the (almost certainly apocryphal) gold from the General Grant, wrecked in a cave
opposite Disappointment Island, and without the benefit of hindsight, concludes: “(t)here is
little reason now to visit these islands” (p. 160). In fact, the islands were to be revived by
tourism. After many years of attention only by scientists the Auckland Islands themselves were transformed in two ways: first through legislation, by being gazetted as a marine reserve and secondly, by becoming the focus of deliberate self-transformation-seeking tourists.

While many of the present-day visitors are intent on becoming, their prototypes, the castaways, were content just to be. Eyre, a castaway, and the others wished for the opportunity to perform everyday life, rather than the extraordinary existence they found themselves experiencing. Even the heroic small-boat journey to New Zealand that resulted in the rescue mission being mounted for the *Grafton* was not undertaken in order somehow to facilitate self-transformation; it was undertaken in an attempt to be again what those individuals had been before, ordinary. Re-enactments, retracing-the-journeys of and following-in-the-footsteps-of are all, of necessity, more about becoming than being. Being can better be experienced by staying at home. Becoming a tourist is a move from self to subject.

A single location may be transformed sequentially into a multiplicity of places. The Auckland Islands act in this way:

Abraham Bristow, a whaling captain, discovered the group in 1806, and whaling and sealing attracted temporary and intermittent populations up until 1852 when settlement was abandoned. Little notice seems to have been taken of the islands until ships sailing the great-circle route from Australia to Cape Horn were wrecked there (Eunson, 1974, p. 3).

Written accounts of the extraction of revenue during the era of exploitation have proved to be unremarkable, although it is reasonable to assume that such a dangerous industry was replete with coming-of-age transformations of ‘turning boys into men’. The subsequent phase, surviving shipwrecks, provided stories of personal transformation. For one crew, from the *Grafton*, an open-sea small-boat repatriation voyage to New Zealand (Musgrave, 1865) offered adequate opportunity for self-development. For another, from the *General Grant*, which foundered in 1866, transformation was a mixed bag. James Teer rose to leadership, others were psychologically devastated. Not to be defeated, Teer, at the lowest point of the castaways’ ordeal, initiated a self-transforming process:113

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113 Li (2010) discusses how “the self is shaped by the ubiquitous neo-liberal ideology of globalization” (p. 60). Teer’s story (in portraying a heroic castaway…resembles a ‘Robinsinade’, a narrative genre named after Daniel Defoe’s classic tale of shipwreck and survival, *Robinson Crusoe*…Robinsinades …appear to be more about humanity abandoned to nature than humanity shaped by society … yet … (are) thoroughly informed by the ideological structures of its society. However isolated and bereft, the individual apparently cannot escape society’s grasp…In the traces of the social and the political-
Teer, in effect, was attempting to transfer his own sense of agency to his despondent companions, and in the process was transforming the relational dimension of his own being, from a person content to look after himself, as he had been in the goldfields where he had previously prospected, to a person who took on responsibility for the affective state of others. This evaluation of personal agency persists and is re-enacted by tourists: “What the journey made me feel was ‘utterly insignificant’; why? Because I began to really understand the power of the wind…I had been taught about it…but never really stood and watched and thought about it and felt it.” (Letter to me from a passenger on #2293).

There is a process of accretion operating. Being presented with another’s narrative has been shown to elicit ‘transportation’ into that narrative (Green, 2005). There are individual differences in susceptibility to transportation but the point is that there is empirical support for the notion that the castaway narratives of early Solander influence still the experiences of present visitors. Allen (1997) cites and partially retells Escott-Inman (1911). Peat (2003) cites and partially retells both Escott-Inman (1911) and Allen (1997). To date there has been nothing published about Solander that challenges, subverts or discredits these received versions.

As the narratives pile up they influence subsequent texts, culminating, to date, in Peat (2003), discussed below. The contemporary tourist doesn’t need to have read directly about James Teer for Teer’s story to be part of the narrated subject which they are enacting. Expedition cruise passengers’ experiences of the sublime in Fiordland: “thank you for opening a small window onto creation” (Redgrave, 2002, p. 28 above) can reasonably be expected to have been influenced by material the tourist has been exposed to prior to the trip; to be part, indeed,

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obscured by the story of human endurance and survival- the articulation of globalization discourse to subject formation can be located. What (Teer’s story) shows is not the subject’s exit from globalization, but his reconfiguration or redefinition by globalization’s neo-liberal ideology (p. 61).

The tourist replicates the Robinsinade narrative form, supported by the trip newsletter posted on the web at trip’s end.
of the experience of desire. Fiordland is unproblematic to the extent that the scenery has
repeatedly and widely been reported as so spectacular (Caffyn, 1979; Peat & Patrick, 1996;
Hall-Jones, 1997, 2002; Duff, 2003) that recourse to the idea of the sublime when searching
for descriptors of personal experience of the landscape is understandable, even within a
secular framework. The sub-Antarctic Islands, though, pose a difficulty to the extent that they
have been represented historically as God-forsaken. Popular recent accounts (Fell, 2002; Peat,
2003), primarily are concerned with describing flora and fauna, along with mention of the
extreme weather. Suggested further readings in these accounts inevitably refer back to The
Castaways of Disappointment Island. Yet this narrative is not a first-person account; it is a re-
presentation of interviews the author had with a survivor, Charles Eyre, an apprentice who
signed on as an Able Seaman for one voyage. Nowadays Eyre would most likely be cited as
author and Escott-Inman as ghost-writer. Escott-Inman himself was a minister of religion and
it is impossible to discount the likelihood that the spirituality described in the text is Escott-
Inman’s more than anyone else’s. Consider:

In the Bible, Solomon, in the book of Ecclesiastes, describes a man who is very
weak…That is just how we were. And then he (Solomon) goes on to say: ‘the
grasshopper shall be a burden.’ That is a wonderful description of weakness; even
the small weight of a grasshopper being more than a man can bear. Solomon knew
what he was talking about (p. 93).

Although Eyre cannot be excluded as the source of this homily, it is far more likely to be the
work of the clergyman. This ghost writing becomes significant in the developing discourse on
spirituality and the sublime when sections are cited by later writers (e.g. Allen, 1997) as being
the first-person account of a survivor. Allen herself engages with the sublime in her report of
how things were after she visited the spot where Rowling was shipwrecked: “It had been one
of God’s perfect days (Allen, 1997, p. 88). This appeal to the sublime, as in invoking a sense
of reverence or awe, is not necessarily an indication of personal religiosity, but rather may
indicate only that no other metaphor has the power, primarily historically based, required to
convey the depth of spirituality experienced.

If an ongoing search for self simply recruits new places within which to situate that search
then Allen (1997) can be read as an extension of the activities of everyday life (McCabe,
2002). The concepts and feelings generated during a visit, and the language used to describe
them, may easily be traced to the language and ideas of earlier centuries, in other locations,
articulated by other people, more or less similar in their systems of values to the present
informant. The fact that a new sense of self became available in the late eighteenth century
doesn’t mean that everybody availed themselves of it. In fact, as with Charles Eyre, the
suspicion remains that a member of the clergy, who hankered for the earlier, more theocratic, notion of selfhood, could appropriate the tale of a simple sailor and tell it to suit traditional ends. Without this appropriation the tale would never have been told, and yet, because of this appropriation, a key text that has influenced later generations of visitors, through having become a major part of the social/historical context of Solander, continued to promulgate, in 1911, a spirituality and system of representation that already was waning amongst those of a scientific bent by the time of Cook’s visit in 1773.

Even having achieved the goal, the place where ‘following in the footsteps of’ transforms almost into ‘being in the presence of’, the visitor retains a sense of exteriority, the tourist subject belongs, not to the experience, but rather, to the narrative in which the experience and the tourist are embedded (Nash, 1996):

Had we known we would be unable to get across the top of the island to the point above the wreck site, I would have gone ashore- but at that time we had expected later to stand atop the cliffs and perhaps risked the climb down. My only regret was that we didn’t actually land (Allen, 1997, p. 88).

It is clear that Allen believes that somehow touching the rocks upon which her ancestor’s ship foundered would complete the connection, would strengthen her personal transformation of self. Nash’s point is that it would have made no difference; the ‘tourist moment’ (Carey, 2003)114 can be no more than a simulacrum.

Purely by coincidence, Allen travelled to the west coast of Auckland Island on Breaksea Girl and experienced Lance’s disappearing act. This performance, which is outside required sailing practice, contains the element of entertainment that situates Allen’s voyage within tourism. Adjectival tourism categories available would include ‘dark tourism.’ Allen, only too grateful to have found someone who would transport her to the usually unvisited site of her

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114 The ‘tourist moment’ (Carey, 2003) posits the legitimacy of the secular-spiritual transformative experience, when ‘tourist as subject’ becomes ‘tourist as narrative object’ (Nash, 1996). Krych (2004) situates such a transformation within a Christian conceptual framework. The key difference between the tourist moment and ‘religious’ transformation is the notion that the transcendent event, the becoming, “suggests intentionally cooperative intervention from a realm beyond consciousness itself”, that is, the Holy Spirit (Krych, 2004, p. 280). The tourist moment is the opposite of Kristeva’s abjection. Kristeva’s concept of abjection (Kristeva, 1982) can usefully be recruited into describing the relationship of the self and the Other, where here the other is individuals in the category ‘tourist’, now that ‘we are all tourists’.

Today the Other is not so different from me as to be an object; discursive consciousness asserts that Blacks, women, homosexuals, and disabled people are like me. But at the level of practical consciousness they are affectively marked as different. In this situation, those in the despised groups threaten to cross over the border of the subject’s identity because discursive consciousness will not name them as completely different…and I must turn away with disgust and revulsion (Young, 1990, p.146).
pilgrimage, remained unconcerned about her membership of the social formation ‘tourist’, focusing instead on the category of adoptee.

By way of contrast, visitors to Campbell Island are made well aware of their tourist status, and how it should be performed.\textsuperscript{115} Negative physical impacts on Col-Lyall Saddle, the site most visited by the 600 allowed annual visitors, are managed by the use of a boardwalk from the wharf to the saddle and the end of which is the muster point for those who have dispersed from there for their independent shore activity. On #2293 (and #2294), I joined a party of six to make the more demanding all-day trip to North West Bay. The two 1975 shepherds and the ship’s chef were part of the group, as was the expedition leader. About half-way through the tramp the leader was forced to turn back after being informed by radio that a search party was being mounted to look for one of the Germans, who had failed to return from a trip to Col-Lyall saddle. The leader’s departure left our party with no radio and no map but we easily made our way to Tucker Cove, where the inflatable was to pick us up. Later, I comiserated with the expedition leader over having been called away and he explained that this passenger had been the subject of a search in the same place two years earlier and he felt sure that the wandering-off was a deliberate ploy to get access to restricted areas, under the guise of being lost, in order to obtain photographs of material that other visitors would not have viewed.

The volcanic geomorphology of the sub-Antarctic islands, and the region’s stormy weather, lend themselves to the construction of a sublime seascape and landscape but this way of experiencing the islands is not of primary importance; the primary features of this region are the wildlife, sea birds and marine mammals, apprehended through a combination of a contemporary, extrinsic, public narrative of restoration/appreciation and persistent, intrinsic, ontological narratives.

5.4 Wildlife and the nonhuman animal in Solander

Reis & Shelton (2011), in their review *The Nature of Tourism*\textsuperscript{116} make a point of using the terms ‘human animal and nonhuman animal’ rather than ‘human and non-human’ animals’; let alone ‘humans and animals.’ This nicety does nothing to alter the human-other species

\textsuperscript{115} There is a comprehensive Visitor Management Plan in; Department of Conservation (2004) *New Zealand’s Subantarctic Islands Tourism Policy*.

\textsuperscript{116} Titles that are wordplays that allow ironic readings are a perhaps overdone feature of postmodernism.
binary, nor does it alter the fact that, presumably, only humans, through language, construct the world this way, but it does indicate an acknowledgement that, although irrevocably separate from humans, other animals are part of the moral and ethical world we have constructed. Of the nonhuman animals in Solander it is the marine mammals who best illustrate aura; as charismatic megafauna, those large animals who most appeal to humans, in part because human values can most easily be imposed on them. Paradoxically, technological reproduction, in the case of charismatic megafauna, serves to increase aura. One of the ways in which the world has changed since Benjamin’s time is that the political work done by the reproduction now does not necessarily detract from its aura, in fact, with flagship species and the individuals who represent them, aura increases. Metonymy does not morph into metaphor because the class of charismatic fauna is controlled and limited, for example the ‘big five’ on the Serengeti. The inclusion/exclusion rules for being charismatic vary from product to product and are not based on membership of any particular ecosystem array. Invertebrates are crucial to ecosystems (as Sir David Attenborough pointed out in Life on Earth; ‘we need them but they don’t need us’) but are unlikely ever to be featured in a tourism product). In the marketing of expedition cruise tourism the preparatory technological reproduction (the website, the glossy hard copy of the year’s itinerary and the complimentary book) serves to shape how the visitor will experience the interaction with the charismatic nonhuman megafauna. Charisma and aura here are closely related, with both illustrating the sacred, but with charisma having the additional characteristics of entertainment and cuteness producing, when attributed to a species of nonhuman animal, “just a ‘new and improved’ version of kitsch” (Morton, 2007, p. 22). It is worth considering how, in this setting, the discursively constructed subject, the Romantic consumer, discursively produces the kitsch object, ‘the individual charismatic nonhuman animal.’

On the voyage from New Zealand to Campbell Island seldom is there a moment without an albatross in sight. The guide on #2294 provided expert commentary, now available as a handsome hardcover coffee-table style book (Terauds & Stewart, 2009). On deck, sometimes surrounded by many species of albatross it was difficult to ignore Coleridge’s Rime of the Ancient Mariner. My own childhood copy was bound in wax paper; the same size, binding and publisher as Castaways of Disappointment Island. These texts had an aura all of their own and this aura was transferred easily to the birds following in our wake. Once on

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117 I am aware of the complex philosophical implications of the constructivism implicit in this sentence, some of which were presented above. On the journey ‘out of Africa’ we have gained reflectivity, perhaps through the acquisition of language, allowing us to construct the human-nonhuman binary, and have lost reflexivity with respect to ‘being the species that has produced and enforced the concept of species.’
Campbell Island the albatross followed us around and when we stopped, approached us. I couldn’t help but think of favourite lines from *Rime*. Morton has a slew of apposite comments: “Coleridge…often wishes for reconciliation of subject and object” (Morton, 2007, p. 22); “Coleridge’s *The Ancient Mariner* suggests an ecological approach that we could call an ethics of kitsch” (Morton, 2007, p. 157); “Consumerism tends to turn every object into the embodiment of the enjoyment of the other” (Morton, 2007, p. 157). I look at my companions spooling off photographs and wonder what it is that they believe they are capturing on film; substance or essence?

By far the most popular nonhuman animals were the two canines; the New Zealand sealion (*Phocarctus hookeri*) and the elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*). The former put on dramatic displays of territorial aggression which were all feint and bluff but which occasionally turned serious. Some of the individual sealions on Campbell Island, and at Sandy Bay in the Auckland Island group, regularly travelled to and from Sandfly Bay on Otago Peninsula, a distance of nearly 700 km, marked for navigation by an undersea volcanic ridge. My personal history of guiding at Sandfly Bay made me familiar with these tagged individuals; I had shown them to visitors. Being canines (through having been classified so by Linnean taxonomy), these nonhuman animals will chase anyone who runs from them. The operator explained not to run but to stand still and even the largest, most intimidating male would lose interest. I have given this advice to others over one thousand times. I knew that the current operator required a *Marine Mammal Viewing Permit* in order to show us this species. At North West Bay, a four hour tramp away, the elephant seal was represented by bug-eyed pups who approached us. Their attentions were welcomed. The guide in me wanted to explain that the eyes looked this way because they were designed to operate most effectively at depths of over 1 km, when the water pressure would change their shape to optimise their ability to focus on prey. My working familiarity with these marine mammals has led me as far away from dualism and as accepting of duality as is possible, as far as aporia will allow. I can see the path, but it is blocked; I see the blockage but I trust there is a path. This busman’s holiday,

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118 One of the more skilled photographers some weeks later put on a show in our home city, Dunedin, New Zealand. I attended and asked him what he was attempting in his selection of objects: sunsets, nonhuman animals, plants. He was quite clear that he was attempting to capture the essence of the trip. A few Auckland Island shots were of abandoned buildings; one dilapidated and one restored wooden WW2 coastwatch huts. These images sat uneasily amongst the sublime aesthetic that informed the others chosen; they lacked aura, not having the key elements required to produce Trigg’s (2006) ‘industrial sublime.’

119 The triumph of the Linnean system of taxonomy was by no means certain; other systems competed with it (Shapin, 2008), so canine is not an inevitable category for these marine mammals.

120 My top-of-mind descriptor was ‘doe-eyed’ but such imagery has been captured and rendered unusable by Disney, through *Bambi*. Whitley (2007) examines Disney’s presentation of nature and the ideological basis of such representation, for example Ch. 2, *Healing the rift*, where Disney’s promise of human/environment reconciliation is shown to be grounded in the application of capitalist values.
as someone who used to earn a living as a wildlife guide, and came not to believe in viewing nonhuman animals, now being guided in viewing wildlife,

undermines the capitalist-ideological difference between work and leisure, which attenuates the notion of labor and is a reflection of alienated labor. When people are involved in their work, they experience, and produce, and produce as experience, a dissolution of the reified object and, for that matter, the reified subject (Morton, 2007, p. 163).

For me, this is distraction; there is no aesthetic distance between me and the sea lion and the elephant seal, even if ‘lion’ and ‘elephant’ invite it, as Serengeti metaphor one step removed. I am absorbed, but it is “a quality of nonstupefied absorption in the environment, conceived not as reified nature ‘over there’ outside the city of the factory gates but ‘right here’” (Morton, 2007, p. 164). These could be individuals I have spoken to in the past, not for any spiritual reason but instrumentally, so they will let me and my party pass in the pre-dawn darkness, unharrassed. The aura of the sub-Antarctic islands, present since that childhood reading of Castaways of Disappointment Island dissipates upon being there. I have come on a ship made available through the collapse of the Soviet economy, with a Russian crew who must accept being away from home for months at a time, unable to practice their former professions. I have replicated my everyday experiences, my work, in another setting; “reception in a state of distraction…more akin to walking through a building than contemplating a canvas” (Morton, 2007, p. 166).

Whether Heritage Expeditions’ and Aurora Expeditions’ trips south can survive in a climate of likely ever-increasing fuel costs remains to be seen. The products must be vulnerable to any reduction in long-haul travel. In the future, the nature of the products that allow tourists to travel to New Zealand’s sub-Antarctic islands will almost certainly change. What is less likely to change is the power of the islands to become a greater part of the very sense of being of those who go there carrying ideas of them as part of their being already (Shelton, 2011c, p. 249).

Such ontological issues notwithstanding, those who seek self in enduring paradises produce a rather too large an ‘ecological footprint’ to be considered ‘ecological citizens’ (Dobson, 2003). We must conclude by considering how to constitute “the melancholy dualist” and how to interpellate “the individual as romantic consumer” into this new, truly ecological position.

**Summary of Chapter 5**

The chapter was intended to address the question of whether embodied tourists’ performances of themselves as tourists in sublime settings ever achieved a critical distance sufficient to
qualify as a critique of the ecological subject. I noted that expedition cruising produced a public narrative of the immanent sublime, an aesthetic of nature, that served the re-enchanted of the world.

However nature is aestheticised, and whatever the engagement with the sublime, four aporia persist; subject/object, reflexivity/reflectivity, *aura/distraction* and structuralism/poststructuralism. The written, verbal and visual material collected and presented in narrative form attempted to illustrate simultaneously being and critiquing, and I opted for a voyage-by-voyage narrative structure. Much of the material in the chapter was concerned about the relationship between place and self and the lability or fixity of self in these settings. Also, the chapter covered the various performances and subversions of the narratives that the host and the guests presented.

These narratives inadvertently contributed to the production of the neoliberal subject, a construct that wasn’t anticipated but nonetheless makes sense within politically saturated postmodernity. The politics of the present age makes problematic any single representation of the object and this chapter then engaged with the issues that emerge when any work of art, including tourists’ performances, are critiqued on the basis of their actually being works of art. Hodges’ paintings of Pickersgill Harbour were presented and subjected to analysis using Benjamin’s concept of authenticity; a concept rendered problematic both by the fact that a focus on boosting *aura* through the use of a particular textual apparatus, or marketing to an affluent elite, may produce a new work of art, with a novel and displacing claim to authenticity and aura.

An insight of the chapter was an understanding of how the neoliberal subject, unchallenged, could emerge from the tourists’ performances of self when the operator and the regulatory authority offered no critique of the Romantic normative narrative that informed the tourist’s ontological positions, perceptions and experiences. Another insight was my own transition from aesthetic distance to critical distance, brought about in part by involvement with the day-to-day experience of what is involved in ‘conservation effort’ and the neoliberal managerialism of the Department of Conservation. Any ‘search for self’ in these places designated ‘remote’, and managed accordingly, perpetuates the ecological subject.
Chapter 6: Insights

This work opened by posing the question: (w)hich is the better way to view how we are in the world; as individual selves characterized by our having agency over how we live our lives and being free to narrate our own existences, or as subjects, brought into being linguistically, not as individuals, but shaped and collected into social and economic formations by forces largely beyond our control? Althusser’s interpellation has the individual “being hailed” to move from self to subject position, recalling that, within any subject position, “At least a possibility of notional choice is inevitably involved because there are many and contradictory discursive practices that each person could engage in” (Davies and Harre, 1990, p. 46).

These “many and contradictory” discursive practices, in this case, constituted the individual and collective performances of everyone I engaged with who was involved in the expedition cruising and conservation management. The “conceptual repertoire” is the collection of performances induced by inhabiting the space created by the reified aesthetic commonly referred to as nature; in particular that version of nature called ‘the sublime’. The expedition cruising industry is economically determined (Shelton, 2011, pp. 244-245) and thus the “possibility (that) notional choice is inevitably involved because there are many and contradictory discursive practices that each person could engage in” ultimately also is economically determined. This claim avoids the sin of teleology since, as noted above, the notion of economy is itself discursively produced and therefore is not in any sense an ultimate causal agent.

Lanchester (2011a,b), commenting on the likelihood of Greece defaulting on its debts, observes:

People feel they have very little economic or political agency, very little control over their own lives; during the boom times, nobody told them this was an unsustainable bubble until it was already too late…But the general public, it turns out, had very little understanding of the economic mechanisms which were, without their knowing it, ruling their lives (p. 6).

These discursive practices referred to above involve touristic performances shaped by a public narrative; either through adherence to it or subversion of it. The Department of Conservation staff operate within The Conservation Economy, as what Althusser would label the apparatus
of the state, so their performances too are economically determined.\footnote{Since its formation in 1987 DOC experienced chronic loss of funding (in terms of 1987 dollars) until receiving a boost in funding with the advent of a Labour-led government and now (October 2011) is undergoing the most comprehensive restructuring since its inception. Separately, the organization was required to cut its budget by $58 million over the three years 2009-2011.} The experience of the sublime is thus economically determined to the extent that it is a commoditized version of the aestheticisation of reified nature; specifically the production of the sublime landscape.

We are dealing with the nature tourist as embodied ecological subject, where establishing and maintaining aesthetic distance and privileging the visual sense would seem to be central to enjoying the product offered. Morton’s (2007) comments on the relationship between subjectivity and environmental writing may usefully be applied to this form of nature tourism:

Subjectivity is not simply an individual, and certainly not an individualist, phenomenon. It is a collective one. (Expedition cruise tourism) is a way of registering the feeling of being surrounded by others (other nature tourists), or more abstractly, by an otherness (a sublime landscape and charismatic flora and fauna), something that is not the self (but the discursive character of the narrated self comes close). Although it may displace the actual social collective and choose to (look and photograph and talk about) surrounding mountains instead, such displacements always say something about the kinds of collective life that (the green, environmentalist, deep ecology, Gaia, biocentric, ecofeminist, neoliberal, tourist) is envisioning (modified from p. 17).

How legitimate is it to substitute in this way expedition cruise touring for environmental writing? It is legitimate to the extent that both deal in aura; mimetic environmental writing is about aura-induced (and inducing) writing, and not environment; expedition cruise tourism is about aura-induced tourism, and not about seeking human-nonhuman duality. The aim of the exercise, the reason we recruited Benjamin in the first place, is to produce “reception in a state of distraction…more akin to walking through a building than contemplating a canvas,” through ecocritique. Mimetic environmental writing can be critiqued through other forms of writing. Expedition cruise tourism may be critiqued using two different approaches. First, cruise tourism may be analysed under the usual heading of impacts; economic, social and environmental. Although intended to provide a structure for management, the impacts approach allows us to engage with ecocritique, under social impacts, since inducing ecological subjectivity in the form of the Romantic consumer is a social process.

More productively, we may engage with the critical turn in Tourism Studies (Ateljevic, Pritchard & Morgan Eds., 2007), particularly the notion, presented in that volume, of processes of becoming (Doorne et al, 2007). What processes of becoming are required when
considering how to constitute “the melancholy dualist,” a subject position of the ecological thought, and how then also to interpellate “the individual as embodied Romantic consumer” into this new, truly ecological subject position? The ecological thought is global (plus any planets we may eventually colonise), as is the cruise industry, but in our Solander the scale of analysis is different; two vessels in one imaginary. The ecological thought “has to do with capitalism and with what might exist after capitalism” (Morton, 2010a, p. 2) and “the ecological thought must imagine economic change; otherwise it’s just another piece on the game board of capitalist ideology…Our current categories are not set in stone. Capitalism isn’t the Procrustean bed that stretches everything to fit it forever” (p. 19). What about the tourist? Is the tourist, as Dann (2002) proposes, a metaphor for everyday selfhood? McCabe (2009) claims above that “the idea of a tourist has taken on cross-cultural and cross-contextual ideological significance as a pejorative term with implicit political and moral implications in its use…Tourist as a categorization device can be subjected to analysis…” (p. 40, italics mine). Yes; and here we must incorporate categorisation into the discursive production of ‘the tourist as subject’ (Moore, 2002). A clear available categorisation is between subjects; between the tourist subject produced partly by the canonical books of the Judeo-Christian religious heritage and the tourist subject produced partly by the texts of other religious traditions. If we confine ourselves to the former, the Judeo-Christian tourist subject, then it is possible to include the received aesthetic, the sublime, as being constitutive of this subject. In this way it is possible also to claim landforms as works of art; divine works of art, with God as the artist. This formulation allows geomorphological features to possess aura, Burke’s sublime. Rather than nature and art slipping from metonymy into metaphor they may be contained by the sublime aesthetic. This means that distraction may legitimately be used to create a critical distance from the elements of the sublime; landforms, weather events or wildlife. It is not possible fully to collapse the aesthetic distance but the process of the individual tourist acting as purely as embodied ecological subject can be disrupted. It is this disruption, through work, that I alluded to above. Repeated exposure to the same waterfall removed its sublimity but did not detract from a respectful engagement with the waterfall as a geomorphological feature fully connected and integrated into the single ecosystem that is planet earth (with no need to invoke Gaia). This duality and recognition of global interconnectedness is at the heart of the ecological thought.

Although the cruise industry globally fits within late capitalism, family-owned Heritage Expeditions (Spirit of Enderby) does not qualify, nor did Fiordland Ecology Holidays (Breaksea Girl), again family-owned, although both are in some ways at the mercy of global
capitalism with respect to fluctuations in demand, particularly the effect of rising oil prices on the United Kingdom market (Becken & Lennox, 2011). The contingencies operating within global capitalism have produced the expedition cruise industry, the nature tourist and the ecological subject but these positions are articulated and performed differently in the two settings within the one imaginary, Solander. For example:

**Breaksea Girl**

Lance went to extraordinary lengths to avoid acknowledging signs of human use, both contemporary and historical. It was clear that only strong visitor interest and expectation ensured that at least some of the social history of the area was included in the itinerary. Lance’s narrative operated in this setting to support ecological subjectivity. This operation justified being considered within Hartley’s (2003) metaphor of theatre. The operator actively and consistently performed his role, apart from that one out-of-role post-dive chat in the dinghy. Definitely nature was presented as being a thing ‘out there’ being ruined by people, with the usual paradox that we, as paying guests, were to be taken inside nature to check the damage. In this way the despoliation narrative presented appeared to provide an element of *distraction* or de-distancing since, as part of entering nature, we were invited to study the forest close-up, for evidence of damage by deer. This drawing-attention-to appears to create a critical distance between the subject and the object. To accept this, though, is to misunderstand *distraction*. The ‘distance’ part of aesthetic distance and critical distance is metaphorical; no ruler can measure such distance. Viewing the forest close-up does nothing to de-aestheticise nature, it is analogous to using a magnifying glass to check a canvas for water damage; the aesthetic distance remains. *Distraction* occurred as we circled Cooper Island for the third time, on the lookout for dolphins to photograph for the purposes of identification. We were sick and tired of the task and the fact that there was snow to a low level meant only that we were cold. The *aura* of the morning had given way to *distraction* by evening. The snowy scene hadn’t changed but our perception of it had, from charming winter wonderland to unpleasant working environment. This experience helped me reject any idea of the immanence of *aura*. Benjamin’s idea of the originality of a work of art bestowing *aura* has meaning only within a specific aesthetic. Benjamin suggests it originated in iconography and religious ritual (Bendix, 2002).

**Spirit of Enderby**

In the sub-Antarctic islands the Romantic consumer purchases experiences that heighten the senses. The giantism of the flowers is impressive but knowing that they cannot tolerate any
more UV than they already receive there seeds an aesthetic of vulnerability. Peat’s (2003) book and the operator’s commentary produce a public narrative of restoration and the fact that the sheep are long gone but the fence posts remain strengthens this. The ‘weed-infested rat-hole’ comment was isolated and informal. There would need to be a formal deconstructive narrative and not just one comment to overcome the power and authority of the public narrative. The promise of distraction is that it can prevent the self from enacting the subject; that is, it can prevent the individual enacting the Romantic consumer, and there was no evidence of that happening; quite the contrary.

Recalling that:

distraction is the subjective form of the collapse of aesthetic distance. There are two types of distraction, and there is a knife-edge of discrimination between them. This makes distraction a very dangerous concept…The first type of distraction is the ignorance born of living in a channel-surfing, easy-clean environment…the second type of distraction is critical absorption (Morton, 2007, p. 165, italics mine).

My insights are situated on this knife-edge of discrimination between the two types of distraction. First: what of the ignorance; the not-knowing-about or the ignoring-of? This is along the lines of ‘don’t look there, look over here’. This kind of distraction supports the expedition cruise sector. When the sub-Antarctic operator levied an extra $US 90 as a fuel surcharge, near the departure date, explaining that the ship used many tons of oil on every cruise, the message was not that the product was unsustainable but that the experience was worth the increased price. This kind of distraction is of little interest since it doesn’t destabilise the Romantic consumer.

Second: what about the de-distancing, the critical absorption? No doubt some of the individuals on board could be interpellated into the position of Romantic consumers where: “Romantic consumerism produced subjective states that eventually became technically reproducible commodities” (Morton, 2007, p. 113). How may a subjective state become a commodity, let alone a technically reproducible one? I suggest that the expedition cruise tourists’ subjective states, those homogenized through exposure to, and performance of, the public narrative are then reproduced through the usual technologies of self; photographs, diaries, blogs, letters, memoirs and the like, but the individual subversions and resistances that are performed are not reproduced since, in order to become reproducible, they need themselves to become newly-formed subject positions; for example members of the ‘voluntary simplicity’ movement (though this example folds back into supporting late
capitalism in that voluntary simplicity exhibits high elasticity of demand, in the same way that recycling supports capitalism by providing cheaply-sourced and collected raw materials to industry for further extraction of profit). The performances of the researcher and the passengers are, to an extent, scripted by the public and normative narratives and may be understood through the metaphor of ensemble acting, where narrative subversion and resistance stand in for knowing asides and stage whispers. These knowing asides and stage whispers themselves are part of, and cannot escape from, the performance; they are ways of expressing Morton’s (2007) dark ecology; the noir realisation of personal complicity in a catastrophe that the naïf believes to be happening somewhere outside of subjectivity. “Instead of endlessly trying to get rid of the subject-object dualism, dark ecology dances with the subject-object duality” (p 185). This gestures to Derridean difference; “(a)s one’s identity and social value is produced through a differentiation between the self and other then the identity of the self is dispersed into the other” (Diprose, 1994, p. 69). There was a hint that the tour operator felt like this with respect to the sea lions he so freely interacted with (I had felt the same about these animals in my guiding days) but the human-animal/nonhuman animal divide remained. In fact there was a double differentiation since the relationship was not just with a nonhuman animal but a charismatic nonhuman animal and so there was an aesthetic distance as well.

The collapsing of aesthetic distance and the establishment of critical absorption highlights the relationship between reflexivity and reflectivity. To be truly reflexive is to have no aesthetic or critical distance; no outside to differentiate from inside, while to be reflective is to be positioned outside, looking back, critically. Can a critical tourism be based in reflexivity? For my part in these voyages I make no claim to reflexivity, only to reflectivity. This set of Derridean aporia; this “undecidability of terms that cannot be reduced to a play of binary oppositions” (Macey, 2001, p. 18) I suggest includes also aura and distraction. Could the ecological thought be reflexive? The process of aestheticisation certainly can be; through socialization from early childhood. The relationship between reflexivity and reflectivity is fraught. There is a paradox that writing the word reflexive is performative of reflectivity since a truly reflexive state can never be known to exist by the organism that is purportedly experiencing it, otherwise it is no longer reflexive, but must be reflective (reflecting upon its own state). For example, Morton (2007) states:

Indigenous cultures have not much time for nature as imagined in and against modernity. Animism is decidedly not nature worship. For example, according to Keith Basso’s study of the Western Apache’s use of narrative in the naming of places, there is no difference between a place and the socially reproving and
improving stories that the Apache associate with it, and thus, there is no nature. There is no gap between the human and the nonhuman realms…Animism thus turns out to have a lot in common with an ecology to come (p. 180).

The comment by Audrey Shenandoah, Clan Mother of the Onondaga Nation (above), “There is no word for nature in my language. ‘Nature’, in English, seems to refer to that which is separate from human beings. It is a distinction we don’t recognize” nicely illustrates the paradox; I don’t recognize this thing I have just now drawn to your attention.

So, reference to the reflexivity of indigenous peoples is dangerously close to colonizing (I can describe your worldview even though you can no longer do so since your describing it vanquishes it) since such referring is the imposition of a putative state of being onto another who, if they are truly reflexive, cannot comment on this imposition since they cannot escape being inside; cannot take up a position on the outside and, if they do take up a position on the outside, can no longer truly access the inside. There is an extensive literature on reflexivity, as in ‘reflexive practice’. For example Myers (2010), in his consideration of “at-risk practices that no longer work” (p. 41) explains:

A primary characteristic of reflexive practice is facility in reframing- the ability to deal with multiple, inconsistent frames simultaneously, creatively and contingently…The fluidity and uncertainty of reflexive practice makes it difficult, confusing and maddeningly irresolute at times, but that is the price of facing turbulence squarely, to not assume that conditions are less turbulent and therefore favourable to a different stance that is cognitively or culturally more attractive or familiar. To assume otherwise- that there is some other underlying, constant and knowable reality in our times- is less and less plausible (p. 41).

Cuddy (2010), promoting reflexive practice, explained,

It is a common misconception that Congress formulates laws and they are simply implemented. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the highest tier environmental legislation and the most direct federal environmental mandate that must always be complied with by all U.S. federal government agencies…(but)…(m)any federal regulations under the umbrella of ‘environmental’ policies are vaguely crafted in the form of considerations…(and)…(t)he agency folks can’t just hand the environmental work completely to the consultants, because they will turn around and ask ‘so how would you like to work this one?’ (p. 127).

Cuddy presents NEPA “as a reflexive setting” (p. 125). Clearly, at NEPA, the production of protection is a process that is fluid, and social. An irony of the federal environmental process is that most practitioners disdain the public components (p. 138). Cuddy’s analysis facilitates identifying and deconstructing various narratives operating within NEPA, and is the basis for
possible change through intervention, while acknowledging the impossibility of this analysis, and Cuddy’s own practice, ever having a standpoint outside of NEPA.

In New Zealand, the Department of Conservation, in contrast with NEPA’s obligation to consider has a statutory requirement to consult. This consultation process, involving public input in National Park Management Plan reviews, was evaluated recently (Wouters, Hardie-Boys & Wilson, 2011). A number of useful insights emerged from the evaluation, including the fact that “there was strong support for more participation at the early consultation phase” (p. 61). How early is early; what about before the formal consultation process begins?

Consideration of this “reflexive setting” for evaluating the production of protection, in this case in national parks, also is an opportunity to identify and deconstruct various narratives operating before, during and after the consultation and evaluation-of-consultation processes. Shelton & Tucker’s (2008) list of environmental narratives available in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and their inescapable everyday performance, is exhaustive and precludes truly ever being outside national park management, even if the topic never crosses one’s mind. Similarly, those intimately involved in the consultation process never truly are inside, since they are aware of taking part in a process. Although neither of the examples given here, NEPA and DOC, engage deliberately in reflexive practice, such practice now is an accepted part of spatial planning theory. Protected areas and national parks are spatial, or at least have spatial components to them, and so does Shelton’s (2011) discussion of the possible future of expedition cruising after the widening of the Panama Canal.

Central to reflexive practice is an acceptance of uncertainty and complexity, where:

complexity is not a notion expressing basic feelings about an encountered situation. On the contrary, it goes far beyond that. Complexity stands for a ‘reset’ of our positivist mind frame, to be able to view the world differently, to make the switch from ‘normal’ science to a ‘post-normal’ science (de Roo, 2010, p. xvii).

The first step in spatial planning is to “begin to understand a problem by defining the ‘big messes’ – situations that are deemed wanting or deficient in some way, situations that have the potential to cause suffering or harm and that ought therefore to be altered” (Grunau & Schönwandt, 2010, p. 48).

Being altered, though, may not fit within the idea of linear progress. de Roo concludes:

Planning is about dealing with our environment…an environment that is subject to continuous change, being either progressive or destructive, evolving non-
linearly and alternating between stable and dynamic periods...environments confronted with discontinuous, non-linear evolving processes might be more real than the idea that an environment is simply a planner’s creation (p. 15).

de Roo clearly is keen, when it comes to environment, not to feel trapped within language, and to have multiple, realities to inhabit, graded by verisimilitude. Nonetheless, de Roo’s thought is aspirational: “If the issue, situation or system that is subject to change is adaptive, self-organising, robust and flexible in relation to this change, a process of evolution and co-evolution can be expected” (p. 15). The term “self-organising”, when applied to planet earth, suggests Gaia (Reis & Shelton, 2011), but that aside, de Roos echoes Morton’s (2007) claim that “the ecological ‘paradise’ has not occurred yet” (p. 162) where the issue is the lack of “properly ecological forms of culture, philosophy, politics, and art.”

The performance art of the tourist (and of anyone attempting to study it) is so strongly situated within Romantic consumerism and the sublime, a reflexive setting, that reflexive practice is required in any attempt to ‘unembed’ the individual from the narrative, or the narrative from the individual. This feature of reflexive settings; the constitutive nature of narrative, encourages identification and deconstruction of figurative language, particularly metaphor. Morton’s (2007) suggestion that nature may be formulated as “a metonymic list” leads to the fact that “a metonymic series becomes a metaphor” (p. 14). If a metaphor, then nature is part of language and “language is far from being a substitute for real experience...by articulating the experience it constitutes it” (Hawkes, 1972, p. 62). “The written text is a social situation. That is to say, it has its being in something more than the marks on the page, for it exists in the participation of social beings whom we call writers or readers, and who constitute the writing as communication of a particular kind, as ‘saying’ certain things” (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 59; italics in original). It is ironic (figuratively) therefore, that Larson (2011) subtitles his book Metaphors for Environmental Sustainability: Redefining our relationship with nature; reflexivity and reflectivity again are at play; sustainability metaphors are situated within a meta-metaphor, nature.

Outside of professional philosophy there is a small literature that directly confronts the impossibility of reflecting on reflexivity, except from the outside. Lawson (1985) noted that all our claims about language and the world...are reflexive in a manner that cannot be avoided. For to recognize the importance of language is to do so within language. To argue that the character of the world is in part due to the concepts employed, is to employ those concepts. To insist that we are confined by the limitations of our own problematic, is to be confined within those very limits (p. 9).
Morton’s treatment of the inside/outside problem of environments constitutes an illustration of Lawson’s point. Crucially, being consciously inside reflexivity (accepting for the sake of argument that such a state is possible) precludes an individual’s having an ontological narrative since such a narrative requires either that it be articulated by the individual, or imposed or inferred by another, as an author would do for a character in a novel. Thus, ontology also is inherently colonising. Levinas (1968) phrases this problem: “How can the passivity of obsession find a place in consciousness, where everything is intentionally assumed” (p. 82). So, the ecological thought, based within distraction, shouldn’t appear as a set of reflexive practices, since reflexive practice is the antithesis of critical distance or critical absorption. The ecological thought must deconstruct the language that surrounds it and brings it into being. This deconstruction is a political act and fits within a politics of social relations, not an unmediated aesthetics, erotics or set of narratives of environment. The tourist, the tourism operator and Department of Conservation staff each are involved in the performances of their subject positions. This will not change, given that these subject positions are economically determined within global capitalism. Shelton (2007), in ‘Evaporating the Essence: Towards an Understanding of sub-Antarctic Visitation’ stated:

(P)assengers’ explorations of these sites using rigid inflatable Naiads dispatched from an ice-strengthened vessel facilitates contemporary performance of Peat’s (2003) text and illustrations. These performances are presented in accounts of each trip posted on Heritage Expeditions’ website (Heritage Expeditions, 2007). The provision of such an integrated public narrative as a basis for site interpretation is consistent with the notion of distilling the essence (Colhoun, 2007) an approach to interpretation that produces a consistent and coherent structure within which to situate individual exemplary stories and to ‘reveal meanings and relationships’ (Tilden, 1957; Ham, 1992) (p. 604, italics mine).

The notion of ‘situating exemplary stories’ (and performances) ‘within a consistent and coherent structure’, which I accepted uncritically when I wrote that paper, now seems problematic; these stories need to be deconstructed, not situated within a structured public narrative (also which needs to be deconstructed). This is one impediment. Morton (2010), in The Ecological Thought elaborates on other issues confronting any truly ecological future:

How to care for the neighbor, the strange stranger, and the hyper-object [an indestructible and therefore everlasting toxic material object of culture], are the long-term problems posed by the ecological thought…it forces us to invent ways of being together that don’t depend on self-interest…to imagine collectivity rather

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122 My thanks to Helen Tiffin for making the colonising link, in response to Kim Worthington’s presentation Ethics and Forgiveness in Postcolonial Contexts, Postcolonial Studies Masterclass, Postcolonial Research Network, University of Otago, 10-12 December, 2007.
than community- groups formed by choice rather than necessity…more stress, more disappointment, less gratification (though perhaps more satisfaction), and more bewilderment. The ecological thought can be highly unpleasant. But once you have started to think it, you can’t unthink it. We have started to think it. In the future we will all be thinking the ecological thought. It’s irresistible (p. 135, material in [these] parentheses mine).

Are we now able to conclude by formulating what Abbott (2002) would call a Chekovian well-phrased question? Such a question, by the very fact of being asked in the way that it is, contributes to knowledge. I think so. One such question is; has what appears above illustrated that Morton’s notion of ecology without nature has an application in a practical setting, in this case expedition cruise tourists in Solander? If so, this demonstrates that McIntosh’s (2008) hostile review was unwarranted? Recall Morton argues for “properly ecological forms of culture, philosophy, politics, and art” (Morton, 2007, p. 1). McIntosh retorts: “Since Morton’s book, he says, is about art above all else it would be effrontery for a retired ecologist to review it in its entirety” (p. 262). I suggest that in its entirety is exactly how it should be (re)viewed. If the ecological thought has a place in Solander what serves to perpetuate the performance of the ecological subject?

The most rewarding way to engage with the question of the practicality of the ecological thought in Solander is through considering the challenge implicit in Hollinshead’s (2009) notion of worldmaking and his claim that “(s)uch is the declarative and clearly pungently political force of tourism as it is deployed in worldmaking fashion in concert with (or at times, wholly against) other co-productive and co-generative narrative-issuing mediating forces in and across society” (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140). In other words, worldmaking is the production of a work of art, and all of its discursive componentry. This collective work of art, Solander, is imaginary in the sense that all touristic experience is imaginary, instantly perishable but also permanently represented by print media and electronic media as imperishable; as an ongoing opportunity to experience the ephemeral. In this sense, at first glance, experiencing Solander fits well with Morton’s idea of “reception in a state of distraction…more akin to walking through a building than contemplating a canvas” (Morton, 2007, p. 166). Solander, then, is walked through, but it is a guided walk, informed by narratives of nature and the sublime. The ‘look over here, not over there’ distraction, mentioned already; the one that allows the ecological subject to continue to engage with reified nature unproblematically, supports “the creative and often ‘false’ or ‘faux’ imaginative processes…individuals strategically and ordinarily engage in to purposefully…privilege particular dominant/favoured representations of people/places/pasts…over and above other
actual or potential representations of those subjects’” (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140). This *worldmaking* act of individuals consciously or unconsciously ‘looking over there’ constitutes in the embodied ecological subject a touristic ‘narrative-issuing’ force. This ‘declarative’ act of narrative production, when engaged in mindfully by the individual tourist, is a self-conscious claim to subjectivity as Romantic consumer, although the individual is unlikely to use this label, preferring ‘nature tourist’ or ‘eco-tourist’. When the ‘looking over there’ is performed unconsciously this suggests the work of an unacknowledged, other, ‘narrative issuing force’. Both the operator and the Department of Conservation fulfill this role. As mentioned above, the imposition of a surcharge to cover the increased cost of fuel, after many passengers had paid their fare, had the potential to act as the second type of distraction, drawing attention to the environmental impact of the sub-Antarctic travel and causing passengers to confront their *noir* involvement in dark ecology; the recognition of being personally implicated in an ethically problematic act. Instead, the declarative, pungent (and unacknowledged political) nature of the passengers’ narratives; Hollinshead’s ‘false’ or ‘faux’ worldmaking imaginative processes, did not allow for this form of distraction but reinforced ‘look over there’ by strengthening the moral rectitude of individual nature tourists enacting the ecological subject. The company brochures and commentary, and Peat’s book explaining how the area is so special it warrants World Heritage status, all combined to strengthen the passengers’ resolve to visit remote settings, presented as benefiting from conservation effort situated within a restoration narrative. Hollinshead captures this when he includes in *worldmaking* the privileging of ‘favoured’ representations ‘ (p. 169) over and above other actual or potential representations of these subjects’. A requirement of carbon neutrality for the voyages would seem to constitute the second type of distraction, gesturing to *the ecological thought*. The production of the individual performance art, operating in the presence of this distraction, the awareness and acknowledgement of the production of carbon, would constitute the epic theatre mentioned above. Not only would the individual performances now engage much more directly with the ethical as well as the moral aspects of expedition cruise travel but the non-passenger ‘narrative-issuing mediating forces’ (Hollinshead, 2009, p. 140), the operator and the regulator, would be hard pressed not to provide explicit figures for the amount of carbon being produced. Carbon offsets, though, as part of a cap-and-trade carbon market, are only a ‘new and improved’ version of ecological subjectivity and may serve only to provide an opportunity for righteous Romantic consumption by an affluent elite. In order fully to engage in epic theatre, the audience being informed by the second kind of distraction, requires political awareness of, if not deliberate
engagement with, the interconnectedness of everything. Burt (2012), in reviewing the work of the poet Adrienne Rich, shows how her work illustrates this kind of critical absorption;

Suppose you want to write
of a woman braiding
another woman’s hair…
you had better know…
what country it happens in
what else happens in that country
You have to know these things (p. 29)

Carbon neutrality does not expose the nature tourist to ‘what else happens’. Burt offers an escape for the ecological subject to be able to enjoy Solander; analogous to being critically absorbed in Rich’s work.

Some sympathy with Rich’s (Morton’s) politics, some sense that we live in a time of ecological emergency, is needed if you are to have sympathy with most of her (his) work. But you do not need to feel…that our broad political dilemmas are the most important thing in your own life. You do not need to feel that all your decisions have to be accounted for or that the future –perhaps brightly, humbly, egalitarian, more likely crowded, flooded, polluted and disappointed- will be your judge. But you do have to be able to imagine what it would be like to feel that way (p. 30).

Burt’s ethical escape hatch, the denial or at least fudging of the personal being political, would be welcomed by Hollinshead’s worldmaking tourists, offering, as it does, the opportunity for them to create and persist with a ‘faux’ Solander, favouring their touristic representation. The ecological thought and its requisite critical absorption has no place within this declarative and pungent political force.
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