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Invitational Rhetoric: Alternative Rhetorical Strategy
for Transformation of Perception and Use of Energy
in the Residential Built Environment from the
Keweenaw to Kerala

By

Merle Niemi Kindred

A DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(Rhetoric and Technical Communication)

MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

2007

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Approval Page

This dissertation, "Invitational Rhetoric: Alternative Rhetorical Strategy for Transformation of Perception and Use of Energy in the Residential Built Environment from the Keweenaw to Kerala," is hereby approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in the field of Rhetoric and Technical Communication.

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Dedication

Satyagraha

9/11/1906 - 9/11/2006

centennial of Mahatma Gandhi's proclamation of
nonviolent action based on soul force

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This study is conducted with special concern for my step-grandchildren and their generation. The youngest, Noah (10), and Jordan (9), will be my current age the middle of this century and will be faced with unprecedented challenges unless key environmental, political, and social situations are addressed now. May this study help in lighting a path to sustainable life practices.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the viability of invitational rhetoric as a mode of advocacy for sustainable energy use in the residential built environment. The theoretical foundations for this study join ecofeminist concepts and commitments with the conditions and resources of invitational rhetoric, developing in particular the rhetorical potency of the concepts of re-sourcement and enfoldment. The methodological approach is autoethnography using narrative reflection and journaling, both adapted to and developed within the autoethnographic project.

Through narrative reflection, the author explores her lived experiences in advocating for energy-responsible residential construction in the Keweenaw Peninsula of Michigan. The analysis reveals the opportunities for cooperative, collaborative advocacy and the struggle against traditional conventions of persuasive advocacy, particularly the centrality of the rhetor. The author also conducted two field trips to India, primarily the state of Kerala. Drawing on autoethnographic journaling, the analysis highlights the importance of sensory relations in lived advocacy and the resonance of everyday Indian culture to invitational principles.

Based on field research, the dissertation proposes autoethnography as a critical development in encouraging invitational rhetoric as an alternative mode of effecting change. The invitational force of autoethnography is evidenced in portraying the material advocacy of the built environment itself, specifically the sensual experience of material arrangements and ambience, as well as revealing the corporeality of advocacy, that is, the body as the site of invitational engagement, emotional encounter, and sensory experience.

This study concludes that vulnerability of self in autoethnographic work and the vulnerability of rhetoric as invitational constitute the basis for transformation. The dissertation confirms the potential of an ecofeminist invitational advocacy conveyed autoethnographically for transforming perceptions and use of energy in a smaller-scale residential environment appropriate for culture, climate, and ultimately part of the challenge of sustaining life on this planet.

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CHAPTER 1 – INVITATIONAL RHETORIC

Introduction

The photograph at the front of this study of the water buffalo and cattle egret that I took in India captures the exigency motivating this dissertation. I feel acute kinship with the little bird nose-to-nose with what I perceive as a huge environmental, social, and economic challenge – energy use – in the form of the water buffalo. I offer the scene as a metaphor for the need for enhanced communication and perseverance in the area of advocacy no matter the size of the problem.

Impetus for this dissertation is dissatisfaction with traditional rhetorical strategies in effecting transformation of perception and use of energy in the built environment as part of our modern, technological lifestyle. I argue that advocacy for sustainable use of energy has been inadequate and ineffective when using solely traditional rhetorical forms as evidenced by growing prospects of energy over-consumption and environmental damage. This study focuses on advocacy practices relating to the residential built environment as part of the larger proclamation former Vice President Al Gore is airing globally that citizens of the world are facing *an inconvenient truth* that we are loathe to admit or address. That *truth* is linked to the actions of human beings, including energy use, that affects global climate change.

Can we find enhanced rhetoric(s) for transformation that builds on the creativity and resiliency of human beings in relation to issues of energy use? Can we empower the small, lived passions as advocacy practices in the process of change?

This study proposes invitational rhetoric as an alternative mode of advocacy enhancing the rhetorical repertoire and helping contravene problematic inadequacies in traditional rhetorical practices. Theoretical foundations of invitational rhetoric join ecofeminist concepts and commitments to expand on both the conditions and resources of invitational rhetoric as well as the rhetorical potency of the concepts of re-sourcement and enfoldment.

This dissertation explores, extrapolates, and recombines elements of invitational rhetoric, re-sourcement, and enfoldment in a quest for positing the viability of this reconfigured rhetorical ensemble as alternative advocacy practice with particular reference to the topic of energy use in the built environment. This study proposes that the conditions of invitation rhetoric, along with re-sourcement and enfoldment, hold promise of enhanced rhetorical success in everyday lived experience with potential of leading to societal transformation in relation to energy use.

Energy: The Exigency

The exigency for this dissertation is ever-increasing demand for energy from diminishing, non-renewable, environmentally-polluting fossil fuels and



potentially hazardous nuclear power. This NASA photograph in Figure 1, a composite

Figure 1. Earth at Night

satellite nighttime photo taken in 2000, illustrates the critical role of energy in our world by illuminating distribution of electrical power.

Portions of continents and countries in the industrialized Northern Hemisphere glow, while vast stretches of entire continents in the less over-developed Southern Hemisphere remain dark. The visibility of electrical power illuminates the importance of energy in our world and reminds us the evolution of the developing world is dependent on increasing the glow in this night photograph. How is a finite orb with a burgeoning population to provide for such expansion?

As Earthlings, we are basically confined to this planet with its population expanding beyond 6.5 billion and its natural endowment of resources, especially fossil fuels used for energy production, dwindling and polluting the life-support systems of earth, air, and water. The status quo in any society is perhaps a social force rivaling the physical force of gravity. The challenge for Earth's inhabitants, especially Americans, in these first few years of the 21st century is to modify a way of life dependent on current energy production and use to help create sustainable development, ecological balance, and social justice globally.

Conservation of energy, increased efficiency of energy use, and employment of renewable energy from sources such as the sun, wind, and geological and waterway sources are viable methods for fostering and assisting socially and environmentally responsible energy use. However, technology is not the prime obstacle in implementing change in perception of energy and subsequent production and use. John H. Marburger III (2005), the current American president's science adviser, says, "Each generation...has a natural resistance to changing the way it produces energy – 'one of the deepest and most

pervasive aspects of the economy''' (Smith, p. 39). Societal will for transformation of attitude is the critical factor in fostering change. How does that will develop?

Although the media gives much coverage to oil use in transportation and promises hydrogen, ethanol, and biodiesel as the fuels of the future, there is need for focus on the energy needs and sources pertaining to *all* facets of the human-made environment. Modern buildings are actually the prime energy consumers with constant needs on a twenty-four-hour, seven-days-a-week basis. *Metropolis* magazine (2003) calculates U.S. energy consumption by sector: transportation 27 percent, industry 25 percent, and architecture 48 percent. When considering not only the energy needed to operate residential buildings, but also the energy needed in extracting, creating, and transporting industrially-produced materials, homes consume 21 percent of U.S. energy on an annual basis. Altered perception and use of energy in the residential sector – over one-fifth of all energy use -- can significantly impact energy consumption and environmental conditions.

This study posits that the escalating global climate and energy crisis attests to ineffective traditional rhetorical strategies, which calls for seeking and experimenting with alternative rhetorical options not only in America, but globally. I propose invitational rhetoric as an alternative mode of advocacy contravening inadequacies in traditional rhetorical practice.

Traditional Rhetoric

Rhetoric as Western communication practice with persuasive intent has often been judged manipulative since its inception in ancient Greece and the debate continues 2,500 years later. Aristotle focuses attention on three constituents of rhetoric:

- the speaker (*ethos* – the character of the speaker as conveyer of the argument),
- the actual speech or written act (*logos* – the mode of proof used in the argument based on logic), and
- the audience response (*pathos* – the emotional response engendered in the audience in response to the speaker and mode of proof used).

This traditional model is largely rhetor-invoked advocacy with a controlled agenda and is manifest in the standard rhetorical practices of governments and organizations. There are at least three features of traditional Western rhetorical practice that weaken its claim to a universally applicable mode of advocacy. First, this rhetorical strategy is traditionally associated with spoken discourse based on formal, intentional principles of communication. Second, traditional rhetoric is focused on efforts at seeking truth and assumes this is an abstract, knowable entity that can somehow be verified and accorded power. Third, traditional rhetorical modes are characterized as occurring in the public sphere, a realm historically populated by white males with power and prestige. With these characteristics, the traditional model is ineffective, counter to, and hindering attempts at societal transformation because of constraints that hamper inclusivity of varied modes of communication, solidification of proclaimed truths and creation of control mechanisms, and limits on the realm of action to the public sphere (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 6). I argue that such inadequacies in traditional rhetorical practice invite experimenting with alternative rhetorical practices in countering faults and enhancing the rhetorical repertoire.

Invitational Rhetoric

Questioning of traditional rhetorical practices is a common topic in both academic and popular discussion. In a blizzard of emails and media extracts after the American presidential election of 2004, an article from *The Christian Science Monitor* by Daniel Yankelovich ruminates on the merits of dialogue over conflict in situations of persuasive intent, which can also be read as characterizing features of traditional rhetoric:

Sad to say, our culture favors debate, advocacy, and conflict over dialogue and deliberation. These adversarial forms of discourse have their uses - for example, arguing in the courtroom, attacking special interests, making TV's talking heads more entertaining. But they're the wrong way to cope with the gridlock issues that threaten to paralyze our society.

I've learned that dialogue rather than advocacy is the superior method for resolving gridlock. We need a large dose of dialogue to highlight our common ground rather than our differences, to help us reserve judgment until we have considered a variety of ways to approach controversial issues, and to motivate us to concede the merits of the other side even when it pains us to do so. We need a special kind of dialogue to bring hidden assumptions to the surface where they can be examined and questioned in the light of a changing world.

Dialogue forces participants to reconcile their views with their most basic values, it obliges them to confront their own wishful thinking, and it exposes them to a variety of ways of seeing and framing issues - an indispensable way to escape polarization and gridlock (15 October 2004).

This is the purpose of alternative rhetorics: to liberate rhetoric from the realm of *polarization and gridlock* and prepare a way for effecting mutual transformation. The goal is to effectively break down the oppositional elements of traditional rhetoric and offer the alternatives that include cooperation, recognition, assent, and digression as effective modes of communication (Lander, 2001).

Invitational rhetoric offers a respectful stance that counters the epidemic of traditional rhetoric emerging from rigid, self-righteous belief systems permeating

many of the political, religious, economic, and social systems in today's world of often violent interaction and imposition, as reflected in current events.

Invitational rhetoric is purposefully nonviolent and avoids intimidation, humiliation, self-aggrandizement, and competition.

It is said that the only thing that doesn't change in the human condition is change itself. Foss and Foss (2003) declare that "We are privileging change as a condition of our world that is exciting and challenging" (p. 3) with invitational rhetoric as a means of effecting such transformation. The fear of change starts dissolving when parties involved in the communication realize that opportunities for learning, growth, and transformation are shared experiences for all participants, including the initiator(s) of the gathering.

To this end, feminism has been reframing scholarly approaches to traditional rhetoric for over forty years with special attention to "writing women in" (Meyer, 2007, p. 1) to rhetorical canons and "challenging rhetorical standards" (p. 1). As part of this effort, in the early 1990s, rhetorical theorists, Sonia Foss and Karen Foss, introduced *invitational rhetoric* as an alternative rhetorical option for enhancing rhetorical practice emphasizing rhetoric as an agency creating space for transformation as voluntary, co-constructed change.

Invitational rhetoric admits egalitarian, expanded forms of communication. Instead of seeking static, externalized truth, it posits myriad *truths* with multiple possibilities for acceptance and beliefs with understandings revealed through interactions of daily life in kaleidoscopic rather than linear fashion. Invitational rhetoric expands the public sphere of rhetoric into private realms, which include marginalized populations such as women, people of color, those with disabilities,

and other minorities. Such an alternative rhetorical option contravenes hierarchical domination as a communication stance and replaces it with sharing of creative power at grassroots levels (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 6). Instead of dictatorial communication, this becomes invitational exchange.

Definition and Model

The hallmark of invitational rhetoric is *offering*, not imposing. Space is created in a communitarian setting for willing transformation as a result of personal decision to learn, choose, and change. Five core assumptions include:

Positing the purpose of communication as gaining understanding. In invitational rhetoric, mutual understanding based in equality, respect, and self-determination is privileged over persuasion and control. Interaction instead of rhetor / audience demarcation is critical in this communication process with the goal of discovery, questioning, rethinking, and possible transformation of all participants to a shared place of change. There is a pursuit of solidarity through expanded conversation rather than confrontation along with engagement of various ideas where multiple perspectives, contradictions, and unresolved incompatibilities coexist (Renegar and Sowards, 2003, pp. 331, 343, quoting Rorty, 1999).

Equality of speaker and audience. Initially at least one person is prepared with more information, an opinion, a goal, or in some other way prior thought about the issue or situation. However,

It is not power-over. Instead, the power you enact in invitational rhetoric is power-with, where power to create knowledge and make decisions is shared between the speaker and the audience. Power is not a quality to exercise over others but something that can be employed by all members of the interaction so that it energizes, facilitates, and enables all individuals involved to contribute and learn from the interaction (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 11).

Traditional hierarchies dissolve in invitational rhetoric. The initiating rhetor acts as a facilitator for exchange of ideas through free-flowing communication. Each person's experience is valued as their own truth, to be shared with the confidence that this truth will receive respectful attention.

Diverse Perspectives Viewed as Resources. Not only are varied experiences and perspectives respected, but they are honored as valuable resources. The understandings of participants is enhanced with exposure to diverse input and acknowledgement of the partiality of individual perspectives is highlighted with sharing of myriad stances. Instead of mere tolerance, welcoming and honoring diversity represents a celebration of difference as part of experiential growth inviting transformed understanding.

There is a listening rhetoric with a determination to air all ideas and arguments and, if there is an oppositional situation, persuading the individual(s) with the opposite view to listen in exchange. Diverse perspectives are not seen as questing for victory, but seeking a new agreement on what is real. This is a constructivist, cooperative rhetoric (Miller, 2006, p. 262. reviewing Booth, 2004 and Austenfeld, 2006).

Transformation as a Self-Chosen Act. The invitation to gain understanding in an egalitarian setting honoring diverse contributions can foster change, including causing participants to modify opinions or values, or seek to secure additional information, or alter behavior, or generate some other form of action, but the key feature of change in a setting of invitational rhetorical practices is that, "Transformation occurs only through the process of self-change generated by interaction with other perspectives" (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 266). There is no coercion when inviting change in this rhetorical mode. Change may result, but

only through individual agency rather than from persuasion or domination from traditional rhetorical practices (Renegar and Sowards, 2003, pp. 331, 343, quoting Rorty, 1999).

Willingness to Yield. Invitational rhetoric also posits that all participants engaged in the interaction are amenable to opportunities for change. The grip on being right and being in control is lessened as individuals relax into the burgeoning possibilities of transformation to another level of shared and mutually-beneficial experience. In summary:

Invitational rhetoric is a mode of communicating in which the rhetor's goal is to invite others to understand a perspective just as the rhetor tries to understand theirs. The perspectives of others are not seen as impediments or obstacles to achieving goals but as resources that encourage moving beyond one's own perspective to gain a more comprehensive view of an issue or a subject. All are equal as each explores the other's perspective. An invitation is issued for others to participate in varied worldviews rather than seeking to change those with whom contact is being made (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 15).

At the very root of invitational rhetoric is the hope that such exchanges can lead to common ground and a better understanding of how people can learn to live peacefully, the oft-mentioned and seldom-realized condition in human experience (Cavin, 2006, reviewing Boulding p. 390).

Conditions

Foss and Foss (2003) delineate four conditions that are necessary in providing a positive environment for inviting transformation to occur. The conditions are not mutually exclusive, but rather meld to form a basis for fostering invitational rhetoric.

Safety. This condition is established when the initiating rhetor or rhetors provide safe haven for the thoughts and feelings of participants in the sharing

process and all maintain this space for everyone. The status quo is a mighty force in the human condition, and people need reassurance that their sense of order isn't under siege if they are to accept the invitation to inspect familiar ways of being or doing for possibilities of co-constructed change.

Value. Closely related to safety, *value* is the term Foss and Foss use to indicate manifestation of respect for the personhood of all members of the gathering and establishment of respectful interaction.

Freedom. In the context of invitational rhetoric, *freedom* means the group fostering opportunities for individuals to have meaningful dialogue engendering and selecting from a variety of options they have helped create.

Openness. This condition involves sincere curiosity and purposeful seeking of varied perspectives and beliefs by all participants in an honest effort at generating co-created transformation, which means ownership by all involved. Openness involves a degree of fluidity, which creates an inconclusiveness that leaves space for receptivity. This can help engender and capture both the mystery and intensity of the encounter.

Though these conditions seem relatively clear-cut and even mild in the realm of advocacy for transformation, they are engendered through constant negotiation in the struggle to create an evolving vision of change. Getting into the moment of invitational rhetoric by establishing these conditions is an intense, ever-shifting process and never a fixed destination.

Traditional Strategies and Invitational Options

Conquest rhetoric. Amplification of the meaning and value of invitational rhetoric can also be derived from what it is *not*, as described by Foss and Foss

(2003). One of the *nots* is traditional *conquest rhetoric* whose goal is winning and which is commonly witnessed in all branches and forms of government and in business. Conquest rhetoric is about who gets to decide what's good or bad, right or wrong. It's a win/lose situation and manifestation of power. Invitational rhetoric doesn't create or support such a scenario, but this study acknowledges occasions when conquest rhetoric is unavoidable, appropriate, and even necessary.

Conversion rhetoric. Another form of persuasive communication in the traditional rhetorical mode is *conversion rhetoric*, which is commonly used in religious situations where issues, beliefs, or behaviors are earnestly under siege to effect change. Marketing, advertising, and sales are common examples of conversion rhetoric. Both conquest rhetoric and conversion rhetoric are focused on the hard sell of the rhetor's goals and are not part of invitational rhetoric, but this study acknowledges times when such standard rhetorical practices dominate or form a hybrid relationship with invitational rhetoric.

Benevolent rhetoric. Another form of traditional rhetoric, *benevolent rhetoric*, focuses more on the recipient or audience and might be mistaken for invitational rhetoric except for its earnest, altruistic efforts to effect change. Campaigns about health and safety issues and many educational situations are examples of benevolent rhetoric. There's strong input from the rhetor with no space given for mutual change, so this isn't invitational rhetoric; however, this study acknowledges occasions when the very nature of a topic such as energy use often lends itself more to benevolent rhetorical forms than the often milder stance of invitational rhetoric.

Advisory rhetoric. Another form of traditional rhetoric is a response to an individual or audience for information, advice, or assistance known as *advisory rhetoric*. Counseling and some educational programs are examples of advisory rhetoric, which is characterized by being unsolicited. However, this still doesn't constitute invitational rhetoric emanating from the concept of *invitation*, which is a request for participation and for mutual sharing on a topic usually determined, but not controlled, by the rhetor. This study acknowledges the powerful connection between advisory rhetoric and the topic of energy issues and the challenges of incorporating pure or hybrid forms of invitational rhetoric in striving for transformation of perception and action.

In summary, focus on winning, converting, or giving advice isn't the essence of invitational rhetoric, which is more concerned about clarifying ideas to enhance understanding and working together exploring issues in an environment of non-judgment and non-confrontation; however, there is tension in effecting this ecofeminist model in the midst of the exigency of energy concerns and the tradition of top-down communication hard-wired in standard rhetorical practices. There are no fixed, hierarchical stances in invitational rhetoric. Instead, there is effort at open communication leading to a mutual understanding of varied beliefs and values, which holds promise of transformative response. This dissertation studies the inherent tensions and challenges in fostering this kinder, gentler mode of rhetorical practice.

In Scholarship

The possibilities inherent in invitational rhetoric have captured the attention and interest of scholars involved in a variety of research. A popular book in the early 1990s on spiritual journeying, *The Celestine Prophecy*, was discussed thus:

Redfield's notions of an intuitive, non-symbolic, or spiritual communication also taps a latent belief. Modern audiences have grown to distrust the type and manipulation of multimedia messages. In fact, even among the ranks of the scholarly, a new form of rhetoric has been advocated, call invitational rhetoric. For example, Foss & Griffin (1996, p. 2) claim that persuasion can be nonviolent and a personal transformational choice rather than attempts at manipulations from external sources (Gross).

From 1997 to 2005, six doctoral dissertations in the United States have used invitational rhetoric for conceptually articulating a variety of themes. Falc (1997) in *An analysis and critique of the vernacular discourse in selected feminist science fiction novels* argues that invitational rhetoric with evidence of immanent value, resourcement [explicated later in this study], offering, and safety evolve from feminist vernacular discourse in this genre. Falc also acknowledges the inherent contradictions often apparent in invitational rhetoric such as the paradox of valuing safety along with passion.

Long (1997) researches *Associative rhetoric: beyond rhetorical sensitivity and invitational rhetoric* which posits associative rhetoric "as a means to appropriately and effectively empower and maintain equitable relations between persons" with characteristics similar to those of invitational rhetoric along with "a commitment to face both the joy and the pain of human self-awareness and social growth."

Menousek (1997) in *A communication methodology focused on ecological unitizing designed to engage upper elementary school students to generate their own appropriate learning goals* uses invitational rhetorical options with both teachers and students as active communicators committed to discovering, adapting, and integrating fragments of information in co-producing learning goals. Here traditional hierarchies dissolve in sharing curriculum development.

Willard (1997) researches *What's for Dinner? Articulating and antagonizing the American foodway* and concludes that:

The narrative articulations of the American foodway [as meat-eaters] are successful because they are situated in deep historical-cultural roots that are familiar to most Americans; and they operate as invitational rhetoric, inviting people to participate in meat eating practice. The narrative antagonisms [vegetarianism, veganism] fail to situate themselves within well known mythic tradition and function as an alienating form of persuasion.

Lossie (2000) explores shifting from a traditional patriarchal rhetoric to one of mutual interdependency in *The Group Nature Mandala: Touching the spirit of community, planting seeds of transformation. Exploring the relationship between the Group Nature Mandala, ecofeminism, and invitational rhetoric*. [A mandala is a graphic symbol of a spiritual concept such as a circle divided into sections with specific icons and meanings.] Lossie describes the experience as:

Creation of a sense of group belonging; a space for speaking and listening; heart-centered communication; the creation of a safe, relaxing, free, peaceful, creative, and spiritual environment; sense of self-connectedness; the awareness of the parts as connected to the whole; and the beauty and connectedness of nature....[and] grounding for a sense of connection that leads to a safe space inviting communication. The process allows participants to actually see and experience the communicative patterns espoused in the theory of invitational rhetoric...[with] nonhierarchical, nonadversarial communication.

Finally, and most recently, Pedrioli (2005) in *Rhetorically constructing the United States law professor personae(e): Implication of traditional, invitational, and cooperative rhetorics* studies the traditional confrontational rhetoric of law and posits a scholar/practitioner hybrid with presenting invitational rhetoric as “well-suited for opening doors to understanding,... [but] generally...not effective in decision-making situations.” However, Pedrioli suggests the embracing of more cooperative rhetoric, “a hybrid approach, allow[ing] for both

an attempt at understanding the views of other parties and also for argumentation about the merits of those views.”

Such varied scholarly approaches in studying the merits of invitational rhetoric give credence to the hope that the inadequacies of traditional rhetoric are increasingly becoming apparent and the quest is growing for viable alternatives.

Framing Strategies

However, invitational rhetoric doesn't just magically happen. Foss and Foss (2003) suggest strategies for effecting invitational rhetoric by creating organizational patterns, which they call *framing*, for structuring main ideas. Rather than a formulaic organizing pattern, framing is a more varied and responsive series of options for organizing ideas, developing claims, and amplifying ways of inviting transformation. The following table (Foss and Foss, 2003, pp. 59-72), listed in alphabetical order, lists options available for framing invitational communication:

Alphabet	Arranging ideas according to alphabetic order.
Category	Organizing around categories arising from topic.
Causal	Structuring according to cause(s) accounting for effect(s).
Circle	Arranging a circular progression of ideas.
Continuum	Organizing ideas along a range or spectrum with shared content.
Elimination	Discussing a situation and positing solutions, which are then eliminated to arrive at an optimal choice.
Facilitation	Establishing an interactional situation with definition of the problem, shared search for ideas, and evaluation or decision.
Location	Organizing according to geographical location.
Metaphor	Comparing ideas, items, or experiences -- new in relation to old.
Motivated sequence	Organizing pattern encouraging problem to solution progress by creating attention, establishing need, creating satisfaction, generating visualization, and encouraging action
Multiple perspectives	Analyzing from many viewpoints such as non-oppositional perspectives or presenting common ground.

Narrative	Structuring as storytelling with characters, settings, and plot.
Narrative progression	Sequencing several stories to achieve a point.
Problem/solution	Organizing with discussion of problem leading to proposed solution.
Spiral	Starting with a broad main ideas and circling downward to increasingly more specific ideas.
Thinking things through	Structuring the discussion as a journey and revealing how the current position was achieved.
Time	Organizing ideas chronologically.
Web	Arranging ideas generating from a central or core idea and traveling back to the center after each ideas is explored.

Table 1. Framing Strategies

For example, the pattern Foss and Foss (2003) label *circle* deconstructs the traditional hierarchy of top>down organization and offers a sequential development of ideas which evolve one to another and eventually circle back to the initial idea or claim (p. 61). Since this study is concerned with transformation of perception and use of energy through alternative rhetorical options, an example of *circle* might be a discussion about reducing the stress associated with the energy issue by consciously reducing energy consumption. This would reduce the need for costly exploration, processing, and transporting of fossil fuels or resignation to potentially hazardous choices. There would also be savings on energy bills. Mindful use of energy coupled with creative uses of alternative sources could circle back to lessen the stress of the initial concerns about energy.

Another example of framing strategies is examination of *facilitation* (Foss and Foss, 2003, pp. 62-64), which is often used in the pre-design phase of architectural projects. Facilitation as an interactional goal is achieved by a rhetor and a group gathering to 1) define a problem or project, 2) brainstorm ideas for possible use, and 3) decide on a course of action. Facilitation or a *design charette* in

an architectural setting is first a discussion of the proposed building and sharing of any known parameters such as purpose, location, approximate size, budget, and anything else that helps define the nature of the project. The second stage in the facilitation is jointly searching for ideas that help form the project, including brainstorming about myriad other aspects of the proposed new facility in a non-judgmental setting so that ideas can help generate further thoughts about possibilities. Facilitation is a creative, co-constructed activity, which may or may not lead to a third step, evaluation or decision, but it does encourage creativity.

Circle and facilitation are only two of the eighteen frames that Foss and Foss (2003) introduce as ways of organizing main ideas and lending to the communitarian aspects of invitational rhetoric. As this study proceeds, examples of alternative rhetorical options will be highlighted as exemplifying many of these framing strategies bolstering transformation of attitudes and actions.

Elaborating Techniques

Along with the organizational patterns of framing, Foss and Foss (2003) suggest techniques for further developing ideas, which they call *elaborating*. Once framing of main ideas has occurred, details to support or extend main ideas or arguments can be offered in a variety of forms. The list follows (pp. 73-86).

Audiovisual aids	Elaborating main points with the aid of charts, graphs, photographs, recordings, etc.
Comparison and contrast	Linking ideas by their similarities or their differences
Credentials	Presenting one's background to enhance credibility.
Definition	Defining a word or concept either by quoting an authority, displaying an example, giving the etymology, or citing an operational definition.
Dreams and visions	Sharing ideas, images, or emotions occurring during sleep or other extraordinary experiences giving inspiration.
Emotions	Elaborating on ideas by sharing emotional responses

	as ways of knowing.
Exaggeration	Overstating an idea for emphasis or contrast.
Examples	Offering short illustrations to elaborate an idea.
Explanation	Describing a term, idea, or process to increase understanding.
Facts	Presenting verifiable pieces of information to elaborate ideas.
Figures of speech	Elaborating ideas through alliteration with repetition of sounds in words, antithesis with juxtaposing contrasts, metaphor with comparison of something in terms of another, oxymoron with juxtaposing of oppositional terms or ideas, personification with human traits given to nonhuman entities, and simile with use of <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> in comparison.
Humor	Developing or extending ideas with levity.
Myths	Elaborating ideas by sharing cultural stories -- real or fiction.
Narratives	Developing ideas by storytelling of real or fictitious tales.
Participation	Encouraging involvement of audience by simple call/response discussion, positive support from the audience or testimonials by audience members.
Poetry	Developing ideas through the literary technique of poetic expression.
Prayers	Using sacred entreaties to elaborate ideas.
Proverbs	Incorporating cultural sayings to develop ideas.
Puns	Playing on word sounds or meanings for expressing or elaborating concepts.
Questions	Posing queries of a rhetorical nature with no answer voiced, substantive questions with both query and answer voiced, or facilitation questions to help manage group interaction.
Quotations	Offering words of others to introduce or develop ideas.
Repetition and restatement	Elaborating ideas by repeating words or phrases or restating them for emphasis.
Rhythm and rhyme	Emphasizing or developing ideas using the sound of language.
Rituals	Using rites of the culture or community to develop ideas.
Sensory images	Extending ideas by reference to information or feelings derived from the senses.
Songs	Elaborating ideas via music.
Statistics	Using quantitative data to elaborate ideas.
Understatement	Employing low-key commentary for emphasis.

Table 2. Elaborating Techniques

Audiovisual aids (p. 74) are a time-honored elaborating technique and were used earlier in this chapter to share images of electrical power on the planet. If audiovisual aids seem an obvious choice for elaborating ideas, Foss and Foss's (2003) suggestion of using *emotions* (p. 77) in the list of twenty-eight elaborating techniques may come as something of a surprise. "Although the emphasis on logic in contemporary Western culture often discourages speakers from considering emotions as a possible form of elaboration, they can be a powerful way to develop ideas" (p. 77). As an antidote to over-emphasis on the logical as the source of all knowing, this study will interject and explicate use of emotions as relevant elaborating techniques. And in conjunction with emotions, this study will also validate the use of *sensory images* (p. 86) as yet another elaborating technique suitable for developing ideas related to invitational rhetorical options for alternative communication. Again, this is only a sampling of the elaboration techniques suggested by Foss and Foss (2003), but gives a foretaste of multiple options in presenting encounters and arguments in invitational rhetoric.

Criticism

This form of alternative rhetorical practice is not without its detractors. With its nonviolent intent and methods, it is often decried as hopelessly utopian, unrealistic and ineffective (Dempsey, 2005). The same charges were and are leveled against the nonviolent strategies of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, yet they produced results that continue to resonate throughout the world. Sometimes it takes nonviolence, with invitational rhetoric as part of its manifestation, to be "instructive of new ways to reconfigure both rhetorical studies and social movement strategy" (Dempsey, 2005).

Not only is invitational rhetoric nonviolent, it also handles argumentation

differently as indicated by Bruner (1996):

"feminine style" is fundamentally non-argumentative inasmuch as "feminist" argumentation is seen as being different in kind from aggressive, "patriarchal" argumentation....scholars...have pointed to a way of understanding feminist argumentation that avoids the reification of gender stereotypes and leads instead to a different way of thinking about argumentation.

The "different way" in invitational rhetorical argumentation represents a desire for a holistic, integrated, communitarian approach to life and this leads into the next topic, a turn to the ecofeminist perspective, which provides the overarching theoretic framework for invitational rhetoric as an alternative option for rhetorical encounters.

Ecofeminism

Background and Commitments

Clegg and Barrett (1996) consider "the two most significant 'post-materialist' trends of the late twentieth century the growth of feminist and ecological consciousness" (p. 201). Ecofeminist theorizing, as a combination of these modes of thought, plus inclusion of spirituality, is a true alternative to traditional rhetoric because it alters the basic tenets and structure of Aristotelian argumentation that traditionally dominate discourse, including scientifically, quantitatively-fixated value systems of operation.

The term *ecofeminism* is attributed to Françoise d'Eaubonne (1974) who "argued that the current patriarchal system is incapable of creating a revolution which will stop the destruction of nature in time to avert total destruction" (Bullis and Glaser, 1992, p. 51). Ecofeminism evolved to include concern about oppression in all its forms, including relationships with women and all subordinated groups.

Radical or cultural feminism; cultural history. Theorist Spretnak (1990) posits that ecofeminist theory grew out of three sources starting in the 1960s and gaining momentum in the mid-1970s. One source is radical or cultural feminism based on study of political history and theory, critical theory, and social ecology, which rejects Marxist theories of domination restricted to only issues of class and money and addresses universal domination of women. Cultural historians also extended the study of patriarchy and the oppressed role of women (p. 5), which is a further basis for ecofeminist theorization.

Nature-based religions. Another source of ecofeminism is resurgence of attention to nature-based religions rooted in historic and archaeological documents and artifacts involving especially the Goddess concept entwined with nature. The Divine becomes embraced as both immanent and surrounding us (Spretnak, 1990, p. 5) with everything having consciousness. “Ecofeminism is inspired by Eastern, indigenous, and pre-patriarchal religions” (Bullis and Glaser, 1992, p. 51.) where the sacred is earth-based and divinity is understood as feminine or maternal. Life is perceived as an interconnected web, which provides an alternative to traditional hierarchies characterized by supreme power from above.

Environmentalism. A third source of ecofeminism is environmentalism, where theorist Spretnak (1990) traces a path that typifies the life of many women who eventually embrace ecofeminism:

For many women with careers in public policy, science and technology, public-interest environmental organizations, and environmental studies programs in universities, their initial connection with feminism was the liberal-feminist attention to how and why their progress on the career ladder was blocked. For there they eventually encountered a book, an article, or a lecture with ecofeminist analysis—and suddenly their career work was framed with a radically different meaning (p. 6).

This is how I came to understand my long-standing support of not only the ecological, but also the feminist and spiritual facets of ecofeminism even before I knew it had a name. In 2003, Dr. Greta Gaard, activist, ecofeminist scholar, and Green Party member, came to Michigan Tech for a presentation. In the Humanities Department's publication, *Michigan Tech's Technobabe Times* (2003), I wrote the following about Dr. Gaard's presentation:

Ecofeminism is a powerful counterforce to the status quo of conventional society and Dr. Greta Gaard is an inspiring standard-bearer for articulation and action that gives us hope for a more sane and peaceful world. Ecofeminism is committed to cultural, ecological, and economic democracy. It rejects the "isms" of domination and strives to reconceive human identity. Ecofeminism envisions connections instead of separation, celebrates diversity of genres and perspectives, and is active and open to new people and new visions of the world (p. 3).

Ecofeminism with its almost shaman-like aura and willingness to embrace and celebrate the power from the private realm of the emotional and spiritual is the lens I was seeking as I worked on communication issues relating to energy concerns in the residential built environment and it served to raise my awareness of a feminism that addresses ALL areas of injustice in the world and posits inclusivity in a world that seems increasingly fragmenting into enclaves of exclusivity "with a value system made of denial, distancing, fear, and ignorance" (Spretnak, 1990, p. 7).

Deconstruction of Traditional, Scientific Stances

Ecofeminism encourages evaluation of the impact of a Western lifestyle and system of values, especially the scientific method of configuring thought that has been evolving for five hundred years with "increasing centralization, bureaucratization, hierarchicalization, and a more extensive commodification all of which have serious implications for the human condition [where] an

atomized, competitive population is created while the interdependent community is ignored" (Bullis and Glaser, 1992, p. 53).

Since science and technology are the core of much of Western thought, society is often faced with "[scientists who] see the pieces clearly, with no feeling for the whole" (Griffin, 1990, p. 88). With scientific objectivity privileging the rational and serving as a distancing device in the guise of securing a truth free of emotional or sensory taint or constraint and organizations supporting this stance, "people [are kept] from seeing implications and direct consequences of their actions" (Griffin, 1990, p. 93) in the context of societal or global impact. Pieces are often easier to grasp than a complicated, networked, multi-faceted, multi-layered entirety. The Western world's scientific method of analysis can lead to fragmentation with little direction to reconnect or integrate with the whole.

Ashcraft (2000) compresses the critique of traditional organizational stances based on scientific thinking: "Feminist scholars concur on a fundamental flaw of bureaucracy: impersonality...separation of public, professional, and rational from private, personal, and emotional" (p. 348). Theorists Bullis and Glaser (1992) suggest reconfigured spaces for articulation and action occur with deconstruction of traditional narratives and reconstruction of alternative discourses critical for societal transformation (p. 50). Ecofeminism focuses on unveiling ideologies that espouse domination in any form and structuring alternative modes of thought and organization that honor and sustain the interconnectedness of all life.

The history and theory of rhetoric and technical communication reveal how torn the world has always been between the positive and negative features of not only rhetoric, but technology. Relating to the latter, anthropologist Peacock

(2001) says, “We may have no future, but if we do have one, we are challenged to master it by harnessing science and technology to fight destructive forces themselves derived from science and technology” (pp. 123-124). Alternative rhetoric of ecofeminist orientation is part of this struggle.

Alternative Political Spaces, Alternative Rhetorical Spaces

Ecofeminist theory and practice evolved during the past generation as a response, in part, to manifestations of a “masculine consciousness [that] denigrated and manipulated everything defined as ‘other’ whether nature, women, or Third World cultures. . . . [and seeks] to reweave new stories that acknowledge and value the biological and cultural diversity that sustain all life” (Diamond and Orenstein, 1990, pp. x-xi). From this position of the *other*, ecofeminists weave new stories as an alternative, nonviolent basis for political action. This may involve public or personal action, but it isn’t necessarily collective or heroic in nature. “Ecofeminism, by linking spirituality, ecology and feminism, without insisting on assimilation of their identities, encourages the creation of alternative political spaces” (Bullis and Glaser, 1992, p. 56). These spaces are created by “Ecofeminists [who] encourage non-violent but direct action to protect and enhance this web of life. Direct action includes both public organized acts...and personal lifestyle changes which are ecologically beneficial” (Bullis and Glaser, 1992, pp. 52-53). Ecofeminism thereby integrates “social and political change as part of ecological change” (Egri and Pinfield, 1996, p. 464).

Grassroots, ecofeminist initiatives operating as cooperative, environmentally-sensitive missions engender and embrace “a new sense of the universe. . . .an exploration about *being* as well as *doing*” (Egri, pp. 423, 425). This *being* is evidence of not only the feminist and ecological roots of ecofeminism, but

its embracing of emotional, intuitive, spiritual facets of the human experience. Such grassroots efforts include a willingness to acknowledge the spiritual elements of mindfully envisioning and constructing societies and folding such perspectives into the persuasive process using alternative rhetorical practices.

The inherent exuberance and vitality of ecofeminism offers a critical contribution to alternative rhetorical practices. Spretnak (1990) declares, "It is our refusal to banish feelings of interrelatedness and caring from the theory and practice of ecofeminism that will save our efforts from calcifying into well-intentioned reformism, lacking the vitality and wholeness that our lives contain" (p.13). Ecofeminism gives alternative rhetorical space to embrace and actualize life-affirming thoughts, words, and actions and calls for deep inward transformation helping manifest outward change, which beckons for non-traditional rhetorical options.

The rhetorical practices made possible in the alternative political spaces of ecofeminist perspectives entail a constellation of values that offers a radically different basis for rhetorical action. "The ecofeminist antidote to exploitative societal structures and processes is social justice based on the principles of egalitarianism, inclusiveness, communitarianism, consensual decision-making, mutual care and responsibility" (Egri and Pinfield, 1987, quoting Cheney, p. 464). Effecting these values and beliefs involves grassroots activity and viewing the larger context while much of the world is at an impasse on the propriety and practicality of social and political action. It is these values that can help create alternative rhetorical options.

Building on this ecofeminist framework, I propose to expand on the invitational rhetorical model developed by Foss and Foss. In particular, I want to

enhance the conceptual repertoire of invitational rhetoric by drawing out the resonances of two ecofeminist concepts: re-sourcement and enfoldment.

Re-sourcement

One of the inherent features of ecofeminism is its lack of rigid structure and limiting conceptual content. The theory often appears as *ecofeminism(s)* and the rhetoric it engenders is expressed as *rhetoric(s)*. The expansiveness and inclusivity of ecofeminism is one of its greatest strengths as it celebrates creativity in breaking the bounds of eco-damaging practices, acts of domination and aggression, and constriction of manifestations of spirituality. Invitational rhetoric, evolving from ecofeminist concepts, is also amenable to development of its conditions. Ecofeminist scholar Sally Miller Gearhart abandons activism and traditional rhetorical practices as too manipulative and even violent in the intent to precipitate change and instead evolves to inner realms of more personal evocation of change.

In what she calls *re-sourcement*, Gearhart (1976) theorizes a drawing upon intuitive powers with wellsprings from the pre-patriarchal, nature-based realms as:

Re-sourcement [that] calls for the energy of receptivity, the energy of the listening ear, of the open meadow, of the expansive embrace. It calls for an energy generated from within the individual's own territory and for an affirmation of that energy as the genesis of both individual and societal transformation ("Womanpower," p. 198).

Re-sourcement draws power from diverse experiences: "attention to dreams, visions, memories, creative modes, rituals, games, celebrations" (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 271) – elaborating techniques noted earlier – all tapping into intrapersonal powers as well as interpersonal events.

Re-sourcement involves the connecting of rhetors with their internal energy sources and their intentionality to share that energy....[which] transforms the individual experience of cosmic energy into a political force; it politicizes the psychic or intrapersonal energy to which the rhetor connects" (qtd. in Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 271).

This energy is then shared in forming a matrix or community, which results in "'horizontal transcendence,' resulting in 'a discernible sense of power 'beyond' each...but not one 'above' or 'bigger'" (p. 271). This lateral connectivity is the basis of invitational rhetoric and grassroots activities for effecting transformation.

The first step in re-sourcement is awareness of and disengagement from the traditional frames of conquest and conversion rhetoric. Re-sourcing requires an affirmation of positive, receptive energy rather than the polarization of the traditional rhetorical encounter.

The second step in re-sourcement is creating a more open, invitational response to the often predictable messages or actions of conquest or conversion rhetoric and going to an alternative space for inspiration and energy fostering cooperation and collaboration instead of competition (Foss and Foss, 2003, pp. 44-48). An example of re-sourcement as disengagement and creative response within a new frame is given by Foss and Foss (2003). A comic strip features a passionate video-game player who has spent a month trying to kill an enemy figure when his sister takes over, walks past the enemy, and proceeds to the next level of the game. The scene was perceived as confrontational by the brother; the sister's solution was ignoring the agonistic scenario and walking onward (pp. 44-45). Re-sourcement is creating unaccustomed responses to situations of non-invitational communication by changing the dynamics to a feminist framework (Gearhart, 1976, "Another View," p. 41) and making space for the conditions of

alternative, invitational rhetoric -- freedom, safety, value, and openness – to develop. Negative confrontation is replaced by invitational engagement of a positive perspective. Gearhart (1976) posits that there is great power inherent in re-sourcement, but fears that as this transformation occurs “we won’t have enough women *conscious of the political nature of our re-sourced lives* [emphasis in the original]” (“Womanpower,” p. 206).

Enfoldment

Gearhart views re-sourcement as an intrapersonal form of alternative rhetoric, but she seeks to excise what she sees as the violence of traditional rhetorical efforts and the manipulative potential of the intentional rhetor. She makes a clear distinction between “wanting things to change and wanting to change things” (quoted in Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 276), with the first unproblematic as a desire, but the second as violent because of its intention to change others (p. 277). This is an entirely different basis for conceptualizing rhetorical practice and the role of the rhetor.

Gearhart doesn’t give a name to this alternative rhetorical concept, but Foss, Foss, and Griffin (1999) coin the term *enfoldment* in characterizing her idea. I offer enfoldment as a critical contribution to an expanded form of invitational rhetoric for the following reasons.

First, the rhetorical activity of enfoldment aims for understanding as it “takes the path of wrapping around the givee, of being available to her/him without insisting: our giving is a *presence*, an *offering*, a *surrounding*, a *listening*, a *vulnerability*, a *trust*....a push toward freedom for the givee” [emphasis in the original] (quoted in Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 278).

Secondly, the distinguishing characteristics of enfoldment are that change only occurs if there is the basis within individuals themselves for such transformation and an environment conducive to change must be present.

Communication can be a deliberate creation or co-creation of an atmosphere in which people or things, if and only if they have the internal basis for change, may change themselves; it can be a milieu in which those who are ready to be persuaded may persuade themselves, may choose to hear or choose to learn. With this understanding we can begin to operate differently in all communication circumstances, particularly those wherein *learning* and *conflict encounter* take place (Gearhart, 1979, p. 198).

Gearhart (1979) posits that this communication environment forms a matrix within which self-change begins to generate and be nurtured. Instead of the traditional concentration on the speaker or conqueror, interest is focused on atmosphere, listening, receiving, and a mode of being-in (the milieu) rather than being-against or the competitive mode of rhetorical antagonism (pp. 199-201).

Finally, if the conditions of trust and a conducive environment occur, then individual change can induce societal change. Gearhart also posits that implicit to this concept is belief in the universe as ultimately a safe space with the presence of unconditional love (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, p. 279), which helps counter reactions of fear of being misunderstood or negatively defined or appearing just plain ridiculous.

Enfoldment emanates from the same deep sources of internal spiritual power that are the underpinnings of the alternative rhetorical strategy of invitational rhetoric as it seeks to create conditions conducive for possible transformation of perceptions, attitudes, values, and ways of being and doing as people begin to relax into sharing the power from within for mutual benefit and possible transformation.

Field Sites

Since invitational rhetoric is the primary theoretical proposition of this study along with amplifications of re-sourcement and enfoldment, I turned to real-world settings to explore the practical viability of this alternative. With ecofeminism as the conceptual framework for expanding on the original invitational rhetoric model, I looked to grassroots efforts at transforming perception and use of energy in residential settings as the place for exploring invitational rhetoric in practice.

Theorists Foss and Foss posit a variety of framing strategies based primarily on literary conventions (see pp. 15-16) for organizational purposes. I select *location* with two distinct geographical regions for observing and employing invitational rhetoric relating to sustainable energy use in the residential built environment: my home community in the Keweenaw Peninsula in the state of Michigan and the state of Kerala in southwest India. I am interested in the viability of invitational rhetoric, as well as the potency of re-sourcement and enfoldment, manifested in two completely different venues in the quest for an alternative form of rhetorical practice that transcends boundaries of race, language, culture and lends itself to non-traditional communication and cross-cultural capacity.

The Keweenaw

The Western site is in my home territory, the Upper Peninsula (U.P.) of Michigan in the Midwest region of the United States. The Keweenaw Peninsula is a finger of land jutting north into the center of Lake Superior and is the northernmost part of Michigan at 47 degrees north latitude with an average annual snowfall of 240 inches. The north shore of Lake Superior is the province of Ontario in Canada.

It is here in the Keweenaw a story begins nearly a decade ago with my late husband and I relocating to the U.P. and building an award-winning passive solar, super-insulated home designed by husband, an architect. We then assisted the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity International in designing and building similarly energy efficient homes with low-income families. The Keweenaw experience provides insight into the effectiveness of invitational rhetorical practices in a Western context.

Kerala

The Eastern site is Kerala, a small state in the southwest corner of India bordering on the Arabian Sea. Over the past half century, Kerala has become a model for Third World development with enlightened policies that have provided such characteristics as nearly 100 percent literacy to the primary school level and universal health care. Here in Kerala the focus of the study is on the achievements of the Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD) in effecting *social architecture* focusing on ending lack of decent housing and attention to indigenous design and materials. The Kerala site provides insight into manifestation and impact of invitational rhetorical practices primarily on the researcher in an Eastern context.

Summary

This study proposes invitational rhetoric as an alternative mode of advocacy contravening inadequacies in traditional rhetorical practice and supplementing the rhetorical repertoire in everyday lived experience. The theoretical foundations for this study join ecofeminist concepts and commitments with not only the conditions and resources of invitational rhetoric,

but also develop the rhetorical potency of the concepts of re-sourcement and enfoldment in expanding rhetorical options. The study explores the efficacy of these theories and the tensions with traditional rhetorical practices by observation of and application to the topic of energy use in the residential built environment in two field sites: one in the United States and the other in India.

To effect the intimate communication involved in invitational rhetoric requires establishing conditions where participants are willing to be vulnerable in exploring non-coercive individual and eventual social change. With this goal in mind, I use the methodology of autoethnography using narrative reflection and journaling, both adapted to and developed within the project, to explore, compare, and contrast invitational rhetoric with traditional rhetorical practices. The methodology of autoethnography is introduced and explicated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2 – AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Introduction

Just as invitational rhetoric represents an alternative rhetorical option, I seek a robust methodology with reliance not only on the traditional modes of observation (visual) and listening (auditory), but also inclusion of hands-on (kinesthetic) participatory engagement of the physical/emotional self in the questing process. Autoethnography is the alternative methodological stance for exploration of the viability of my conceptual choices.

What is autoethnography?

The research technique in the field of anthropology is ethnography, the *in situ* of cultural life that produces knowledge of *others* based on claims of authentic experience (“I was there”). In the late 1970s, in the encounter with post-structuralism and post-modernism, ethnographers realized the radically interpretative nature of their knowledge claims provoking a turn to narrativity and a blurring of subject/object in ethnographic practice. Goodall (1999) says those engaged in qualitative work “are softer, more poetic, feminine; we display emotions and are openly vulnerable. We welcome multiple approaches to inquiry. We tell stories and examine narratives for metaphors” (p. 474).

One outcome was the development of autoethnography as a specific research methodology “connecting the personal to the cultural” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 739). A key feature of autoethnography is “search of the nexus of self and culture.... maneuvering through time and space to reveal how cultural logics enable and constrain” (Pelias, 2004, p. 11). This study employs autoethnography as a methodological tool and perhaps even “more as a broad orientation toward scholarship than a specific procedure” (Gingrich-Philbrook,

2005, p. 298) in effecting exploration and expansion of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice.

The essence of autoethnography is summarized by Ellis (2004) when she writes, “Autoethnographers examine relevant literature, interview other people, and weave their stories with those of others....[it] is not about fixing a problem...it’s about gaining insight into who you and others are and finding a way to be in the world that works for you” (p. 296). This explanation of autoethnographic practice complements the essence of ecofeminism with extensions of re-sourcement and enfoldment as frameworks for establishing conditions for invitational transformations. The strength of autoethnography, with its explication of the personal in terms of not just facts, but meanings and how the personal relates to a larger context, generates from layers of feeling and multi-sensory perceptions. Autoethnography is not limited to a mental exercise; rather, it incorporates sensory experience as knowledge-making. “*What happens within the observer* [emphasis in the original] must be made known” (Behar, 1996, p. 6). The self, with its range of emotions and the physicality of the body, becomes a source of valid knowledge claims as the gaze shifts outward and inward and back again in multiple iterations of questing and ruminating (Ellis, 2004).

Autoethnographic Practice as Vulnerabilities

In autoethnography, the conventional boundaries between self and other, and self and culture become permeable and distinctions blur. The self becomes more open to criticism as it grapples with what people think, feel, do (Ellis, 2004) and becomes vulnerable coupled with a degree of evolving emotional maturity that strengthens with application of the methodology and provides valuable

insights for study. The basis for knowledge claims in autoethnography is different than the ethnographic claim “I was here.” Rather, autoethnography is grounded in narrative evocation with the possibility of evoking visceral responsiveness. In laying open the self, the autoethnographer is vulnerable as Behar (1996) eloquently explains:

Writing vulnerably takes as much skill, nuance, and willingness to follow through on all the ramifications of a complicated idea as does writing invulnerably and distantly. I would say it takes yet greater skill. The worst that can happen in an invulnerable text is that it will be boring. But when an author has made herself or himself vulnerable, the stakes are higher: a boring self-revelation, one that fails to move the reader, is more than embarrassing; it is humiliating (p. 13).

In a process of self-scrutiny and acceptance of vulnerability, autoethnography creates accelerated “fragmentation, negotiation and reconstruction of the self during fieldwork” (Coffey, 1999). There is effort at creating evocative narrative that “refuses the impulse to abstract and explain, stressing the journey over the destination” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 44). Ambiguity is embraced with an understanding that the journey may well lead to wildly varied and even contradictory emotions, actions, and results.

Autoethnography blurs the boundaries of writing genres as it evokes empathetic perceptions and posits writing as a method of inquiry. Evocation is critical for successful autoethnography because if the researcher can’t stretch beyond their own experience to elicit others’ responses, self-absorption is probably occurring. Successful autoethnographic writing is a conduit between emotional responses of writer and recipient(s), but in addition, it’s a connection between those emotional responses and the larger concerns in the social environment. Willis and Trondman (2000) speak to the politics of autoethnographic evocation when they say:

We aim to re-connect and commit academic work with and to larger social projects and with the identification and formulation of the different possibilities of “social becoming” in an era of intense change. . . .we are interested in producing “Ah ha” effects where evocative expression...hits the experience, body and emotions of the reader (pp. 11,12).

An “ah ha” response is never guaranteed and again opens autoethnographic practice to vulnerability. Nonetheless, Behar (1996) suggests “the possibility that a personal voice, if creatively used, can lead...not into miniature bubbles of navel-gazing, but into the enormous sea of serious social issues” (p. 14) with possibilities for transformation of belief and action.

Autoethnography often includes epiphanies – sudden great awakenings (Ellis, 2004) such as the one I experienced in India on my first visit in 2004. After the intellectual and emotional intensity of comprehensive examinations and the subsequent commencement of the dissertation process over three years ago, I went on holiday and as I melted into the pre-monsoon heat of India and mingled with a multitude of its citizens, the lens of my proposed study focus blurred and then became clear.

I gave my intellectually-bounded emotions a rest and used the experience to confront my intellect and claim more equal status for heart in relation to head. I began to contravene the objective, scientific patterns of thinking and structuring where “control is thought to be essential because personal and emotional experiences are devalued, comprising ‘contaminants’ of objective data rather than avenues of insight into significant processes in the setting” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 12).

The emotions involved in this evolution are crucial to and in many ways the core of the narrative process I was to embark upon. Eventually I recognized

autoethnography as my methodology of choice, which would “involve both being with other people to see how they respond to events as they happen and experiencing for [my]self these events and the circumstances that give rise to them” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 2). I wanted to examine not only my work in the Keweenaw, but compare and contrast such reflection with study of similar efforts in Kerala.

Another reason I’m drawn to autoethnography is that it’s another opportunity to connect my own activist passions with my scholarly endeavors. Academia is not noted for activism in the social realm; therefore, Peacock (2001) utters a clarion call for anthropological activism, which I take as a similar call for activism through autoethnographic engagement: “The two spheres – theory and practice – have perhaps exhausted their isolation. The time is ripe for effective synergy: reflective practice and connected research” (p. 139).

How is autoethnography effected?

At this point, there needs to be explanation of the methodological structure of this dissertation beyond discussion of autoethnography with its purposeful vulnerabilities and embracing of emotion and sensual experience as valid data collection. How is autoethnographic manifestation created and shared? The following amplifies how I conducted autoethnography during the course of this study and how “writing is a way of seeing, that a lived experience is not only preserved but also is illuminated through writing about it” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 63) and the form of that writing changes the illumination.

Narrative Reflection

Narrative reflection is a technique for autoethnographic inquiry that involves purposeful delving into the past for supportive experiences and insights assembled and offered in the present. Despite its basis in realities of the past, narrative reflection also exists “within the tensions constituted by our memories of the past and anticipations of the future” (Bochner, 2000, p. 746). Memory is selective and the recapturing of the past is necessarily partial, nuanced, possibly idealized, weighted for rhetorical effect, and in actuality “retrospective reinterpretation” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 61). Narrative reflection is more than chronicling; it is creative reconstruction, but subject to “the homogenizing tendencies of retrospective recall” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 14). Ellis (2004) elaborates on the tensions and selective and interpretative essence of memory of the narrative experience when she says:

Making memory more complex is that it doesn't work in a linear way, nor does life....Instead, thoughts and feelings circle around us, flash back, then forward. The topical is interwoven with the chronological. Thoughts and feelings merge, drop from our grasp, then reappear in another context. In real life, we don't always know when we know something. Events in the past are always interpreted from our current position. Yet that doesn't mean there's no value in trying to disentangle now from then, as long as you realize it's not a project you'll ever complete or “get right”; instead, you strive as Richardson says, to get it contoured and nuanced in a meaningful way (p. 118)

Coffey (1999) reminds us of the rhetorical elements of narrative reflection when she says, “The re-recognition of the rhetorical features of lived experience, and therefore its representation, emphasize the narrative qualities of social life. That is, the ways in which ‘reality’ is texturally constructed to render it socially meaningful” (p. 142). Narratives have agendas, however intentionally or unintentionally hidden, and these agendas are a form of persuasion, a directing

of interpretation of the event. Of course, such interpretations are themselves part of other stories despite efforts at narrative closure.

Bochner (2000) exemplifies the practice of narrative reflection in his story of coming to narrativity as a communication scholar in this excerpt *Why Personal Narrative Matters*.

It's my pleasure to be here today and to have this opportunity to speak on a topic about which I feel so passionately. As many of you know, I was educated as a traditional empiricist and spent most of the first decade of my academic life plying the trade I had learned as a graduate student. In the late 1970s, I began to feel uneasy about the political, philosophical, ethical, and ideological foundations of social science research (Bochner, 1981). In my chosen field, communication research, empiricism rested largely on the premise that communication between humans could be described as an object. But human communication is not an object, or a discipline studying objects. Communication is a process consisting of sequences of interactions and the dynamic human activity of studying them. Moreover, as communicating humans studying humans communicating, we are inside what we are studying. The reflexive qualities of human communication should not be bracketed "in the name of science." They should be accommodated and integrated into research and its products.

Like many other social scientists who took these matters seriously, my confidence in orthodox, social science methodology was shaken by the critiques of poststructuralist, postmodernist, and feminist writers. I turned to narrative as a mode of inquiry because I was persuaded that social science texts needed to construct a different relationship between researchers and subjects and between authors and readers. I wanted a more personal, collaborative, and interactive relationship, one that centered on the question of how human experience is endowed with meaning and on the moral and ethical choices we face as human beings who live in an uncertain and changing world. I also wanted to understand the conventions that constrain which stories we can tell and how we can tell them, and to show how people can and do resist the forms of social control that marginalize or silence counternarratives, stories that deviate from or transgress the canonical ones. The texts produced under the rubric of that create the effect of reality, showing characters embedded in the complexities of lived moments of struggle, resisting the intrusions of chaos, disconnection, fragmentation, marginalization, and incoherence, trying to preserve or restore the continuity and coherence of life's unity in the face of unexpected blows of fate that call one's meanings and values into question. (pp. 743-744).

I choose engagement in narrative reflection, fully acknowledging the fallibility of memory and the inevitability of selection and interpretation in reconstructing events from the archives of the mind. Ellis (2004) describes the autoethnographic experience as drawing upon narrative reflective experiences in:

opening up a deeply personal space in [our] life from which to create understanding. In this space, we learn to live meaningfully in the stories of our lives....we learn to see and feel the world in complicated manner and then reflexively turn that lens on ourselves. In this space, we access the material and talent to create and write evocative and engaging stories of our lived experiences (Ellis, p. 98-99).

Narrative reflection enables me to reach into myself and share the emotional, sensual, intuitive essence of my experiences in questing for manifestation and impact of invitational rhetorical options as ecofeminist practice. My life in the Keweenaw is nearly a decade long, but my experience in India was cumulatively over two months with half in Kerala. I seek to share my varied experiences autoethnographically and evocatively remaining mindful of the value and the vagaries of narrative reflection.

My experiences relating to energy use in the residential built environment in the Keweenaw comprise my primary data gathered through a sifting of sensate memories and personal materials. My analysis focuses on identifying manifestations of both traditional and invitational rhetoric and reporting their impact retrospectively through the lens of autoethnography.

Journaling

In India, my experiences are, by comparison, cursory because of temporal constraints, and results are again sifted through my sensory and emotional

systems; however, on these occasions I was mindful of the analysis that was to follow. The specific data collection method I used was journaling.

In a world of high-speed technology, I purposely choose a low-tech, kinesthetically-rich form of recording thoughts and feelings as part of the experiential process. The following passage is an ode to journaling written between my first and second trips to India:

Rather than press onward to *cybertechnogeekdom* (a term I coined just now), I'm writing in a blank book with a sparkling beaded cover in shades of purple and black with hints of orange and turquoise – a book crafted in India. I'm using a Pilot G-2 07 pen with a fine point and rich black ink. The kinesthetic appeal of applying ink to fine paper bound in an attractive format has always thrilled me since I began journaling during my time in Jamaica in the late 1970s.

The journal I used for my recent 3-week trip to Florida for a solar workshop and conference was a gift from a friend. The 5"x7" book was bound in burnt cork with three pieces of earth-toned, small scale corrugated cardboard glued to the cover along with a peach-colored piece of hand-made paper and stylized ancient Egyptian birds back-to-back in burnished metal affixed to the top of the artfully assembled background material. This spiral-bound journal also contained a bookmark printed with Egyptian hieroglyphics and attached with a triangular, bronze paperclip that matched the bronze of the spiral and the motif of birds.



Figure 2. Journals

Both journals appeal to me tactilely and visually (I place the ordering of the appeals purposefully) and are pure joy for me. In contrast, I remember jotting notes in my Egyptian-theme journal at a restaurant in Daytona Beach while waiting for the bus that would start me on my journey homeward and seeing my waitress whip out a Palm Pilot to take my order. "I've never seen a waitress use a Palm Pilot," I commented.

"I love it!" she chirped (and proceeded to get two things wrong on a simple soup 'n' salad order).

My choice of journaling in notebooks, depicted in Figure 2, as I traveled in India was a natural extension for me of over a quarter of a century's experience in the practice and ease of recording thoughts and feelings. I had learned years ago that journaling usually starts as think>write and often morphs into write>think. I shared with Richardson and St. Pierre (2000) the realization that "writing as a method of inquiry [is] a viable way in which to learn about [ourselves] and [our] research topic" (p. 959).

Despite the bifurcating of the world of writing into literary and scientific realms during the scientific revolution of the 17th-century, non-scientific writing can still provide rich data for knowledge-making. Qualitative writers:

can eschew the questionable metanarrative of scientific objectivity and still have plenty to say as situated speakers, subjectivities engaged in knowing/telling about the world as they perceive it....Nurturing our own voices releases the censorious hold of "science writing" on our consciousness as well as the arrogance it fosters in our psyche; writing is validated as a method of knowing (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2000, p. 961-962).

My journaling in India served as field notes recording time, place, encounter, and quantitative data, but also extended into exploration of emotional responses and plumbing spiritual depths. If I was to break the stranglehold of quantitative, rational-focused data, I was determined to accelerate my honed abilities in exploring the often murky depths of emotional and intuitive response to conditions in which I was immersed. I share the view of Richardson and St. Pierre (2000) when they declare:

I know that when I move deeply into my writing, both my compassion for others and my actions on their behalf increase. My writing moves me into an independent space where I see more clearly the interrelationships between and among peoples worldwide (p. 967).

Again, because of the temporal limitations in India, I had to rely more on my feelings and thoughts about the encounters, which further renders my work in the realm of autoethnography. I was aware of “balanc[ing] sensitivity to people’s experiences of events with self-conscious awareness of [my] own perception and reactions to these others” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 59). However, Peacock (2001) gives solid backing for autoethnography when he says, “Introspection claims a very solid justification: All that you can ever know is your own experience” (p. 106).

Data gathering in autoethnographic fashion relating to my experiences in India is based primarily on real-time journaling, with understanding that the very nature of the activity is a *creation* and not mere *recording* of reality as experienced by me as writer with writing more a filter than a mirror (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 64, 66). Richardson and St. Pierre (2000) recommend differing categories for fieldnotes: observation, methodological, theoretical, and personal, which I handled in varied fashion.

The *observation notes* in my journaling includes notetaking of statistical data relating to time, place, number of participants in encounters, and descriptive content notes rich in sensual description interspersed with my reasoned responses to meetings or events. I used a stapler or gluestick to insert clippings, business cards, and other information in the journals and write commentary near the pieces, so the journals also served as scrapbooks and ways of organizing loose material.

Methodological notes about issues such as objectivity and subjectivity tended to be woven into the general flow of my chronological accounts. However, *to do* lists were jotted in my pocket-size Day-Timer. I also carried an unobtrusive and

handy palm-size spiral notebook to jot notes when standing or moving about with a group or in other situations where pulling out a journal would have been intrusive. In the evening, I would tear out these numbered pages and glue them into the larger journal to maintain both the details of the in-process encounter and its place in the chronological record I was building. I would also add reflective commentary.

I went to India as an ecofeminist, but I hadn't yet discovered invitational rhetoric, so my *theoretical notes* tended to appear as autoethnographic exploring, evaluating, and questioning. I didn't enter the realm of hypothesizing or criticizing as I was keeping myself open to possibilities and purposely positioning myself as vulnerable to new thoughts and feelings, which I later realized were conditions of invitational rhetoric.

Since I was immersed in ecofeminist autoethnography, *personal notes* were interspersed throughout my journaling and often indistinguishable from observational notes and theoretical notes, such as they were. Feeling notes were everywhere as I jotted emotions, responses, fears, doubts, uncertainties, and perplexities. All of these seemingly autobiographical notes are not peripheral to, but essential as "writing culture/self."

I chose to travel low-tech to India and I took my 35 mm camera and on the second trip, which was devoted to field study and shot 35 rolls of film. Since I was traveling light, I sent four 10-kilo boxes home at intervals and these were filled with unneeded items, Indian arts and crafts, books, resource materials, and the exposed film containers. When I returned to the United States, I had the film processed into prints (nearly 1,000) and CDs. Then I engaged in narrative reflections on thoughts and feelings evoked by these photographs weeks after

the actual encounters and selected some for inclusion in the dissertation along with reflections on their representative value in the narrative.

The journaling and photography became part of an ongoing, reflexive process and as I began to shape the India portion of this dissertation, there was a weaving of theory and methodology with the data emerging from the journals and photographs. Gradually I came to the conclusion voiced by Goodall (1999) about:

com[ing] to the place all writers whose life experiences stand outside of scientific explanation must eventually come to, which is the realization that we don't begin with knowledge, but come into it through writing. Writing is our way of translating that watchfulness, that inwardness, that solitude into words. The words themselves are our methods, our ways not so much of shaping knowing as of coming to it (p. 472).

Revisiting Autoethnography

I chose autoethnography because my goal was to plunge deeply into real-life, physical activities and enterprises and share the visceral and emotional results in order to evoke increased awareness in both myself and others of the need and possibility for meaningful lifestyle transformations leading to life-sustaining change in relation to energy issues. However, despite selecting this alternative methodology to accompany the equally alternative invitational rhetoric, I admit to a contradiction. Including my sensory and emotional responses as an autoethnographer to evoke shared, meaningful, and creative responses with others, is an admittedly traditional rhetorical goal in its persuasive stance. Also, I found myself sometimes “experie[n]c[ing] through the senses in anticipation of writing” (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 35). All such effort remains an “exogenous project of studying or understanding the lives of others—as opposed to the indigenous project of simply living a life in one way or another....[and the

researcher's] strangeness is created and maintained exactly by writing fieldnotes; such notes reflect and realize this socially close but experientially separate stance" (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 36).

Despite my quest to engage in alternative rhetorical practice, I seemed quite vulnerable to traditional patterns of seeking to influence and create change. As an academic researcher, I was very aware of "intended and anticipated audiences and the theoretical commitments they reflect" (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 46) and I struggled with scholarly conventions about dissertation forms and protocols. I also concede that my writing has an element of manipulation, because "all writing, by definition, is an abstracting and ordering process" (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 106) "whether as privately filed resources or as public excerpts in final documentation, fieldnotes persuade" (Emerson, et al, 1995, p. 107). Writing exercises a powerful, persuasive force despite attempts at engaging in alternative rhetorical practices.

However, I continue striving to bring theory and practice from the academic realm to bear on my advocacy efforts and embolden my academic work with examples from my advocacy experiences. Researchers Ray and Anderson "suggest that a growing number of people, whom they dub 'cultural creatives,' share a constellation of values that differ from those that characterize the modern/industrial age" (Van Gelder, 2000, p. 6). While I've always been drawn to aspects of advocacy practice and burgeoning technology, I'm also attracted to cultural creatives personally challenged with evolving sense of differing social values and, concurrently, seeking alternate rhetorical approaches, and a sustainable and more satisfying way of conducting life. I'm looking for strength and direction from primarily grassroots efforts, which I feel are closer to

my longing for a supportive, sustainable community that can stretch worldwide. I desire a “feeling mind and thinking heart” (Killingsworth and Palmer, 1995, p. 45) in myself and others with a softening of the polarity of rational and emotional responses as I engage in environmental practice via invitational rhetoric

Autoethnography offers opportunities and expansiveness in reaching these goals by expanding sensitivity to the interrelationship between the public and private realms of existence. It also indicates an alternative, relational standard of morality in the context of traditional rigid, rule-driven morality. And finally, autoethnography expands the awareness of and strength of “an evolving, liberatory, feminist epistemology” (Pickering, 2003, p. 1).

Homes as Co-rhetors

As I sift my experiences in the built environment in autoethnographic fashion through my emotional and sensory systems, I also acknowledge the profound presence of silent companions: the energy efficient houses themselves. Invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice embraces co-producing goals, co-constructing activities, and co-creation of transformative practices. I argue that part of the pursuit of alternative rhetorical strategies in effecting transformation is acknowledging and cultivating the materiality of prototypical homes as part of the rhetorical process and including them in my autoethnographic accounting.

This dissertation relies heavily on narrative progression as a framing strategy for invitational rhetoric as offered by Foss and Foss (2003, p. 69) and I weave stories about exemplary houses in both the Keweenaw and Kerala.

Summary

The purpose of this dissertation is exploration of the strength of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice as a viable alternative option to traditional

rhetoric. I acknowledge the tension between attempting to resist the role of a traditional rhetor operating in patriarchal, hierarchical systems and communications and the openness and responsiveness necessary to operate from a realm of cooperative, collaborative communication. Autoethnography is a methodology that allows me to acknowledge my successes and failures, insights and trepidations as I engage in both recreating portions of past events conveyed as narrative reflection and culling lived experiences as recorded in travel journals.

By choosing autoethnography, I declare my willingness to become intimately involved with the study of invitational rhetoric and share not only the results, but the personal journey through the process of discovery. The next chapter contains the experience of manifestation and efficacy of invitational rhetoric in relation to the residential built environment in the Keweenaw Peninsula.

CHAPTER 3: INVITATIONAL RHETORIC IN THE KEWEENAW

Introduction

This chapter shares my experiences with alternative building models in the Keweenaw through the lens of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice and airs concerns about current building practices in America. With ecofeminist commitments reconfirmed, the Keweenaw is introduced as the site of two examples of energy efficient, small-scale home designs with houses as co-rhetors, which means the buildings and builders serving in tandem as advocates for transformation of perception and potential action relating to energy use. The exigency is conveyed by three examples that illustrate aspects of current building philosophy and practices in America.

The study takes the form of narrative reflection using Foss and Foss's (2003) framing strategies and elaborating techniques. It also acknowledges problems arising from the abstract nature of the conditions of invitational rhetoric, challenges of not lapsing into the comfort zones of traditional rhetorical strategies, and struggles in engaging in this form of alternative rhetoric with metaphors of bridge and sandbar.

The Keweenaw

The Keweenaw Peninsula is the finger of land jutting north into the center of Lake Superior and is the northernmost part of Michigan at 47 degrees north latitude with an average annual snowfall of 240 inches. The peninsula was a remote region inhabited mostly by Native Americans until geologist Douglass Houghton discovered its rich lode of copper in the 1840s. The area then experienced a *copper rush* with steady immigration and intensive mining through the Civil War and on to the boom decades of the 1880s until after World War I when the economic viability

of extracting copper from ever-deeper shafts became too expensive with the region subsequently experiencing economic decline over the last century. At present, the Keweenaw Peninsula is home to 40,000 to 45,000 people and one of the key factors in the economic stability of the region is a vestige of the mining boom era, the former mining college now morphed into Michigan Technological University with a student population of over 6,000.

The roots of this dissertation topic on energy concerns generating from heightened consciousness based on experiences in the Keweenaw stretch back years ago to environmental awareness, even as a youth, that I was immersed in a society whose consumptive practices were well beyond the capacity of this finite planet to endlessly provide for life support with limited resources of earth, air, and water. My awareness grew in focus and depth when I married in the mid-1980s and became business coordinator for Garfield Kindred Associates, P.C., Architects. Skip Kindred was sensitive to issues of energy conservation in design since the inception of his career in the early 1960s. By the 1970s, his interest grew to include extensive research on energy conservation through super-insulation and earth-berming (mounding) and, when possible, use of renewable energy in the form of passive solar features in his design strategies, which means siting buildings with a southern orientation to maximize sunlight for lighting and heating.

In the early 1990s, with our increasing sensitivity to the exigency of energy availability and use in the world, we made space in our lives for volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and helped establish an affiliate in Macomb County, north of Detroit, where Skip (1997) designed the first house, which was passive solar and super-insulated. A journal entry summarizes his concern:

My feeling is that low income people need energy efficient and functional housing more than others as they have fewer dollars to be squandered on this aspect of their lives. As energy costs increase, more of their limited income will be diverted to heating their houses – properly designed houses will minimize the impact of these increases (21 August).

Often life washes over us with such speed and forcefulness that exact moments of awareness and decision are lost. This is not the case with our decision to ratchet down our architectural practice in suburban Detroit to just the two of us, sell our house, build an energy efficient home in the Upper Peninsula, and re-establish our firm in a small town setting.

Skip attended a seminar in October, 1997, a month after the above journal entry, and heard about then President Clinton's *Million Solar Rooftops Initiative* and the parceling out of money to each state with Michigan having five \$8,000 grants encouraging energy efficient building. Our architectural practice was doing well enough, but the pace and place, the constant wariness about possible litigation, and the commodification of architecture were making our lives increasingly stressful and unsatisfying. News of the Five Star Home Grant (now called the Energy Star Home Grant) program sparked our immediate and mutual decision to reconfigure our lives and relocate to our eventual retirement destination, the Upper Peninsula where we each had family connections.

It is here in the Keweenaw that a story begins nearly a decade ago when we submitted a grant application to the State of Michigan along with our proposed house design, a plan to initiate solar home tours in the U.P. in conjunction with the American Solar Energy Society's annual tour of solar homes, and a proposal to write a children's book on energy efficient housing. An entry from my journal during this period reads, "It is time to change, evolve."

Ecofeminist Commitments in the Keweenaw

From the very inception of the idea of moving north, Skip and I manifested elemental components of ecofeminist commitments. We viewed life as an interconnected web and thought our personal efforts, however small, on behalf of the planet were part of the basis of change globally. We believed that not only our words, but our actions were critical in the process of transformation by engaging in the materiality of designing and constructing a prototypical energy efficient home as part of reconstructing alternative discourses relating to the built environment. Beliefs that engendered actions became both reflections of personal lifestyle changes and organized public acts.

We basically established the conditions of invitational rhetoric in conceiving of the home as providing a sense of welcome for not only family and friends, but especially visitors unknown to us who shared interest in energy concerns. When my husband and I accepted the state grant for our house with obligations for effecting innovative design along with marketing and educational efforts, our intent was creating co-rhetors that individuals could experience as sensually as possible. As soon as the house was completed, we hosted the first Keweenaw Solar Home Tour, along with open house events at several other energy efficient houses in the area and invited community members to visit and experience the ambiance and attributes of a passive solar home. We'd also arranged workshops



Figure 3. post & cousin

and an art exhibit of the work of my cousin in British Columbia, whom we'd commissioned to carve our front porch post as shown in Figure 3: a bear's head on one side and solar motif on the other to further community discussion about connection with the natural world and alternative energy.

The post speaks powerfully to visitors and is a much commented upon feature. It is a vital part of what Foss and Foss (2003) term the *beginning* (p. 87) of creating the conditions of invitational rhetoric and this distinctive post further materializes the conditions of value and safety, which are intrinsic in the house and critical in effecting invitational rhetorical practice. It also physically manifests ecofeminist commitments to ecological holism and spiritual connection. The bear, a strong symbol in my cousin's and my Finnish ancestry, was purposely positioned on the front of the post as a rhetorical reminder of the reverence we felt at claiming a part of its world for our building. It was a physical connection with the natural world as was the sun motif carved on the opposite side facing the house and both tap into *myth* (Foss and Foss, 2003, pp. 79-80) as part of an elaborating technique based on cultural stories. These motifs are rhetorical reinforcements of acknowledging natural powers in relation to the artificiality of the building. Visitors are greeted by a bear, experience the southern panoramic exposure to the woods only after entering the house, and are again reminded of the house's connection with and homage to the natural world when they depart and spy the sun motif.

In some ways, my husband and I continued to be traditional rhetors seeking to persuade visitors of the importance and possibility of energy efficient living even at such high latitude. However, we also fulfilled the communitarian conditions of Foss and Foss's original model of invitational rhetoric by letting visitors explore the house in anonymous silence if they so chose. In this way, we unwittingly

established conditions of freedom and safety for them by not requiring immediate response to the experience. In addition, the post itself invites us into a larger ecological context when bidding a silent “hello” and “good-bye” to visitors.

Further Examples of Invitational Rhetoric

The mode of presentation of this section of the study is based on Foss and Foss’s (2003) invitational rhetorical *framing* strategies organized according to *location* (p. 65) focused on local sites in the Keweenaw and *narrative progression* (p. 69) with the sequencing of several stories of design and construction.

The Kindred House

With *location* (p. 65) the primary Foss and Foss (2003) framing strategy for this study, a variety of elaborating techniques serve to support and extend main ideas for the first locale: the Keweenaw. Our house on Crestwood Drive became the lodestone of advocacy for smaller, energy efficient housing and an elaborating technique serving as the basis for our *credentials* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) presenting expertise and fostering credibility. We were awarded one of Michigan’s Five Star Home Grants, the first in the U.P., in 1998 and relocated from the industrial, commercial, urban southeast region, built a 1,920 s.f. passive solar,



Figure 4. Kindred house, SW view

super-insulated home and architectural studio, and demonstrated the viability of such design at high latitude. [Note: *passive solar* means use of available sunlight for daylighting and space heating, not electrical production; *super-insulated* means 2”x 6” walls providing extra

insulation for energy savings. In providing these definitions, the elaborating technique used is *explanation* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78), defining terms for increased understanding].

The photograph in Figure 4 elaborates the main idea visually through *audiovisual aids* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) and conveys the distinctive features of the house non-verbally: large windows facing sunward to capture ambient light and the structure nestled in a wooded setting of deciduous trees providing exposure to sunlight in winter and shade in summer. This view of siting to face the sun and photographs that follow are offered to elicit evocative response engendering new thoughts about residential possibilities in the north country.

Rhetoric is generally construed as operating in the realms of speaking and writing, but as I become more deeply aware of the scope and depth of ecofeminism, I realize rhetoric can manifest itself even in mute form from the realm of the sensorium, the part of the brain that receives and interprets input from the senses. This realm also fuels the internal energy of re-sourcement and enfoldment furthering the power of invitational rhetoric as alternative practice.

In this study, passive solar homes become co-rhetors for energy efficient design and construction through responses from the sensoriums of visitors. Such homes have the potential of having character, displaying the logic of their being, and drawing response from visitors. Rhetoric does not always have to be verbal and the physicality of such homes is an alternative rhetorical manifestation that might be an even more powerful form of invitational rhetoric because there isn't the possible clash of personalities, worldviews, and communicative disjunctions that often detract from personal interactions and possibilities for transformations.

This understanding gives me great comfort that I don't always have to be saying or doing, as just *being* with the buildings as co-rhetors evoking a sensory experience can be enough. There is power in extending ideas by tapping into information or emotions drawn from the senses and trusting re-sourcement to engender the energy of receptivity. The homes provide space for being-in the milieu, for being enfolded in the sensory experience.

The following is an *example* (p. 78) as part of the elaborating of main ideas offered by Foss and Foss (2003). Evocative response is sought through the *audiovisual aid* (p. 74) of photography coupled with *sensory images* (p. 86) developed verbally.

My home on Crestwood Drive has been quietly speaking for nearly a



decade. It is part of a traditional subdivision with conservatively designed homes lining the street and much of the original woods retained between houses and in yards as shown in Figure 5. The street is to the north of the house, so the façade

Figure 5. Kindred house, N side contains small windows as there is never direct sunlight and the customary two-car garage jutting out for wind protection and closer access to the street gives no hint of the sensory surprises inside.

As first-time visitors troop up the stairs to the residential level, there are gasps of amazement at the panoramic effect of the living room and the house embraces their imaginations. The deciduous trees wave a leafy hello in the greens of spring and summer, and the reds, yellows, and oranges of autumnal

celebration as depicted in Figure 6. In snow season, the trunks and branches of the sheltering woods present silhouetted forms against the cloudy grey or clear blue of wintry skies and when the wind blows, there's a slow sway of sensual dancing on display.



Figure 6. Kindred living room

The openness of the living space and connection between the house and the world of nature outside is direct and inviting and all visitors are mesmerized by this surprised intimacy. As guests relax into the comfort of the sofa, they gaze outside with comments of rapture: "It's so peaceful," "The woods are almost inside," "It's so quiet," "It's a treehouse." Such display of *emotions* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 77) indicates ways of knowing via sensory experience. Soon visitors also realize that just as the panoramic array brings them closer rapport with nature, the super-insulation of the house quiets the hum of traffic from outside.

With indoor air quality an issue in much of the built environment and respiratory conditions such as asthma increasing, visitors often mention the quality of freshness in the air. Their perception is correct as the heat recovery ventilation system provides a complete air exchange from the outside once every three hours. Breathing eases and stuffiness subsides as people experience a sense of freedom with the physical and portent of spiritual healing attributes of the house. A sense of peace, well-being, and safety is offered by the home's embrace in both visual, auditory, and kinesthetic forms, which constitutes conditions of invitational rhetoric with the addition of enfoldment with offering a presence of an alternative living environment.

The context of the house from spring to fall offers another sense of freedom, which is also one of the primary conditions of invitational rhetoric. The property is *naturescaped*, which means no lawn and encouragement of native and unregulated plants, i.e. weeds. Vegetation is knee-to-thigh-high in the sunny front yard and ground cover abounds in the leaf-shaded side and backyards. When downstate, urban, middle-school students visited the house one summer as part of MTU's Summer Youth Program, one student asked, "What's with your lawn?" I responded, "There's no lawn, this is called naturescaping; what goes is whatever grows." The youngsters grinned as such a lush and wild environment is unusual in a subdivision. The interlude constitutes re-sourcement in changing the dynamics and definition of yard care and encouraging unaccustomed response.

During frequent house tours, I provide elaborating main ideas via *facts* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) and anecdotal information, but it is the very house itself that silently speaks the loudest as co-rhetor in advocating for alternative housing models that are smaller, more energy efficient, and mindful of their natural setting. The house is exemplifying enfoldment in "wrapping around the givee, of being available...without insisting" (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, quoting Gearhart, p. 278).

The following is an autoethnographic interlude shared from sitting here in front of my computer. My house is the genesis of my quest for alternative rhetorical options in relation to energy concerns and serves as a powerful rhetorical companion. As an illustration of autoethnography's visceral nature, I share a vignette of the ambiance of my home in the Keweenaw through sensory details.

As I write on an early spring day here in the Upper Midwest, I'm in my spacious, south-facing studio in my passive solar home with windows overlooking our community's shared woods. Oak, birch, and maple trees of varying trunk expanse are on the verge of leafing. Last year's crunchy layer of snow-flattened leaves is coming to life again as spring breezes scatter them and reveal shoots of daffodils, crocuses, irises, and all the unruly and welcomed plants of my naturesscaped yard. Sunlight streams through my low-e [e=emissivity] windows, which stretch from two feet above my dyed concrete floor slab to the ceiling. The floor serves as thermal mass to hold the trapped sunlight as radiant heat. Eighty percent of the south wall of this room is glass and at times I have to lower the cellular soft shades to block the brilliance so I can read what's on my computer screen.

Vihrea, my black cat with luminous green eyes [*vihrea* in Finnish means *green*] is resting on my bright red, handwoven attempt at Navajo weaving covering a folded polar fleece blanket and she stretches a paw my direction before yawning. Pepper, her grey and white companion, has just scooted outside slipping through the weighed netting I hang in place of a screen door keeping bugs at bay, but letting my cats be mistresses of their comings and goings. The door has just slammed shut with the wind rising and promising a storm. I pause from my writing and use a grey, loaf-sized Lake Superior rock with a reddish stripe to hold the door open.

Mozart fills the studio with auditory sunshine. I'm sipping tea from my husband's favorite mug bearing a grinning Goofy. Tazo Chai, with a strong scent of cloves, reminds me of last year in India. I have my feet propped up on a carved box from my Oregon days that serves as my footstool here in the studio. I wiggle my toes as my fingers tap away on my keyboard.

Here I'm arguing for the validity of my own lived experiences as knowledge(s) about positive conditions of the passive solar built environment. By sharing the visceral elements of the experience, I'm seeking to evoke the emotional connection and response I feel in the house in a way that invites others into its presence as an enfoldment presenting "an offering, a surrounding, a listening, a vulnerability, a trust" for the reader or visitor (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, quoting Gearhart, p. 278).

The traditional rhetorical appeal to logic would be citing the home's energy performance: 2006 average monthly natural gas bills of \$72 for space heating and domestic hot water and \$57 for electricity. However, this study claims that

transformation relating to energy concerns can't be addressed solely in conventional economic and quantitative terms; evocative description tapping into the sensory realms is vital for holistic representation of a plethora of responses to the energy challenge and opens the possibility for personal and cultural movement toward sustainable residential living environments.

Copper Country Habitat for Humanity Houses

Even as my husband and I savored our new home and shared the experience of it with others while entertaining and conducting tours, we also extended our concern for low-income families by volunteering our services to the local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. A year after our arrival, Copper Country Habitat for Humanity (CCHFH), which had already been building energy efficient homes, was using Skip's designs and building smaller versions of our passive solar, super-insulated house with low-income families.

Since 1995, nineteen families have partnered with CCHFH building seventeen 1,056 s.f. houses and two renovated mining-era houses. Starting in 1999, twelve of the houses have been passive solar and super-insulated. My narrative reflections of the experience now leads to the further evocation by descriptive *example* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) elaborating upon the main ideas about the ambiance of these energy efficient houses.



The CCHFH homes have to be snug and affordable, so they look much like factory-built modular housing at casual

Figure 7. Laurium house, SE view

glance; however, the significant change is the size of windows on the south side, shown in this Laurium home in

Figure 7. Sunlight floods into these small homes and provides more than adequate daylighting in summer and equally bright rooms in winter as sunlight reflects off snow. The super-insulated 2" x 6" walls and extra insulation above the ceiling and under the floor, plus careful caulking and gasketing, ensure a tight envelope with heating and hot water bills often a tenth of those in previous houses. Habitat housing partners and visitors to their homes are enthralled by not only the economic advantage of their new homes, but also the cheerful ambiance these homes share with their occupants.

These Habitat homes, at 1,056 s.f., are approximately half the size of my home, but also serve as co-rhetors for more sustainable modes of living manifesting conditions of invitational rhetoric in their own right. Despite a variety of floor plans, the first sensation in entering a home is the relative



Figure 8. Habitat living room

openness of the spaces. Living rooms and dining areas mingle with the kitchen, the heart of most homes, comfortably adjacent as depicted in Figure 8. There is roominess and a sense of safety in the provision of basic housing needs articulated in thoughtful space planning.

Residents are free to mingle in common areas or retreat to the privacy of bedroom as the homes are designed to value both public and private spaces.

The very basis of Habitat for Humanity is rooted in the conditions of invitational rhetoric as low-income citizens are offered the opportunity of participating in what could prove the pivotal acceleration and stabilizing of their standard of living. Citizens of the community are also offered the opportunity of investing time and effort in addressing poverty housing and the communication is based on ecofeminist principles of caring and cooperation. The value of the co-rhetor manifested in these Habitat homes is their compact efficiency, welcoming of sunlight from the south, and a history of neighbors coming together to help build a home with a family in need. Participants have the opportunity of sensing the intrapersonal energy of re-sourcement coupled with enfoldment's "wanting things to change" (Foss, Foss, and Griffin, 1999, quoting Gearhart, p. 276) in this communitarian house-building effort.

In communities, the homes become beacons attesting to the possibility of invitational rhetoric's conditions of freedom, safety, value, and openness being manifest in both the practices of Habitat housing partners and volunteers. The homes attest to the reality that small can be beautiful and that perceptions of housing and energy use and more responsible citizenship can be realized even by citizens with modest incomes assisted by neighbors who are willing to "give a hand up and not just a hand out" (a slogan of Habitat for Humanity International).

Hundreds of people have also toured the various Habitat houses and these stalwart little homes are increasingly becoming even greater co-rhetors employing several of the invitational rhetorical elaborating techniques (Foss and Foss, 2003) already mentioned in relation to the Kindred house: *comparison and contrast* (p. 74) with existing housing; *emotions* (p. 77) evoked from the ambiance,

and knowledge of the affordability and energy efficiency of the dwellings; *explanations* (p. 78); *facts* (p. 78); *sensory images* (p. 86); and *statistics* (p. 86). All these techniques support and extend main ideas and serve as varied forms of invitational rhetorical practice. Our affiliate has been asked to nationally publicize the design and construction strategies used and the energy saving data as quantitative information, but it is the visible, qualitative aspect of a dozen of these houses in various Keweenaw communities that also attests powerfully in the local community as to their merit.

What follows are illustrations of the exigency fostering this study's concern. *Teardowns* and *McMansions* are rhetors of a current residential reality that fuel my passion for alternative advocacy relating to energy efficient, smaller-scale home design.

The Exigency: House Construction in America

Teardowns

A National Public Radio (NPR) broadcast in 2005 announced that land is becoming more valuable than houses in popular urban and suburban locations in America and good, solid homes are being torn down to build much larger houses. Classic 1920s bungalows with their human-proportions and detailed wood and glasswork are facing the wrecking ball. Even relatively new homes of 3,000 - 4,000 square feet (s.f.) from the 1980s and recently remodeled homes aiming for a good selling price are being bought up, torn down, and what have been dubbed by the popular press as *McMansions* are replacing them. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) says the number of teardowns has doubled in the past ten years. Wealthy would-be homeowners in thriving urban and suburban areas want homes that are 6,000-10,000 s.f. They want such amenities as larger kitchens, 4-5

bedrooms, 3-4 bathrooms, studies, and media and exercise rooms. “Americans with big dollars want big houses” (14 July).

That news report calls to mind the work of researcher Mathis Wackernagel from British Columbia who has modeled the *ecological footprint*, which measures the impact of individual lifestyle in relation to Earth’s resources. I had gone online (www.myfootprint.org) a few months prior and calculated my ecological footprint at Global Footprint Network’s site. Even in my 1,920 s.f. energy efficient home, driving a 16-year-old car getting nearly 30 miles per gallon, and with minimal commuting and consuming, I registered 7.8 planet Earths to sustain me. Americans are 5 percent of Earth’s population and consume over 30 percent of our global resources and create greater than 30 percent of Earth’s pollution (Gore, 2005). If my energy efficient house and relatively modest lifestyle give me such an enormous footprint, imagine how McMansions rate, not to mention the waste entailed in disposing of destroyed homes.

Is there a limit to house size and, if so, who decides? What is the nature and purpose of a home? What is the difference between need and want? What about preservation of the past? The following examples illustrate current housing practices in the Keweenaw and the lower peninsula of Michigan.

McMansion Tour

My husband had done some initial design development and interior design consultation for a proposed 5,500 s.f. home farther north on the peninsula and I had an opportunity of touring the house. It is three-stories of doeskin-hued cedar shakes with white trim on many-mullioned windows with a hint of overall New England Cape Cod architecture quietly nestled into the existing bayside community and not flaunting its price tag of over \$1 million.

I pulled into a shady area under a large deciduous tree, but was greeted by the owner with “Oh, we’ve built to the lot line. Please use the drive and park around the back. The tree belongs to our neighbor.”

The owner, John (name changed), characterized his home, “Greek Revival encased in a cottage exterior.” An enclosed porch with white wicker furniture spanned the north side of the house and presented a panoramic view of the bay and the lighthouse. From the porch I was escorted into the house with an immediate vision of a very long, wide staircase carpeted in cherry red. The length of the staircase became understandable when I entered the formal living room to the right: Greek Revival with high ceilings, ornate plaster ceiling moldings and chandelier surrounds with chandeliers of carved alabaster rimmed in bronze with ornate bronze chains. The room was furnished with an eclectic mixture of Grecian replicas, family furniture, and a dark carved bench and side table kept from the time when the couple was “young and collecting things we liked.” The rear wall of the room housed illuminated showcases of exquisite and valuable collection of antique, hand-painted china gathered over the years by Mary (name changed).

Next we came to the study with books and bar with a table from the early 1900s that had served such notables as Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and Sarah Bernhardt. The adjacent family room had a huge wide-screen TV on one wall and an equally massive fireplace on the opposite wall. The kitchen finishes were in marble and granite and all the appliances were state-of-the-art, including refrigerator and freezers in large, pullout drawers. The formal dining room was a celebration of Monet with bright yellow walls, illuminated display cabinets in white with gold hardware and filled with classic Wedgewood blue pieces on the long wall across from the bay view and tall white cabinets in each corner filled with a variety

of crystal and china. The dining room table was to be rebuilt to seat closer to twenty rather than just nine guests.

It was now time for touring the second floor, but I didn't have to ascend the red staircase. I was ferried heavenward by "the only elevator in [the] county." The door opened and I was escorted to the guest wing to the west: two bedrooms with twin beds and a total of four handmade quilts by one of the grandmothers. A sumptuous shared bathroom connected the rooms. On the bayside was John's office and adjoining it was Mary's studio. The master bedroom was the length of the combined guestrooms and had *his* and *hers* closets at the either end. There was a king-size bed and high windows tilting outward the entire length of the room to catch the northern breezes. The master bathroom ran the length of the bedroom with his and her Kohler flower-motifed sinks and gold-colored faucets. The mirror was at least twenty feet long and we three marveled at how the workmen managed to get it transported, up the stairs, around corners, and installed in one piece. The marble surrounds in the massive glassed-in shower stall and around the Jacuzzi tub also puzzled us as to installation success, but the overall effect was indeed sumptuous and stunning.

Mary and John were gracious hosts and had the freedom and resources to design, build, and furnish the vacation house of their dreams. Meanwhile, I calculated that we could have housed twenty-seven Habitat families for the price of this summer home. This house is a rhetor with lavish, grandiose capacity. It speaks loudly for the current penchant for large-scale home environments. I offer it here not only as a warning, but also as a rhetorical invitation to elicit thoughtful response in those who wish to engage in reflection relating to *need* and *want* in the

arena of what everyone experiences: home. The next example relates to awarding of current state grants for promoting energy efficient homes.

McMansion Recipient of an Energy Star Home Grant

This example of a McMansion started with a phone call from a builder downstate who had received contact information via the state Energy Division office. This custom home building company had received a 2005 Energy Star Home Grant from the State of Michigan, wanted to create a DVD about this house, and asked for a copy of Copper Country Habitat for Humanity's year 2000 video production from its grant. This award-winning house in Michigan's lower peninsula featured structurally-insulated panels, radiant floor heating, energy efficient windows, and was 5,000 s.f. with a per square foot building cost of \$150-\$180 or a total building cost of \$750,000-\$900,000.

Later I accessed the company's website, studied the floorplan, and watched the iMovie. The house was three stories with three garages and a foyer, porches, decks, balconies, lofts, 4 bedrooms, 4-1/2 baths, an exercise room, a library, a great room, a family room, a kitchen and kitchenette, storage rooms, upstairs and lower level utility rooms, dormers, and an abundance of cultured stone and cedar shakes.

I then called Jeremiah (name changed) in Lansing at the state's Energy Division that distributes the Energy Star grants, and someone I've known since we received a grant in the late 1990s. I was particularly interested in house size and attributes in relation to energy considerations.

"Jeremiah, I was raised in an 800 s.f. house with parents, two sisters, and grandma. Tell me about your family and your family home."

"Well, let's see. Mom, Dad, my brother, and me in about 900 s.f."

"This house is six times the size of our family homes and this leap is occurring

in one generation.”

“Yes, but people just don’t seem to be building that way anymore.”

“Exactly, but what are we saying when we award an Energy Star Grant to builders of a 5,000 s.f. house? Is this sustainable?”

“Well, we probably should be thinking about an upper limit on house size and looking at what we’re promoting with these grants.”

The buildings involved in teardowns and McMansions underscore the exigency of addressing energy concerns in the residential context. How is the American mantra of *bigger is better* to be changed? This study seeks answers in alternative rhetorical practices based on ecofeminist modalities of “egalitarianism, inclusiveness, communitarianism, consensual decision-making, mutual care and responsibility” (Egri and Pinfield, 1987, quoting Cheney, p. 464) as well as honoring and honing the intrapersonal, spiritual responses of re-sourcement and enfoldment.

Conditions, Contrasts, and Constraints

The features of invitational rhetoric as alternative rhetorical practice have been detailed previously, but now I admit to the challenges of employing such strategies as part of narrative reflection that examines my activities as an advocate for transformation of energy use these past years based here in the Copper Country in tandem with the houses themselves as co-rhetors. What follows are reservations I have about the abstract terms that compose the conditions of invitational rhetoric in relation to traditional rhetorical practices.

Freedom. This term is so overused in America today in relation to attempts to establish democracy in Iraq and preserve the American way of life at home, that the term often becomes a hot-button for emotional response without regard for the complexities and depth of its meanings. Freedom cannot and does not reside in

isolation; rather, exists in the context of an inhabited world and not just by human beings. Freedom, when viewed from the perspective of equity and justice, isn't fulfillment of boundless desire; it is constrained by the negotiated intersection of the wants and needs of individuals, species, and laws of the natural world. In the context of invitational rhetoric, freedom is the ability of individuals to share, without undue impingement or lack of respect, the ideas and situations of others, including non-humans and the natural and human-made world, in order to foster co-constructed transformations. Freedom isn't a static state or goal; rather, it's a process defined differently according to perspective and interpretation. For example, in political theory, freedom *to* refers to the rights of the individual; whereas, in the environmental field, freedom *from* is the foundation of environmental laws (MacLennan, 2006).

In relation to this condition of freedom, I return to consideration of the house tours my husband and I conducted. Visitors were free to ask questions and take whatever meaning they derived from the tour, but my husband and I created and were basically in control of the scenario complete with stage setting, props, lighting, and scripted talking points. Visitors were escorted through the house with a running monologue, which means engagement more in *benevolent rhetoric* with an instructional goal than in truly invitational rhetoric. However, from an ecofeminist model, the condition of freedom draws on the concepts of re-sourcement and enfoldment. All elements in the milieu are free to respond in terms of their own responsive capacities to become enfolded in the ambient experience.

Safety. This is another term that involves interpretation. With regard to human beings, what feels like a safe situation for one person may be extremely intimidating for another. Also, definition of safety and degree of need vary with individuals.

Safety is not a permanent condition, nor are other features of invitational rhetoric. Safety, along with freedom, value, and openness, is constantly being negotiated in the communication process. In invitational rhetoric, safety is reached as sufficient thoughts and feelings are shared and people begin feeling relaxed enough on common ground to let the communication process continue in breadth and depth, but this isn't a static condition.

An example of safety and surety in transformation of perception and use of energy might be manifest in the homes we help build with our Copper Country Habitat for Humanity housing partners. However, the passive solar, super-insulated features which are now the hallmark features of our houses evolved from the affiliate's experience in building an earlier iteration of energy efficient houses the three years prior to our arrival in the community. The safety manifest in supporting and advocating our construction designs and strategies has developed over nearly a decade of experience building seventeen new houses and having hundreds of volunteers and housing partners share in the process. Initially, our affiliate worked with a small group of volunteers developing skill and confidence through communication and labor that we could build solid, energy efficient houses. Now there's enough confidence that word of our achievements is stretching internationally. However, again I question whether creating a sense of safety through knowledge and positive results was truly an alternative rhetorical strategy. There still had to be knowledgeable initiators (rhetors) to start the process, which again raises the question as to whether this is benevolent rhetoric more than invitational rhetoric.

The condition of safety also is paradoxical in the ecofeminist model where it embraces and celebrates power from the intrapersonal realm. However, there is risk

inherent in reaching forth to accept the connectedness of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice and the participant in the exploration is vulnerable. Safety and vulnerability are opposite states of being and the risk-taking inherent in establishing the conditions of invitational rhetoric is challenging. This requires a feminist willingness to live with contradiction and embrace ambiguity – a comfort with “both/and” rather than a drive to “either/or.” That safety requires vulnerability is both paradoxical and inherent to an ecofeminist inspired invitational rhetorical perspective.

Value. In noun form, value refers to the degree a belief or feeling is held by individuals and in verb form, the term refers to the respect individuals hold for each other and each other’s beliefs. Value is critical for invitational rhetoric if sharing is going to occur for the possibility of transformation. However, how are these values engendered, shared, transformed? Ecofeminist practice posits intuitive response to at least some elements of its theoretical precepts for connectedness and growth. For example, if someone values egalitarianism, then evolving to participation and support of consensual decision-making might occur.

Ecofeminism is challenging because it celebrates intrapersonal power without resorting to individualism and engenders interpersonal power through a non-assimilative gathering. The values of ecofeminism, whether experienced personally or in concert with others, involve risk and alternative ways of being in traditional settings. *Value* is a noble condition of invitational rhetoric, but hard to live out in the alternative rhetorical setting of invitational practice.

In contemplating the challenges of understanding and explicating the condition of value, I experience lack of a sense of relaxation and ability to simply listen and learn in the invitational rhetorical setting. I may be overly-imbued with

passion for transformation of perception and practice relating to energy use to truly effect Foss and Foss's version of invitational rhetoric. On the other hand, I can choose to be less self-flagellating and simply observe my participation in the process of narrative reflection in relation to the ever-changing process of invitational rhetoric and the wellsprings of re-sourcement and enfoldment. I advocate for transformation or change in relation to energy issues, but change is not an end result, rather, an on-going process and dealing with value in and for myself and with others is also a work in constant progress.

Openness. This final feature of invitational rhetoric was not in Foss and Foss's initial proposal, but soon was added because openness or trust relates to so much of personal positioning that is defensive. The willingness to lower one's guard and be a responsive and responsible participant in communication is vital for invitational rhetoric to occur. Openness actually provides the foundation for freedom, safety, and value to be manifested and provides the possibility for co-constructed transformation to thrive and all this is based on trust.

An example comes to mind that may or may not truly be openness, but at least is perhaps *advisory rhetoric* rather than benevolent rhetoric.



Figure 9. debut of solar books locally

As part of our 1998 Five Star Home Grant from the State of Michigan, I wrote two kids books, as shown in the *Daily Mining Gazette* article in Figure 9, about "how

sunlight can help supply heat and light for our homes:" *Sunshine is FREE* (K - grade 3) and *SUN POWER* (grade 4 - 6) with illustrations done by children at Hancock Elementary School.

An ad in *Solar Today* magazine netted regular orders and by the end of 1999, hundreds of copies had been shipped to half the states in the U.S. and half the provinces in Canada (even the Yukon). Orders also came from Japan, England, Italy, India, Brazil, Ghana, Zambia, Spain, Peru, and Saudi Arabia. Individuals, schools, universities, businesses, and libraries wanted to see how we presented energy efficient housing concepts to children.

What has been the impact? It's hard to document, but even without advertising these past several years, I still occasionally get an order, such as a few years ago when an environmental center in Pennsylvania emailed and asked for copies. I consider this the planting of seeds and when I send books overseas (free copies and postage), I encourage recipients to find an architect or engineer knowledgeable about energy efficient building with local materials in their climate, find a teacher and/or writer and school children for illustrators, and write their own books. My goal in writing the books was not only to educate with the ideas contained in the books, but also foster the idea of making books in indigenous language(s) and tailoring them to local conditions.

Maybe it's a stretch, but I consider this a free-will offering in simply sending books (artifacts along with a note of suggestion and encouragement) as resources to be used in whatever manner by unknown others as an act of detachment and therefore an example of openness. Detachment from results is perhaps a version of or step toward openness and lays the foundation for freedom, safety, value for the ultimate realization of invitational rhetoric.

Openness, as a component of invitational rhetoric (again, process-within-process), invites extension, amplification, and modification as much as the other conditions. Invitational rhetoric, as ecofeminist practice, changes the dynamics of rhetorical situations and responses. Ecofeminism celebrates the web of communication and how one knows or grows isn't formally structured. It is also possible that the kids books were an ecofeminist invitation to ways of being that avoided the defenses adults bring to persuasive situations. In this sense, not only kids but adults may have read these books in a more receptive and open state of mind, particularly since the books were not saturated with technical or overcomplicated commentary. I felt this to be true because several adults told me they'd read the books and now knew the meaning of the basic terms relating to passive solar design.

The conditions of invitational rhetoric based on ecofeminist practices continue to invite challenge and commentary, especially when amplified with the more spiritually-oriented conditions of re-sourcement and enfoldment. A journey into the realm of metaphor helps bring a concrete dimension to the topic.

Metaphors. The work of feminist theorist Gloria Anzaldua offers four rhetorical stances in the form of metaphors as a way of helping connect known with unknown ideas to enhance and accelerate understanding. And *metaphor* (p. 66) is yet another way to frame or create organizing patterns for ideas suggested by Foss and Foss (2003) and also can be used as an elaborating technique (p. 78).

The *island* is a position where the rhetor operates in relative isolation and neglects to form the alliances and networks that are essential for transformation. I've not been an island as I've been becoming the message-bearer of energy

efficient home design and construction at high latitude from the local to international levels.

On the bulletin board in my studio, I have an anonymous clipping torn from a magazine that reads, “Without bridges, we would all be islands. Mankind has always had a deep desire to build bridges. Both figuratively and literally. We want to meet the people who live on the other side of the water. We want to know what they look like, sound like and, most importantly, think like.” But what kind of bridge is needed?

The *drawbridge* allows for physical and emotional connection and disconnection by the rhetor when necessary. I’ve been steadily involved in energy advocacy since my arrival in the Keweenaw and haven’t been a drawbridge, though it might have been easier for me emotionally to disconnect at intervals.

The *bridge* denotes constant availability of the rhetor for interaction and decades before reading Anzaldua, I had already characterized myself as generally operating as a facilitator or bridge in much of my life, so this metaphor was personally very appealing, especially with my involvement in India and intensified by the above-mentioned clipping. But what’s at the ends of the bridge?

The *sandbar* is the only organic construct in the quartet and has a degree of fluidity on the part of the rhetor with constantly shifting sands. This metaphor for a rhetorical stance has great resonance for me and I’d even venture to assert that I’m often a bridge on a sandbar, which is an even more precarious and uncertain position of advocacy. Admitting to the sandbar as the foundation of the bridge pilings underscores the ecofeminist stance as an exploration of *being*

with all the risk-taking and vulnerability involved. There is a freedom in admitting the uncertainty of serving in the realm of alternative rhetorical practice. There is an invitation to change and to be changed.

Summary

In addressing the exigency of energy issues in relation to the residential built environment, my late husband, Copper Country Habitat for Humanity, and I manifested a willingness to acknowledge the spiritual elements of mindfully envisioning and constructing societies and folding such perspectives into the persuasive process using alternative rhetorical practice (invitational rhetoric) based on ecofeminist commitments. We were operating as rhetors connecting to our internal energy sources with intentionality of sharing that energy (re-sourcement) and wanting things to change (enfoldment) while quietly demonstrating possibilities by establishing a communication environment that formed a matrix within which transformation could generate and be nurtured.

However, as a rhetor struggling at becoming less pedantic and relax into the process of ecofeminist invitational rhetoric in advocacy practices, I see my role as the vocal part of home tours a mixed offering. Despite presenting the house as a silent co-rhetor and creating opportunities for new experiences in relation to the built environment, I still acknowledge serving as primarily a traditional rhetor. There are elements of conversion rhetoric in the house tours with issues, beliefs, and behaviors if not earnestly, at least admittedly mildly under siege to effect change. There are traces of benevolent rhetoric in the exercise with earnest, altruistic efforts at transformation. With implementation of both of these traditional forms of rhetorical practice, there is decreased space for the mutual change posited by invitational rhetoric.

Traditional rhetorical practices emerge from strong belief systems and invitational rhetoric stems from a more exploratory, questing realm. As an advocate for smaller, more energy efficient homes, I'm operating as a proselytizer, which makes attempting the mutual educative aspect of invitational rhetoric more difficult to attain. With the admitted goal of transformation of perception leading to altered action in relation to energy concerns, perhaps the best advocacy stance I can enact is a hybrid form of traditional and invitational practice with extensions into the realm of re-sourcement and enfoldment.

The next chapter uses a different venue for studying invitational rhetoric. I maintain my theoretical stance as an ecofeminist and the methodology of autoethnography, but I remove myself from my culture of origin in the West and relocate myself in the East, specifically to the Indian state of Kerala where I am audience seeking both manifestations of invitational rhetoric as a viable alternative strategy and assessing its ability to transform me from my Western perceptual base.

I position myself as the metaphoric bridge on a sandbar and engage in the framing strategy of the *web* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 72) wherein I move from the Keweenaw where I have been arranging ideas generating from the core idea of ecofeminist invitational rhetoric. In Kerala, I'll experience them autoethnographically in a new realm and return to the central idea as the odyssey proceeds. The eventual goal is using the elaborating technique of *comparison and contrast* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) in appraising the viability of invitational rhetoric as alternative rhetorical practice in established, extended, or hybrid form.

CHAPTER 4: INVITATIONAL RHETORIC IN KERALA

Introduction

This chapter continues exploring the viability of invitational rhetoric as an alternative to traditional rhetorical practices with the venue changing to the subcontinent of India, which becomes a symbol of the planet's less over-developed societies. I visit this dramatically varied society first casually as a tourist and return as an ecofeminist researcher observing and participating in rhetorical situations, traditional and invitational. In my encounters with Indian academics, activists, directors of grassroots cooperative organizations, and society at large, I am primarily audience and not the instigating rhetor, which engenders a different perspective on rhetorical encounters. This isn't a travelogue or economic treatise, but rather commentary on Indian life and an attempt at gradually teasing out manifestations of invitational rhetoric, especially in relation to the built environment, as an alternative mode of communication and sharing my experience of giving myself over to the process of an alternative rhetorical mode.

I conduct the study using journaling as autoethnographic practice and elicit further examples of Foss and Foss's (2003) framing strategies and elaborating techniques in situations of rhetorical exchanges that constitute invitational practices. Examples of traditional and invitational rhetoric in the Indian context are drawn primarily from experiences in the southwestern state of Kerala in association with the Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD) addressing the built environment in terms of *social architecture*.

I start the chapter with an autoethnographic sensory sampling of my first trip

to India. What follows selectively narrates my second trip for field study focusing primarily on my month-long stay in the state of Kerala using the lens of invitational rhetoric in examining Indian advocacy practices for “a multicultural and diversified global vision of healing for life on Earth” (Diamond and Ornstein, 1990, p. vii). I’m challenging a “masculine consciousness [which has] denigrated and manipulated everything defined as ‘other’ whether nature, women, or Third World cultures” (Diamond and Ornstein, 1990, pp.ix-x). In visiting India, I am seeking to diminish the sense of *other* and *foreign* by letting myself be vulnerable and studying how invitational rhetoric operates in a different culture, noting how it affects me, and seeing if, indeed, we all “swim in the same interconnected global soup” (Agar, 1980, p. 21).

The exigency of this chapter is based on India’s challenges with its population of nearly one-sixth of Earth’s population struggling to modernize and industrialize in the Western mode with resulting cultural disruption and global ramifications relating to the energy concerns of this study. The purpose of field study in India is to determine if invitational rhetoric holds promise of alternative rhetorical strategy leading to perceptual change and networked international action in ecofeminist mode. By moving into an Eastern cultural setting, I’m also engaging in acts of re-sourcement and enfoldment and serving as the metaphoric bridge on a sandbar of rhetorical experience.

Kerala

Kerala, the primary focus of my Eastern field studies, has always been part of a global society. Its location on the Arabian Sea at the southwestern tip of India made it a central location in the ancient trade routes between the Middle East and China and also a confluence of religions: predominantly Hindu,

Muslim, Jewish, and Christian. For thousands of years, it was the world's primary source of black pepper, heart of the spice trade. Kerala started on the path of Western-style modernity in the 19th century via German and British missionaries who helped shape the changes that now characterize the state in the areas of education and health. (Cherian).

Kerala is markedly different from other states in India for two primary reasons. First, it is a society with matrilineal heritage, though this was formally changed in the 1940s, but its influence is still in evidence. Second, in 1957, Kerala voted in the Communist Party, which has been in and out of office over the past half century. This led to the establishment of strong cooperative organizations and the Land Reform Act of the 1960s with land redistribution in the 1970s and establishment of 919 *panchayats* or village councils (Chattopadhyay).

In the last fifty years, Kerala has gained distinction in India and the world for its high standard of living and innovative and successful grassroots efforts in creating a strong, decentralized society. Keralites have:

- life spans as long as Americans
 - universal health care
 - nearly 100 percent literacy (at primary school level)
 - relative harmony in matters religious, cultural, and racial
 - a high level of political consciousness and participation by the electorate
 - relatively even distribution of rural and urban populations
 - balanced numbers of females and males
 - narrow differences between the privileged and non-privileged classes (hill tribes and non-scheduled classes or *Dalits*, formerly the Untouchables)
- (Tharakan and Cherian, 2005, personal discussions).

Kerala has carefully created a society attempting greater justice and equality and a relatively high standard of living based primarily on universal education and health care. However, because of unemployment or underemployment, it is estimated that 1.9 million Keralites in a population of 35 million work abroad and send more than Rs. 400 crore rupees (\$88 million) home to their families (Nair, 2005, p. 17). One sad fact: Kerala has the highest suicide rate in India. It is a well-educated, healthy, underemployed or unemployed agrarian society often unable to fulfill the expectations of people striving for modernity and industrialization in the Western mode.

Ecofeminist Commitments in Kerala

With radical change of *location* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 65) as a framing strategy, this study continues to maintain and even extend commitments to an ecofeminist stance in gathering and weaving descriptive *examples* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) and *narratives* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 80) elaborating main ideas supporting the framing strategies of invitational rhetoric as a cooperative, collaborative *web* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 72) of ecofeminist practice. I not only engage in, but embrace sharing of emotional, intuitive, and spiritual facets of human experience in India as a basis of knowledge-gathering for potential transformation of perception and action. I accept the inherent exuberance and vitality of ecofeminism giving alternative rhetorical space for embracing and actualizing life-affirming thoughts and words that hold promise for change.

I acknowledge by my very presence in India my willingness to live *re-sourcement* with its energy of receptivity, its extension of a listening ear, and its all-encompassing embrace of experience, both external and internal. I also open myself to *enfoldment* by making myself vulnerable for possible profound change

within myself in relation to serving as rhetorician-as-audience and sharing both thoughts and feelings generated from such openness. By relaxing into experiencing and sharing the power from within, I expose myself to possible benefits, transformations, and turbulences, which I document. With my interest in ecofeminist invitational rhetorical options focused on atmosphere, listening, and receiving, I offer evocative *examples* ((Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) tapping the realm of the sensorium. I also acknowledge the challenges of operating in an invitational rhetorical mode in a world accustomed to traditional rhetorical practices.

First Passage to India

Autoethnographies usually involve epiphanies (Ellis, 2004) such as the one I experienced in India after the intellectual and emotional intensity of comprehensive examinations for this doctoral degree and the subsequent construction of the first iteration of my dissertation proposal. As I melted into the pre-monsoon heat of India and mingled with a multitude of its citizens three years ago, the lens of my research focus blurred and then became clear. I gave my intellectually-bounded emotions and senses a holiday and then used the experience to confront my intellect and claim more equal status for heart in relation to head.

I became comfortable with what I came to know as *narrative* storytelling (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 68) and *thinking things through* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 70), discussion of journey and revelation, as framing strategies of invitational rhetoric. I also realized experiencing and sharing *emotions* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 77) as part of elaborating of main ideas (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 77). With autoethnography as my methodology of choice, I now share the epiphany

depicted by the rodent in the *New Yorker* cartoon in Figure 10 pausing in reflection – another *audiovisual aid* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) using *humor* (p. 79) in elaborating a main idea relating to invitational rhetoric.

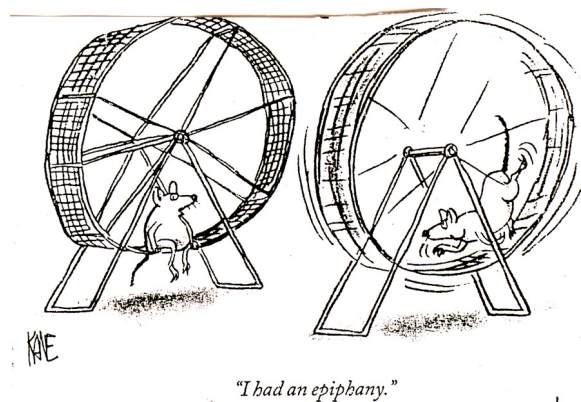


Figure 10. A reflective pause

Since this dissertation is committed to experiencing and sharing autoethnographically with heavy emphasis on sensory revelation and emotional response, what follows is information conveyed to the sensorium, a furthering of knowledge beyond the

confines of the objective and into the realm of the evocative and subjective.

India usually conjures images of congestion – over a billion people residing in one relatively small landmass on the subcontinent of Asia and a realm of mystery and the exotic for a Westerner. It's an image I shared and had reinforced by anyone who knew I was planning a trip to the region; however, I was eager for this varied experience of life on Earth and a sampling of the fabled East. The following *sensory images* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 86) serve as evocative elaboration of main ideas as conditions of inviting transformation through invitational rhetoric. They are a taste of my epiphany and the inception of my willingness to embrace emotion-laden features of invitational rhetoric as an ecofeminist mode of alternative rhetorical strategy and serve as a bridge on the sandbars of multicultural experiences.

Sensations of India

Sight. Mumbai (Bombay) is indeed crowded, but in an exciting, communal fashion. The following photographs are further *audiovisual aids* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) that help evoke the bustle of Indian life in public spaces. Streets are alive with gaily-painted buses, trucks, and cars of all sizes and models jockeying for space with miniature versions of London taxis, autorickshaws (two-person vehicles built over motorscooters), motorcycles, motorscooters, bicycles, ox carts, pedestrians, and the occasional cow, shown in Figure 11, the latter always a source of amazement to Westerners. Shops and restaurants have narrow facades (by Western standards) and are clustered several to a building. Goods are stored on shelves behind counters or flowing out onto tables



Figure 11. Mumbai traffic



Figure 12. Mumbai streetscape

or racks on the crowded sidewalks as shown in Figure 12. Restaurants squeeze in as many tiny tables as possible with small chairs or stools, and serve attractive, aromatic meals on small plates. Everyone everywhere is in constant motion.

However, my urban stay was short as I was scheduled to visit the state of Goa to the south, a former Portuguese colony on the Arabian Sea and now a

tourist destination with small villages and miles of sandy beaches, winding country lanes flanked by palm trees and bountiful tropical vegetation, and an overall relaxed atmosphere.

I stayed at a sumptuous, newly-constructed tourist compound with brightly-painted, two-story bungalows surrounding a large, shallow pool. I savored the comforts of air-conditioning, ample hot water, color TV, and a king-size bed, but my real joy was the beach restaurants and the village. Each morning I left the compound in loosely-fitting long skirts and blouses purchased in Mumbai, my huge straw hat protecting my fragile Finnish skin, my many-pocketed denim travel vest, and my red canvas totebag. I'd have a simple breakfast of eggs, toast, and tea at one of the open-air, thatch-roofed beach restaurants and then wander back down the main road past farmers and oxen working the soil in rice paddies in preparation for the monsoon rains.

The village of Benaulum was a half mile away and reminded me of Jamaican settlements with seemingly haphazardly placed buildings of block and stucco painted in pastels amidst verdant greenery, and much organic and non-organic litter. Long-horned cows, small dark-haired pigs, and chickens of varied hue wandered at leisure foraging for food.

Since I wanted to tour, I'd been advised by Mumbai friends, who had been my housemates in the Keweenaw three months prior, to stop at one of the two travel agencies in Benaulum and secure a vehicle and driver. Here hi-tech facilities and ancient patterns of civilization mingled freely and often incongruously to the Western eye. Pigs foraged under a sign that listed "money exchange, money transfer, cash on credit card, Internet, pay phone, Xerox..." the juxtaposition shown in Figure 13.



Figure 12. Benaulim

Mohammed (name changed) became my driver for my week's stay in Goa. He and I would head off on local adventures every other day, with time to rest and absorb my experiences in the days in between. I was amazed at the richness and diversity of the region. As in the Caribbean, splendor and squalor existed side by side.

Structures of concrete and rebar, or brick and stucco were brightly painted and existed next to palm-thatched huts or make-shift dwellings of

corrugated metal, the ubiquitous bright blue plastic tarps, and various salvaged materials. I saw how poverty creates what is essentially ecological astuteness. The cycle of life was manifested everywhere with natural products in abundance and in varying stages of construction, use, or decay. During the train ride from Mumbai to Goa, I noticed the only debris accumulating in the gullies beside the tracks was plastic products. Natural products such as palm, wood, and straw had disintegrated back to nourish the earth.

I was reminded of the more environmentally-friendly way of life (despite the litter and ramshackledness) of cultures closer to ancient agrarian and herding practices. When was the last time I saw a cow, chicken, or pig in America? When had I seen a field being plowed or market produce being transported? As the sun set, I saw farmers bringing carts loaded with hay homeward. People on foot and bicycle streamed along the roadside. The grace and beauty of women in *saris* and *churidars* or *salwar kameezes* (long blouses, loose pants, and flowing scarves)

continued to fascinate me. Colors were mixed in wondrous new combinations (for me): burnt orange with turquoise, tan with bright blue as shown in this street scene in Figure 14.



Figure 14. a village in Karnataka

There is a warmth, literally and figuratively, and vibrancy in India and more humanly-proportioned scale with space at a necessary premium in dwellings and commercial establishments. *Small is beautiful* is exemplified here.

However, I'm not discounting the extreme poverty and squalor, especially in the city slums, but there's also richness of history, art, humanity, community, and the murmur of constant activity and communication. What follows are evocative *examples* as elaborating techniques (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) appealing to the sensorium in ecofeminist mode.

Sound. "Chai! Chai!" is a regular call as waiters on the train bring hot and cold drinks and take orders for hot meals cooked in the kitchen car. "Come see my things, miss, please come!" chime the three pre-teenage girls in Indian and Western dress whose job at the market is to find customers for their families' wares.

These are the sounds I remember about this first, carefully orchestrated trip to India, which I experienced as a remarkably quiet country except for the sounds of commerce and the endless honking of horns in heavy traffic. Even then, the horns were a muffled, nasal beep – scaled down as is much in this

crowded country. And if the sounds seemed muted, what of the aroma of a billion people's lives?

Smell. What's memorable for me is that I didn't smell any of the poverty of India. This was a red flag for me that I was essentially a tourist on this trip. Friends in Mumbai cared for me and didn't let me experience the raw side of India. They also made the train and bungalow reservations for my Goa stay. The most powerful smells I remember were the fabled spices – nutmeg, cumin, lemon grass, cloves – wafting from exquisite meals.

Taste. Oh, the glories of Indian cuisine! Columbus risked his life to sail west to access the spices and other treasured commodities of India. I savored dishes graced with cinnamon, cardamom, cumin, coriander, nutmeg, chilis, coconut, garlic, and ginger. I sampled pickles of mango, lime, carrot, green chilies, mango halder, karonda, and flavored with turmeric, mustard dal, and fenugreek dal. Prime ingredients were simple: chicken, fish, rice, but the art of seasoning made every dish remarkable to a Western palate accustomed to flavors governed by sugar, salt, and fat. Not only was my palate pampered in India, but my entire body savored the joy of new sensations.

Touch. I experienced unexpected and exquisite comfort on the train from Mumbai to Goa, a ten-hour trip at the government-regulated speed of 60 kph (36 mph). In the first class AC3 air-conditioned coaches, padded benches with blue vinyl covers provided ample seating for three people on each side facing the other and, across the aisle, provisions for two more people facing each other. Suitcases, boxes, straw baskets, and backpacks were stored underneath the seats.

Since the trip was long, two levels of bunks overhead could be folded down and the more nimble could climb up and allow the elderly or those hesitant to climb ladders use of the lower bunks. Crisp cotton sheets, a small pillow with equally crisp pillowcase, and a soft, lightweight wool blanket were handed to each passenger. We could stretch out in great comfort for a few hours to shorten the long journey. All of us snoozed at some point and I especially enjoyed being rocked to sleep by the motion of the train.

Fiber arts are my passion and the textures and colors of Indian fabric were a constant delight. In markets, such as the one illustrated in Figure 15, I'd run my fingers over intricate embroidery and beadwork. I let my fingers experience the ripple of finely-woven saris and churidars with matching air-light chiffon scarves. I'd squeeze and stroke the brightly-hued, hand-woven bags from Karnataka. I bought two ultra-fine Kashmir wool shawls in subtle earth tones and luxuriated in the delicacy of the craftsmanship and beauty.



Figure 15. market in Goa

I was delighted with jewelry of precious metals, native gems, and beads. I bought strands of brightly colored beads of wood and bone, glass and pottery as gifts. I bought blouses and dresses of finely woven cloth for my granddaughters. I bought and bought and bought, a typical consuming tourist, which was highly unusual for a person who doesn't like shopping, but India called me through my fingertips.

I also witnessed the squalor of India in

Mumbai as our autorickshaw passed quickly by entire families living make-shift lives under highway bridges or in shanty towns clustered around the periphery of high-rise apartment complexes. Once, when our autorickshaw was stopped at a light, a young girl with a baby on her hip darted through heavy traffic to reach me and beg money. The baby touched my knee as the girl knelt to kiss my foot. My Indian companion brushed them aside as the light changed and we sped forward. I still feel that baby's fingers and the girl's lips.

Reflections. I had been told that I would experience a heightened sense of spirituality in India despite its relative impoverishment in Western-style materiality. I don't pretend to characterize my initial experience as more than a tourist's superficial grazing of the surface of this most ancient array of cultures experiencing the planet-wide impact of Western influence through globalization. I do know, however, that my preconceived notion about what we in the West label *developing* or *emerging* societies, based on our values, shifted on this trip as I engaged in *comparison and contrast* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74), an elaborating technique in invitational rhetoric

In retrospect, I realize I was in the midst of being transformed. India was communicating with me every day and every way and my very presence and openness to experiential change was my acceptance of the invitation to change and grow in understanding of why I was drawn to the siren song of India. To experience a deeper understanding of ecofeminist alternative rhetorical strategy meant immersing myself in the processes of invitational rhetoric and letting myself live with the vulnerability that precedes the possibility of transformation.

Examples of Invitational Rhetoric

Second Passage to India

The above section establishes the basis for my initial attraction to India as a research destination. Now I share commentary and insights from Eastern experiences during nine weeks of field study focused on studying grassroots organizations, and meeting academics, activists, and ordinary citizens of this subcontinent and experiencing their handling of life's challenges in an Indian context. I engaged in some spontaneous interviewing using questions that developed from our interaction, but didn't come equipped with a set agenda. I maintained nomadic status in the country and a willingness to serve as both observer and recipient of conditions of invitational rhetoric. However, writing about Kerala (and India) in relation to invitational rhetoric is very different from the Keweenaw, where I can apply the theory to lived experience with a longer, stronger temporal basis. I submit the caveat that in India I was audience learning with encounters that are, by comparison, cursory and limited. What follows is a brief outline of the structure of my nine weeks of travel that took me from the very southernmost tip of India to nearly the Nepal border in the north.

I bookended my trip with two formal Global Exchange Reality Tours. This California-based organization dedicated to fostering global peace and justice has a travel division that arranges two-week tours for North Americans to visit what the West calls *emerging* or *developing* countries generating from a non-Western cultural base and meet grassroots activists and academics with the goal of effecting transformation in Western perception and action in relation to the rest of the world. The first experience for me was the Kerala Tour where I became willing to experience vulnerability through *emotions* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 77)

as a way of elaborating ideas and positing feeling responses as valid ways of knowing. I opened to change within myself as recipient of conditions of invitational rhetoric in relation to self-definition, values, goals, and my role as advocate for transformation in perception and use of energy.

I then traveled north to Bangalore and toured homes built by Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI). Then it was on via train for a week of visiting, touring, and field study in Nagpur in the very center of India with friends, a family I met on my first trip, and another week of the same in Mumbai with more friends, my former housemates in the Keweenaw.

The Gandhian Legacy Tour was the other two-week bookend to my travels. We toured northern India with Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, Arun, a retired journalist and bearer of the legacy, and visited historic sites of Gandhian activity and heard personal stories of life with Grandfather. We also visited grassroots organizations implementing the Gandhian philosophy for creating a just and equitable world.

When I first arrived in Mumbai and the taxi whisked me through throngs of pedestrians, buses, trucks, cars, motorcycles, autorickshaws, oxcarts, bicycles, and cows, I felt at home again – *home* being the Caribbean years. I continually marveled at the magnificence of Indian women in their bearing and attire. Their gliding walk in saris and churidars in combinations of brilliant colors brings beauty to the shabby, makeshift, dog-eared quality and appearance of most buildings in cities, whose exterior didn't matter as much as the interior, I was told, to ward off increased taxation and possible theft.

Now I'll pause again for an autoethnographic moment and share some of the insights and transformation occurring within me while in India, recorded in

my ever-present journal. Such entries presented thusly are part of Foss and Foss's (2003) framing process in establishing varied organizational patterns for illuminating ways of inviting transformation. The following is termed *thinking it through* (p. 70), which I title *Mumbai Interlude* sharing the emotional journey experiencing *comparison and contrast* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 74) and *sensory images* (p. 86) of India. A photograph of the building appears as Figure 16.

I sit here on a dusty concrete bench in an equally dirt-covered park with well-used playground equipment in evidence. Fungus, mold, and patched concrete form the mottled skins of undistinguished block-like apartment buildings [illustrated in Figure 16]. Plumbing pipes and electrical conduit run where needed in unmasked fashion on the exterior of buildings. Windows are barred or caged.

I'm here on an architectural mission of sorts. Why am I relatively unphased by the grimy poverty everywhere? The scratched and dented vehicles belching fetid fumes. The shabby little market stalls and shops stuffed with colorful, cheap wares. The decayed streets and sidewalks with leg-breaking, axle-busting potential. Color and cleanliness comes only in the artfully displayed fruit and vegetables and the saris and salwar kameezes of the fluid-flowing Indian women.

Yet I am happier here than America. Here there's blatant poverty; in America, there's the cankerous hidden poverty of loss of spirit, loss of sense of equity, and inability to judge *enough* in relation to endless abundance of material goods. I can bear poverty more than pretense.

Horn OK please is painted on all back bumpers of big vehicles and horns sound endlessly as drivers navigate as much by auditory acuity as by visual and kinesthetic prowess in the ever-changing, constant flow of traffic.

Sweat trickles down my face. Scent is less strong than anticipated – perhaps diminished by the furnace of a fiery, desiccating sun or diminished olfactory ability of the sniffer.



Figure 16. Mumbai apts.

This is perhaps a more honest world – one that admits lack, but gets on with the business of life. The ubiquitous cell phone confirms India's leapfrogging over a century of communication evolving via line.

And now I rate the taste of Indian food with the cheeky confidence of one nourished by *dal* and *masala*, *roti*, and *golabi*. My appreciation for meat and potatoes was never great and now recedes even further into the realm of *deadly dull*.

Young boys cavort on the jungle gym in front of me. Except for the difference in language, they could be children anytime, anywhere. *Other* is fiction. (Dec. 27, 2005, a park in the Chunabhatti district of Mumbai)

When I write “*Other* is fiction,” I’m referring to the patriarchal concept of the *brotherhood of man* which is often mouthed readily without resonance in the heart. Surprisingly often, I didn’t feel markedly different in India and felt kinship with those around me. In retrospect – and struggling to find manifestations of invitational rhetoric – I think I was experiencing the communitarian qualities of this alternative rhetorical form in the level of comfort I felt moving about and interacting with Indians. Freedom, value, safety, openness – those characteristics of invitational rhetoric relate to communication where the goal is a sense of comfort that allows for free-flowing exchange of ideas and feelings. The melting of *otherness* as I journeyed through India and deeper into my knowledge of and responses to the country was invitational rhetoric writ large with me purposefully stepping out of the role of the rhetor and absorbing India through my senses and allowing myself to be transformed and embrace a larger worldview.

Most of my time was spent in the south near Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of the state of Kerala, where I stayed a month and which became my primary field study site because of the duration of my visit and the depth of the encounters. I now embark upon further *narrative progression* as an invitational rhetorical framing strategy (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 69) with vignettes conveying

the emotional and sensory impact of experiences in Kerala that build a sense of the invitational rhetorical aspects of this Indian sojourn.

At times, my head would spin at the multi-sensory input from Indian life, often mixed with vestiges of the British *raj*, swirling around me. I was on Andulzua's sandbars and the sands were constantly shifting. There would also be moments of complete cultural dystopia such as when I spent one evening in December at the University of Kerala's University Center for a stage show called *Christmas Sketches* with a backdrop of snow-covered cottages, evergreens, Santa with reindeer, and a Christmas tree. I was seated in a century-old hall with over a thousand velvet-upholstered chairs from the turn of the 20th century. Around the room were 4'x8' portraits of former university presidents (all Indian) in heavy, braid-encrusted velvet robes in British fashion with a single portrait of a maharajah in silk turban and coat, and slippers with turned-up toes. The *Christmas Sketches* were a curious blend of carols in English, Indian dances in traditional and contemporary mode, and an eclectic collection of entertainments devoid of connection to Christmas. I went back to my lodgings with a headache.

Sensations. As our group traveled through Kerala by plane, train, and van, I was treated to the constant moving picture of life in South India – a panorama of dwellings, shops, and citizens streaming along roadways. Women in saris and churidars in vibrant hues continued to be a delight. The constant tooting of horns was annoying to Western ears, but was apparently customary in heavy traffic where drivers used both visual and auditory clues to navigate with clearances often measured in inches.

I learned to eat Indian style with my fingers, which became a *ritual* (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 85) for me, yet another way of elaborating main ideas folded

into the empirical realm of invitational rhetoric. Our logistics guide, David (name changed), showed me how to use my fingers as a scoop and my thumb as a thruster pushing rice and spicy sauces into my mouth. I savored the sensuous delight of this mode of eating as I'd mix *paneer tikka masala* in puffy steamed rice and green-tinged *methi mutter malai* with green peas intact into more rice and enjoy experiencing the texture and temperature of my food with more than just my taste buds. Once I became adept, I found it a wonderfully tactile sensation that increased my intimacy with my food. Utensils became cold, hard, and very hi-tech by comparison.

I learned the custom of removing shoes and became comfortable walking barefoot on smooth, cool surfaces in homes and temples. I also became accustomed to feeling chilled water flush my backside after toilet visits, which required squat-and-aim dexterity. New protocols and closer proximities heightened my awareness of greater human connectedness in India. Dwellings, shops, modes of transportation – all were more compact and with less in the way of walls, glass, and other partitioning devices. Greater physical and emotional contact was inevitable and welcomed by this Westerner. Can enhanced sensual experience lead to greater community cohesion and grassroots advocacy in the invitational rhetorical mode?

What follows is a description of one of Kerala's most impressive grassroots organizations, despite its hierarchical structure, which, by its communitarian focus, shares the core features of invitational rhetoric in essentially engendering a village voice in facilitating transformation. This *example* as an elaborating technique (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 78) helps develop the main idea that practices in Kerala have a strong invitational rhetorical element.

Kerala People's Science Movement. A discussion with Professor T.P

Kunhikkannan of the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) i.e. Kerala People's Science Movement, was particularly informative and gave insight into Kerala's success as a Third World developmental model. KSSP started in 1962 as a volunteer organization including all political parties and all organizations. It now has 45,000 members with a traditional hierarchical structure of state, district, regional (block), and local units (2,000) with annual membership renewal. KSSP is where science and society interact with the Communist-echoing slogan, "Science for social revolution." KSSP is applied science and is working to counter monopolization of science and technology by the elite.

KSSP organizes *street classes* with usually 50-75 people in attendance. (I observed one in the evening – a female speaker with a large crowd standing at full attention). It also publishes pamphlets and books (over 900 titles). The KSSP Reception Committee distributes the materials via members, who get commissions, and KSSP receives roughly 60 percent of the proceeds and the Reception Committee and vendors, 40 percent. The sale of these materials is the only source of funding for the organization. 450,000 Keralites out of a state population of 35,000,000 attended classes in 2004. In 2005, the 100th anniversary of Einstein's birth, over 5,000 Keralites attended classes on the theory of relativity and $E=mc^2$ became part of a popular song in Malayalam, the local language.

In relation to energy, KSSP has created solar ovens with 32 percent efficiency (an increase from 8 percent). It also distributes a *hot box* with thermo cones for cooking, manufactured in Bangalore for Rs 175 (approximately \$3). KSSP has received many awards and has influenced the creation of an All-India

Science Movement with twenty-five organizations from other states connecting with Kerala for training sessions.

Is this truly an example of invitational rhetoric or more traditional rhetoric in the form of educative benevolent rhetoric? I think I'm stretching the definition and gliding lightly over the features of freedom, safety, value, and openness in using KSSP as a model of invitational rhetoric. However, if I view invitational rhetoric as an alternative to traditional rhetoric in that it attempts to create community sharing for mutual benefit, then I posit KSSP is an example of invitational rhetoric as village voice.

Center of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD)

Despite my alleged quest for manifestations of alternative rhetorical strategies in India, plans for this second trip started as a pilgrimage for me with the primary goal of seeing buildings designed by Laurie Baker, a British-born architect and founder of the Center of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD) with a storied history and a model of advocacy for sustainable building practices now being carried on by Indian architectural partners.

In Foss and Foss's (2003) explication of invitational rhetoric, *narrative* is both a framing strategy (p. 68) and an elaborating technique (p. 80) in response to the strong evocative appeal of storytelling in societies. The tale of Laurie Baker's presence in India is just such a captivating story of a transformed life and manifests an abundance of conditions of invitational rhetoric.

In World War II, Laurie Baker, an architectural student, was a non-combatant as a Quaker and drove ambulances in Burma and China as part of the war effort. At one point, he met Mahatma Gandhi in Bombay who, in a gesture

that could be perhaps construed as invitational rhetoric, invited him to return to India to design affordable housing for the poor. Later Baker accepted, settled in the north of India, met and married Elizabeth Jacob, an Indian physician, and served as full-time physician's assistant and part-time architect in the north for fifteen years.

Then, in the 1970s when both were in their fifties, the Bakers and their three children moved south to Kerala, Elizabeth's home region, where Baker's architectural work eclipsed their medical practice. Baker continued designing and building using indigenous materials and designs, this time from the tradition of South India. Baker has designed over 2,000 homes and public buildings in Kerala alone. Many of the homes were built for ordinary Indians who came to him with whatever money they could save and said, "We only have these rupees to build our house. What can you make for us?" Baker regularly rose to the challenge of designing and physically helping construct houses with severe budgetary constraints.

There are 15,000-20,000 of his buildings throughout India – houses, churches, hospitals, education centers – with innovative design and construction features suited for the subcontinent. The Baker compound, called *The Hamlet*, is north of the capital of Thiruvananthapuram in a village called Nalanchira. When I was engaging in field studies for this dissertation, Laurie was 89 and Elizabeth, 90, and his work was being carried on by the next generation of Indian architects, engineers, and builders. For me, Baker was a kindred spirit, and since I didn't meet him, a presence, a rhetor with dirt under his nails with buildings serving as co-rhetors speaking his vision of energy efficient, indigenously appropriate design and construction.



Figure 17. brickmaking at COSTFORD

COSTFORD Headquarters.

However, before seeking Baker's home and office, on the Kerala Tour I visited the main office of Baker's nonprofit organization in Thrissur on the central coast of Kerala. This voluntary organization was formed in

1985 by Baker and supporters as an advocacy group for fundamental housing rights. COSTFORD's emphasis is on providing information, and developing and upgrading skills and providing customized, informal programs with people from all over the world who arrive for training. The day we visited, a group of twenty or so youths was learning how to lay locally-made bricks, illustrated in Figure 17, in a training program geared toward developing competency, capability, and creativity. I was fascinated by careful placing of the bricks in this traditional and pragmatic construction mode acknowledging readily-available material(s) and abundance of labor.



Figure 18. roofing system

Conservation and recycling are also taught at COSTFORD. Waste roof tiles are embedded in the two-inch thick concrete roofs, which reduces cost by 25 percent and can be used instead of rebar (metal reinforcement rods). Figure 18 depicts this practical and surprisingly elegant technology. Mortar is a cement,



Figure 19. brickwork

lime, and water, which is inexpensive and long-lasting. *Rat trap* walls with three-inch gaps in decorative patterns between bricks provides natural ventilation, more security than windows, and reduction of brick usage by 30 percent. Figure 19 illustrates the imaginative use of brick for both ventilation and light.

COSTFORD has also developed septic tanks that are 90 percent efficient, some solar hot water systems, and is working on photovoltaics (PV),

though the lush foliage of Kerala blocks much possible PV panel use (Chandradath).

Again, I stretch the definition of invitational rhetoric when I say COSTFORD's ethos is a variation on this alternative rhetorical strategy. Baker was the instigating rhetor because when dealing with a physical construct of great complexity (a building), there's practical knowledge that has to be imparted and the work must be supervised. Since Baker's organization is using indigenous materials and design details, there is attention to the builders of this region of the subcontinent who have left artifacts that are hundreds



Figure 20. palace, now museum

and often thousands of years old as depicted in Figure 20, a palace from the 18th century.

COSTFORD's work displays an openness in communication between contemporary and ancient builders, which has led to distinctive architectural form valuing native Kerala materials and design strategies. Baker, a British-trained architect, was transformed by his long life in India and now his transformation is being carried onward and extended by Indian colleagues at COSTFORD to the international level.



Figure 21. slum rehab

Garuda (name changed), a 22-year-old architect apprenticing with the Master for six months, and Helen (name changed), a 20-year-old architectural student from the neighboring state of Tamil Nadu, were my guides for a couple of days. They took me to see houses, churches, schools, universities – all designed by Baker in his four decades in Kerala, with the past twenty years of work under the banner of COSTFORD as a cooperative non-governmental organization (NGO). The cost of a slum rehabilitation house is

roughly \$1,500, although a landfill reclamation site in Thiruvananthapuram, depicted in Figure 21, was costing double because of the preparatory site work needed to rehabilitate this parcel of land and build a multi-family structure. Elizabeth Baker told me their first house in the area forty years ago cost Rs. 2,500 (approximately \$50). Laurie Baker accomplished this by being very good at

salvaging used materials and making something out of nothing in meeting housing needs with respect to culture and climate, creativity and affordability.

The Hamlet. There is value in considering issues from a global, governmental, or even nonprofit perspective for only so long, then it's time to return to roots – grassroots. This is where I felt the manifestations of invitational rhetoric in the conditions of architectural exposition I experienced in the buildings without actually meeting the architect. Laurie and Elizabeth Baker's COSTFORD, The Hamlet (home and office) in Nalanchira, forms the roots of Baker's practice as a cluster of signature homemade brick buildings added gradually when dictated by inclination or necessity. Some are rectangular, some are round, and all are nestled on a steep hillside covered with prolific tropical vegetation. The Hamlet's cluster of buildings, a sampling shown in Figure 22, are powerful rhetors for indigenously mindful

architecture and a testament to Baker's life work. Brick lends itself to serpentine forms, which give a playful sense of freedom and openness in juxtaposition to conventional residential architecture. The buildings that form The Hamlet are nestled in a group and serve as rhetors for the merits of communitarian construction. The eaves provided by traditional Kerala architecture provide protection from monsoon rains and the *jali*

(jalousie) louvered wood or brick-screened

windows give a sense of both airiness and safety to the buildings. The tiny compound with luxurious vegetation and covered porticos for quiet meetings



Figure 22. The Hamlet

invites visitors and residents alike to engage in the conditions of invitational rhetoric.

I met Aalok (name changed), an architect who has been with Baker for nearly twenty years and is now his successor as Baker is a recluse at The Hamlet. His office adjoins the tower-like structure to the side of the compound that Baker calls the *niecery*, which once housed the Baker nieces and now serves as COSTFORD's hostel for resident male architects and interns. The first day I visited, the office area was filled with engineers, architects, interns, and administrative staff busily engaged in the work of architecture. Meanwhile, clusters of secondary school students were touring the grounds, slowly walking up and down stone steps and surveying the buildings clustered in various parts of The Hamlet. The ambiance of the setting and the imagination displayed in the design and siting of the small buildings were an invitation to imagine residential living and working environments differently.

Aalok and two apprenticing architects stepped outside to the covered porch and we sat on brick benches matching the trademark brickwork of COSTFORD buildings and engaged in an invitational rhetorical exchange initiated by my visit. We talked about Baker's innovations in design and construction used by COSTFORD and the energy involved in effecting architecture – the extracting, manufacturing, and transporting of building materials. (Gandhi understood this energy cost and advocated using materials from a five-mile radius whenever possible when building a house, which was a concept used by Baker.) I learned that traditional building materials such as lime mortar are inexpensive, readily available, require relatively little energy for production, and, in the case of this mortar, last more than two hundred years.

As we shared reflections on the architecture of our respective societies, I revealed various aspects of the unsustainability of the American way of life: high energy use (extracting materials, manufacturing, transportation, and maintenance), resource depletion, and pollution production. I repeated what I surmised from my initial visit to India: if power suddenly fails (electrical and from fossil fuels used in the built environment and transportation), Indians in rural areas, because of their closer connection to agrarian life, will physically survive longer than Americans in similar circumstances. In this exchange, there was no solid agenda and no business was being transacted. The very richness and unique qualities of the setting allowed us the freedom and safety in an atmosphere of openness to share our values about the residential built environment. Although we spoke, the rhetorical power of The Hamlet surpassed our words by its very existence.

Spending a few hours at The Hamlet felt like a homecoming, and transformation and integration of myself into visions of a mode of living more akin to sustainable practices I support. In retrospect, I realize I was relaxing and benefiting as a participant in the invitational rhetorical process. COSTFORD architecture was an invitation to participate in a vision and helped elaborate on the argument I am making about thoughtful use of space and materials, which inspires and reinforces commitment and ongoing effort toward designing with sustainability as a chief consideration. As I toured COSTFORD buildings, I continued appreciating my role as recipient of invitational advocacy as I basked in the designs, materials, and rhythms of this ingenious work at especially a *sensory* level as another elaborating technique in invitational rhetoric as explicated by Foss and Foss (2003, p. 86).

I had total freedom interacting with both architects engaged in COSTFORD work and sampling many of the various buildings. I felt safe in the encounters because nothing was asked of me other than savoring the experiences. Mutual valuation was expressed in my seeking out of COSTFORD and the time and attention gifted me for discussion of the firm's activities and tours of the buildings. Openness on all our parts was apparent from the aforementioned manifestations of the other conditions of invitational rhetoric: freedom, safety, and value.

Learning about COSTFORD design and construction practices and life at The Hamlet reminded me that my husband was basically a modern architect attempting energy conservation and aesthetically appealing and functional designs and I began to reframe his goals as part of this larger vision encompassing COSTFORD's work. My husband generally worked with new materials for clients, but we employed reduce/reuse/recycle in our personal



Figure 23. Hamlet gate

lives and construction practices. Laurie Baker's home is creative recycling of old materials: machine parts, tools, shards of pottery, and old furniture. Old metal tools and machine parts were welded into the front gate as shown in Figure 23. Ceramic shards were worked into creative patterns and grouted into tabletops along with pieces of richly carved old furniture in teak, mahogany, and rosewood integrated in original and playful ways in new construction depicted in Figure 24. There

was respect for the natural environment and appreciation of panoramic vistas with human-scaled spaces, built-in furniture, and inclusion of the Keralite architectural tradition with the truss arrangement of wooden roofs, carved buttresses of wide eaves, and polished



Figure 24. Baker living room

stone floors. The Hamlet was a wonderful and creative blending of the old and the new and nestled in the verdant slope giving voice to its blending into the natural environment. It was a powerful presence with enormous rhetorical capacity especially at the *sensory* level (Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 86).

Dialogue on a Backwaters Boat.

Since much of my time in India was spent listening to academics, community activists, directors of grassroots organizations, and friends expounding on their area of expertise or activity, I was often part of an audience in a situation where traditional benevolent (instructional) rhetoric was operational. There were occasions, however, when I purposely sought to create a situation of invitational rhetoric, such as in a small wooden boat filled with Valiyaparampu village *panchayat* members on the way back to the mainland from our visit to their island off the Kerala coast. Village men had done most of the talking in English as the women spoke only Malayalam; however, I wanted to hear from the women and asked our tour coordinator, Malak, to translate for me. Were there questions the women wanted to ask us? (These *quotations* serve as another elaborating technique in invitational rhetorical mode [Foss and Foss,

2003, p. 83]). One Muslim woman in a long-sleeved black dress and head covering leaned forward, stared directly at me, and asked:

“Do you vote Left or Right?”

“I don’t like parties and vote depending on the person or the issue.”

“What is the status of women in America?”

“Women make around 70 cents for every dollar an American man earns.”

“Are a certain percentage of seats reserved for women in American government?” [*Panchayats* hold one-third of the seats for women.]

“No.”

“What do you think of Fidel Castro?”

“He was right to oppose Batista and the U.S. was wrong to oppose him outright, but Communism frightens Americans.”

I told the cluster of women I was thinking of running for my city’s council again as I’d witnessed a woman silenced by the current council of predominantly men just prior to my departure for India. I also told them, as we all strained to hear Malak’s translation over the hum of the outboard motor, that India has had two women in positions of power (Indira Gandhi and now Sonia Gandhi) and that I doubted there would be an American woman as President in my lifetime.

The Muslim woman who had posed the questions sat back on her bench, smiled at me, and said she wanted to come to America to learn more about empowerment. I laughed and said I needed to stay in her village to learn from *her* and the other women how to become more powerful women in our village councils and national government. When my final reply was translated, all the women in the boat smiled and nodded at me.

This encounter helped cheer me, because I was fearing that I'd find no hints, no answers on this quest in India for simple give-and-take exchanges with ordinary Indians, especially women, outside my friendship circle. However, this one exchange where we looked directly into each other's eyes with barely two feet of space between us and leaned forward to catch each other's words and the translations, was probably as close to pure, spontaneous invitational rhetoric as I experienced the entire trip. Also, I think we were experiencing the flowing together of Foss and Foss's (2003) framing devices of establishing common ground from *multiple perspectives* (p. 67) and the *circle* (p. 61) of conversational exchange where the give and take of *questions* (p. 82) and responses drew a cordon around us and bound us as women with similar experiences and hopes. This wasn't directed traditional rhetorical exchange, but rather a circular pattern of query, connection, and emotional engagement with its own grassroots energy. Foss and Foss list a variety of discreet framing and elaborating strategies, but, as exemplified above, they often overlap and co-mingle in fluid fashion in the actual communication encounter and expand rhetorical possibilities in evocative manner.

The Exigency: India Modernizing

India represents a diverse mixture of ancient cultures often incongruously abutting cutting-edge modernity. With its kaleidoscopic array of geographic features, traditions, languages, religions, ethnicities, and a population over one billion, it forms a vast and dynamic society.

In many ways, India since independence in 1947, is experiencing yet another economic colonization through globalization and resultant emphasis on an urbanized, industrialized society. Globalization has created a worldwide

marketplace pitting traditional cultures against strong, foreign market forces. “Globally the 20 percent of the world’s people in the highest-income countries account for 86 percent of the total private consumption expenditures—the poorest 20 percent, a minuscule 1.3 percent” (Kennedy, 2004, p. 5). Materialism is being proselytized with missionary zeal to increase Indian consumption to Western levels and this means an increasing percentage of India’s life is globally determined, which has far-reaching economic, cultural, and societal repercussions (Tharakan). Globalization involves marketing and this, to paraphrase Chairman Mao, is simply war by alternate means.

Gandhi said “materialism and morality are inversely proportional.” In advocating the return to Indian roots and self-rule (*swaraj*), Gandhi recommended use of local *khadi* homespun cloth (*khadi* meaning *livelihood*) as a symbol of simple living and took up his famous discipline of spinning cotton as a symbol of this belief. Globalization, with fostering of a marketing culture, counters these teachings and focuses on capitalization, not humanization of society as advocated by Gandhi.

“India is rich in poor people.” So said my friend Sesha (name changed), a civil engineer in Nagpur in central India, and these poor are people without land, fixed homes, or steady livelihoods. As the disparity between rich and poor accelerates in all countries, such *richness* of poverty will also intensify, thereby further unraveling the fibers of social fabric. This study examines manifestations of invitational rhetorical strategies in the state of Kerala in the realms of education and intercultural interaction, but primarily in the field of architecture in effecting greater social justice in the realm of affordable, appropriate, energy efficient housing.

Conditions, Contrasts, and Constraints

Finally it came time to leave Kerala amid a super-saturation of sensation, swirl of impressions, and diminuendo into despair at ever being able to translate my Indian experience into meaningful discourse on alternative rhetorical strategies from an Eastern perspective. However, I felt the impact of all this elaborating evidence as compelling advocacy for more sustainable energy practices conveyed a similar strong rhetorical message to me in its parallel emotional tenor, sensory images, and narrative quality with my work in the Keweenaw. My task was to sit inside this multi-faceted emotional experience and parse it out for evocative response in others. Just as the dialogue I was engaged in at home in the Keweenaw was often purposefully generated with considerations of establishing the conditions of invitational rhetoric in tandem with houses as co-rhetors, so, too, occasions of invitational rhetoric occurred in India. However, this time it was Indian hosts initiating the sharing and COSTFORD's buildings serving as co-rhetors.

Invitational Rhetoric and Gandhi. I continue seeing merit and manifestations of invitational rhetoric and the framing and elaborating devices offered by Foss and Foss (2003) wherever I find myself and I'm increasingly relaxing and melting into the processes as supporter rather than my more practiced role as instigator. I'm encouraging myself to *let* things happen instead of always struggling to *make* them happen and thereby operating from the place of Gearhart's *re-sourcement* and *enfoldment*. Foss and

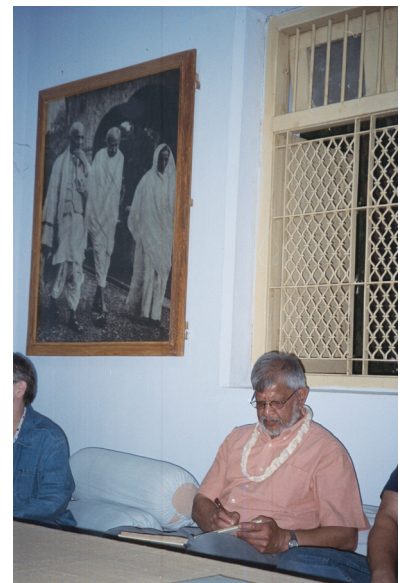


Figure 25. two Gandhis

Foss (2003) stress that invitational rhetoric “involves a deliberate exposure to and consideration of diverse voices as beneficial...because every perspective – including your own – is necessarily partial” (p. 12).

I’ve spent many hours traveling with and listening to Gandhi’s grandson, Arun, pictured in tandem with an image of his grandfather in Figure 25. In hearing Arun talk about his grandfather’s life and work, I realize that Mahatma Gandhi’s foundation principles for relationships:

- respect
- understanding
- acceptance
- appreciation

are variations of the conditions of invitational rhetoric as outlined by Foss and Foss:

- freedom
- safety
- value
- openness

However, Gandhi is dealing more with internal conditions manifest by individuals in working to transform the greater society. Foss and Foss present conditions of a more external nature – contexts that foster invitational rhetoric in clusters of individuals for communitarian transformation with co-created goals. Nevertheless, both are creating non-threatening and nonviolent rhetorical situations and providing alternatives to the traditional rhetor-based persuasive modes focused on intention, strategy, and audience analysis. Gandhi and Foss and Foss accentuate balanced relationality and emotional maturity by all parties

in the communication, which provides the basis for possible experience of transformation of all participants.

However, I still am troubled by the place of the rhetor in both of these constructs. By whom and how is the communication initiated? Perhaps it's spontaneous and without leadership, but usually there is an initiator and this person or these persons thereby default to a position of authority, which is perhaps an inevitable and hard-wired feature of rhetorical practice, standard or alternative. Maybe traditional and alternative rhetorical strategies start with a rhetor and the difference evolves along with the communication when the rhetor in invitational rhetoric lets go of the reins and blends into the general discussion and becomes as interested in being transformed as helping engender transformation.

Perhaps the value in seeking to find alternative rhetorical strategies may well be in the very act of questing; *means* and not the *end* may be a more worthy goal, which reflects Gandhi's belief in *pursuit* rather than *possession* as the greater value. Sharing a boatride with a group of Muslim women who were village *panchayat* members, with me serving as cultural bridge, underscored for all of us that we were seeking better ways of living, each in our own country and in our accustomed manner, but also eager for insight into new approaches from other cultural contexts.

Summary

India is a different dimension to the experience of invitational rhetoric and it was a relief *not* to be the rhetor, but rather fully immersed, asking questions, and participating in varied fashion in the initial learning process of living in a different culture.

The transformation I could be certain of was occurring within me. By stepping out of my role as energy rhetor at home, I opened myself to the experience of being transformed in the presence of similarly passionate rhetors in India. This was an act of Gearhart's re-sourcement: "'going to a new place' for energy and inspiration" (qtd. Foss and Foss, 2003, p. 44), with the *place* being both India and new space within myself for more spiritual, intuitive response. I also realize I can't hope for transformation in others unless I'm willing to open myself to experiencing the reality of transformation through lived invitational rhetoric. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "My life is my message."

As I traveled and, from time to time, quizzed myself on how all this experiential input was affecting my quest for alternative rhetorical strategies, I continued to see recurring grassroots traits: passionate involvement, action on whatever scale possible, evolution of activities, and participant involvement in decision-making. Invitational rhetoric and grassroots activities are counter forces to traditional rhetorical strategies and patriarchal, hierarchical systems. In particular, the participant involvement in decision-making through open communication is the catalyst that can engender non-coerced transformation, such as the *panchayat* village councils in Kerala.

For me, invitational rhetoric represents a humanizing of rhetorical practice with people-to-people communication and community building. It is about humanization in scale and scope – counter to the omnivorous outlook of globalization. In both the Keweenaw and Kerala, I experienced the familiar challenge of similar problems – how to establish and maintain satisfying and sustainable life – and knowing that any descriptor is subject to individual, culturally-based interpretation as well as extra-societal influences.

CHAPTER 5 – SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

I return to the water buffalo and cattle egret in the cover photograph. Pondering the pair again at this point makes me wonder what progress I've made in assessing the viability of invitational rhetoric enhanced with re-sourcement and enfoldment as lived experience in relation to the preponderance of traditional rhetorical communication in the quest for rhetoric(s) for transformation. The following is a brief summary of aspects of this exploratory study, briefly reiterated before moving forward to conclusions and recommendations.

Purpose. This dissertation studies alternative rhetorical options in broaching the continuing enigma of change resistance in acknowledging and addressing challenges of resource availability, use, and environmental impact of energy in the residential built environment. The goal of this study is threefold:

- 1) explicating the concept of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice countering the inadequacies of traditional rhetoric and also exploring re-sourcement and enfoldment as expansions of invitational rhetorical practices,
- 2) demonstrating how to engage in autoethnography as methodology with focus on the personal, including intuition and spirituality, and adapting the literary techniques of narrative reflection and journaling,
- 3) engaging in and reporting on the efficacy and challenges of alternative rhetorical stances in evoking altered perception of energy and advocating for wiser energy use in the residential built environment in field sites in America and India and assessing their viability as

universally applicable in fostering personal and eventual societal transformation.

Theories. Invitational rhetoric based on ecofeminist principles forms the conceptual base for this dissertation. The study takes the form of a personal odyssey wherein I live my ecofeminist beliefs about the importance of environmental concerns aired in feminist communications of cooperation and caring with respect for the spiritual and intuitive dimensions of existence, which are posited as critical sources of knowledge. I propose the feminist rhetorical option of invitational rhetoric as a viable alternative to inadequacies in traditional persuasive rhetorical practices. I also extend the tenets of invitational rhetorical theory to include engaging in rhetorical practices from stances of re-sourcement and enfoldment, which represent a deeper, more intimate wellspring of spiritually-based practices.

Methodology. Autoethnography, evolving from anthropological ethnography, is the methodological base for this dissertation. Not only am I present at and immersed in the situations under investigation, but I channel the experiences through my sensory and emotional systems giving credence to another goal of this study: reuniting the rational with the emotional. This study focuses on how to engage in autoethnography by detailing the methodology of narrative reflection in plumbing past experiences for manifestations of invitational rhetoric and more intuitively-based practices. When I engage in field studies to garner further instances of invitational rhetoric, I use journaling, but not as an ethnographic tool; rather, immersing myself so that journaling itself is an autoethnographic experience and source of knowledge.

Field Sites. Since the environmental impact of energy use is a global issue, I choose both a Western and an Eastern site for field studies. In the West, I focus on my home territory, the Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan. The narrative involves the inception and impact on myself and others of both my passive solar, super-insulated home and subsequent houses built in similar fashion for Copper Country Habitat for Humanity. In the East, I make two trips to India and focus primarily on energy-efficient, indigenously-sensitive homes built in the state of Kerala by a non-governmental organization called the Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD). I also share my sensory and emotional responses at both sites as part of knowledge-building from the spiritual level intrinsic to ecofeminist invitational rhetorical practice.

Claims. I claim the inadequacies of traditional rhetoric in relation to changing perception and use of energy in the residential built environment can often be remedied by using invitational rhetorical practices in original or hybrid form. I also claim a place for non-overtly persuasive practices of re-sourcement and enfoldment as ways of being and complementary extensions of ecofeminist invitational rhetorical stances. Further, I claim that discussions of autoethnography often lack sufficient examples of how to effect this methodology as useful practice; therefore, I detail the strategies I employ in narrative reflection and experiential journaling while parsing out elements of invitational rhetorical practices.

In positing the inadequacies of scientific practice based primarily on rational beliefs and traditional persuasive rhetorical practices, I claim space for emotion, intuition, and spiritual considerations in invitational rhetoric as valid sources of knowledge with potential for creating change. However, I also

concede that inviting knowledge from such internal sources doesn't preclude bias or ensure unquestionable validity. Perceptions are still connected to our rational thought processes, but opening ourselves to accept greater input from our interior sensory and emotional realms offers promise of transforming our experience of the world. The gleanings from introspection aren't infallible, but might broaden the realm of perceptual input and increase the success of invitational rhetorical exchange.

Evidence. My experiences in the Keweenaw and Kerala in relation to transformations of perception and use of energy in the residential built environment using invitational rhetoric are the evidence for my claims. I observe and use invitational rhetoric, including re-sourcement and enfoldment, in a variety of situations in both locations. I note situations where invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice works and times when it's inappropriate, ineffective, or lends itself to hybridity in concert with traditional rhetorical practices.

Methodologically, I engage in autoethnographic practices of narrative reflection and journaling with full awareness that I'm laying open not only my thoughts, but my feelings to examination with the possibility of criticism or dismissal. I accept my vulnerable position as part of autotethnographic evocative practice in feminist mode as a bridge between shifting sandbars.

The photographs and other graphic aids interspersed throughout the study are not mere documentary tools; rather, they are evocative complements to the commentary that is created with intention of sharing and stimulating emotional response leading to transformations. I posit that logic alone isn't enough in

altering perceptions leading to change of actions – emotions must also be accepted and integrated into the process.

Exigency. The exigency propelling this dissertation is my long-standing concern about issues of climate change relating to energy use, and alarm that even with the topic now debated in the media at all levels, the traditional rhetoric eliciting actions is still insufficient in avoiding environmental and societal crisis. I contend the challenge relating to energy perception and use is as much rhetorical as technical; therefore, I seek strategies that stretch beyond traditional rhetoric that can serve as wedges to open doors – and minds – to life-preserving practices in relation to energy issues.

Challenges. I experience acute irony in the subject of my dissertation and the nature of the dissertation process, especially at a technological university. I'm arguing about a non-argumentative form of rhetorical practice in invitational rhetoric. My concern is for transformation to more sustainable use of energy in the residential built environment, yet I also argue for re-sourcement and enfoldment as ecofeminist spiritual practices of merit: wanting things to change, but not suggesting exactly how they are to change.

In choosing the intimate methodology of autoethnography, I'm delving into the realm of emotions, intuition, and spirituality – not the focus of choice at a technological university. As I summon the literary forms of narrative reflection and journaling to elicit personal experiences as data, I'm still bound by the constraints of the scientific method in structuring the study. I'm questing for new structures and content, yet constrained by established practices.

Conclusions

Traditional rhetorical practice is an extremely powerful force seemingly hard-wired into humankind's communication practices. I am constantly reminded that attempts at altering perceptions or patterns of use are essentially rhetor-invoked and creating alternative strategies with greater options for individual input is consistently difficult. Even the act of trying to empower others constitutes a persuasive action in rather standard rhetorical fashion.

Theories. I could not have predicted where the research and writing of this dissertation would take me. I felt passionate about *home*, the place everyone experiences, even if it's a cardboard box under a bridge trestle. However, I could not have anticipated that focusing on *energy* in relation to *home* would take me to the opposite side of the planet, repeatedly, and heighten my awareness of the rhetorics operating in the West, but also lessen my commitment to the capitalist/consumer aspects of the American way of life.

The Indian civilization is a spectacular array of culture shaped – often torqued -- by association with foreign cultures, including those of the West, these past many centuries. It is a place and space that allowed me breathing room to absorb the impact the West has on the evolution of life in both Western and non-Western societies and imagine paths to transformation via alternative rhetorics.

Initially, India was essentially an escape for me. The first journey was a holiday with the surprising realization that a return might illuminate alternative rhetorical strategies from an Eastern perspective. Not only was India a sensorial delight, it also let me fully step away from what I often felt were the confines and overuse of a traditional rhetorical stance on my part and become the recipient of myriad traditional and invitational rhetorical encounters in a different cultural

context. As I immersed myself in cross-cultural situations and engaged in free-flowing discussions about environmental and general societal concerns, I felt a deepening awareness that the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and financial vulnerabilities I was exposing myself to in coming to India were extending a self-transformation that was already underway in the Keweenaw and strengthening my belief that a melding of the conditions of invitational rhetoric as ecofeminist practice and evolving beyond the constraints of traditional rhetorical stances by embracing re-sourcement and enfoldment was indeed the foundation for alternative rhetorics.

The frustrations and perplexities I experienced about change resistance in relation to energy concerns began to lessen as I thrust myself fully into experiencing vignettes of grassroots organizations in India, particularly absorbing the architectural breadth and rigor of the work of COSTFORD. Beyond my particular interest in comparative architectural considerations as a way of stretching me beyond my knowledge and comfort zones in the area of the residential environment, the very fact of immersing myself in an unknown culture allowed me to experience vulnerability and move onward to a position of greater self-assurance in both cultures. As I shared thoughts and feelings with Indian friends and associates, we experienced a lessening of sensations of *other* and co-created understandings of the commonality of many of our fears and concerns, passions and interests.

Methodology. In my quest for rhetorical variances, I discovered that what was occurring in America and India also became different experiences for me based on the form of autoethnographic revelation employed. In my home territory in the Keweenaw, I used narrative reflection to assess past actions in

relation to advocacy for altering perception and use of energy. I was a strong rhetor in these situations, despite the houses as co-rhetors, and my stance was usually more traditional than I would have wished. At times I detected hints of invitational rhetorical practices, but I was usually searching perhaps too deeply for such manifestations. However, in India I was touring with duffel bag, backpack, and journals and outside my usual leadership role. As I recorded incidents and insights in situ, rereading my field notes recorded in journals revealed more in the way of varied framing strategies and elaborating techniques (as delineated by Foss and Foss, 2003) operating in my encounters in Kerala than the Keweenaw.

Mindful of seeming too simplistic, I admit to feeling happy in India – a happiness not equaled by my experience of American life at present. Perhaps it was just the novelty of new environs or respite from the burden of responsibilities beyond my own concerns, but something else was operating. I rode country buses, ate in local restaurants, and navigated much of the country as a lone American woman. It was largely the necessity of ordinary communitarian association that was refreshing and invigorating. I had meaningful and profound experiences as a non-rhetor and the potential of invitational rhetoric as a powerful alternative practice grew for me as I explored the topic autoethnographically as real-time, lived experience.

Limitations. However, there are limitations to promoting invitational rhetoric as alternative rhetorical practice in autoethnographic mode. Sobering reality continues to resurface routinely in efforts to effect change in communication patterns as the standard model of top-down rhetorical performance as the default setting in traditional rhetorical practices continues

reasserting itself. Strong hierarchical leadership seems virtually hard-wired into the operational dynamics of the human species and the concerns of ecofeminism and the temporal extension required for invitational rhetoric often hampers acceptance, much less implementation of alternative rhetorical strategies.

It has been enlightening and liberating reading ecofeminist theory and observing and incorporating elements of ecological awareness, feminist communication practices, and heightened response to spiritual elements involved in life's challenges as I craft this dissertation. Patriarchal and hierarchical forms of power employing traditional rhetoric are still tightly in control of most facets of life, and regularly employed, no matter how much struggle is exerted in negating their influence. However, ecofeminist practices as manifested in invitational rhetoric give promise of altered modes of communication that might lead to a more sane and sustainable world. Unfortunately, power structures rarely voluntarily admit profound change except in breakpoint situations such as cataclysmic social, economic, or environmental upheavals. Ecofeminism with its espousal of a holistic worldview and partnership modes of communication instead of traditional dominator forms certainly challenges the status quo in different fashion.

In these times of societal turmoil, some people are remembering what seems another hard-wired trait of the human species: gathering together, sharing ideas, and supporting each other in building empowered communities. When the monolithic societal structures we've collectively created over generations seem to hinder or even harm the nurturing of life in its myriad forms, these structures certainly set themselves up for being challenged to change and individuals need

the reassurance that change can come from many sources, including the grassroots level.

Ecofeminism reinforces another power base: the power from within. It is this power that helps sustain the spirit in challenging traditional hierarchies. The limitations of ecofeminism seem to manifest themselves in its temporal mode and its non-aggressive approach because it takes time to gather and converse and build a foundation for cooperative, collaborative efforts. In a world dedicated to the merits of speed and efficiency, the time required to effect group cohesion and consensus is often maddeningly slow to those whose pace of activity and mode of operation is accustomed to hyperdrive. However, this seeming limitation or weakness of ecofeminism might also be its greatest strength. Just as *The New Yorker* cartoon I shared earlier about a rodent having an epiphany and stepping out of the rat race, individuals are also offered the opportunity of pausing and assessing the pace, premises, and manifestations of patriarchal, hierarchical structures and deciding on perhaps different modes of operation for themselves, including replacing aggression with assertion.

If traditional systems of power and communication are to be changed, people have to become willing to invest the time and personal participation that encourages an opening of the issue at hand to the varied input of all members of the communication group. Time is a critical concern in American lives. With a population that works, on average, 360 hours (nine 40-hour weeks) of the year longer than citizens of comparable Western countries, Americans are, by comparison, a more frenzied people. Since speed and efficiency have almost iconic status in our society, the time needed in effecting invitational rhetorical

practice has implications for its wide-range use, yet serves as a limitation in its implementation in some situations.

Since we're in a culture that privileges rationality and quantification in standard forms of advocacy, there are implications for autoethnography in challenging traditional areas of operation and helping make space for emotion, intuition, and qualitative methods of inquiry. Both the strengths and limitations of autoethnography involve its relative recent arrival in academic venues with its celebration of the emotive along with the rational in providing more holistic responses. This dissertation may be vulnerable to criticisms generating from its use of ecofeminism, invitational rhetoric, re-sourcement, enfoldment, and autoethnography, but its purpose is to lend credence to these conceptual and methodological perspectives and suggest that transformation in the area of focus of this research also calls for transformation in traditional theoretical and methodological constructs.

This study can also be called to task for using case studies in relatively isolated areas of the world. The passive solar, super-insulated construction of homes in the Keweenaw Peninsula doesn't represent a national trend, and homes using indigenous materials and acknowledging traditional designs by a British-born architect and co-founder of the Centre of Science and Technology for Rural Development (COSTFORD) in the south of India certainly don't speak for building conditions in all of India or the Third World. However, I acknowledge the specificity of my cases in the West and the East and use them to demonstrate aspects of ecofeminist invitational rhetorical conditions and share autoethnographic passages relating to intimate connections with these built environments. I don't argue for wholesale adoption of these theories and

methodologies for research, but share perspectives and insights that might prove useful as gleaned from these practices in pure or hybrid forms.

Reflections. Through metacognition and what I call *marinating*, the experiential and theoretical washed over each other and I begin to garner nuggets of insight. I find myself truly interested in power, but in the form of empowerment generating from within. As I composed the Keweenaw portion of this dissertation, I engaged in narrative reflection as I hadn't been inspired to detail the years-long development of energy efficient housing projects in the Copper Country in my journals. There was a rich collection of materials to review: articles for community publications, papers for conferences, brochures accompanying solar home tours, and notes from various presentations. These provided resources for thoughtful reflection and narrative commentary. In India, field notes, clippings, and diary entries were combined and through real-time journaling I continued evolving growing interest in the efficacy of the power from within as the wellspring of durable transformation of individuals and eventually societies.

As I live with the accelerating concerns about environmental issues not only locally, but globally, my interior and exterior worlds expand. As a female belatedly coming to feminist perspectives on living on this beleaguered planet and stretching into the realm of spiritual considerations and not only validating, by valorizing them, I continue to amaze myself. I realize there are no fixed points in my questing and no permanence in my momentary arrival at moments of understanding. I am operating as a cross-cultural bridge on Andazua's sandbars.

I also realize the immense relief I feel when I, in the position of a traditional rhetor, am willing and able to lead from the side. There is more actual power for transformation and merit in allowing myself to experience and be experienced as vulnerable than in attempting traditional rhetorical standing at the apex of the patriarchal, hierarchical pyramid. True leading from the side is actually an exhilarating, empowering position. As I relax into the realm of Gearheart's re-sourcement and enfoldment, I experience the inherent thrill – and chill -- of the dynamics of evolving life. There is merit in living with the tensions of alternative rhetorical stances and portrayal of life-challenging issues related to even seemingly mundane issues related to energy use in the home environment.

I find strange solace in a discomfoting world by choosing to live as Andalzua's bridge between West and East on the sandbars of perceptual and actualized change. I am stretching well beyond the parameters of my comfort zone – and this may be an authentic homebase: on sandbars with resultant tensions and uncertainties.

Recommendations

As I've traveled the country and distant parts of the world forming and framing this study, I'm either seeing increasing grassroots activity or becoming more sensitive to its presence. Here in America I notice communities gathering to create meaningful youth activities and neighborhoods taking responsibility for healthcare and housing initiatives. Some communities are finding creative ways of fostering jobs and improving their local economies in Earth-friendly, sustainable fashion. Neighborhood pride is being touted and there's encouragement for sharing skills and knowledge informally and joyfully. Communities continue sponsoring events of celebration, local to international.

Neighborhoods are assuming greater responsibility for community safety and becoming increasingly mindful of the interests of all segments of their populations. Energy awareness is accelerating and *green building*, mindfulness about greater concern for benign and conserving design and construction strategies, has entered the American vernacular. What follows are observations about examples of invitational rhetorical practices in the academia, the workplace, and communities and suggestions for ways it might be further utilized.

Academia. The pedagogical setting, by its very nature, lends itself to a variety of modes of learning and offers possibilities for ecofeminist-based invitational rhetoric to be encouraged. Some subjects and instructors are committed to lecturing, which is highly patriarchal and hierarchical, and therefore there's little space for invitational rhetoric to exist. However, class discussion and small group activities are perfect settings for nurturing the development of communication that includes the attributes of freedom, safety, value, and openness and the framing strategies and elaborating techniques suggested by Foss and Foss (2003).

Future directions for invitational rhetoric in the educational field includes lauding its communitarian focus, which is increasingly necessary in helping heal the fracturing and fragmenting of our world. Encouraging and valuing every individual in the communication process can enhance the power of problem-solving and, even better, create thought forms and modes of behavior that eliminate the possibility of problems before they fester.

Ecofeminism-inspired invitational rhetoric usually receives its greatest reception from the Humanities and Social Sciences, but it is even attracting

attention here at Michigan Technological University in such places as the department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and the cross-disciplinary Sustainable Futures Institute. I've met women who are engineers at the graduate level in CEE who are dissatisfied with the quantitative, problem-solving fixation of much of their course of study. They want to be pro-active and tackle environmental issues in a manner that avoids dealing with only remedial situations. They want to address causes and not simply effects of environmental challenges.

Today, as I was revising this chapter, I received an e-mail from a doctoral candidate and National Science Foundation graduate fellow in Environmental Engineering who heard me a few weeks ago give a reprise of my oral defense of this dissertation. She's interested in getting together so she can learn more about invitational rhetoric and autoethnography. I, in turn, saved an e-mail from her that I received as part of the Engineers Without Borders listserve relating to papers published by the American Chemical Society concerning "transferring knowledge (in the areas of science/ technology, governance, and economics) from the developing world to the developed world for sustainability" (Fuchs, 6 April 2007, personal e-mail).

These women and I are networking and they are on the path to joining me as ecofeminists, if they aren't already, as their environmental concerns evolve into areas of fostering preventative collaborative efforts and a willingness to give voice to the intuitive, spiritual concerns they're experiencing about not only the environment, but treatment of myriad issues and entities in our societies.

Michigan Tech's mandate in the year 2000 to develop a General Education program that incorporated a course for sophomores -- Revisions: Oral, Written,

and Visual Communication – developed in the Humanities Department, focused on service learning. As students were honing the various interrelated aspects of their communication skills, they were also challenged to extend their focus into the community beyond the classroom and become engrossed in offering assistance in improving the communication of a campus, civic, or non-profit organization. In retrospect, this decision shares aspects of ecofeminist invitational rhetorical practices in its use of small group collaborative procedures. This was grassroots work to improve existing structures and foster not simply individual effort, but cooperative action.

The other General Education courses – Perspectives, World Cultures, and Institutions – also offer opportunities for alternative rhetorical practices. Environments, both natural and human-made, are studied; classroom activities offer possibilities for varying combinations of co-constructed projects; and there is space for exploration of intuitive, emotional, and spiritual concerns.

And a further note relating to ecofeminist-based invitational rhetoric and the academy: this dissertation is a purposeful and fully-declared attempt at altering the fixation on quantitative, rationally constrained study. Quite simply, I'd like to see more scholars raise the same challenge. We're living in critical times on this planet, which the academy is challenged to help address in both orthodox and unorthodox fashion. As for further academic research generating from invitational rhetoric, I'm eager for the possibilities of this form of alternative rhetorical strategy to penetrate myriad areas of our lives, institutions, and perceptions of reality. I've explored invitational rhetoric in relation to energy use in the residential built environment, but it lends itself to a multitude of topics of scholarly concern. There can be further rhetorical studies of grassroots

advocacy with focus on identifying conditions of invitational rhetoric. The topic of the built environment can be further studied for alternative rhetorical strategies from the perspective of ecofeminist studies. In a world rampant with despots and demagogues, invitational rhetoric reminds us there are other ways of relating and other realities available to us and academic study helping in the revelation process.

Cultural studies could extend research on cross-cultural advocacy practices, both traditional and alternative on a wide variety of topics. Further research could be undertaken to explore energy and sustainability issues in various cultures. Autoethnography in cross-cultural settings could also serve as a topic for academic study. Self-revelation isn't a comfortable realm for most individuals, but might become used more widely if academia and activism draw closer. My choice in using autoethnography was supported by my life as a keeper of extensive journals. Developing journaling as part of autoethnography and a mode of self-revelation and self-transformation can also be studied as an incubator for invitational advocacy.

Workplace. Just as I perceive invitational rhetorical opportunities appearing in the world of education, it can be seen in the workplace where teams are already commonplace, but where the sports concept signaled in the very name and the hierarchical mandate can be altered. Employees can stretch into new realms of collaborative, cooperative effort that manifests creativity and sensitivity beyond the definitions of the assigned task designated for economic gain. Goals and strategies can be created that strengthen not only economic goals, but address civic and societal issues. Corporations, not mandated to have

social responsibilities, can perhaps be nudged to extend their sights and their reach beyond the bottom line.

Invitational rhetorical practice in the workplace can help counter the perceptions and practices of traditional patriarchal, hierarchical systems and perhaps enhance the workplace environment and eventual output. Research has shown that employees most value not their income or perquisites, but having a voice in the workplace. Invitational rhetoric can help provide that voice so both employees and employers gain positive results from such communication practices.

Limitations in the workplace relating to implementation of invitational rhetoric center around the willingness of employers and employees to ease the constraints of traditional patriarchal, hierarchical communicative and power structures and be willing to court transformation. Some businesses and industries are eager in attempting transformation using what are essentially the practices of invitational rhetoric, while others remain rigid.

Communities. Instances of invitational rhetoric are also manifest in communities, where myriad issues are addressed with great creativity and multi-generational participation. Ecofeminist-inspired invitational rhetoric in any venue can engender an awakening to the realities of the context of lives in the natural world with the life-support systems of earth, air, and water in peril and awareness of abilities in fostering communitarian efforts for sustenance of meaningful, healthful, sustainable lives. In a world raging with religious and political intolerance, alternative rhetorical strategies also tap into the spiritual, intuitive, and emotional elements that can be accessed for wisdom, which is

more profound than mere information and knowledge, and can provide the foundation for perceptions that can lead to lessening of change resistance.

Hybrid forms. I'm indebted to the work of another doctoral candidate, Pedrioli (2005) in a dissertation entitled *Rhetorically constructing the United States law professor personae(e): Implication of traditional, invitational, and cooperative rhetorics*, mentioned in Chapter 1. Pedrioli's study of the rhetoric of attorneys led to the suggestion that a hybrid approach might be appropriate. Invitational rhetoric could be used in understanding the views of all parties and traditional argumentation could be reserved for debating the merits of those views. This suggestion leads to consideration of the merits of a repertoire of rhetorical modes, including invitational rhetoric, in situations usually conducted with traditional rhetorical practices. For example, in encounters where I wasn't certain whether standard beneficial rhetoric was employed or aspects of invitational rhetoric, perhaps what was manifested was a hybrid form of communication appropriate to the situation.

As I draw to the conclusion of this study, a question posed to me earlier lingers: What did this new approach of invitational rhetoric bring to my work that traditional rhetoric couldn't provide? Perhaps it is the excitement – in myself and in communication with others – evolving from my study. By coming up close and personal with my topic and willing to figuratively get dirt under my nails, I found myself stimulated both intellectually and emotionally. As I took risks and pushed myself beyond my comfort zone and shared my experiences with others, I found increasing interest in my subject. Since I'm passionate about energy issues in relation to the residential built environment and concerned for the comfort and well-being of a wide range of people from varied socio-

economic levels and cultures, I found my passion was sparking interest in others. If I were operating from a traditional rhetorical stance and not immersed in the messiness and often maddening elements of the process, I don't think I would have elicited the quantity and quality of responses I'm receiving.

The superlative testimony and persuasive strategy (because we never escape persuasion in advocacy) is *walking the talk*. This dissertation supplies data through encounters with the physical environment in two representative and disparate regions of the world. I assert this dissertation makes contributions in both the realms of conceptualization and pragmatic concerns. Conceptually, I stretch ecofeminist invitational rhetorical practice to include the refinements of re-sourcement and enfoldment as spiritual stances toward change.

Pragmatically, I discuss narrative reflection and journaling not just as tools, but as immersion of self into experiences at an emotional level and recording that effort in autoethnographic terms.

I argue in this dissertation that the communitarian conditions of invitational rhetoric, though challenging in establishing and maintaining, offer a more egalitarian, social, and perhaps more durable success in the co-created results. This alternative rhetorical practice lends hope that the topic of this dissertation – energy use in the residential built environment – might actually be impacted by grassroots movements internationally evolving to the understanding that the current destructive practices of dominator patriarchal, hierarchical systems can be transformed by the partnership ways of communication espoused in ecofeminist invitational rhetorical practice.

Epilogue

We won't believe the world can change until we experience ourselves changing.
- Frances Moore Lappé

As I grapple with turning my thoughts, feelings, and experiences into understandable, evocative communication at a scholarly level, I am heartened by results evolving beyond the temporal constraints of this dissertation. What I privately determined during the course of this study is that I would simultaneously craft a blueprint for my future life in relation to energy activism.

This past year, after my successful oral defense of this dissertation, I made another trip to the opposite side of the globe. I spent a week in Thailand and witnessed the effects of a prolonged monsoon season as part of probable climate change and spent another week in Guangzhou, China experiencing the environmental effects of intensive modernization and industrialization. I was then in India for four months starting with participation in the annual Habitat for Humanity International's Jimmy Carter Work Project south of Mumbai in Lonavala where over 2,000 volunteers from 40 countries spent a week constructing homes with 100 families.

Finally, I returned to COSTFORD in Kerala as a volunteer seeing if I could fashion an Indo-American future for myself. I approached the venture from an invitational rhetorical stance along with the non-assertive conditions of resourcement and enfoldment and offered informal business operational and communication consultancy when requested. The result has been increased business effectiveness at COSTFORD and preparations for me to join a young Indian widow and her family in designing and constructing a COSTFORD home

with enhanced energy efficient features, which will serve as my Indian home base and a permanent home for my new *family of friends*.

I am now returning to Kerala for multiple reasons: 1) to document the building of our house, 2) to assist in furthering business and communication efforts at COSTFORD on a volunteer basis, and 3) to lend input, when asked, on plans for a school of architecture based on the principles of the late Laurie Baker's COSTFORD mission to provide indigenously-sensitive, socially-focused architecture to help eradicate poverty housing.

I've learned Gearhart's lesson of enfoldment in sensing the difference between *wanting things to change and wanting to change things* and am choosing to simply walk the talk and lead from the side with both COSTFORD and Habitat for Humanity International. In Gandhian fashion, I choose to focus on the process and not only the product.

While concluding this dissertation and collating the various elements, I read the following passage over breakfast from a Philadelphia artist and activist, Lily Yeh: "Don't go in thinking you can solve someone's problem, that's arrogance....Go in and receive the experience." I now open my arms to embrace a communitarian future of embodied ecofeminist-based invitational advocacy for assisting in creating an energy renaissance globally.

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