



“We Are Seneca Lake”: Defining the Substances of Sustainable and Extractive Economics Through Anti-Fracking Activism

Mollie K. Murphy*

Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies, Utah State University, Logan, UT, United States

Scholars of environmental communication have had difficulty discerning whether and how nature should be considered as an economic resource for humans. This article examines how strategic definitions of environmental substance can forward a rhetorical vision of sustainable economics. Turning to a successful anti-fracking campaign, it illustrates the definitional means through which activists challenge fossil fuel dependence with an ecological perspective of economic and environmental health. Contextual, nutritive, and directional substance in New York’s “We Are Seneca Lake” campaign together constitute the Finger Lakes’ local economy as a blueprint for a sustainable future. This article contributes to scholarship and advocacy at the intersections of environmental activism and industry rhetoric.

Keywords: hydraulic fracturing, environmental activism, economy, fossil fuels, substance

OPEN ACCESS

Edited by:

Stacey Sowards,
The University of Texas at El Paso,
United States

Reviewed by:

Heather Zoller,
University of Cincinnati, United States
Emma Frances Bloomfield,
University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
United States

*Correspondence:

Mollie K. Murphy
mollie.murphy@usu.edu

Specialty section:

This article was submitted to
Science and Environmental
Communication,
a section of the journal
Frontiers in Communication

Received: 24 February 2020

Accepted: 15 April 2020

Published: 14 May 2020

Citation:

Murphy MK (2020) “We Are Seneca Lake”: Defining the Substances of Sustainable and Extractive Economics Through Anti-Fracking Activism. *Front. Commun.* 5:27. doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2020.00027

INTRODUCTION

For 4 years, protestors affiliated with Upstate New York’s “We Are Seneca Lake” (WASL) campaign struggled against the efforts of an energy company, Crestwood Equity Partners, to transform salt caverns beneath the Finger Lakes into storage containers for gases used for high-volume hydraulic fracturing, commonly referred to as “fracking.” WASL gained national coverage in the *New York Times*, and high profile environmental leaders Bill McKibben and Josh Fox traveled to New York to support the campaign (McKinley, 2014; Schwartz, 2016). WASL’s efforts paid off. In May 2017, Crestwood announced it would abandon its plans to use Seneca Lake for methane storage. A year later, Governor Andrew Cuomo’s administration rejected Crestwood’s proposal to store liquefied petroleum (LPG) in the region, and the project came to an official close (Murray, 2017).

Throughout their years of protest, WASL argued that Crestwood’s project threatened the area’s sustainable local economy. In their “Pledge to Protect Seneca Lake,” WASL (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016a, n.p.) states that Seneca Lake “creates a climate perfectly suited for the growing of wine grapes” and “is a world-class tourist destination.” In reference to his support for the campaign, Josh Fox described the region as “part of a microclimate that supports distilleries, wineries, breweries and agriculture” (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Similarly, environmental conservation commissioner Basil Seggos (Seggos, 2018, n.p.) expressed significant economic concerns in his statement justifying the decision on the LPG project, arguing that, “the project does not avoid or minimize those impacts to the maximum extent possible.” While protestors voiced more common environmental concerns such as climate change, WASL’s main rhetorical strategy centered

on a juxtaposition of extractive (fossil fuel driven) and sustainable (activist driven) notions of the economy.

In mainstream news, fracking is almost always framed as *either* an economic benefit or an environmental concern (Krause and Bucy, 2018, p. 325). This framing echoes capitalist industry rhetoric that depicts environmental policy and job stability as mutually exclusive (Estabrook et al., 2007, p. 29–30; Faber and O'Connor, 1993, p. 13–14; Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. ix). A number of environmental activists and scholars have made efforts to rhetorically unite economic, environmental, and social needs as part of a larger call for justice (Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. x; Agyeman, 2005, p. 2; Davies, 2013, p. 195), yet framing these connections remains difficult. Lakoff (2010, p. 76) argues that environmental advocates must work to expose the cause of both economic and ecological damage: neoliberal ideology, which champions the unregulated free market and privileges capitalist gains over the public good. It is critical that communication scholars attend to activists' efforts to challenge the neoliberal assumption that the environment is exploitable. Analyses of grassroots environmental movements in particular can improve scholarly understandings of resistance and in turn strengthen movements for social and environmental justice (Burningham, 2000, p. 59–60; Davies, 2013, p. xxiv; Cozen et al., 2018, p. 291).

In this analysis, I examine how WASL constructs an ecological approach to economics by depicting environmental exploitation as a threat to their sustainable local economy. For WASL, a healthy economy depends upon a healthy environment; the two are consubstantial. This view challenges the fossil fuel industry's efforts to frame their practices either as necessary to economic growth or altogether safe (Matz and Renfrew, 2015, p. 293–294; Schneider et al., 2016, p. 25; Baka et al., 2018, p. 453; Schneider and Peeples, 2018, p. 6). Utilizing Kenneth Burke's notion of "substance," I reveal WASL's means of defining a sustainable economy as dependent upon environmental health. To assess WASL's strategies, I rely on their website, <http://www.weareseculake.com>, which served as their main communication outlet throughout their years of advocacy. The web page contains press releases written by protestors (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016b), the group's "Pledge to Protect Seneca Lake" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016a), and a page filled with pictures and statements from protestors arrested for trespassing when they blockaded Crestwood's gates to prevent trucks from entering the premises (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c). By attending to how WASL defines the "substances" of both sustainable and extractive economics, this article contributes to scholarship and advocacy at the intersections of environmental activism and industry rhetoric.

This article proceeds in four parts. The following section explains fracking and subsequent controversies, particularly those in New York State. Next, I review scholarship in the interrelated areas of neoliberalism, corporate environmental rhetoric, and environmental activism. Then, I explain Burke's concept of substance and illustrate how WASL defines the substances of both sustainable and extractive economics. Attention to three overlapping types of substance shows how

WASL forwards a vision of sustainable economics grounded in a connection between humans and nature and dialectically opposed to fossil fuel extraction. Attention to *contextual substance* shows how WASL constructs two opposing visions of the Finger Lakes region: Seneca Lake as a hub for the hydraulic fracturing industry and Seneca Lake as a critical provider for the local wine, tourism, and agricultural industries. By juxtaposing definitions of contextual substance, WASL frames extractive economics as involving "outsiders" and sustainable economics as inextricably tied to local residents. Second, WASL's construction of Seneca Lake's *nutritive substance* (a distinct type of what Burke calls familial substance) shows that the health of Seneca Lake dictates the health of locals, who in turn support the area's economy. When protestors define themselves *as* Seneca Lake itself, they construct humans, economics, and nature as sharing nutritive substance. Finally, WASL's construction of *directional substance* once again juxtaposes the fossil fuel industry's view of the environment with protestors'. Here, WASL's construction of the economy is futuristic, guided by "where it is going." WASL portrays the fossil fuel industry's vision of the future as dialectically opposed to a sustainable future for which protestors are fighting. Together, WASL's contextual, nutritive, and directional definitions of substance challenge fossil fuel extraction with a sustainable vision of the relationship between humans, nature, and the economy. The article concludes with a review of its contributions to environmental communication scholarship and activism.

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING IN THE U.S. AND NEW YORK

"Fracking" often refers to what is actually a modern version of the practice: high-volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF). Although the fossil fuel industry has utilized hydraulic fracturing to vertically extract natural gas from wells since the 1940's, HVHF combines this practice with horizontal drilling (Wilber, 2012, p. 3). Discovered in 1997, the new technique enabled fossil fuel companies to access massive, previously unreachable amounts of oil and gas from shale formations deep beneath the earth's surface by injecting millions of gallons of water, sand, and chemicals into the shale (Rinaldi, 2015, p. 93–94). HVHF skyrocketed after the 2008 recession and was widely considered an avenue for economic recovery and energy independence as well as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Wilber, 2012, p. 105–106; Baka et al., 2018, p. 453).

While proponents of HVHF emphasize its benefits, contemporary environmental activists almost unanimously oppose the practice on the grounds that it threatens to contaminate local water supplies, exacerbates climate change, and increases traffic pollution (Crowe et al., 2015, p. 442). According to Sandra Steingraber (Steingraber, 2010, n.p.), a renowned environmental writer, biologist, and founder of the WASL campaign, although burned methane generates half the greenhouse gases of coal, "when it escapes into the atmosphere

as unburned methane, it's one of the most powerful greenhouse gases of them all – twenty times more powerful than carbon dioxide at trapping heat and with the ability to persist nine to fifteen years.” Recent studies show that methane emissions from fossil fuel extraction have been underestimated by as much as forty percent, making the potential environmental effects of hydraulic fracturing all the more concerning (Hmiel et al., 2020). Though climate change is a major concern, debates about HVHF often center on the probability of negative environmental and public health effects for communities proximal to drilling (Meng and Ashby, 2014, p. 125; Hedding, 2017, p. 370).

New York State has had one of the most vibrant anti-fracking movements in the United States¹. Coverage of fracking in mainstream news spiked after 2009, after which pundits often framed fracking in New York as a divisive struggle between environmentalists and industry (Dokshin, 2016, p. 929; Hedding, 2017, p. 382). Between 2010 and 2013, New York had more local ban campaigns than any other state, threatening industry encroachment into communities (Dokshin, 2016, p. 930). Grassroots activists eventually pressured Governor Andrew Cuomo to place a moratorium on fracking in January 2014 on the grounds that more information was needed on possible risks and benefits (Metze and Dodge, 2016, p. 370; Hedding, 2017, p. 370). New York's ban against fracking was finalized in 2015.

Although New York's eventual ban was the result of collective struggles across the state, WASL represents a remarkably effective local campaign. Sandra Steingraber spearheaded the group after years of anti-toxins advocacy. On March 18, 2013, she was among a dozen arrested for trespassing to protest Inergy Midstream (now Crestwood Equity Partners), the company that purchased the salt caverns under Seneca Lake in 2008 with plans to repurpose them for methane storage. WASL emerged a year and a half after Steingraber's arrest when federal energy officials gave Crestwood clearance to expand methane-gas storage in New York on October 2, 2014 (McKinley, 2014). Two months later, Governor Cuomo banned fracking in New York, but the ban did not apply to gas storage (Kaplan, 2014; Metze and Dodge, 2016, p. 370). The first official WASL protest took place on October 23, 1 day before Crestwood was authorized to begin construction. In their online press release, WASL (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016b, n.p.) claimed, “The ongoing acts of civil disobedience come after the community pursued every possible avenue to stop the project and after being thwarted by an unacceptable process and denial of science.” The 657 arrests that occurred since the initial protest included 404 unique protestors, and 144 “defenders” blocked trucks from entering Crestwood's gates for a full day without being arrested (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c). WASL portrayed both arrest and avoiding arrest as conveying dedication to the cause. While the group's collective concerns included methane leakage, salt cavern collapse, and cavern salination, their primary strategy centered on the local economy's dependence on wine and tourism. This pattern situated their rhetoric within an ongoing debate regarding the relationship between humans, nature, and economics.

¹From here out, “anti-fracking” or “fracking” references HVHF.

NEOLIBERALISM, CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL RHETORIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

Humankind's relationship to nature is heavily shaped by neoliberalism, a belief system in which the capitalist market guides human behaviors (Asen, 2017, p. 330; Zaroni et al., 2017, p. 576; Bloomfield, 2019, p. 320). Schneider et al. (2016, p. 3) describe neoliberalism as “a discourse and a set of practices that privilege market rationality, and individual freedom and responsibility above all else.” Under neoliberalism, individuals are conditioned to think of themselves as “self-sufficient capitalists” who are first and foremost contributors to the market (Asen, 2017, p. 330). Asen (2017, p. 330), explains such thinking as evident in policies that call for weakening government support systems for the poor and deregulation of industry. In essence, neoliberalism prioritizes the ability of those who control the market to accumulate financial capital.

Neoliberalism hinders collective efforts toward societal and environmental well-being (Schneider et al., 2016, p. 9; Asen, 2017, p. 331). As Asen (2017, p. 331) explains, “public engagement draws on the promise of a public good, which neoliberalism disavows through its strict reliance on narrow individualism.” Further, by privileging free markets and deregulation, neoliberalism endangers environmental (and thus human) well-being (Bloomfield, 2019, p. 320). Under neoliberalism, economic gains are made to matter more than social and environmental welfare; indeed, capitalist gains and environmental welfare are, in many cases, mutually exclusive (Faber and O'Connor, 1993, p. 12). In public discourse, the incompatibility of capitalism and environmental health is sometimes mistranslated as economic and environmental welfare being mutually exclusive (Estabrook et al., 2007, p. 29-30). This hinders coalition building between labor and environmental movements, weakens the ability of activists to engage the public who fear regulation will weaken the economy, and ignores the fact that a neoliberal market threatens *both* the economy and the environment (Faber and O'Connor, 1993, p. 21; Lakoff, 2010, p. 76).

In this section, I trace how neoliberalism manifests in corporate environmental rhetoric and explain how such rhetorics relate to environmental advocacy. Discussing the relationship between neoliberal ideology, economics, and the environment contextualizes the subsequent analysis of the WASL campaign.

Corporate Environmental Rhetoric

Environmentalism and corporations share a history that shapes contemporary economic views of nature. DeLuca (2001, p. 633) notes that the railroad industry's attempts to promote tourism and development played a key role in establishing national parks. While this had positive effects (e.g., preservation), it constructed nature as separate from culture, a view that hinged upon the erasure of Native Americans and the impacts of environmental toxins on humans (636-637). Separating humans and nature is part and parcel of what Kelly (2012, p. 31) calls “extractive design,” a dominant, capitalist approach to economics that prioritizes

maximizing profit (31). Extractive economics are rooted in individualism: “What the rules say is to maximize gains for the *self* and avoid responsibility if *others* are harmed in the process” (Kelly, 2012, p. 32). This ideology applies to views of corporations as people and is evident in the rhetoric of the energy industry, which in turn plays a significant role in shaping public perception and debate.

Environmental communication scholars have paid increasing attention to energy rhetoric, which Endres et al. (2016, p. 420) define as “the study of symbolic practices surrounding material experiences with energy resources, production, and consumption, including related practices of research, development, deployment, and policy.” Fossil fuel industry representatives tend to frame environmental efforts as harmful to the free market as well as the working and middle classes (Schneider and Peeples, 2018, p. 6). According to Schneider et al. (2016, p. 2), coal corporations aim to persuade individuals to identify with their industry; this helps construct environmental regulations as detrimental to economic welfare. Through their financial resources, fossil fuel industries effectively control available information on their practices and in turn weaken support for progressive environmental policies (Schneider et al., 2016, p. 7).

One of the most common tactics of industry is to construct a “jobs vs. the environment” dialectic wherein economic and environmental welfare are deemed mutually exclusive. Schneider et al. (2016, p. 25) explain how the coal industry does so through a series of appeals they term “industrial apocalyptic,” which occurs when industry officials construct environmental policy as damaging by “repeatedly raising the specter of job-killing regulations, energy industry annihilation, a backward slide into the ‘dark’ ages of limited energy access, and widespread economic catastrophe.” “Job blackmail” is a similar practice, evident when industry officials warn the public to “give corporations what they want or face higher unemployment” (Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. ix). By threatening job losses, industry bolsters support for corporate freedom, which often comes at the expense of environmental welfare. Pitting jobs against the environment ignores evidence that industry does little to create job growth, environmental regulations seldom lead to job loss, and green energy (e.g., solar and wind power) creates more job growth than jobs tied to extraction (Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. 24; Ross, 2012, p. 208).

Fossil fuel industries do not always pit job growth against environmentalism; in some cases, representatives argue their practices are safe and compatible with environmental welfare (Matz and Renfrew, 2015, p. 293-294). This constitutes “greenwashing,” a form of rhetoric in which toxic goods, services, and practices are portrayed as compatible with environmental care (Plec and Pettenger, 2012, p. 464). Smerecnik and Renegar (2010, p. 153) explain how British Petroleum’s Helio’s Power campaign “create[s] the perspective that consumerism is an effective solution to environmental degradation.” By portraying their gas stations as “green” (e.g., having energy efficient lighting) and encouraging individuals to reduce their carbon footprints, BP limits the scope of environmental action. Smerecnik and Renegar (2010, p. 163) argue that emphasis on individual,

consumer-oriented action “attenuates the perception that a profound change must occur.” While not all green marketing involves greenwashing, rhetorics that lead consumers to believe fossil fuels consumption can coexist with environmental care are dangerous in their ability to mislead and, in turn, thwart action to protect the environment.

Although corporate rhetoric creates challenges, scholars emphasize that activists can undermine neoliberal ideologies that normalize financial gain at the cost of environmental exploitation (Endres et al., 2016, p. 427; Schneider et al., 2016, p. 176). According to Endres et al. (2016, p. 421), “Since climate change mitigation requires fundamental transformations in how energy is understood, communication is one of the main challenges in creating and implementing different energy futures.” As I explain next, environmental advocates have utilized a variety of tactics to negotiate tensions between economic, social, and environmental justice.

Economic Appeals in Environmental Activism

Environmental advocates hold differing views of the relationship between nature and the economy. Conservationist ideology emphasizes efficient development of nature for the purpose of continued economic usage (Brulle, 2000, p. 148). Many scholars have questioned the ethics of conceptualizing nature as a commercial resource first and a place to appreciate second. Brulle (2000, p. 160) argues that by viewing the environment exclusively as a resource for humans, conservationism “cannot provide a basis for the protection of aspects of the natural world that do not serve human purposes.” Other branches of environmentalism hold different views of nature. Whereas preservationists “set aside areas of natural scenery or wilderness for appreciation and enjoyment” (Oravec, 1981, p. 245) (constructing humans as separate from nature), advocates of ecological consciousness emphasize the interconnectedness of all living things (Pezzullo and de Onís, 2018, p. 108). While humans must use nature to survive, the rhetorical relationship between nature and the economy remains contentious amongst environmental advocates.

Natural capitalism represents one of the more problematic efforts to merge environmental and economic needs. Boehnert (2016, p. 400) describes natural capitalism as an ideological system wherein “[n]ature’s processes are reduced to capital that can be traded like other financial instruments.” Whereas conservationism has historically privileged economics while still fostering appreciation for nature, natural capitalism focuses almost exclusively on economics. Natural capitalism looks to wealthy shareholders to solve environmental problems and suggests environmental and capitalist needs can be met simultaneously (Kendall, 2008, p. 59-60). Kendall (2008, p. 63) argues that those who promote natural capitalism depict capitalists as those best equipped to “meet the exigencies of the sustainability problem.” Natural capitalists such as Paul Hawken argue for environmental protection as a means to maintain capitalism. Such thinking privileges economic concerns, which in turn marginalizes “those who cannot capitalize on the potential

for surplus value and have less of a voice in the rhetoric of natural capitalism” (Kendall, 2008, p. 73). By privileging those with capital, natural capitalism inevitably maintains the oppression of groups already inequitably impacted by extractive economics and environmental toxins such as the poor, women, and people of color (Estabrook et al., 2007, p. 30).

Multiple scholars have emphasized the need to unite calls for economic, environmental, and social justice (Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. x; Faber and O’Connor, 1993, p. 22; Agyeman, 2005, p. 2; Davies, 2013, p. 195). Curbing environmental destruction necessitates a sustainable economy that “[meets] our needs today while not compromising the ability of those that follow to meet their needs” (Agyeman, 2005, p. 2). Environmental and economic welfare are interrelated, yet Lakoff (2010, p. 76) notes that scholars have had difficulty framing this connection. He states, “*The economic and ecological meltdowns have the same cause*, namely, the unregulated free market with the idea that greed is good and that the natural world is a resource for short-term private enrichment” (Lakoff, 2010, p. 76). The extant economy must be refigured to provide for needs rather than profit and consumption for the privileged. Kelly (2012, p. 15) proposes “generative economics” as an alternative framework to extractive economics. She explains generative economics as guided by fairness, sustainability, and community with the end goal of “creating the conditions for life” rather than maximizing profit for wealthy shareholders (23). Whereas capital holders dictate extractive economics, the general public guides generative economics. Extractive economics remain dominant, yet Kelly argues there are numerous local economies that operate according to generative thinking (e.g., Maine’s lobster industry).

Two features often mark rhetorics aligned with generative economics: emphasis on local communities and an idealistic vision of the future. As Brulle (2010, p. 86-87) argues, “An effective rhetoric of change critiques the current situation and offers a Utopian vision of where the society needs to go.” Idealistic visions of the future mobilize activists, counter calls to compromise, cultivate hope, and challenge negativity (Brulle, 2010, p. 86; Lakoff, 2010, p. 80; Davies, 2013, p. 218). Local efforts are especially powerful in challenging views of nature as an exploitable resource. Estabrook et al. (2007, p. 28) argue that “the existence of a strong geographic sense of place” is critical to the effectiveness of resistance to industrial projects. Local campaigns do not exist in a vacuum but rather can be viewed as crucial components of the larger struggle for justice (Burningham, 2000, p. 59-60). It is critical that scholars attend to such movements; doing so bolsters understanding of strategies of resistance, which in turn improves activist rhetorics and brings forth faster and more effective change (Davies, 2013, p. xxiv; Cozen et al., 2018, p. 291).

My analysis reveals how WASL resists neoliberal governance by constructing a healthy economy and healthy environment as consubstantial. While WASL claims that fracking threatens their local economy, they do not prioritize economics. They challenge industry arguments that environmental protection threatens jobs, arguing instead that industrial projects threaten *sustainable* jobs. Yet they also claim to fight for “life itself”;

the Finger Lakes provides for locals economically, nutritionally, and spiritually. WASL’s rhetoric may be described as an appeal to “ecosocial flourishing,” a framework that “highlights the interconnectedness of ecological and social concerns” (Crowley, 2010, p. 83). WASL’s constructions of a sustainable economy as dependent on environmental health offer a utopic synecdoche for a sustainable future.

DEFINING THE “SUBSTANCES” OF SUSTAINABLE AND EXTRACTIVE ECONOMIES

Substance refers to that which comprises—and thus defines—a “thing,” such as a lake, group of protestors, or community, yet Kenneth Burke (1969a, p. 23) notes a paradox inherent in the notion of substance: “though usually used to designate something *within* the thing, *intrinsic* to it, the world etymologically refers to something *outside* the thing, *extrinsic* to it.” Substance thus refers to both intrinsic “substance”—what a thing *is*—and extrinsic “sub-stance,” that which supports the “thing” and what the thing is *not*. For Burke, this tension between internal substance and external sub-stance is present in any discussion of motives. He offers constitutions as an example:

For what a Constitution would do primarily is to *substantiate an ought* (to base a statement as to *what should be* upon a statement as to *what is*). And in our “agonistic world,” such substantiation derives point and poignancy by contrast with notions as to what should not be (Burke, 1969a, p. 358).

In arguing they *are* the lake, WASL protestors suggest that local land and waters ought to be protected in order to sustain the local economy. At the same time, WASL’s vision of economics gains meaning when protestors offer Crestwood’s view of the region (and economics in general) as a point of contrast. Given the ubiquitous tension between motive, internal substance, and external sub-stance, Burke (1969a, p. 33) describes dialectical substance as the “over-all category of dramatism.” He argues, “the dialectical considers things in terms of not *some* other, but of *the other*” (Burke, 1969a, p. 33). Whereas WASL protestors see economic welfare as inextricably linked to environmental health, they argue that Crestwood views environmental extraction as a means to accumulate capital. Through their definitions of the substance of extractive economics (represented through Crestwood) and sustainable economic structures (represented through WASL and the local Finger Lakes economy), WASL illustrates fracking operations as mutually exclusive with a healthy economy.

At the same time that they situate their motives as dialectically opposed to Crestwood’s, WASL protestors strategically identify with their local environment. The group constructs a sustainable economy as “consubstantial” with the natural world. Burke (1969b, p. 20) describes consubstantiality as a strategy of identification by way of example:

A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B. Or he may *identify himself* with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so.

WASL protestors strategically identify themselves and their economy with nature; if Crestwood's project were to continue, it would damage the local environment and in turn the region's economy dependent on wine, tourism, and agriculture. Inevitably, the paradox of substance and sub-stance manifests in efforts to establish consubstantiality. As Burke (1969b, p. 20) explains, "In being identified with B, A is 'substantially one' with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives." Ironically, it is the differences between humans and nature (e.g., language) that necessitate identification; identification represents an effort to "compensate" for division (Burke, 1969b, p. 22). Sowards (2006, p. 50) argues that consubstantiality "is the sort of identification that environmentalists often call for—a greater connection to what humans call nature." WASL protestors depict identification with nature as a matter of economic necessity; recognizing their thriving economy's dependence on nature is the only way to protect it.

Burke identifies three general categories of dialectical substance: contextual, familial, and directional. Contextual substance traffics in rhetoric that appeals to scene. It is synonymous with "positional" or "definition by location"; "An object placed in its setting, existing both in itself and as part of its background" (Burke, 1969a, p. 29). Familial substance is in play when rhetors speak to a common spiritual or biological ancestry. "Most often there is the notion of some founder shared in common, or some covenant or constitution or historical act from which the consubstantiality of the group is derived" (29). Burke identifies nutritive substance as a subsidiary type of familial substance that "involves a *transubstantiation* of external elements into elements within" (30). In nutritive definitions, the familial consubstantiality of the group is based in nutrition. Burke (1969a, p. 31) offers the Eucharist as an example: "Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you what you are." Finally, directional substance is evident when a "thing" is defined according to its temporal trajectory. Directional definitions are "purposive" and "strongly futuristic" (31). Contextual, familial, and directional substance each figure in WASL's definitions of Seneca Lake and the surrounding area, working together to craft the rhetorical basis of an economy grounded in care for nature.

Through their definitions of substance, WASL forwards a rhetorical vision of sustainable economics that is dialectically opposed to fossil fuel extraction. WASL's contextual definition of the region shows local economies as sustainable and extractive economics as involving "outsiders" with no ties to the environments they exploit. Although WASL appeals to a familial activist ancestry through references to Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Junior, and the woman suffragists of the Seneca Falls Convention, it is their nutritive definition of familial substance that enables them to establish consubstantiality with nature and sustainable economics. Accordingly, my analysis focuses on nutritive substance specifically rather than familial substance in

general. WASL's defines the local region as the nutritive essence of their thriving local economy; Seneca Lake nourishes locals who maintain the region's tourism, wine, and agricultural industries. Directional depictions of the region pit activists' utopic vision of renewable economics against a dystopic vision guided by the fossil fuel industry; for protestors, the present moment figures as a crossroads wherein one path must be rejected and the other embraced. Through their definitions of the contextual, nutritive, and directional substance, WASL denounces extractive economics while painting a healthy, sustainable long-term economy as inextricably linked to environmental welfare.

Contextual Definition

Contextual definitions of substance stress geographic placement. WASL defines Seneca Lake contextually in two ways: they show how it is part of the exploited "background" of the Marcellus shale, yet they also illustrate how it can be (and is already) envisioned differently as part of a sustainable, flourishing local economy. Griffin (2012, p. 271) describes how contextual substance "might include both the external context in which a thing participates or, alternatively, its internal context, that is, how the interior arrangements within the thing provide a frame of reference for identifying its nature and purpose." WASL defines the local region through reference to both the internal and external configurations of Seneca Lake. Whereas the lake's internal context provides the community and businesses with drinking water, wine, fish, and recreational activities, the surrounding external area attracts tourists who come to enjoy the region's beauty. For WASL, this definition of the region contrasts with Crestwood's view of the lake as a container for methane and the land as a platform for fossil fuel expansion. Methane storage places the lake's interior salt caverns at risk of collapse and creates noise, air pollution, and truck traffic in the external environment. Crestwood serves as a synecdoche for the fossil fuel industry's "extractive gaze" of the environment, a perspective that involves "viewing nature as a resource to be exploited" (Takach, 2013, p. 212). In contrast, WASL protestors depict their own concerns as existing within the larger struggle for climate justice. As Steingraber states, "This driveway is a battleground, and there are driveways like this all over the world" (Schwartz, 2016, n.p.).

WASL frames Crestwood's contextual definition of Seneca Lake as disregarding the ways in which the local community's welfare depends on a healthy environment. According to protestors, Crestwood views the salt caverns as "contained" storage facilities that can be repurposed without adversely affecting the external region. As Michael Dineen claims in his statement following his arrest,

Crestwood Midstream is planning an expansion of methane storage, and it's going to be stored in salt caverns that were shown by previous owners to be unsafe. Crestwood is also applying for an LPG storage permit, which would massively increase truck and train traffic. All those tankers will be full of explosive materials. Crestwood says that it wants to become the gas storage and transportation hub for the entire northeast, which will require a massive expansion of transportation infrastructure paid for by

taxpayer dollars. It's a direct threat to our ecology, water quality and economy (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.).

For Dineen and others, Crestwood's project is about more than gas storage. Partial, controlled contamination is impossible; any disruption of nature's delicate ecological balance disrupts social and economic systems. As Boehnert (2016, p. 404) notes, ecological processes are "the *context* of economics, not a *subsystem* of economics." WASL protestors bring this fact to light, calling out Crestwood's claim that they can practice "sustainable development" as a form of greenwashing. Phil Davis argues that Crestwood exhibits "arrogance and dismissiveness regarding environmental concerns, community safety concerns, [and] area business concerns" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). For WASL, Crestwood naively views the environment as comprised of multiple contexts that do not interact with or affect one another.

Further, WASL emphasizes the global implications of Crestwood's project: it threatens to thwart efforts toward building a sustainable economic system. Protestor Jamie Carestio states,

This LPG project is in direct opposition to a growing local economy that is devoted to promoting renewable energy, developing conscientious systems of living, and preserving the lands and waters of this beautiful finger lakes region. I believe it is our constitutional duty to stop this facility which is a threat to our livelihoods and the world which we will leave to our children (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.).

In this passage, Carestio initially focuses on Crestwood's LPG project and the impacts on the local region but then extends the implications of the local controversy for "the world." Other protestors echo this sentiment. Wes Ernsberger explains his motivations as rooted in "concern for the safety and well-being of all who live near this storage facility," yet he too emphasizes the global implications of the struggle in New York. He argues that for the sake of "all who live, and will live, on this planet... [it] is critical that we eliminate the worst effects of climate change by ending the extraction and use of all fossil fuels as soon as possible" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Embedded in these statements is the assumption that environmental exploitation in the Finger Lakes exemplifies the fossil fuel industry's extractive gaze of nature. While this attitude leads to environmental degradation, it also undermines the foundations of a sustainable economy. For the Finger Lakes, this includes healthy land, water, and forests that support the tourism, wine, and agricultural industries. Thus, the struggle in Seneca Lake represents a global struggle between two contextual definitions of the environment: that of climate justice activists (and WASL) and that of the fossil fuel industry (and Crestwood).

WASL's contextual definition of Seneca Lake depicts locals as those best equipped to care for their environment; locals stand to gain the most from a healthy environment and risk losing the most from destruction. Apparent in protestors' statements is the assumption that sustainable economics are inextricably linked to local place and people whereas extractive economics involve those deemed outsiders. As Audrey Southern puts it,

"This gas is not intended for local markets and will not impact prices here. The profits will be sent elsewhere and we will be left with the costs and the destruction" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Crestwood's project will thus create economic downfall—not prosperity. Protestor Krys Cail similarly emphasizes that whereas extractive economics bring destruction and no real monetary rewards, sustainable economics benefit the region: "Renewable energy production infrastructure can add many jobs, and does not threaten our established, sustainable agriculture and tourism economy" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). For WASL, Crestwood's understanding of the region stands in stark contrast to locals'. The gas storage project will yield no short-term benefits and will come at great cost to the local community.

Burke's notion of circumference informs WASL's depiction of scene. Circumference "reminds us that, when 'defining by location,' one may place the object of one's definition in contexts of varying scope" (Burke, 1969a, p. 77). Burke urges critics to "be on the look-out for... terministic relationships between the circumference and the 'circumfered'" (78). WASL shapes Crestwood as outsiders whose contextual definition of Seneca Lake represents an exploitative, unsustainable economy. In contrast, WASL frames their own motives as rooted in a care for and connection to the local environment and, thus, an economy based on sustainable practices. Indeed, the local Finger Lakes' economy depends upon the protection and preservation of Seneca Lake. As WASL's November 2014 press release states, "Seneca Lake... contributes \$4.8 billion to the New York State economy every year, supporting the equivalent of 25,000 full-time jobs, paying over \$408 million in taxes, and generating over 5.2 million wine-related tourism visits" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016b, n.p.). While not all economies are currently able to thrive on local, environmentally just practices, protestor Kip Wilcox notes that, "The Finger Lakes could become a showcase for a sustainable future" (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). While activists act locally, their vision is global.

Nutritive Definition

As noted, nutritive is a special case of familial substance, yet Burke (1969a, p. 30) notes that it is more accurately treated as "a combination of the contextual and familial sufficiently notable to deserve a separate designation." In nutritive definitions of substance, external, environmental elements become part of the body and thus change and influence motive. WASL's claim that they *are* Seneca Lake works to portray environmental destruction as an issue of residents' bodily and spiritual health. WASL depicts their local economy as dependent upon the region's nutritive substance in a number of ways: wine and fishing industries rely upon Seneca Lake's health, residents who run local businesses drink the water, and the tourism industry similarly relies upon the nutrition of the region. For WASL, the nutritive substance of the lake is inextricably linked to the nutritive substance of their thriving local economy.

Gas storage threatens the health of Seneca Lake, which is critical to sustaining local businesses. Finger Lakes resident Owen Senders states: "Crestwood threatens our ability to share the lake, and it threatens the livelihoods of people like my father, a baker, who needs access to fresh water in order to provide for

their families” (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). The health of Seneca Lake directly influences the economic livelihood of the local community. Other protestors echo Senders’ convergence of the region’s nutritive environmental and economic substance. D.J. Kitzel states, “We are fed by this land and this water on many levels. As a guide, I make my living from this place. I am obligated to protect this land, and these obligations are sacred” (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Seneca Lake provides for local residents economically and spiritually, driving their dedication to protesting its obstruction. Similarly, WASL protestor Alicia Alexander argues that Crestwood’s project threatens her bed and breakfast: “As a B&B owner, all the Finger Lakes are our territory” (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Tony Del Plato likewise stresses that his own health and local business depend upon the health of the Finger Lakes “Though Cayuga Lake provides water for my home and business, I also socialize and swim in Seneca Lake. Seneca Lake is a lake under stress. I am here today because I am Seneca Lake” (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). Similarly, Marie Baumgardner, a farmer, emphasizes the impacts of a changing climate and “roller coaster weather” on her crops (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.). For protestors, Seneca Lake’s local economy cannot exist without a healthy nutritive substance, which demands clean water and soil.

WASL protestors’ definitions of themselves as Seneca Lake itself serve as grounds for their commitment to protecting the region. For protestors, Crestwood’s view of the local region as a hub for natural gas storage constructs *locals* as a hub for gas storage. If contaminated along with the land, locals can no longer sustain their healthful economy. In November 2014, Steingraber pointedly spoke on behalf of the WASL campaign:

We are young mothers and great-grandmothers and business leaders. We are your neighbors, the makers of your favorite wine, and the drummers in your favorite roots-rock band. We are fighting for water. We are fighting for life itself. We will not give up. Not in jail. Not in the rain. Not in the snow. You can’t freeze us out, starve us out, or arrest us out. Because we are... Seneca Lake (We Are Seneca Lake, 2016c, n.p.).

Compromising locals’ drinking water will lead to the region’s economic collapse. Clean water sustains local bed and breakfast owners, wine vintners, musicians, bakers, and more. For Steingraber, water represents “life itself,” which includes the lifeblood of the Finger Lakes’ economy. Davies (2013, p. 227) argues that collective, peaceful civil disobedience enables social movement supporters to emphasize their dedication. Coupled with civil disobedience, WASL’s efforts to frame the nutritive substance of Seneca Lake as key to the region’s economy healthy illustrate protestors’ dedication and conviction. Further, such claims highlight what will be lost if the fossil fuel industry infiltrates the area. Burke (1969a, p. 31) argues that “any change of nutritive elements... is analyzable as a ‘new physical situation.’” For WASL protestors, a change in Seneca Lake’s nutrition will impact the nutritive essence of their economy by compromising the livelihood of those who sustain it.

For WASL and other likeminded environmental advocates, a healthy economy shares nutritive substance with the environment. Whereas industry often encourages the public to

identify with corporations (Schneider et al., 2016, p. 2), WASL fosters identification with local land and waters. Compromising the health of land and water directly affects the health of local workers and thus the local economy. At the same time, WASL challenges the conservationist assumption that economic needs outweigh environmental welfare. This is captured in We Are Seneca Lake’s (2016a, n.p.) “Pledge to Protect Seneca Lake”:

I make this pledge to ensure the protection of Seneca Lake, which nourishes the vitality and enjoyment of the communities surrounding it; to prevent the destruction and poisoning of water, air, and food systems on which safety, health, and economic prosperity of our communities—and those of future generations—all depend.

Seneca Lake and the surrounding region provide for locals economically but also spiritually and recreationally. For WASL, social and economic welfare are interconnected. Protestors promote “ecosocial flourishing” (Crowley, 2010, p. 83) and in doing so reject hierarchizing economic and environmental welfare; societal well-being depends upon the nutritive substance of both.

Directional Definition

Directional definitions of substance define a thing according to where it is “going.” According to Griffin (2012, p. 281), “Directional substantiation encompasses the possibility that a thing can be defined by its participation in some larger arc or trajectory of affairs.” Burke identifies four types of directional substance; each represents a distinct means of shifting “free” motion into “determined” motivation. Motion as motive occurs when actions are attributed to a physical response. Movement as motive occurs when an “individual’s acts are referred to some larger curve” (Burke, 1969a, p. 32). Emotion as motive occurs when motives are explained as a result of passion. Finally, moments may be defining when characterized as “containing” both past and future. WASL protestors define their actions directionally to highlight the dialectically opposed consequences of sustainable and extractive economics.

For WASL, “moments” such as incarceration and Earth Day protesting define their campaign according to its participation in the larger struggle for a sustainable economy. Protestors construct two mutually exclusive notions of the economic past and future: those guided by the fossil fuel industry and those guided by WASL protestors and likeminded environmental activists. WASL embraces the present moment as balanced between a dystopic (fossil fuel industry driven) past and future and a utopic (activist driven) past and future. Implied is that environmental advocates can guide the path to a sustainable future, or those who exploit it can continue on the path toward ecological disaster. Defining the protest through direction allows protestors to emphasize the significance of the present moment, which will shape the future for better or for worse.

WASL activists who chose incarceration over paying a trespassing fine (for trespassing company property) depict jail as superior to a life guided by the extractive gaze of the fossil fuel industry but inferior to the kind of life guided by sustainable economics and environmental care. Steingraber invokes both

potentialities in her ironic jail writing, “The Crappy Mom Manifesto.” Here, she winds up past and future to define the moment of incarceration as directional:

Jail time has several important, value-added relevancies. One is that the enforced extended separation from the natural world serves as a potent reminder of everything we depend on the world to do for us. Five days without clouds, sky, stars, leaves, birdsong, wind, sunlight and fresh food has left me homesick to the point of grief. I now inhabit an ugly, diminished place devoid of life and beauty—and this is exactly the kind of harsh, ravaged world I do not want my children to inhabit.... Inside cell 3, I have a dream: an environmental movement full of crappy moms who do what’s required and refuse to give up on life (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.).

Fossil fuel extraction will make living in the world akin to incarceration, yet Steingraber suggests this is not yet the case. The outcome of both sustainable and extractive economics figure in Steingraber’s ironic jail writing; sustainable economics foster ecological flourishing and thus greater quality of life whereas extractive economics create a world devoid of nature’s beauty. For Steingraber and other WASL protestors, industry’s extractive economics are impoverished directionally, cutting off links between past, present, and future for short-term profit. In another example, Todd Saddler defines his reason for protest: “I’m here to awaken the conscience of my fellow humans so that we’ll be able to change direction” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.). Similarly, protestor Lyndsay Clark states, “I’m a firm believer in alternative energy... This is an old-fashioned technology and we’re here to embrace change” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.). For WASL, the moment of protest—and, for some, incarceration—simultaneously “sums up” the past and “seminally contains” the possibility to change direction and materialize a more just global economy based on the Finger Lakes.

Central to WASL’s future vision is an economy modeled after that of the Finger Lakes. Visualizing a Utopian future while critiquing the current extractive economy embraces the present as a powerfully defining directional moment. For protestors, shifting toward green economics cannot wait; the moment of protest and/or incarceration elevate the present as a critical crossroads. Jim Crevelling’s statement on his motivation for participating in WASL’s Earth Day protest and his subsequent arrest powerfully defines the present as a directional paradox:

There is no better time than Earth Day to gather here in peaceful protest of Crestwood’s plan to expand an industry anchored in the past and ignoring the future. I am here today because I am convinced that the production, transport, and storage of lpg, or any fossil fuel for that matter, is perpetuating a destructive, disruptive and, in many ways, primitive technology that causes problems for many while profiting a few. It is time for a change. Renewable energy is here as an off the shelf technology. It is, for all practical purposes, available in infinite amounts. The energy of the sun and the wind is here for us to harvest. It could be said this energy is delivered by, and stored in, the very air we breathe. The world made a promise to itself at The Climate Summit in Paris a few months ago. We have a wonderful opportunity right here, right now to help the world keep that promise. For our

grandchildren we must keep that promise. We must change our thinking - not our climate (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.).

Crevelling constructs extractive economics as primitive, outdated, and destructive, yet notes that a sustainable green economy is available and for the benefit of humans, the environment, and future generations. By juxtaposing a critique of the economic past/present with a Utopian vision of a green economy, Crevelling meets Brulle’s (2010, p. 86-87) aforementioned criteria for an “effective rhetoric of change.” Trelen Smith echoes Crevelling, arguing that WASL protestors aim to “slow the forces of cynicism and greed, and make room for optimism and a sustainable way forward” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.). In another example, Ken Zeserson describes fossil fuels as a dated way of constructing the economy and argues that the time has come to “harness other earthly powers” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c). He states “We must continue to rise up to fight this monster every day in every way. The future of the world hangs in this balance” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.). For WASL, protest gains meaning when defined through its directional substance. For WASL, a future guided by fossil fuels is mutually exclusive with a future led by renewable energy. Crevelling and other WASL protestors offer a sustainable vision of the future, thus enacting rhetorical change with the hopes of promoting a material restructuring of the U.S. and global economies.

WASL protestors depict themselves as fighting on the rhetorical border of present and future. They consider the present as a time to choose between two economic futures: that guided by the fossil fuel industry and the sustainable Utopic vision guided by activists. For protestors, the choice is critical and thus legitimizes their peaceful civil disobedience. As activist Ellen Grady remarks, “At this point in history, if we are going to survive, we have to put all of our efforts into converting to a clean energy economy” (*We Are Seneca Lake*, 2016c, n.p.). WASL protestors thus dwarf the immediate consequences of their actions; risking arrest and jail time mean little in contrast to the risk of losing “life itself.” For WASL, a substantive life depends upon a sustainable economy. Environmental and societal welfare are inextricably linked and mutually exclusive with fossil fuel extraction. By defining their protest according to their temporal direction, WASL activists illustrate the present moment as *the* time to make the switch to a sustainable, ecologically oriented economy.

CONCLUSIONS

By defining the substances of sustainable and extractive economies, WASL shows how the two are dialectically opposed. Whereas a sustainable economy affirms the consubstantiality between human economies and the natural environment, extractive, fossil fuel based economies reject humankind’s connection to nature. A sustainable economy provides long-term stability for local communities and relies upon a healthy environment. Through their contextual definitions of substance, WASL illustrates sustainable economics as tied to local place and, further, as mutually exclusive with the extractive, capitalist vision championed by the fossil fuel industry. Nutritive substance

defines the health of local land and waters as essential to the health of the Finger Lakes' local economy. Finally, WASL's directional definitions of their protest show two possibilities for the future: one guided by protestors and one guided by the fossil fuel industry. This enables protestors to showcase the present as a crucial time to change to green economics and divest from fossil fuels. Together, these interrelated definitions of substance foster an *economic* identification between humans and nature while showing fossil fuels as incompatible with this vision.

This analysis contributes to scholarly understandings of environmental activism by explaining an effective means through which local activists have rhetorically merged economic, social, and environmental welfare. According to Cox (2007, p. 15), it is critical that environmental scholars “enhance the ability of society to respond appropriately to environmental signals relevant to the well-being of both human civilization and natural biological systems.” While scholars have emphasized the importance of uniting economic, environmental, and social justice (Kazis and Grossman, 1991, p. x; Faber and O'Connor, 1993, p. 22; Agyeman, 2005, p. 2; Davies, 2013, p. 195), imagining a clean energy economy remains difficult, in part because of the simple and effective efforts of industry to pit economic and environmental welfare as mutually exclusive. Through their definitions of contextual, nutritive, and directional substance, WASL protestors effectively point toward the culprit of both environmental and (sustainable) economic destruction: the neoliberal assumption that the environment can be exploited for the financial benefit of capitalists. For WASL, substance distinguishes extractive and sustainable economics. Whereas extractive economics view nature as a resource for building the fossil fuel industry's capital, sustainable economics recognize nature as the substance of local economies. Whereas extractive economics deny the connection between human and environmental health, sustainable economics support a livable sustenance for both. Whereas extractive economics neglect the impacts of environmental exploitation on the economic and environmental future, sustainable economics meet the needs of the present and protect the future. As WASL's rhetoric shows, the substances of extractive and sustainable economics are dialectically opposed, and only sustainable economics can provide for human culture as well as the environment.

Through their definitions of contextual, nutritive, and directional substance, WASL challenges industry's jobs/environment dialectic while also expressing hope and positivity. They clearly show fossil fuels as incompatible with jobs that are sustainable, reliable, and safe; environmental policy is “bad for the economy” *only* if the economy in question is toxic and extractive. At the same time, WASL avoids being entirely negative in their rhetoric. Davies (2013, p. 219) argues that the U.S. environmental movement should place greater emphasis on positivity: “it should... create inspiring idealistic visions that describe the type of society it wants to create.” Such visions cultivate hope and empower likeminded environmental advocates to effect change. Attention to dialectical substance

shows how WASL balances the tension between negativity and positivity; they critique the current extractive economy while elevating sustainable economics as superior for all living things. WASL's definitions of contextual, nutritive, and directional substance each highlight differing ways of viewing the relationship between humans, the economy, and nature. I suggest environmental activists in other communities may find promise in mirroring WASL's strategies. Context matters, and not all communities currently have thriving local, sustainable economies. When grassroots movements emphasize the (potential) effects of toxic chemicals on community, they necessarily focus on a particular kind of community. Future studies should attend to issues of race, class, and gender as they relate to grassroots anti-fracking activism. While some communities face far more significant material and rhetorical barriers than others, I suggest that strategic definitions of substance can attend to the nuances of context by specifying what is at stake in a particular community while emphasizing structural causes of environmental problems. By defining local environments according to contextual, nutritive, and directional substance, activists can showcase the interconnections between environmental systems and the economy. How activists in other types of communities define local regions, economies, and environments is an area for further study.

The WASL campaign makes the case for prioritizing environmental care by way of promoting local, sustainable economic systems designed for long-term stability. There is value in understanding the means through which they reconstruct the rhetorical relationship between humans, economies, and the environment. By showing how treatment of land and water is inextricably linked to the health of humans and the economy both now and in the future, WASL has transformed what was initially a small, grassroots movement into a vibrant, nation-wide challenge to fossil fuel dependency. Attention to their rhetoric offers a deeper understanding of the means through which environmental advocates have challenged fossil fuel extraction and industry rhetoric. Strategic definitions of environmental, economic, and societal substance can help future advocates to effectively continue this struggle.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All datasets for this study are included in the article/supplementary files.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author thanks Celeste Condit, Kelly Happe, Jennifer Peeples, and the reviewers for their feedback on earlier versions of this article.

REFERENCES

- Agyeman, J. (2005). *Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
- Asen, R. (2017). Neoliberalism, the public sphere, and a public good. *Q. J. Speech* 103, 329–349. doi: 10.1080/00335630.2017.1360507
- Baka, J., Neville, K. J., Weinthal, E., and Bakker, K. (2018). Agenda-setting at the energy-water nexus: constructing and maintaining a policy monopoly in U.S. Hydraulic fracturing regulation. *Rev. Policy Res.* 35, 439–465. doi: 10.1111/ropr.12287
- Bloomfield, E. F. (2019). The rhetoric of energy darwinism: neoliberal piety and market autonomy in economic discourse. *Rhetoric Soc. Q.* 49, 320–341. doi: 10.1080/02773945.2019.1634831
- Boehnert, J. (2016). The green economy: reconceptualizing the natural commons as natural capital. *Environ. Commun.* 10, 395–417. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2015.1018296
- Brulle, R. J. (2000). *Agency, Democracy, and Nature: The U.S. Environmental Movement From a Critical Theory Perspective*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. doi: 10.7551/mitpress/1158.001.0001
- Brulle, R. J. (2010). From environmental campaigns to advancing the public dialog: environmental communication for civic engagement. *Environ. Commun.* 4, 82–98. doi: 10.1080/17524030903522397
- Burke, K. (1969a). *A Grammar of Motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Burke, K. (1969b). *A Rhetoric of Motives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Burningham, K. (2000). Using the language of NIMBY: a topic for research, not an activity for researchers. *Local Environ.* 5, 55–67. doi: 10.1080/135498300113264
- Cox, R. (2007). Nature's 'crisis discipline': does environmental communication have an ethical duty?. *Environ. Commun.* 1, 5–20. doi: 10.1080/17524030701333948
- Cozen, B., Endres, D., Petersen, T. R., Horton, C., and Barnett, J. T. (2018). Energy communication: theory and praxis towards a sustainable energy future. *Environ. Commun.* 12, 289–294. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2017.1398176
- Crowe, J., Silva, T., Ceresola, R. G., Buday, A., and Leonard, C. (2015). Differences in public perceptions and leaders' perceptions on hydraulic fracturing and shale development. *Sociol. Perspect.* 58, 441–463. doi: 10.1177/0731121414567355
- Crowley, T. (2010). From 'natural' to "ecosocial flourishing": evaluating evaluative frameworks. *Ethics Environ.* 15, 69–100. doi: 10.2979/ete.2010.15.1.69
- Davies, K. (2013). *The Rise of the U.S. Environmental Health Movement*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- DeLuca, K. M. (2001). Trains in the wilderness: the corporate roots of environmentalism. *Rhetoric Pub. Aff.* 4, 633–652. doi: 10.1353/rap.2001.0067
- Dokshin, F. A. (2016). Whose backyard and what's at issue? Spatial and ideological dynamics of local opposition to fracking in new york state, 2010 to 2013. *Am. Sociol. Rev.* 81, 921–948. doi: 10.1177/0003122416663929
- Endres, D. E., Cozen, B., Trey Barnett, J., O'Byrne, M., and Rai Peterson, T. (2016). Communicating energy in a climate (of) crisis. *Ann. Int. Commun. Assoc.* 40, 419–447. doi: 10.1080/23808985.2015.11735267
- Estabrook, T., Levenstein, C., and Wooding, J. (2007). *Labor-Environmental Coalitions: Lessons From a Louisiana Petrochemical Region*. Boca Raton, FL: Baywood Publishing Company. doi: 10.2190/LEC
- Faber, D., and O'Connor, J. (1993). "Capitalism and the crisis of environmentalism." In: *Toxic Struggles: The Theory and Practice of Environmental Justice*, edited R. Hofrichter (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers), 12–25.
- Griffin, C. J. (2012). Moving day in the house divided: contextual substantiation and constitutional unionism in vice president John C. breckinridge's address on the removal of the senate to its new chambers, january 4, 1859. *Rhetoric Public Aff.* 15, 267–288. Available online at: muse.jhu.edu/article/478615
- Hedding, K. J. (2017). Sources and framing of fracking: a content analysis of newspaper coverage in north carolina, New York, and Pennsylvania. *Environ. Commun.* 11, 370–385. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2016.1269819
- Hmiel, B., Petrenko, V. V., Dyonisius, M. N., Buizert, C., Smith, A. M., Place, P. F., et al. (2020). Preindustrial 14CH4 indicates greater anthropogenic fossil CH4 emissions. *Nature* 578, 409–412. doi: 10.1038/s41586-020-1991-8
- Kaplan, T. (2014). *Citing Health Risks, Cuomo Bans Fracking in New York State*. New York Times. Available Online at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/18/nyregion/cuomo-to-ban-fracking-in-new-york-state-citing-health-risks.html> (accessed December 17, 2019).
- Kazis, R., and Grossman, R. L. (1991). *Fear at Work: Job Blackmail, Labor, and the Environment*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers.
- Kelly, M. (2012). *Owning Our Future: The Emerging Ownership Revolution*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Available Online at: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.dist.lib.usu.edu/lib/USU/detail.action?docID=915456>
- Kendall, B. E. (2008). Personae and natural capitalism: negotiating politics and constituencies in a rhetoric of sustainability. *Environ. Commun.* 2, 59–77. doi: 10.1080/17524030801945583
- Krause, A., and Bucy, E. P. (2018). Interpreting images of fracking: how visual frames and standing attitudes shape perceptions of environmental risk and economic benefit. *Environ. Commun.* 12, 322–343. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2017.1412996
- Lakoff, G. (2010). Why it matters how we frame the environment. *Environ. Commun.* 4, 70–81. doi: 10.1080/17524030903529749
- Matz, J., and Renfrew, D. (2015). Selling 'fracking': energy in depth and the marcellus shale. *Environ. Commun.* 9, 288–306. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2014.929157
- McKinley, J. (2014). *What Pairs Well With a Finger Lakes White? Not Propane, Vintners Say*. New York Times. Available Online at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/26/nyregion/new-york-winemakers-fight-gas-storage-plan-near-seneca-lake.html> (accessed December 25, 2019).
- Meng, Q., and Ashby, S. (2014). Distance: a critical aspect for environmental impact assessment of hydraulic fracturing. *Extr. Ind. Soc.* 1, 124–126. doi: 10.1016/j.exis.2014.07.004
- Metze, T., and Dodge, J. (2016). Dynamic discourse coalitions on hydro-fracking in europe and the United States. *Environ. Commun.* 10, 365–379. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2015.1133437
- Murray, J. (2017). *Crestwood Drops Seneca Lake Natural Gas Storage Plans*. Star Gazette. Available Online at: <https://www.stargazette.com/story/news/2017/05/10/crestwood-drops-seneca-lake-natural-gas-storage-plans/316228001/> (accessed May 10, 2019).
- Oravec, C. (1981). John Muir, yosemite, and the sublime response: a study in the rhetoric of preservationism. *Q. J. Speech* 67, 245–258. doi: 10.1080/00335638109383570
- Pezzullo, P. C., and de Onís, C. M. (2018). Rethinking rhetorical field methods on a precarious planet. *Commun. Monogr.* 85, 103–122. doi: 10.1080/03637751.2017.1336780
- Plec, E., and Pettenger, M. (2012). Greenwashing consumption: the didactic framing of exxonmobil's energy solutions. *Environ. Commun.* 6, 459–476. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2012.720270
- Rinaldi, R. (2015). Fracturing the keystone: why fracking in pennsylvania should be considered an abnormally dangerous activity. *Widener Law Rev.* 24, 385–432.
- Ross, A. (2012). "Eco-keynesianism, green jobs, and labor's need to embrace climate justice," in *Labor Rising: The Past and Future of Working People in America*, edited D. Katz and R. A. Greenwald (New York: The New Press), 201–213.
- Schneider, J., and Peebles, J. (2018). The energy covenant: energy dominance and the rhetoric of the aggrieved. *Front. Commun. Sci. Environ. Commun.* 3, 1–12. doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2018.00005
- Schneider, J., Schwarze, S., Bsumek, P. K., and Peebles, J. (2016). *Under Pressure: Coal Industry Rhetoric and Neoliberalism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan Unlimited. doi: 10.1057/978-1-137-53315-9
- Schwartz, J. (2016). *Environmental Activists Take to Local Protests for Global Results*. New York Times. Available Online at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/science/earth/environmental-activists-take-to-local-protests-for-global-results.html> (accessed March 19, 2019).
- Seggos, B. (2018). *Finger Lakes LPC Storage, LLC – Decision of the Commissioner, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, and SEQRA Findings Statement*. State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation. Available Online at: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/hearings/114139.html> (accessed July 12, 2019).
- Smerecnik, K. R., and Renegar, V. R. (2010). Capitalistic agency: the rhetoric of BP's helios power campaign. *Environ. Commun.* 4, 152–171. doi: 10.1080/17524031003760879

- Sowards, S. K. (2006). Identification through orangutans: destabilizing the nature/culture dualism. *Ethics Environ.* 11, 45–61. doi: 10.2979/ETE.2006.11.2.45
- Steingraber, S. (2010). *The Whole Fracking Enchilada*. Orion Magazine. Available Online at: <http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/5839/> (accessed September 24, 2019).
- Takach, G. (2013). Selling nature in a resource-based economy: romantic/extractive gazes and alberta's bituminous sands. *Environ. Commun.* 7, 211–230. doi: 10.1080/17524032.2013.778208
- We Are Seneca Lake (2016a). *Pledge to Protect Seneca Lake*. Available Online at: <http://www.wearesenecalake.com/pledge-protect-seneca-lake/> (accessed April 20, 2019).
- We Are Seneca Lake (2016b). *Press Kit (Pre Dec 2014)*. Available Online at: <http://www.wearesenecalake.com/press-kit-archive/> (accessed April 20, 2019).
- We Are Seneca Lake (2016c). *The Seneca Lake Defenders*. Available Online at: <http://www.wearesenecalake.com/seneca-lake-defenders/> (accessed April 20, 2019).
- Wilber, T. (2012). *Under the Surface: Fracking, Fortunes, and the Fate of the Marcellus Shale*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Zanoni, P., Contu, A., Healy, S., and Mir, R. (2017). Post-capitalistic politics in the making: the imaginary and praxis of alternative economics. *Organization* 24, 575–588. doi: 10.1177/1350508417713219

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2020 Murphy. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.