Appendix A

List of articles, essays and other material from the Dark Mountain publications referenced in the research.

Author, title, publication	Marker
Alcock, N. R.: 'Beyond Z. – a memoir of place', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 127–138.	Alcock DM3
Amstrong, L.: 'The Place Looks Back', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 84–93.	Armstrong DM2
Brachi, P.: 'The Truth Fairy', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 219–225.	Brachi DM3
Challenger, M.: 'The Thorn', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), p. 136.	Challenger DM1
Challenger, M.: 'The Forgotten Farm', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 4–10.	Challenger DM2
Draper, W.: 'The Shuttle Exchanged for the Sword', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 131–150.	Draper DM2
Fairlie, S.: 'The tragedy of the Tragedy of the Commons', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 178–200.	Fairlie DM1
Greer, J. M.: 'The falling years: an Inhumanist vision', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 6–17.	Greer DM1
Griffiths, J.: 'This England', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 201–207.	Griffiths DM1
Henderson, C.: 'Barely Imagined Beginnings', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 161–164.	Henderson DM3
Hester, J.: 'The Three Lessons of History', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 33–38.	Hester DM3
Hine, D.: 'Remember the Future?' *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 260–271.	Hine DM2
Hine, D. and Abram, D.: 'Coming To Our (Animal) Senses – A Conversation with David Abram', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 61–73.	Hine and Abram DM2
Hine, D. and Gupta, V.: 'Black Elephants and skull jackets – a conversation with Vinay Gupta', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 32–46.	Hine and Gupta DM1

Author, title, publication	Marker
Hine, D. and Samuel, S.: 'Rehoming Society: a conversation with Sajay Samuel', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 90–105.	Hine and Samuel DM3
Hirons, T.: 'Sometimes a Wild God', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 123–126.	Hirons(a) DM3
Hirons, T.: 'Nettle Eater', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 214–218.	Hirons(b) DM3
Hou Je Bek, W.: 'Poetry First, Engineering Second – Uncivilised Writing and & Primate Poetics', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 203–209.	Bek DM2
Hughes, G.: 'To the morning sun', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), p. 176.	Hughes DM1
Hunt, N.: 'Loss Soup', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 23–30.	Hunt DM1
Keyes, T.: 'Finding Roe Deer', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 56–60.	Keyes DM3
Kingsnorth, P.: 'Confessions of a recovering environmentalist', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 47–60.	Kingsnorth DM1
Kingsnorth, P.: 'Dark Ecology', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 7–27.	Kingsnorth DM3
Kingsnorth, P. and Hine, D.: 'Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain Manifesto', Dark Mountain (2009)	Kingsnorth and Hine MA
Kingsnorth, P. and Hine, D.: 'It's the end of the world as we know it (and we feel fine)', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 1–4.	Kingsnorth and Hine DM1
Kingsnorth, P. and Hine, D.: 'Control, and Other Illusions', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 1–3.	Kingsnorth and Hine DM2
Kingsnorth, P., Tompkins, D. and Tompkins, K.: 'The Death of Birth – A conversation with Doug & Kris Tompkins', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 141–160.	Kingsnorth et al. DM3
Klein, N.: 'On Precaution', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 20–25.	Klein DM2
Lewis, H.: 'On this Site of Loss', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 110–122.	Lewis DM3
Lewis, R.: 'The Silence of Vanishing Things', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 222–231.	Lewis DM2
McCann, A. and Jensen, D.: 'A gentle ferocity – A conversation with Derrick Jensen', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 108–118.	McCann and Jensen DM1
McKenzie, B.: 'In the Orchard', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 61–64.	McKenzie DM3

Author, title, publication	Marker
Morris, B.: 'Low country', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 156–157.	Morris DM2
Petrucci, M.: 'Three hot drops of salmon oil', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 137–143.	Petrucci DM1
Prieur, R.: 'Beyond Civilised & Primitive', *Dark Mountain* vol. 1 (2010), pp. 119–135.	Prieur DM1
Rao, V.: 'The Return of the Barbarian', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 32–41.	Rao DM2
Smith, C. H.: 'The Art of Survival, Taoism and the Warring States', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 240–245.	Smith DM2
Staines, R.: 'The Alchemist', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), p. na.	Staines DM3
Strang, E.: 'The Miracle', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 82–83.	Strang DM2
Szabo, M.: 'Bending Like a Peasant', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 204–210.	Szabo DM3
Taggart, A.: 'Following Nature's Course', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), pp. 181–199.	Taggart DM3
Thorp, S. and Major-George, K.: 'The Fixing of Things', *Dark Mountain* vol. 3 (2012), p. na.	Thorp and Major-George DM3
Wheeler, S. and Zerzan, J.: 'Why Don't You Go and Live in a Cave?!' A Conversation with John Zerzan', *Dark Mountain* vol. 4 (2013), pp. 188–203.	Wheeler and Zerzan DM4
Wolfbird: 'The Science of Imaginary Solutions', *Dark Mountain* vol. 2 (2011), pp. 164–174.	Wolfbird DM2

Table A.1: Index of data from Dark Mountain publications referenced in the research

Appendix B

List of articles, talks and blog posts related to the Dark Mountain Project referenced in the research. All markers are hyperlinked to their online location in the electronic version (accessed 26.06.14).

Author, title, place of publication, date, address	Marker
Adams, M.: 'Inaction and environmental crisis: Narrative, defence mechanisms and the social organisation of denial', *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* vol. 19, pp. 52–71, 2014. Available at: http://www.palgrave-journals.com/pcs/journal/v19/n1/abs/pcs201321a.html.	Adams 2014
Bell, A. (2010) 'The rise of the Environ-Mentalist', *Decline of the Logos blog*, 30.09.10. Available at: http://declineofthelogos.wordpress.com/2010/09/30/the-rise-of-the-environ-mentalist/.	Bell 30.09.10
Dias, A.: 'Dissensus', *Horizons of Significance blog*, 15.03.14. Available at: http://horizonsofsignificance.wordpress.com/2010/09/07/dissensus/.	Dias 15.03.14
Dias, A.: 'Enormity', *Horizons of Significance blog*, 10.01.09. Available at: http://horizonsofsignificance.wordpress.com/2009/10/01/enormity/.	Dias 10.01.09
Du Cann, C.: 'The Snake in the Box', *The Dark Mountain Blog*, 03.09.13. Available at: http://dark-mountain.net/blog/the-snake-in-the-box/.	Du Cann 03.09.13
Evans, A.: 'Are collapsitarians socially inadequate?' *Global Dashboard blog*, 05.07.10. Available at: http://www.globaldashboard.org/2010/07/05/are-collapsitarians-socially-inadequate/.	Evans 05.07.10
Forrest, A.: 'Climate Change: A Matter of Faith', *The Big Issue*, 26.03.12. Available at: http://www.bigissue.com/features/809/climate-change-matter-faith.	Forrest 26.03.12
Gray, J.: 'Review of Uncivilisation: the Dark Mountain manifesto', *The New Statesman*, 10.09.09. Available at: http://www.newstatesman.com/books/2009/09/civilisation-planet-authors.	Gray 10.09.09

Author, title, place of publication, date, address	Marker
Greer, J. M.: 'Green Wizardry: A Response to Rob Hopkins', *The Archdruid Report blog*, 01.09.10. Available at: http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.de/2010/09/since-green-wizards-project-got-under.html.	Greer 01.09.10
Hine, D.: 'What do you do, after you stop pretending?', *The Dark Mountain Blog*, 31.01.10. Available at: http://dark-mountain.net/blog/what-do-you-do-after-you-stop-pretending/.	Hine 31.01.10
Hine, D.: 'The Measurable & the Unmeasurable', *talk at Aston Business School, Birmingham*, 12.02.12. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYolIzrU4J8&feature=youtu.be.	Hine 12.02.12
Hine, D.: 'A question of billing', *The Dark Mountain Blog*, 31.10.12. Available at: http://dark-mountain.net/blog/a-question-of-billing/.	Hine 31.10.12
Hine, D.: 'Organisations that matter', *Collapsonomics! blog*, 20.03.13. Available at: http://rhapsodi.se/collapsonomics/organisations-that-matter/.	Hine 20.03.13
Hine, D. and Abram, D.: 'Sensing & Knowing: David Abram in conversation with Dougald Hine', September 2010. Available at: http://blip.tv/dougald-hine/sensing-knowing-david-abram-in-conversation-with-dougald-hine-4587734.	Hine and Abram Sept 2010
Hine, D. and Brewster, C.: 'Västerås Conversations #4: Christopher Brewster and the Limits to Measurement', *ABF (Workers Educational Association)*, 21.05.14. Available at: https://soundcloud.com/dougaldh/vasteras-conversations-4-christopher-brewster-and-the-limits-to-measurement.	Hine and Brewster 21.05.14
Hine, D. and McCann, A.: 'Västerås Conversations #1: Anthony McCann and the Politics of Gentleness', *ABF (Workers Educational Association)*, 30.04.14. Available at: https://soundcloud.com/dougaldh/vasteras-conversations-1-anthony-mccann-and-the-politics-of-gentleness.	Hine and McCann 30.04.14
Hoggett, P.: 'Climate change and the apocalyptic imagination', *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* vol. 16, pp. 261–275, 2011. Available at: http://www.palgrave-journals.com/pcs/journal/v16/n3/abs/pcs20111a.html.	Hogget 2011
Kingsnorth, P.: 'Mythos and Logos: a Dark Mountain talk', *talk at University College Falmouth*, 22.03.12. Available at: https://soundcloud.com/peekay72/mythos-and-logos-a-dark.	Kingsnorth 22.03.12
Kingsnorth, P.: 'The Barcode Moment, Part 3', *The Dark Mountain Blog*, 04.05.12. Available at: http://dark-mountain.net/blog/the-barcode-moment-part-3/.	Kingsnorth 04.05.12

Author, title, place of publication, date, address	Marker
Lupton, C. (2010) 'Minding The Gaps: Arriving At Dissensus', *The Place Between Stories blog*, 14.09.10. Available at: http://theplacebetweenstories.wordpress.com/2010/09/14/minding-the-gaps-arriving-at-dissensus/.	Lupton 14.09.10
Monbiot, G. (2010) 'I share their despair, but I'm not quite ready to climb the Dark Mountain', *The Guardian*, 10.05.10. Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cif-green/2010/may/10/deepwater-horizon-greens-collapse-civilisation.	Monbiot 10.05.10
Newton, M.: 'The Dark Mountain project: where creativity, intellectualism and politics combine', *Huffington Post*, 06.10.11. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mark-newton/the-dark-mountain-project_b_998945.html.	Newton 06.10.11
Othieno, D.: 'What remains – Memories of my father and the forest', *These precious and beautiful things blog*, 31.01.12. Available at: http://preciousbeautiful.blogspot.de/2012_01_01_archive.html.	Othieno 31.01.12
Othieno, D.: 'Always boundary walking – Reflection on Phase One & the Mearcstapa Liminal Exploration', *Effectiveness in Action blog*, 30.05.13. Available at: http://effectivenessinaction.tumblr.com/post/51756157157/always-boundary-walking-reflection-on-phase-one-the.	Othieno 30.05.13
Pollard, D.: 'Climbing a Dark Mountain, and Thoughts on a New Culture', *How to save the world blog*, 06.09.10. Available at: http://howtosavetheworld.ca/2010/09/06/climbing-a-dark-mountain-and-thoughts-on-a-new-culture/.	Pollard 06.09.10
Smith, W. J.: 'Radical Environmentalism: Dark Mountain Project's Anti Human, Pro Decline Agenda' *First Things*, 21.09.11. Available at: http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2011/09/radical-environmentalism-dark-mountain-projects-anti-human-pro-decline-agenda/.	Smith 21.09.11
Stephenson, W.: 'Hope in the Age of Collapse', *Thoreau Farm blog*, 03.03.12. Available at: http://thoreaufarm.org/2012/04/hope-in-the-age-of-collapse/.	Stephenson 03.03.12
Towers, D.: 'Dire Mountain: more abysmal than abyssmal', *Dwight Towers blog*, 31.05.10. Available at: http://dwighttowers.wordpress.com/2010/05/31/dire-mountain-more-abysmal-than-abyss-mal/.	Towers 31.05.10

Table B.1: Index of other online data related to the Dark Mountain Project referenced in the research

Appendix C

Lists of own material produced during the research in addition to the interview-conversations (see Table 3.3) which is available online, including online diary, blog posts and conceptual notes. All markers are hyperlinked to their online location in the electronic version.

Online research diary	Marker
Reflections: A stone's throw, 11.01.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/1/11_Reflections__A_stones_throw.html.	O-D, 11.01.12
Reflections: Finding home, 12.01.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/1/12_Reflections__Finding_home.html.	O-D, 12.01.12
Reflections: Stories and making sense of them, 19.01.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/1/19_Reflections__Stories_and_making_sense_of_them.html.	O-D, 19.01.12
Theoretical considerations: The world and I, 26.01.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/1/26_Theoretical_considerations__The_world_and_I.html.	O-D, 26.01.12
Reflections: A place to settle, 08.02.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/2/8_Reflections__A_place_to_settle.html.	O-D, 08.02.12
Reflections: Co-creating the Dark Mountain narrative, 18.03.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/3/18_Reflections__A_stones_throw_2_3_3.html.	O-D, 18.03.12
Reflections: Sincerity all the way down, 19.04.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/4/19_Reflections__Sincerity_all_the_way_down.html.	O-D, 19.04.12
Discussion: The social eco-system dance, 25.04.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/4/25_Discussion__The_social_ecosystem_dance.html.	O-D, 25.04.12
Reflections: Changing worldviews, 25.05.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/5/25_Reflections__Changing_worldviews.html.	O-D, 25.05.12

Online research diary	Marker
Reflections: Patterns and harmony, 29.05.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/5/ 29_Reflections__Patterns_and_harmony.html.	O-D, 29.05.12
Reflections: Emergence and submergence, 14.09.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/ 9/14_Reflections__Emergence_and_submergence.html.	O-D, 14.09.12
Reflections: Flickering, 06.12.12. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/diary_2/Entries/2012/12/ 6_Reflections__XXX.html.	O-D, 06.12.12

Table C.1: Index of online diary entries

Blog posts	Marker
The Dark Mountain Project & Uncivilisation, 30.08.11, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/the-dark-mountain-project-uncivilisation/.	REM, 30.08.11
The Dark Mountain Project and narrating social change, 18.01.12, *3S blog*. Available at: http://3s.uea.ac.uk/blog/dark-mountain-project-and-narrating-social-change.	3S, 18.01.12
When the game is rigged and the ref is corrupt, 15.02.12, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/ blog/when-the-game-is-rigged-and-the-ref-is-corrupt/.	REM, 15.02.12
Stories about violence, 25.04.12, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/stories-about-violence/.	REM, 25.04.12
Bringing time into the picture, 23.05.12, *3S blog*. Available at: http://3s.uea.ac.uk/blog/bringing-time-picture.	3S, 23.05.12
Why you should get Dark Mountain Issue 3 now, 25.06.12, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/ blog/why-you-should-get-dark-mountain-issue-3-now/.	REM, 25.06.12
Repossessing the future, 14.08.12, *Time culture*. Available at: http://time-culture.net/repossessing-the-future-2/.	T-C, 14.08.12
The reality of collapse – reflections on Uncivilisation 2012, 25.08.12, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/the-reality-of-collapse-reflections-on-uncivilisation-2012/.	REM, 25.08.12
In the Field of Time, 03.11.12, *Redrawing the maps*. Available at: http://www.redrawingthemaps.org.uk/blog/?p=262.	R-M, 03.11.12
Draget, 16.06.13, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/draget/.	REM, 16.06.13

Blog posts	Marker
Expanding the possible – Uncivilisation 2013 and beyond, 10.09.13, *Remembering*. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/expanding-the-possible/.	REM, 10.09.13
Repairing the Silent Spring: a conversation with Bernie Krause, 17.10.13, *Dark Mountain blog*. Available at: http://dark-mountain.net/blog/repairing-the-silent-spring-a-conversation-with-bernie-krause/.	DMB, 17.10.13
Emergent figurative thinking, 14.10.13, *Refigurations*. Available at: http://www.refiguring.net/refigurations/Entries/2013/10/14_Emergent_figurative_thinking.html.	REF, 14.10.13
The circle and the line, 07.11.13, *Refigurations*. Available at: http://www.refiguring.net/refigurations/Entries/2013/11/7_The_circle_and_the_line.html.	REF, 07.11.13
The Experience of Collapse, 04.12.13, *3S blog*. Available at: http://3s.uea.ac.uk/blog/experience-collapse.	3S, 04.12.13
Lines of flight in a time of endings, 07.12.13, *Refigurations*. Available at: http://www.refiguring.net/refigurations/Entries/2013/12/7_Lines_of_flight_in_a_time_of_endings.html.	REF, 07.12.13

Table C.2: Index of research related blog posts

Other material
Research plan. This was the original research proposal drafted at the end of the first year of my research. Individual chapters are available separately, see: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/academic_writing.html
Narrative methods and my approach. This was an early formulation of my approach to doing narrative research, see: http://patternwhichconnects.com/phd/academic_writing_files/Narrative%20methods%20and%20my%20approach%20%28JDG%29.pdf

Table C.3: Index of other material publicly available

Appendix D

List of talks and events recorded during the research.

Recording	Marker
Paul Kingsnorth & Dougald Hine, 'Welcome', *Uncivilisation* 2011	PK DH A-R, 20.08.11
Panel Discussion, 'Collapsonomics', *Uncivilisation* 2011	PD A-R, 20.08.11
Sharon Blackie, 'Living on the edge – and by the word', *Uncivilisation* 2011	SB A-R, 20.08.11
Vinay Gupta & Dougald Hine, 'We can no longer afford to ignore the sacred', *Uncivilisation* 2011	VG DH A-R, 20.08.11
Nick Hunt, 'New Myths for New Worlds', *Uncivilisation* 2011	NH A-R, 20.08.11
Paul Kingsnorth & Dougald Hine, 'The Dark Mountain Project: what next?', *Uncivilisation* 2011	PK DH A-R, 21.08.11
Dougald Hine & Anthony McCann, 'The Future of the University', *Uncivilisation* 2011	DH AM A-R, 21.08.11
Paul Kingsnorth, 'Welcome and introduction', *Carrying the Fire* 2012	PK A-R, 21.04.12
Margaret Elphinstone, 'In conversation with David Borthwick', *Carrying the Fire* 2012	ME A-R, 21.04.12
Sharon Blackie & Alastair McIntosh, 'Restorying the Earth', *Carrying the Fire* 2012	SB AM A-R, 21.04.12
Franklin Lopez, 'End:Civ', *Carrying the Fire* 2012	FL A-R, 21.04.12
Dougie Strang, 'Closing session', *Carrying the Fire* 2012	PK A-R, 21.04.12
Andy Letcher & Adrian Arbib, 'The Art of Protest', *Uncivilisation* 2012	AL AA A-R, 18.08.12
Martin Shaw, 'Gambling with the Knuckle-Bones of Wolves', *Uncivilisation* 2012	MS A-R, 18.08.12
Paul Kingsnorth & Jay Griffiths, 'The Earthsongs of England', *Uncivilisation* 2012	PK JG A-R, 18.08.12
Martin Palmer & Dougald Hine, 'Sacred Stories', *Uncivilisation* 2012	MP DH A-R, 19.08.12
Mearcstapa, 'Rise and Root', *Uncivilisation* 2012	M A-R, 19.08.12
Steve Wheeler, 'Extended Horizons: Unprogramming the Apocalypse', *Uncivilisation* 2012	SW A-R, 19.08.12

Recording	Marker
Dougald Hine & Jeppe Graugaard, 'A Breakout from the Prison of Modern Time Is Possible', *Redrawing the Maps*	DH JG A-R, 05.11.12
Dougald Hine, 'Taking it Home', *Uncivilisation* 2013	DH A-R, 17.08.13
Morten Svenstrup & Jeppe Graugaard, 'Time Culture', *Uncivilisation* 2013	MS JG A-R, 17.08.13
Dougald Hine, 'The Illich Conspiracy', *Uncivilisation* 2013	DH A-R, 18.08.13
The Dark Marshes, 'Reflections on Unciv 2013'	DM A-R, 29.08.13

Table D.1: Index of audio recordings

Appendix E

List of blogs related to the Dark Mountain Project followed during the research.

Title, author	Address
Andrew J Taggart's blog, Andrew Taggart	http://andrewjtaggart.com/
Changing the world (and other excuses for not getting a proper job), Dougald Hine	http://otherexcuses.blogspot.com
Charlotte Du Cann's blog, Charlotte Du Cann	http://charlotteducann.blogspot.co.uk/
Coyopa, Tom Hirons	http://coyopa.wordpress.com
Dougald Hine's blogs, Dougald Hine	http://rhapsodi.se
Elsewhere, Paul Kingsnorth	http://tumblr.paulkingsnorth.net/
Farmer versus fox, Alex Fradera	http://farmerversusfox.tumblr.com/
Horizons of Significance, Antonio Dias	http://horizonsofsignificance.wordpress.com/
How to live wiki, Vinay Gupta	http://vinay.howtolivewiki.com/blog/
Into the Hermitage, Rima Staines	http://intothehermitage.blogspot.co.uk
Paul Kingsnorth's blog, Paul Kingsnorth	http://www.paulkingsnorth.net/blog
Marmaduke Dando's blog, Marmaduke Dando	http://www.marmadukedando.com/category/musings/
Nick Hunt Scrutiny, Nick Hunt	http://nickhuntscrutiny.com/
Psycho-Bubble, Steve Thorp	http://psycho-bubble.tumblr.com/
Ran Prieur's blog, Ran Prieur	http://www.ranprieur.com/
Re-enchanting the Earth, Sharon Blackie	http://reenchantingtheearth.com/blog/
Steelweaver, Steve Wheeler	http://steelweaver.tumblr.com
The Archdruid Report, John Michael Greer	http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.co.uk/
The Dark Mountain Blog, various participants	http://dark-mountain.net/blog
The Learning Planet, Bridget McKenzie	http://thelearningplanet.wordpress.com/
The Place Between Stories, Cat Lupton	http://theplacebetweenstories.wordpress.com/
These precious and beautiful things, Daniela Othieno	http://preciousbeautiful.blogspot.co.uk/
Uncivilisation Ning, various participants	http://uncivilisation.ning.com/
Weaving poetry, Emily Wilkinson	http://weavingpoetry.net/

Table E.1: Index of blogs followed during the research

Appendix F

Example of thematic analysis of interview-conversations. Codes are grouped according to the different aspects of the Dark Mountain Project they relate to.

What's DM reacting against?	Way to DM	What's DM about?	Attitude	Tools
Linear narrative (DH)	Despair (ST)	Conversation (DH)	Openness to the unexpected (DH)	Deliberately opening up a space (not top-down) (SW)
Seeing the promises of progress break (PK)	Despair (DS)	Conversation (DO)	Reality as playing field (DH)	Holding the space and improvising conversation (SW)
Cultural nihilism/decline (SW)	Carrying the weight of ecocide (DS)	Way of being/seeing (DH)	Awareness of the arbitrariness of the game rules (DH)	Language as emergent and improvised (AF)
Isolation following from interest in decline (SW)	Heart ache (DO)	Innovation as theology (DH)	Wildness (AF)	The role of language and metaphor (AT)
Stuttering as the expression giving to this experience (AT)	Recovering from trauma (TD)	DM as a philosophical experiment (DH)	Wildness (ST)	DM as a place to be puzzled in (PK)
Linear time: the change is always in the future (SW)	Acceptance (PK)	Doing the same thing but in different domains (AF)	Presence (AF)	Holding the space (PK)

What's DM reacting against?	Way to DM	What's DM about?	Attitude	Tools
Enormity and psychological collapse (TD)	Being ready for the conversation (PK)	Joy and play crucial to improv (AF)	Listening (AF)	Art as a way of looking at the world as multiple (PK)
Staring reality of ecocide in the eye (DS)	Finding each other: contingency and serendipity (AT)	Reconfigure relationship with what is possible (PK)	Opening to vulnerability and risk (AF)	DM as a platform to scream from (ST)
Technology as attitude (TD)	Serendipity (CL)	Ecocentrism (PK)	Generosity (AF)	Attention-span and focus (SW)
Urgency as escape (TD)	Synchronicity (DO)	Shifting worldviews (PK)	Openendedness (TD)	Proprioception (TD)
	Synchronicity (ST)	DIY culture (DS)	Beauty (DO)	Stories (TD)
	Calling (ST)	Starting small as a point of departure in change (SW)	Living in the now: improvisation (SW)	Art as meaning-making (TD)
	Kindred spirits (DS)	Myth as sense-making on the cultural level (SW)	Control vs. virtues (patience, courage, phronesis) (AT)	Re-storying / re-narrating: creating new meanings (CL)
	Joy in finding each other (DS)	Flourishing (AT)	Fecundity without finality (AT)	Communication (TD)
		Good social institutions support being good humans (AT)	Essay as one of the great genres of today (AT)	Creativity as a way out of despair (DS)
		What's next is a way of living, not an answer (SW)	Practicing and learning together in conversations (CL)	Holding a space for conversation (DS)
		Moving between different circles of logic (TD)		Liminal as an 'unsettling' concept (DS)
		Re-integrating in evolution (TD)		Metaphor (CL)
		Shifting perspectives (TD)		Pilot and compass (TD)
		Playfulness and beauty (DS)		

Principles	Pitfalls	What's DM saying?	What happens/emerges?	DM evolution
Improvisation (DH)	Movements (TD)	The game is almost over (DH)	Five stages of coming to terms with death (DS)	Manifesto 'hit a nerve' (PK)
Improvisation (PK)	Signposts and labels (TD)	What we have is enough (AF)	Getting on with it (DO)	Festival changed (DS)
Improvisation at the root of what DM is doing (SW)	Ends and means (TD)	Catabolic collapse (PK)	Connecting with likeminded people (DO)	Keeping DM open, avoiding definitions (PK)
Making do with less (AF)	Ego and short-circuiting (TD)	Environmentalism: all or nothing (PK)	Shifting worldview by acting differently (DO)	Wide range of opinions within DM (DS)
Finding solutions by looking backwards (AF)	Negotiation (TD)	Psychological collapse (ST)	Stopping pretending feels better (DO)	DM as a flexible entity that will develop (DS)
Emergence (AF)	The white, male intellectual (DS)	Violence as part of life (understanding it) (SW)	Opening up for creativity and writing (DO)	Conversation (following from manifesto) (SW)
No point pretending (PK)	Violence as an obstacle to conversation (CL)	Slow decline (SW)	Exploring new ways of expression (ST)	
Cutting through to the bare bones of language (DO)	Language as a stumbling block (CL)	From Logos to Mythos (SW)	Facing up to collapse: awakening (ST)	
DM as an open space where uncertainty is allowed (ST)	Language armour (CL)	Place and connection to the land (SW)	Soul-making / acorn (ST)	
Being in Dark Mountain doesn't carry obligation (ST)	The story of the end of growth as a linear narrative (CL)	Apocalypse as the flipside of progress (SW)	Art and performance as instances of magic (DS)	
People don't judge you (ST)		Now is a trickster moment (SW)	Portable skills to build personal resilience (SW)	
Agility/ductility as a key part of what comes next (SW)		We live in a unique moment in history (DS)	'Deep work' to get out of the rot (SW)	

Principles	Pitfalls	What's DM saying?	What happens/emerges?	DM evolution
Craft as an attitude (SW)		DM as 'speakers for the dead' (Ender's Game sequel) (SW)	Invoking new infrastructures (AT)	
Quality (Zen and the Art of) (SW)		Gap between social reality and the concepts we are using to describe it (AT)	Gift economy (AT)	
The role of place as fundamental to getting rooted (unlike Beckett's placeless space) (AT)		Scarcity and abundance: competition, innovation, playfulness (AT)	Improvisation and jazz: codifying language and metaphor into social reality (AT)	
Awareness, presence, training our senses (AT)		Technology and craft (TD)	Joyful disillusionment (TD)	
Dissensus (TD)		DM vs. other environmental narratives (DGR) (DS)	Creativity beyond a sense of self (TD)	
Have conversations differently (CL)		DM prompts to ask bigger questions (CL)	Ease and resistance (TD)	
Carry out enquiry differently (CL)		The role of story and myth in social change (SB)	Vulnerability and letting go (TD)	
Dissensus / disparity (CL)		Meta-narrative (SB)	Recognising abundance (TD)	
Temporalities: deep vs. flat time (CL)		Place-based stories and responsibility (SB)	Emergence (TD)	
Unlearning habits of confrontation (SW)			Collaboration beyond isolation (TD)	
			Letting go of preconceptions (CL)	

Table F.1: Example of thematic analysis

Appendix G

Example of visual analysis of Bridget McKenzie's untitled photograph (see Figure 5.4) and elaboration of my approach. This was written in an email to Bridget, 24.09.12.

hi again bridget,

i've had some time to think a little more about your question on interpretation. i've been using the work of catherine kohler riessman in working with textual narrative so a [sic] my approach is grounded in narrative sociology focusing on identity, cultural context, representation and emergent meanings. seeing narratives as co-constructed, i try to listen to the narrative as much as i can while offering open-ended questions which allow for dialogue and communicative equality. i find the process of arriving at a shared understanding of a narrative really interesting and have taken an experimental approach to analysis. you'll probably be able to see this in some of the interviews i've published about dark mountain.

as i move on from fieldwork into analysis (although these are not discrete phases), i am beginning to sense different themes and place individual conversations in the context of the others. there's a lot of thematic analysis in there but also dialogic/performative stuff which will inevitably bear on visual analysis as well, [sic] i find an appropriate way to link text and image.

the reason i was struck by your photo was that it somehow condensed a lot of the meanings i'd been finding in my conversations. the contrast of the footprint – with both its fragility and insistence – and the imprint of the sea – beautiful, powerful and unintended – bears on collective reflections about the relationship between humanity and nature, the sense of frailty and despair, wildness and civility. it also spoke to a deeper undercurrent in my personal thinking that stems from gregory bateson's ideas about meta-patterns and the relation between mind and nature. the 'organic' feel of the subsided wave (with its root structure) is oppositional to the industrially made boot/shoe, yet it just touches the footprint and beckons us to think about our connection with it. in this way, i think the image is asking me personally to consider how the patterns i see in nature are mirrored in my own life, and how i can unfold in unison with it.

so i think there are ecological, social, political and spiritual elements in there to talk about. a lot of questions emerge: is the sea encroaching or subsiding? is it coming to engulf the shoeprint or was the highpoint that moment when it just sent out a tongue to touch the shoe? was the walker there in the moment the wave came to put her foot down? was it

a moment of fleeing or playing? your story about the photo further adds questions about change, memory and beauty.

so my framework is one which basically draws on my own interpretation/subjective reading, dialogic thematic exploration and the work's contextual background. this is based in my work with interpreting meaning through a process of turning a spoken conversation into an interview through transcription, re-interpretation and editing in collaboration with my co-conversationalist. i have no idea whether this will work for visual narratives – i have a hunch that it will but it will probably need modification and a great deal more listening and contemplation.

i don't know if this really answers your question. but it gave me an opportunity to reflect on my method and re-think how this might work for images. very helpful as i am in the beginning phase of data analysis!

hope you are well and keeping on top of time :) it's been busy for me since i got back (actually with the topic of time itself as i've been working on a new project on time culture – www.time-culture.net) and so i haven't really had a good moment for sending you this email before now. take your time with replying and don't feel obliged to put too much thought into it!

i had a strange encounter with david buckland of the cape farewell project, which alana mentioned at the field. very disappointed about his presentation, i managed to challenge his linear meta-narrative with a question about failure but he just dismissed it and managed to be offensive in the process! well, there is art and then there is Art, i guess.

take care and see you further down the line. all the best!

jeppe

Appendix H

Interview-conversation, CL P-I, 20.12.12: 'Serendipity, Edges and Dissolving Language-Armour – A Conversation with Cat Lupton'. Available at: http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/serendipity-edges-and-dissolving-language-armour-a-conversation-with-cat-lupton/. Underlined text is hyperlinked in the electronic version of this text.

Last year around this time, I found myself responding to an invitation by Cat Lupton to contribute a piece to her new blog The Place Between Stories. That was the beginning of a longer conversation that has unwound itself into the words below. The text is based on a conversation we had in St. James' Park last spring, which I transcribed and we subsequently played with in a process of continued dialogue. It begins, as many of these conversations have done, with Dark Mountain and unfolds in several directions at once. It still is.

JDG: How did you find Dark Mountain?

CL: Kind of by accident. I took this transition in my own life in 2009, I gave up my job as a university lecturer and was basically in recovery from that. And I stumbled on Paul Kingsnorth's piece in the Ecologist which then led me to the manifesto. And I just felt very inspired by it. I guess the idea of new stories about the world, new possibilities for writing and creative responses to the world is what drew me towards it initially.

But I think the strongest thing is the expressed desire to have conversations differently, to carry out enquiry differently. To open up space for saying let's not just bring our received ideas and ways of speaking, of engaging with each other, to the table and keep repeating them. What I mean is the kind of speaking that sounds pre-scripted and depersonalised – say, the habit any of us can fall into of saying things like 'we really must do something!', when it's not at all clear to whom that 'we' is referring. I recently came across Andrew Taggart's distinction between reciting and improvising, and I found that helpful for thinking further about this. I connected with people in the project who seemed to share this sense of openness. So that's probably the touchstone for me.

And it's a metaphor. The Dark Mountain. You are not dealing with a programme, you're dealing with this poetic metaphor which is very powerful. People have the mountaineering metaphor, the image of base camp, or gathering around a fire. It's a sort of place where you gather and a place where you can go off to have your own Dark Mountain experience. The suggestiveness of having a geographical image is very strong (and mountains are already powerful metaphors for difficult inner journeys and spiritual experiences across many cultures). So you kind of know what it means without having to define it.

JDG: Yes. What I've found is that by opening a space, as you say, for having a different kind of conversation we are also becoming able to re-story and re-narrate not just the collective story but our own life stories as well. If we stop using the old concepts and language of growth and development, there arises some kind of momentum, a kind of conceptual vacuum, where we can begin building new meanings. I experienced that in something Andrew has said about the end of

the career, for example. I thought "actually yes, I'm probably not going to have career in that way". It doesn't really make sense to think about my future in terms of pursuing a career. And suddenly new possibilities arise. It's interesting to observe that Dark Mountain is sometimes able to create this kind of space where old concepts can be challenged and where we are able to collectively come to new meanings together.

CL: It is, for want of a better word, a delicate process that you find a kind of reciprocity with and it takes an incredible generosity towards first of all yourself and then towards others. Not to be impatient with the 'not knowing' of that open enquiry. Or the process you describe of re-telling the story of your life, which is an incredibly hard thing to do. You can't believe the new thing that you are trying to open up. And so a sense of support is important to be able to maintain the conversation.

JDG: I came to Dark Mountain through an environmentalist or activist path. And what was really refreshing about coming to the Uncivilisation festival was finding other people who just had a similar kind of heartache. Being allowed to ache in order to heal and come to terms with that feeling of heartache around these issues and what's going on at a planetary scale. That it's OK. I mean, activism can easily fall into a sentiment of "just toughen up and get on" or "we can't give up". So when you actually do give up and sit down and look at it, it is pretty overwhelming.

CL: I've always been, through most of my adult life, fairly close to a sort of left-wing milieu where a lot of people are political activists of various kinds. But I've just never found an activist in myself to connect to. To commit to that way of being. I guess I've always had a wariness of exactly that kind of attitude you're describing, that the ends justify the means so we must keep pushing on regardless. There is a set of behaviours that goes with activism that can be incredibly useful and powerful in some circumstances but then there's a lot that it is repressing.

The ability to just take a reality check and say "are we actually achieving the goals that we say we are achieving?" is really important. Sitting down and taking the blinders off. What comes out? What else do we find?

JDG: There is a spiritual aspect to that mixture of heartache, meaning-making, and taking off the blinders, I think. At least to me. Although 'spiritual' is such a loaded word. I've always been interested in Buddhism and was very inspired by Alan Watts early in my life, so that's where I come from in that regard. But the experience I've had over the last year has been that some of my daily practices of yoga, meditation, small prayers, there's seems to be a greater depth in that aspect of my life. Which has come as a bit of a surprise, really. I wonder if this has to do with having all these conversations and engaging in a mode of communication where I don't have to have answers all the time. People have mentioned spirituality in different ways as an aspect of Dark Mountain. Is that related to your interaction with Dark Mountain and your writing, or the creative aspect you mention?

CL: I think it is connected. This feels like quite an odd thing to say, but there is something about being at the Uncivilization festivals where there are just these powerful energies or serendipities that go through them. In terms of the people you just meet or run into, or happen to sit next to in a session. And you find these new connections. And other people you just walk past and you don't see. Also, something really important for me this year at Uncivilization 2012 was making a connection with the land of the Sustainability Centre where the last two festivals have been held. I wrote a blog post about this: about asking for, and receiving, help from the land itself, from the being(s) of that particular ecosystem. You're on these pathways that I would say are to do with energy, spirit and following intuition, even if what you're bringing is a very secular, or rational, mind frame or thinking.

I don't know how to describe this well, but it is as if there is a bigger purpose trying to realise itself through these gatherings, that brings people together seemingly at random, and they find these deeper connections together. And I notice things like people I think of as "the Dark Mountain

Elders" who are just often not doing very much that is visible, like speaking out in q & a sessions, for instance, but whose presence just seems incredibly reassuring. And then there is a little contingent of children. So different generations are present. And it's just this sort of feeling that it's a community that is re-finding ritual, that is making a ritual even without consciously intending to do so. Or, there is some kind of intention there but there is something bigger going on with it. Does that sort of make sense?

JDG: I think that makes a good deal of sense. As you say, it is hard to talk about, really. What are those dynamics and processes? Other people have also mentioned a sense of synchronicity, serendipity, and how things pop up at the same time and bring people together. It isn't something you can plan out but something that emerges out of what first appears as random encounters.

CL: It's the sort of things that you can't really predict or plan for. Like with the Liminal performance, which I participated in in a small way in 2011. And on that basis I became part of the Mearcstapa clan, who were involved with decorating the festival space and doing weird and wonderful things around the edges at this year's Uncivilisation. There's an intention to create something that's quite edgy – liminal means on the edge or at a threshold. But it is not deliberately creating magic, it is more about crafting, and then stepping into, a space where magic might just happen, if you have crafted well, if you're lucky, if the spirits are pleased and want to come out to play.

The thing about serendipity is very strong. People meet it when they are going through that process of emotional questioning of progress. It is when you stop and take a breath, when you stop pushing for results, that it comes up. That seems to be when people find connections. And it hits people at different times and in different ways but it puts something in the ground that is there as long as it is needed. The thing about serendipity is that it can take you where you need to go, and that is not necessarily where you might have planned to go. It opens the doors you weren't expecting to find.

JDG: That whole process is really interesting! It is actually reflected in how Dark Mountain developed and how it grew. The emergence and the coming together. It wasn't planned for.

CL: I suppose it's the beginning of being in that kind of cultural movement where there's a lot of disparity or dissensus to use that word. You know, you don't have to all agree and don't have to all follow the same programme. But there are resonances and differences that are echoing across this kind of space. And then it is very interesting all that happens within this space and the different networks of people who are drawn to it.

I remember at the 2011 festival being conscious that there were hackers, geeks, steampunk folk, Transition Town folk, permaculture folk, artists/makers, poets, smallholders, people living wild in the woods, different environmental activist groups, and more. All these different tribes that you wouldn't normally expect to see at the same event, all finding some kind of resonance with Dark Mountain.

JDG: You mention dissensus which is something I've come to use more as a way of thinking about Dark Mountain. It seems to describe accurately a kind of unspoken agreement on the form of the conversation rather than the content. The ambiguity within Dark Mountain seems to be a real strength because people can connect to their own life and their personal circumstance and don't have to, like you say, subscribe to a programme of action. It seems we can kind of agree on the core stuff. Whatever that is! It is quite hard to describe what Dark Mountain is. The boundaries are blurry and there are no hard edges. I've been thinking about those edges. It seems like they only really appear when we come up against some limit of what Dark Mountain is not or when we hit on some really sensitive issue. People can quickly become divided into 'for and against', and 'right and wrong', when the conversation turns on deep emotional and personal stuff. Then the form of the conversation all too quickly breaks down.

I was trying to make sense of this thing about edges when I read your essay from Dark Mountain 2

[based on the blog post Wandering Around Words], which is dealing with how language sometimes becomes an obstacle for the deeper interaction that goes on within our conversations. I found that really interesting because I feel like we easily trip when we talk about more emotionally charged ideas or topics. Then people seem to get into fixed positions and the conversation breaks down into an argument much quicker.

CL: My interpretation of that is to do with the cultural fear and entrenchment we bring from a society that values certainty and holding your position. Which would rather try to be strong than say "I don't know", or ask "can we look at this differently". In many of these situations you are dealing with a shadow, in a Jungian sense, a part of yourself that is so repressed that when it emerges, it emerges very violently. And one of those things, I guess, would be violence. Living in a society where most of us privileged people are pretty uncomfortable with and removed from direct physical violence, we don't meet violence in our day-to-day lives, yet our civilization is built on incredibly deep violence. We practice violence indirectly through non-physical forms, through intellectual violence or emotional violence or by projecting the source of violence onto somebody or something else. I've begun dipping into Marshall Rosenberg's work on Non-Violent Communication, and just the fact that he identifies most of the normal, taken-for-granted ways that we speak and converse with one another as violent, and then explains why they are violent, is itself a revelation. Subliminally you think of yourself as being a nice person and not being violent. Yet that violence is still there within oneself and it doesn't take much for it to surface and overwhelm a conversation. And then it is not possible to have that kind of dialogic space anymore.

JDG: Yes, that describes it well! In *Wandering Around with Words* you ask:

"what happens if we act in the name of certain words without questioning them? They might, for a while, set hard enough to make a crust to stand upon, to rally around. 'Sustainable development', 'uncivilisation', 'stop the war'. But underneath, molten questions and challenges are moving all the time; sooner or later the pressure of what has been left unsaid and unexamined will break to the surface and demand attention."

The importance of the language we use has become a central theme to my research. Not in the sense that we need to analyse everything or be pernickety about every word we use. But in the sense that we need to recognise language as a dynamic flow, a continual stream, where it is implicit that the words or categories we articulate are useful only insofar as they allow for emergence and avoid closing down meaning.

As you say, it seems really important that we pay attention to this. And refrain from just regurgitating words and phrases because we feel they signal something we can identify with. That too easily leads us into a use of language that makes the world appear static and dead. Which ends up reproducing the unspoken power relations that plague our social interactions. I almost want to say that if stories open new possibilities, language can make or break them. How do we deal effectively with our 'encultured inability to engage with complexity', as you call it, and begin to embrace the openness and uncertainty of language?

CL: One of the things that's begun to interest me is how English, and many other languages, are predominantly oriented towards nouns. So our entire language drives a habit of dividing the world up into discrete objects which are supposed to stay put, to be what they say they are, to have labels stuck on them. I wrote a blog post recently which was about being weary of this kind of language, the last line of which ended with the phrase "hand the power of nouns over to rich, ever-unfolding variations upon verbness." I had in mind languages like Navajo, which famously place much less emphasis on nouns and use a lot more combinations of verbs, and how this nurtures in speakers a much more dynamic sense of being-in-process-within-a-world-in-process, if I can put it like that.

Daniela has also been looking into this aspect of Navajo and also a similar tendency in Inuit

languages. Adding to this – more synchronicity! – I got around to reading the second part of your conversation with Tony Dias, and the passages where you talk about not reducing things to labels, which is about setting them up as fixed things outside yourself that you then have to subjugate yourself to, but staying in more fluid relationship with something like Dark Mountain. That was the best articulation I've found so far of trying to understand this kind of dynamic.

There's also a question for me of nurturing the kinds of spaces where people can have these kinds of conversations, because they are about learning, experimenting, and taking risks, so it's important that people feel safe, that trust is built and maintained. That judgement is put to one side, that those involved will practice generosity and compassion towards one another. It's worth emphasising 'practice' because most of us aren't automatically good at these things, so it is very much about practicing and learning to do them better. Although it's not appropriate to every circumstance, for me the Way of Council is a good starting point, a good container, for this kind of work, because it has forms and ground rules that promote that kind of trust, safety and openness – speaking and listening from the heart.

The Rise and Root session that I helped co-host at Uncivilization this year, along with some of the other members of Mearcstapa (the other hosts were Allie Stewart, Daniela Othieno, Tom Hirons, Steve Wheeler and Rima Staines), was a first attempt at creating that kind of space for the whole Unciv community to encounter each other, to speak and listen deeply in a place where all voices are equal. Allowing for things that could be done better next time, many people seemed really to appreciate that session, and for me helping to hold that space was a very powerful and instructive experience, and a real honour as well.

Coming back to the point you made earlier: if a conversation hits on something really sensitive and the people participating don't feel safe (which might not be a conscious awareness), if their sense of reality is threatened, then everyone starts clamping down, retreating to very entrenched positions and hurling insults at one another, which boil down to 'you're a so-and-so' (forcing a label onto them). In my experience, people often have a certain tone of speaking, or certain words or catch phrases they use, or a little routine that they go through, or they start talking faster and blocking their interlocutors out, if they're feeling insecure or threatened or under pressure, and these are always very clammed up and defensive ways of using language. I know I have these habits myself.

The psychologist Wilhelm Reich saw people as having 'character armour', that they store emotional pain and repression and the effects of social moulding within their bodies as a kind of rigidity and tightness (the classic English stiff upper lip, which is about men especially not showing emotion, is an example), which is hugely detrimental to their physical, emotional and spiritual health. I wonder if it's possible to talk about a parallel phenomenon of 'language armour'.

JDG: That's an interesting idea! So we could say that we need to remove our *language armour* before being able to engage in this kind of conversation. I guess that is another way of saying that we are vulnerable when we open up to 'not being right'. And that's why trust and support is so important. It helps us move beyond that initial feeling of exposure into a deeper sense of mutuality.

I'm trying to get to grips with how people express the Dark Mountain narrative in their lives and how to talk about that. You mentioned being attracted to the creative and poetic in Dark Mountain. How do you engage with Dark Mountain in a creative way?

CL: It's interesting because it's not that I don't think I do, it's just that if I do it is not intentional. When I try to have intentional engagement with some kind of mental construct of what I think the Dark Mountain Project is about, things like local living, storytelling, reconnecting to land and, eco-poetry, I don't actually do any of that stuff. And it doesn't come to me, or through me, in any sense.

Yet in the last year I've done a series of photography-related projects for Dark Mountain: I wrote

an illustrated post for the blog, and curated a photo-essay of my own work and that of three other photographers (Bridget McKenzie, Tony Hall and Andy Broomfield) for Dark Mountain 3, and with Bridget and her husband Brian I put together the Light Leaves installation for this year's Uncivilisation. And when I see these things finished there are definite resonances with Dark Mountain concerns: with re-wilding the self, for instance, with the complicated place of photography and more broadly digital technology in a declining civilization; but those are not like ingredients that I set out to put consciously into those projects.

It links back to the question we were just talking about, and again your conversation with Tony Dias really helped my understanding of this. If I try and relate to Dark Mountain as a set of fixed concerns which I'm 'supposed' to be engaging with, paralysis ensues. But if can let go of my preconceptions enough and just make something, I look back at what I've done and can and see that it definitely fits with, or adds to, Dark Mountain's preoccupations. Also, it's worth stressing that all of these projects are in some degree collaborative, they're 'conversations' involving the work of a group of people, not just me.

I guess Dark Mountain has also prompted me to ask bigger questions, about how to live well in a world in which economic and ecological certainties are unravelling. How to make sense of really drastic changes to the world's climate, if you happen to be in a place where the impacts are indirect, and have to be inferred from quite abstract data? How to you make sense of, and live with, the myriad layers of what is happening and what is changing? What are the right choices for me to make, in the context of where I'm at now?

For me, writing and art aren't about responding with the kind of urgency and immediacy that on one level those kinds of questions seem to demand. Or, to be specific, I can't do the kind of writing that I do and feel it is any good if I submit myself to those kinds of pressures. It is much more about a longer rumination, an I-don't-quite-know-what's-going-on process of responding to things in the world which I am not even consciously aware of. It changes the time of reaction. Although you are living in a civilisation which is in the process of decline, materially or culturally, you don't suddenly wake up one morning and see the end result of that process. Even in fifty years, you could only see a fraction of things changing. So how do we live in that much longer scale? It's made me think about that process of adjusting life to that kind of temporality. And be honest about that.

JDG: Wendell Berry, in his recent Jefferson Lecture, says very succinctly and powerfully that sustainability is really about developing cultural cycles that map back onto fertility cycles of the planet. That has condensed what the whole sustainability issue is about for me. And I think that is directly related to what you are saying about time and how time is constructed in our civilisation and that sense of urgency and hurry. When you look at the development of the mechanical clock, for example, it's apparent that over the last thousand years cultural cycles have been increasingly pushed out of sync with natural cycles by a tendency towards speed and efficiency created by clock technology itself.

In Norwich you still find a few churches which have sundials. That was how you measured time and that was all that was needed until you had railroads when you needed to be there on time for the train. It ties in with the development of industrialism all the way up to computers and network time. Today time seems to be just an abstract. We've abstracted time from actual physical process as well as extracted space from physical place.

What seems to be a kind of cultural task is to start paying more attention to natural temporalities, getting used to thinking in different, slower or much longer time-scales. I think that relates to what you are saying about looking ahead and saying it is not just about the next five years, or a small window in which we can deal with climate change or something like that. We actually need to think deeper about how we want to live and how we re-inhabit longer temporalities.

CL: I think that's right. I was thinking about indigenous temporalities as well – although that's a very generalised way of putting it. I recently read Rebecca Solnit's book *A Book of Migrations* where she goes travelling in Ireland. She was talking to people in Southwestern Ireland, which is a rural area where things move slowly, and heard a story about a local guy in a pub nearly getting into a fight with an English visitor, because the local guy was raging quite seriously about an episode that happened during Oliver Cromwell's invasion of Ireland – that's around 350 years ago! And that really made me stop and think, about how there are cultures where people still carry a much deeper, denser sense of historical time, of ancestral time, than we in our speeded-up lives do. What then counts as 'recent' history, or 'too far' in the past to be worth getting into a fight about? Where are past, present and future? Who gets to make those kinds of decisions and judgements? Even my saying 'time moves slowly in Southwestern Ireland' feels like me imposing my assumptions about time on that place – I actually haven't a clue how fast people there feel themselves to be moving!

Going off at a tangent from that, I've been thinking recently that you can also get into the same pattern of linear narrative thinking that the growth society isn't going to continue. What if it actually does? What if it does so for the next twenty years in the part of the world where you find yourself? It almost becomes a challenge of not how you deal with things falling apart but how you deal with things not falling apart! Although the bigger picture is decline, growth could continue in some places, just serving smaller and smaller fractions of society. A number of things brought me to this point where I felt the need for a reality check about the story of the end of growth as much as the story of growth.

I've been haunted on and off by a comment that a guy posted after one of the Dark Mountain blogs, going back a while now so I'm paraphrasing this instead of digging out the source. He was a teenager in the early 1970s, and had heard Teddy Goldsmith speaking at his school, basically saying that within 20 years, industrial civilization would have completely collapsed and the survivors would be subsisting off the land. So the guy decided to go live on the land and become an organic farmer in Devon. He'd raised a family there and it sounded like in every sense he'd lived a beautiful, valuable life, helping to heal the land where he was. Yet he was now finding himself having to face up to his adult kids, who felt that he'd been crying wolf all those years about a terrible future that just didn't materialise, so rather than following his path they want to go live in the city, drive cars, have conventional jobs, that kind of mainstream life. Lots of similar stories dog the environmental movement: over-precise predictions of calamity that didn't come to pass as anticipated.

Several things come out of this for me. Many of the stories in circulation about how collapse will happen seem to mirror the narrative of progress in that they are extraordinarily simplistic – they presume that things will unfold in predictable ways with large-scale general effects. It's curious: in many ways John Michael Greer is one of the most subtle, historically-informed thinkers about peak oil and collapse: he points out over and over again that it's not about a one-hit apocalypse, but a process of slow and uneven contraction and decline, punctuated by brief periods of consolidation, over long stretches of time. But I've started to wonder (although I'm nowhere near an expert on these issues) whether he underestimates some of the ways that current technology might, at least in some places for some segments of the population, complicate or speed up that overall process. It's knowing that the overall picture is correct, but the devil is in the detail, and it's in the detail that each one of us has to work out the best way for him- or herself to live!

It always puzzles me how few people, even extremely smart people, really seem to take to heart that the world is composed of many multiple, discontinuous realities. How often big, general, global consequences get confidently extrapolated from a comparatively narrow set of experiences and perceptions. One of the really hard things to confront about the current crises is how the impacts are extremely uneven, the reactions to those impacts often seem totally counter-intuitive and counter-productive (well, at least from a liberal, left-leaning perspective they do: I guess if you are one of the tiny percentage of financial beneficiaries of the crises, you want to wring as much from the Earth

as you can while you still can), and there seems to be no connection or even mutual recognition across the increasingly sharp divides.

Why is it the overly-simplistic story memes that seem to float around and hold people's attention and belief, rather than the more complicated but more probable versions? Why is there this sense in someone like Greer's writings that he has to keep on repeating certain core premises about the long and uneven descent, to reign in some tendency 'out there' to reduce future events to a one-dimensional collapse? It's like we're telling ourselves stories to try and stay in control of a process of unravelling that actually we can't control to anything like the extent we believe we can, because there are so many variables, and so many uncertainties. Like – this comes back to a point you made earlier – trying to fit events into the mathematical, decimal time-frame that the culture of our modern minds is comfortable with: ten year chunks, fifty year chunks, things that will happen in the short, medium and long term. But again, how does a particular modern (Western) human social notion of 'the short term' map onto unfolding, not directly predictable, patterns of climactic instability caused by global warming? Or onto the natural planetary cycles you talked about earlier? Put it another way, how do you keep in your mind at once the 'slow violence', the little incremental changes that are impossible to see, the fact that these can add up to sudden tipping points of rapid and very drastic transformation, and the eventualities covered by neither of these?

I've been thinking quite a bit for various reasons about stories and credulity, which comes back to the Devon farmer. About the risks of believing someone else's version of reality – especially someone who has authority as a figure of power, an expert or leader – letting it carry you along to the point where you lose your own bearings, and then it turning out that they were not quite as right as you'd believed them to be. Again, Tony Dias's distinction between following your inner compass and following an external pilot is a really helpful metaphor for this. Funnily enough, these thoughts always end up with me recalling the story of the Pied Piper of Hamlyn, who spirited all the town's children away with his beautiful music and shut them up in the mountainside – all except for the little crippled boy who couldn't keep up with the rest, and so was able to raise the alarm. In this light, it intrigues me no end that Rima Staines happened to choose the Pied Piper for her extraordinary painting for the cover of the second Dark Mountain book!

JDG: Yes, it seems like we have a set of deep habits to overcome in breaking away from the one-size-fits-all, quick-and-ready answers we find for ourselves. It's such a difficult process because it involves giving up our sense of control and security, getting comfortable with being vulnerable and being held by others, not seeking salvation in technology and not having solutions! It involves a deeper and longer rumination, as you say, that really doesn't feel very comfortable in the beginning. And we are so used to having our attention taken away by political slogans, economic master-plans, advertisement and propaganda that it is hard just to hold our focus. At the heart of this is something that Tony talks and writes about so well, the fact that our attention is all we have. When I first noticed how often my attention wandered, I was discouraged. It is all too easy for some seemingly brilliant idea to capture our imagination without the slightest resistance.

I am by no means adept in holding my attention but it undeniably gets easier. In those longer moments of rumination we can begin to see how senseless this dissipation of attention is. I'm beginning to think that this lies at the core of every move towards brutality, fascism and cruelty (and the fact that these things are hard to watch makes it all the easier to turn our attention elsewhere). As soon as we lose our attention we are projecting or filling in the gaps with past observations. We miss an opportunity to see what usually falls in between the cracks. And we certainly can't grasp this thing you mention about the diversity, multiplicity and complexity of reality. Which is the very source of any beginning to feel ok in this world!

And it seems plausible to me that we can only begin to make sense of what a non-linear narrative or perspective is, when we have some kind of experience of it. It is there, readily available, all the time

in our being present. There is a moment in David Abram's *Spell of the Sensuous* where he goes out into a field and has an experience of past and future coming together into the present. It is that kind of presence I'm alluding to. If we can hone in on that, we may begin to become more attuned to the astonishingly diverse realities we exist within. The way we are so deeply intermeshed with the rest of the world that surround is undeniable when we let go of our projections and really step into the present.

CL: Yes, I think you're right. Coming back to choosing where to place one's attention, coming back to the present and learning to observe what is there without the baggage of preconceptions and labels and without rushing to classify and extrapolate, this is the beginning of a capacity to approach these matters in fresh ways. As you say, it's not an easy thing to do: it's practicing and failing and trusting yourself to pick it up again, and that you can get better at it, and that then your sense of what the world is does gradually begin to shift.

Appendix I

Example of an initial analysis of the first interview-conversations, 28.02.12.

This text is based on six conversations I have had with people involved in the Dark Mountain Project (DM). In it I try to unearth the different meanings that people infuse the project with as well as grapple with how and why it started, how people see or explain DM, and how [sic] could be analysed as a grassroots innovation. As such it is intended as a pilot study which will allow me both to test my methods and draw some initial conclusions which will help inform and structure my further fieldwork. It is a rather rushed text and should be seen only as an attempt to begin making sense of the interviews which were long (on average between 1-2 hours) and deserve a more in-depth analysis.

Two of the interviewees are founders of the project (Paul Kingsnorth (PK) and Dougald Hine (DH)), while the others (Andrew Taggart (AT), Daniela Othieno (DO), Roger Barnes (RB) and Anna Boyle (AB)) are participants in one way or other. I have also included some of my own statements (JDG) from the conversations and reflections. Here, I have given each statements equal weight in an attempt to create a higher level view of the Dark Mountain Project and I have written this text as a linear story. It is structured under the headings 1) How did DM begin?; 2) What is DM?; and, 3) Initial reflections on DM as a grassroots innovation.

While I acknowledge that each statement does not carry equal weight within DM and that my chosen headlines are arbitrary, I don't think this runs counter to the purpose of this text which is solely to provide a testing ground for my approach and an overview of DM itself. Further, it should be kept in mind that each of the seven narrators have a unique view of DM and that their statements cannot be synthesised into one single story. The aim is to draw out some of the key, underlying strands in order to examine the three section headings in terms of narrative. This means the focus here is the narrative aspect of each of these questions and that both the materiality and sequential nature of stories fall into the background.

This analysis is based on six interviews or 'structured conversations' for most of which I read a lot of the interviewee's writings before approaching them for an interview (the interviews with RB and AB where conducted during the festival so they were more spontaneous). The interviews themselves were open-ended and based on questions or themes

that I had drawn out from the texts or made up in order to answer my overarching research questions. All of the interviews were transcribed and during a re-reading of them I highlighted specific comments and themes. Based on reflections on these statements I selected some of the quotes in order to answer each of the questions posed in the sections headings of this text. My analysis is based on reflections on the interviews, reading DM texts, being a participant at the festival, and my research diary. I briefly reflect on this process and provide a detailed plan for my fieldwork at the end of this document.

1. How did DM begin?

This question can be answered at two levels. One tells the story of how PK and DH met, describes the conversation they engaged in, and recounts the events that led to the formation and take off of DM. The other describes the underlying thoughts and emotions that DM emerged from and this is the story I am concerned with here. First of all, DM has its root in PK's work as an activist, journalist and author. His second book 'Real England', which was published in 2008, deals with 'the death of place-based culture'. During travels around England he documents the advance of consumerism and the demise of local distinctiveness. There is an underlying sadness in the book and it leaves the reader with a sense of loss. The DM manifesto, published in 2009, is partly a reaction to having researched and written Real England.

PK: I was on a bit of a downer for a while after it. Because it's... At the same time you're meeting all these inspiring people doing good stuff but you can see that in the face of what is happening, you know, they can do... they can do good things, but they're not going to hold off the whole... I mean, doing that book was one of the things that brought me up to Dark Mountain in the first place ... [doing Real England] brought home the scale of what is going on. And... like, the importance of being honest about how much I'm not going to stop in this country now.

This connects to two themes in my conversations which captures PK's 'honest analysis of what we can do' as well as his sense of loss. One is the view of the present as a time of collapse, what DH and others have termed 'collapsonomics', and the other is the emotional response to that, namely despair. To begin with collapse, the overarching theme of the DM manifesto and the project itself is that modern civilization is no longer able to sustain itself because its institutions, resources and ability or operate are declining. The consequence is that Western countries are getting poorer and that many of the modern concepts with which we previously made sense of the world are breaking down. This basic analysis, that the way things are at present cannot be sustained and that things are going to change, underpins all of the conversations I've had. The interviewees have different view [sic] on how it is going to play out and what an appropriate response might be but there is a shared sense of living in a time of collapse. However, 'collapse' is clearly understood as a longer historical process rather than a one off catastrophic event:

PK: it is almost like we're stepping down, and this could go on for a hundred years or two

hundred years. And he [John Michael Greer] kind of traces it, compares it to the decline of the Roman empire, which is that kind of thing happening. And at the time, no one was there saying 'oh my god, it's an apocalypse, everything is falling apart', you know, they're just gradually realising that their parents were richer than them.

DO: I don't think it will be sort of a Big Bang kind of end of the world, I don't think so. I think it will be much more by stealth. Which is actually more dangerous on some level.

This underlying sense of danger connects with the emotional response to facing collapse. This is another recurring theme in the conversations and part of the conversations people have in DM is around how to deal with this. PK expresses that there is [sic] side to DM which is about dealing with despair and tells about how DM to him was also part of 'stepping back from an activist mindset'.

PK: there's an element of Dark Mountain which is almost like a kind of therapy group [laughs] which was entirely unintentional but a lot of people get together and start talking about how they are dealing psychologically with all these things.

But the therapeutic aspect of having such conversations doesn't end with simply coming to terms with collapse. On the other side of despair lies the challenge of how to take that realisation and that consciousness with you into your everyday life. For example, DO talks about the need to accept collapse and 'get on with it':

DO: this idea of acceptance, that there are certain things that are just going to happen whether we do our thing or not, they are just going to happen. And some of the things in collapse might be like that, they just might happen. I have a bit this thing about just get on with it. Whatever happens we just need to get on with it somehow.

PK relates to this as a process of 'stripping yourself of your illusions' and simply asking what makes most sense to do in a the world of collapse:

PK: It's just saying 'come on, actually you're not going to change the world'. But you have to be able to do it without giving up on everything. There has to be a way of balancing that out. Which is what, sort of, Dark Mountain sort of came from. It's saying 'this stuff isn't working and there's no point in pretending that it is', and we're committed to certain things which look like they're are going to happen now. And we're not going to stop that either. But that doesn't mean that we just give up and die. It just means we have to reconfigure our relationship with... with what's possible.

This is where the creative aspect of DM comes in. All of the interviewees expressed a sense that the best response to despair and collapse is to try and nurture new ways of seeing the world and finding creative ways to live that are appropriate in times of collapse. This seems to be at the heart of DM. Here, DH gives his version of what this process is like:

DH: the game is almost over and it is time to remind ourselves that it was a game, and that

we are the players rather than the pieces we've been playing with. The game in a sense is what we've known as capitalism, it's the way of viewing the world and the actions that follow from that when you tweak reality as made up of things which can be counted, measured, priced and once you agree to that rule then certain kinds of behaviour become almost inevitable. And a lot of the stuff we've said about human nature is really about the nature of humans when playing that particular game. And history and anthropology have a lot of other material for us which shows that there are other constellations in which we can be human together than the ones which are normal under the rules of this particular game. And as this unravels then things are likely to be useful or not useful to the extent that they have an awareness built in that there are other games that humans are capable of playing.

Learning to play those other games is part of the process of 'uncivilisation'. I think exploring this process of responding to collapse will shed light on the next question 'what is DM?'. But before going on to explore this in more depth, I want to briefly summarise the qualities that the interviewees relate to the process of dealing with collapse intellectually and emotionally. Here, realism, groundedness and honesty were recurring themes in our conversations about what characterises this process, e.g.:

DO: I think it's the honesty. The fact that people could say... And I get that about Dark Mountain the fact that it's looking at dark stuff but it's not really dark. It's actually really hopeful. Maybe hope is... but if there is something really just... 'Oh my god, finally we can just say it as it is', you know, without anybody erm, wanting immediately a programme for how to change things. That's one of the things that I love, that there is no programme of action that has to happen anytime to... but we can just sit down and take a breath and kind of go 'ok, what is it, what do we do?'

2. What is DM?

The common word that came up in the interviews about what DM is was 'conversation'. This word clearly meant different things to the interviewees which is seen in the kind of words they associated with conversation. Both PK and DH talked about a 'guided conversation' which is perhaps not surprising seeing they founded DM. Other words and phrases that come up in connection to conversation was 'a space' where 'the rules are different' and you 'can come to be confused', a 'place for getting perspective', 'improvising', 'experimenting' and 'being creative'. DM as a place for getting perspective has been a natural point for discussion because it is implicit in the name, as PK says: 'the mountain is a place to go to to get perspective'. As such it is a place which is removed from the processes involved in collapse:

PK: it's just a more elemental, primeval place that you can go to and it was there before the civilization arose and it will be there afterwards. However many turbines you put on top of it, it will always be there. It's this kind of solid rock and it's a place of perspective. You know, that's what Dark Mountain was for me, it's this place of perspective.

Further, this sense of perspective is also related to the sense of the realism of collapsonomics:

PK: in the context of the sixth mass extinction, in the history of Earth, us not getting pensions is actually not very important. It's important to us but it doesn't matter very much. So, I think you have... it's important to lift your eyes off the ground a bit for that.

It is within this place of perspective that DM conversations take place. This provides shared ground for both the process of dealing with collapse and for building creative responses. For DM conversationalists, like myself, this is actually a relief. Having read and thought about the state of the world and coming to the conclusion that things cannot go on is not an easy process. It is not made easier by having to start conversations about the world from scratch by explaining concepts like the greenhouse effect. I've written about that in my interview with DH (http://patternwhichconnects.com/blog/beyond-the-parameters-of-the-game-a-conversation-with-dougald-hine/):

JDG: I didn't feel I could relate to many of my closest friends and family about this. It took a while to come to terms with. When I then encountered a whole bunch of people with whom I could skip the 'is climate change really happening?' debate, and jump straight into 'how are we going to deal with the unthinkable?' I was, needless to say, both glad and relieved. And, despite the gloomy background story, there was nothing doom and gloom about it.

I got a very similar feeling from the interviewees.

DO: when we went to the first festival, I went with two friends, we immediately just kind of found these other people that we just made this little group of about ten people that moved through the whole festival. And I'm still in touch with all of them and doing stuff. It just became like a... just a space that you could sit down, you could really be honest, you could argue as well because we didn't all, you know it's not like... just because we all feel that things are crap, we all think this is what we should be doing or this is why even. So, you could argue. But it was just, there was just a certain level of agreement of some sort. And it did make me feel for the first time that erm.... I'm actually becoming part of some kind of unity which I haven't had, I think, in London. And it is, actually we've' been sitting around a lot of fires since then. Actually. Real fires,

The use of fire, light or a torch as a metaphor for DM is another returning theme. In addition to the image of the campfire this was also used in connection with the metaphor of DM as a point high up where people who saw those campfires would come to. In the manifesto, and elsewhere, the people who participate are often referred to as 'mountaineers' who have somehow found their way up the mountain. And this is very apt because the people who are part of Dark Mountain have all come there of their own accord. There is no sense in which DM is campaigning to recruit people for the cause. The 'torch', which in the context of the next quote is the manifesto, is a kind of signal for people who are seeking that kind of meaningful conversation:

DH: It's actually more just signalling a place where people can converge to see where it goes next. And it was quite important to me that where it went was to return to that conversational quality rather than... erm... yea, rather than a programme to be defended...

People find each other not because they are coming to [sic] together with an agenda for changing the world but because they are seeking people who have had similar considerations about the world and are working on practical, real life solutions to dealing with it.

PK: It is not as if we created those people, they were out there anyway, we just had... we just made a space and they all came into it.

The way people come into it is really interesting and something that needs further exploration. Here's one example of how finding DM is expressed:

AT: There's some kind of intimation, some visionary gleam and it seems like we're groping towards each other and finding not just consummation but some sense of kinship and this is really better than what was going on before. It's hard for me to say in more direct terms how I got in touch with these people, it's more like you find one person, you say hello, you dance around a bit, another person comes in and stops by and you say hello, you find each other.

The kind of conversation that takes place is also very different to conventional forms of debate in which topics around the political, economic, environmental and social state of the world are discussed. There is no need to have the same views (although there is usually a shared sense of perspective) and there is not even a sense that the conversation has to end with agreement. More often than not the conversation is explorative, open-ended and non-linear, and there is a sense in which confusion and puzzlement is valued in themselves.

PK: I think it is also a place you can come to be confused in a way. You know, in a healthy way. We start of with this understanding and acceptance of where you are and what's happening, and you you don't really know what to do, you might not even know how to articulate it. But you want to be somewhere else where people feel the same and talk to them about it and work it out.

It is clear that seeing DM as a conversation means paying attention to the ways in which the conversation is facilitated. A great deal of effort goes into avoiding closing down the conversation and allowing a different mode of interaction to take root. This mode is seen as fundamentally different to the 'planning and control' mode of public and political discourse.

PK: When you actually take the abstract stuff off the page and take your massive intellectually satisfying plan and try and make it work... that won't work. Or at least bits of it work and others bits of it don't work and it never, you know... We can't even plan our own economy. You know, we're not going to plan the whole fucking world. So... and that's...

that's... that's were improvisation then comes in.

Improvisation characterises both how DM unfolded, an underlying attitude to the world and a quality of the conversation that takes place:

DH: A conversation, an improvisation. Erm... something that is rooted in being sociable as opposed to instrumental. Erm, so where there is never too much pressure to move to action or to move to answers because there is an intrinsic value [. . .] another sense of the spirit of improvisation is a kind of openness to unexpected opportunities. Erm, to the thing that matters, the thing that's at the heart of it taking the forms you'd never thought of, rather than being too attached to the form that you happened to start out having in mind.

I will come back to this in relation in considering DM as a grassroots innovation because this is also a core organisational principle underlying setting up and running DM. Improvisation as a mode of being sociable and avoiding instrumental ways of thinking is core to DM conversations and resonates with the felt need to avoid programmatic thinking which easily changes the nature of the conversation:

DO: So, when you kind of step back from the idea that you are in control then maybe you can also step back from this idea that you are right.

Setting that space up and keeping it open requires quite a lot of attention and effort on behalf of the organisers. As I experienced at the festival last year, a lot of people want to bring their own particular agenda into DM and some people find it difficult to get used to a new mode of conversation and 'stepping back from the idea that you are right'. At the same time it is a fine balance between being 'an open space' and maintaining a sense of coherence or direction:

PK: if you just say Dark Mountain is a conversation then it doesn't have a purpose in a way. You know, it has to be a guided conversation almost. Or a conversation with a particular, not an end point, but moving in a certain direction.

That direction is a slow shifting of worldview throughout the conversation – towards an ecocentric worldview where humans are no longer the sole focal point of social organisation. The way in which this is facilitated will be one of the key issues to grapple with in the fieldwork. Currently, I suspect that it happens through having people who have a deep understanding of the issues that are discussed at the same time as they are highly skilled in the kind of conversation that is engaged in DM. Through shared exploration and 'guided conversation' the way in which the conversation unfolds can slowly become a mode of seeing or being in other contexts or conversations. I think this is what DH means when he says:

DH: all of those are manifestations of [DM] that's sort of... at a higher level has a certain coherence as a philosophy. But, not a philosophy in the sense of a complete set of rational propositions, but a philosophy in the sense of an attitude to life and an attitude to reality

and to one's situation.

Facilitating this conversation almost needs to be improvised to a degree because everyone coming into the conversation will have different starting points and different ways of approach. A lot of effort goes into balancing 'openness' and 'direction':

PK: you have to kind of hold onto those [core] principles without telling anyone how to do it. [. . .] it has to have... it has to have that... that sense of specificity without being too... without being prescriptive.

The elusiveness both of this process and of its purpose is what makes DM difficult to pin down, and often the interviewees themselves find it hard to express exactly what DM is.

DO: So I do ask myself what is it that is Dark Mountain about what I do? But I think what I come back to is that it is something which hasn't got a dogma, there is no, you know, what you where saying earlier about people needing an ideology or people needing to belong to some sort of... some kind of rules of some sort. That just isn't there. So it is almost like what makes it Dark Mountain is the absence of something. Rather than... it is really hard to define what the thing is that is present. I know what it is not, it is not an ideologically bound movement. It is a freer space.

I think DH's statement that DM is 'a cultural movement for navigating collapse' is as precise as it gets. In order to be part of it you obviously have to recognise that there is even such a thing as collapse and this is far from obvious to everyone. In this sense it is 'like a movement of people who have seen the promises broken' (PK), which also goes a long way to explain who is part of it, and how they come to, DM. All of these issues need further exploration and I will need to pay attention to these aspects in my further fieldwork. They are also only half of the story but for the purpose of an initial exploration of the they ways on which the narrators related their experience of DM, this will do.

3. Initial reflections on DM as a grassroots innovation

The sense of DM being a place where people can come to have a different kind of conversation about what is happening in their personal lives and in the wider world is supported by my own experience at the festival. This aspect of the conversation was empowering people to find both the strength and the courage to do their own projects and seek out new ways of things:

RB: sometimes one can feel overwhelmed by the problems of the world, and I go away from this [festival] feeling less overwhelmed, and thinking 'no, perhaps all these ideas I have aren't so silly after all, and I should carry on pursuing them' [. . .] There are projects which I want to start getting moving which will... coming here makes me feel more like I am going to do them.

AB: For me Dark Mountain is a meeting point where. . . really, the main point is listening, is hearing other people. Seeing how they do things, and then how that can help me do my

thing.

Personally, I came back from the festival feel empowered but also unsettled because it had been a challenging weekend where a lot of my assumptions about the world had been shaken. It [sic] remember having a feeling that it was important to find a way to express the ideas and thoughts I'd had in my everyday life. This quote is taken from my reflections on the festival written after I came back:

> JDG: I don't think that the Dark Mountain Project simply reinforced the stories we all came with, it was challenging and demanding as well. And at different points I had to accept that my version of the world wasn't the most accurate. It gave me new perspectives but it is not always an easy process to find a new view. Perhaps the Dark Mountain Project is like Wittgenstein's slight of hand when he turned the picture upside down and showed the child that to someone standing on the other side of the planet, she was living on the bottom. It is a different narrative of the times we live in, one which favours honest observation over technical answers, and one which says it as it is. Things are not going so well. And if we don't start living differently in the world, if we don't start living by different stories, things are not going to get any better. That is not easy.

To me, it is the 'living by different stories' which is the innovative part of DM. The festival was full of people who shared their knowledge on alternative ways of living, did workshops, skill-sharing, and demonstrations. All of these innovations are already there and they are applied in other grassroots innovations as well, Transition Towns being the most obvious example. It is not the innovation, or even the use, of technologies that is novel about DM. It is the accompanying stories that weave the use of these technologies into peoples lives and create not only new material infrastructures but new institutions and communities as well. This came out in my interview with AT where he likened uncivilisation to becoming settled in life:

> AT: perhaps uncivilisation is just an attempt to answer the question of 'what would being a settler today be like?' [...] one could imagine settlement as in part invoking new infrastructures as well [...] It could also be, and Dougald speaks of this a fair amount, reinvoking old models that worked in the past but were lost or cast aside a bit by some of our movements of modern civilisation.

The innovation is a creation of a shared imagination and narrative of a world where these technologies make sense and become useful and, importantly, this is a qualitatively different world than the one in which these technologies were made. This is very similar to the kind of innovation that programmers and hackers do when they take chunks of programmes or technologies and put them together to create something entirely new, only this is done by consciously creating a new reality in which people's lives unfold. And the real novelty is that this reality is not in the future but already present and being nurtured into being. It is part of the different kind of conversation and the mode of organisation within DM, which is fostered deliberately:

DH: I distinguish between orchestration as having been the dominant mode of social organisation during the industrial era and improvisation as being another mode which is very ancient, has been marginalised and is becoming increasingly important.

Improvisation as a mode of organisation (or conversation) attaches no value to instrumental goals but allows experimentation and accidents to occur, examine why they happened, how they work and nurture them if they are useful. Improvisation coupled with and underlying attitude to the world which sees nature and places as having intrinsic value is the guiding the experiments that take place within DM:

DH: If you were to say that the thing at the heart of Dark Mountain is possibly an attitude. A way of being in the world, a way of being together. Erm... and that each of these manifestations, you know, feels like... feels right to the extent that it is a manifestation of that attitude.

The social institutions that spring from this kind of experimentation are not necessarily easy to see and they might remain invisible until they find wider use. But they are often very real and visible to the people taking part in them, e.g. AT has set up his counselling practice entirely as a gift economy. He similarly relates this to an attitude and explicitly calls it a social experiment:

AT: trying to walk nimbly forward in any case is social experimentation, that you also find elsewhere. And what I like is the idea of having small scale, and porous and semi-invisible institutions emerge that are serving a variety of purposes and later on might get scaled up.

This is going back to first principles and saying that the outcome cannot be controlled so what is really important about the process of innovation is the underlying values and attitude that the particular innovation springs from.

PK: we're pretty sure where we stand in terms of what our principles are, and we're pretty sure that everything is falling apart here in some way, but we don't know where it is going to go, and we can't argue any solutions, but what we can do is have a process of working it through. And in that process, you know, things will... things will be created. And writing will be created, art will be created, something new will come, erhm, if you kind of... if you start to do it with that attitude.

The creative aspect of DM is the creation of new narratives which allow for new configurations of people and technology to emerge. This is linked to the idea of DM being a place where 'the rules of the game' are different and a space where people can 'practice different games'. All the interviewees expressed a sense that they had found new opportunities for expression and trying out other ways of doing things:

DO: And then it's opened up a lot of well possibilities around sort of art and creative projects that I'm starting with people that I've met through Dark Mountain. Erm... and me kind of realising that maybe that is... that's the role. You know, it has also given me that whole thing about art and writing as a really valid thing in this whole transformation or

collapse.

At the same time there is a large group of people who are very technology savvy (a lot of the people speaking at the festival were hacktivists). Using the opportunities that ICT opens up to forge new social institutions is an aspect of DM which deserve close attention. There is a whole debate about using virtual platforms to bring new people and institutions into 'first life' within this part of DM, and a lot of people learn how to navigate and benefit from this through DM:

DO: And it is amazing that even online... because before I was involved with Dark Mountain I was hardly ever on Facebook, I just didn't really do... but I was never... I was one of those people who thought that on Twitter people talk about what they have for breakfast, you know. And then, it was actually Dougald who kept saying 'go on Twitter do it', you know, and then I did. I have met quite a few people on Twitter that I now know in real life. You know, connecting. It is even like this fireplace thing in the virtual world. The nice thing is that it then moves, it doesn't stay there, at least not for me. I think there are people who have all kinds of discussions on the forum and stuff and they get very heated and they get quite pointless sometimes. But for me it has moved from online to real life, really.

DM as a cultural movement is set aside from other current movements in its focus on building new social institutions and nurturing different ways of the present crisis. Asked about what makes DM different from the Transition movement DH replied:

DH: Very much the emphasis on deep cultural narratives and choosing to address that while explicitly renouncing a sort of progressive or developmental linear meta-narrative. Because I think that, on the one hand there are lots of places where people tend to be more focussed on, in one sense or another, technical or 'hard ends' of, rather than cultural or 'soft ends' of, the mess we are talking about.

The 'soft end' of creating solutions to social-environmental crisis is providing a new narrative where concepts that are more useful (because they are more accurate in the age of collapse) can emerge for people to organise their lives around. It is as if collapse also creates a conceptual vacuum in which old ideas (such as 'economic growth' or 'the career') become outmoded. This also provides breeding ground for new and better social concepts. This is explicitly recognised in many of the interviews, e.g.:

AT: Well I think that we can begin to see, I use a lot of metaphors in my practise, that when new social conditions emerge or new natural conditions, or some understanding of seeing the world today differently emerges, then we're also going to have an incredible flourishing of metaphors, some of which are going to be useful and some of which are not.

In the context of collapse, DM is therefore also a space which

DH: allows for that kind of coming into awareness of the arbitrariness of the rules of the

particular games that we arrive familiar with whether that is the big game of capitalism, the game of sustainability as we've known it, all of these things that we've known them because they are open to this kind of challenge.

This challenge, and experimentation, takes place in stories and the declared goal is a shift in worldview through their enactment:

PK: So when we were talking about new stories and writing about things differently, for me one of the big things I'm looking for is that shifting of consciousness. It's a very hard thing to do, it's a very hard thing to do, and it will take a long time. It is not like us producing a few book is going to change all that but we've got to start getting that discussion out there, and that debate and those... trying different ways of seeing things.

In this sense, art and writing are ideal media for expressing different worldviews.

PK: if you're going to write a novel you going to do it... to create any successful piece of art, you have to hold open that way of looking at the world where there are multiple ways of seeing. Every character has got a completely different relationship to what is happening. And a different way of seeing it, being, and they've got a different consciousness.

In this way, I think that a further exploration of the DM narrative and how it plays out in the participants lives will make it possible to examine if and how that shift of consciousness occur.

Reflections/pointers for further fieldwork and a provisional plan of study

The exciting aspect of this study, and the potential original contribution to the literature, is that this line of analysis allows me to explore how grassroots innovations could be sites of transition in epistemology and ontology in addition to socio-technical infrastructure. This initial analysis has highlighted certain questions that need further exploration in order to do this, including:

- How people find DM and come into the conversation;

- The ways in which the conversation is facilitated;

- The different expressions the DM narrative take in participants lives;

- How technologies are used and viewed as tools to enable change;

- How improvisation as a mode of social organisation works; and

- What kind of new social institutions emerge within DM.

These are questions which I will seek to address in my further fieldwork.