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Abstract

This dissertation examines the challenges to belonging, attachment and identity created by the current climate crisis. It looks at how the alterations in the climate’s patterns and peoples’ expectations of them (e.g. seasonal temperatures, weather, and storm intensity and frequency) are creating practical, cultural and affective disruptions. It focuses on how the material and affective dimensions of climate change are destabilizing our sense of place, attachment to place, and ultimately a mode of belonging that I call “place-belonging.” The first chapter establishes the deep connection with place by contrasting the symbolic understanding of land in nationalist discourse and literature with an affective, sensorial attachment illustrated by our visceral response to landscape and abstract art. The second chapter argues that we must supplement the notion of territory with that of place-belonging. Unlike national or civic belonging, both of which rely on formal, abstract territorial frames, place-belonging puts the emphasis on more personal engagements with surroundings: familiarity, bodily imbrication and solace. Climate and the rhythms it establishes in our lives are the themes of the third chapter. Looking at both the violence of altered storm activity and the more subtle shifts in seasons and weather, I argue that climate change is causing a kind of homesickness, unease and anxiety. The final chapter gives special attention to the impact of climate change in the Arctic and small island states, two regions experiencing the phenomenon at a faster pace than the rest of the planet. Residents in these places are acutely aware of the threat that climate change poses to their homes and sense of belonging and self-consciously articulate their plight as the “canary in the coal mine” cautionary tale to the rest of the world. The
dissertation concludes that the impact climate change is having on a sense of belonging is an important, but underappreciated, facet of the climate crisis. Taking this facet seriously will not only alert us to the broad stakes of the crisis, but also to the reality that it is not a disaster to come, but rather one that we are living and experiencing already.
Acknowledgements

I was warned before embarking on this adventure that a PhD is an arduous undertaking. Nonetheless, embark I did. I had an inkling that I would find the process rewarding, despite the obstacles. There was something seductive in the idea of taking several years to see where my thoughts might take me. Now that I find myself on the other side I can confirm that both premonitions proved true. And that I am pleased and a little surprised about where those thoughts led me.

What I had not realized before taking the PhD plunge is that it takes a vast network of people to get through a doctorate. I consider myself fortunate in the network that has seen me through these last six turbulent years. My first thanks must go to my advisor, Jane Bennett. Jane is a marvellous combination of generous, frank and insightful. Her openness, encouragement and guidance allowed me to write the dissertation that I wanted to write, with all its idiosyncrasies. Most of all, her support helped me to enjoy the process of writing this thesis. My second reader, Daniel Deudney, who provided very helpful suggestions, along with the rest of my committee - William Connolly, Rebecca Brown, and Naveeda Khan - all deserve warm thanks.

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I am grateful to Sharon Switzer and Jin-me Yoon for allowing me to use their works of art in my dissertation and to the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Finnish National Gallery for giving me permission to reproduce works from their collections. Thanks also to my friends, and accomplished photographers, Élise Newman, Dave Weatherall and Jacob Leibovitch, for letting me use their photographs.

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inspiration even in the most unusual places. I can count on them to give me the gentle
nudge that I need to take risks. They always seem to know when those risks are worth
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To my parents,
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who taught me to be curious about the world
and to appreciate the art of writing.

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who showed me that academic thought and
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Introduction

Mamie l'hiver est à l'envers
Ne t'en retourne pas dehors
Le monde est en chamaille
On gèle au sud, on sue au nord
- Jean-Pierre Ferland, Je Reviens Chez Nous

Sing an elegy for the washed away!
For the cycles of life, for the saltwater marshes,
the houses, the humans – whole islands of humans.
Going, going, gone!
- Zadie Smith, Elegy for a Country's Seasons

There is no experience quite like skating outdoors in the middle of winter. Your whole body moves differently. Smooth, fluid movement replaces the more familiar staccato of steps. The result is an exhilarating glide, though not the effortless glide of an indoor skating rink with its highly controlled ice surface. On an outdoor rink – and even more on a frozen pond or canal – the ice is never completely smooth. There are cracks and dips and rough patches scattered all over the surface, demanding constant vigilance. Your muscles must remain alert, ready to respond to unexpected changes in texture. They must remain loose and flexible in order to shift your weight and maintain the distribution that keeps you upright on those two thin metal blades.

There is a serene pleasure that comes from the rhythmic strides of skating – with their accompanying cutting and scrapping sound – that propel you forward along the ice. You settle into the rhythm and the rhythm settles into you. There is also exhilaration. This comes in the corners. Executed properly, with a cross-over step, skating around a corner is a moment of perfect co-operation among body, blade and ice. As you lift your outside
foot to cross it over the inside one your body hangs in extreme precarity. The entire weight of your body balances on the outside edge of the blade gliding along the ice. Learning how to execute this technique – before you come to know and feel the properties of the blade and the ice – that first step over feels like a leap into the void. The split second before the hovering blade touches the ice is a wobbly eternity. But with practice this manoeuvre becomes second nature. A habitual gesture informed by an acquired familiarity with subtle changes in the material behaviour of ice and blade. You come to know, for example, that on a warm day the ice will be softer, yielding more readily to the dig of the blade, but that the softness also creates drag, making the cross-over both easier and slower. The sharpness of the blade also plays a role. Too sharp and you cut into the ice too readily, reducing the resistance from the ice that holds your body, and leaving you vulnerable. Too dull and you can not cut into the ice, meaning that your blade slips across the surface without holding your weight. As experience builds up instinctual knowledge you learn to subtly adjust the angle of your body and the speed of the cross-over to respond to the conditions of the day.

Skating has long been my favourite winter sport, but over the mild winters spent in Baltimore working on my PhD I wasn’t able to practice it. For the last year of my PhD I moved back to Montreal and over the course of that winter I eagerly took up skating again. I lived a short walk away from the Parc Lafontaine, one of the city's best known downtown parks. Several times a week I would sling my skates over my shoulder and head over to its large frozen pond. As I reacquainted myself with this neglected sport I was pleased not only with how quickly my basic skills returned, but also that my aptitude
for reading the skating conditions and consequent bodily adjustments resurfaced. Skating alone out on that frozen urban pond, refamiliarizing myself with sensations and adaptations, I felt a profound sense of belonging. I felt a resonance with the climate and environment.

Skating on the pond in the Parc Lafontaine was for me an instance of what I will describe in Chapter Two of this dissertation as “place-belonging.” To briefly rehearse that concept here, place-belonging points to an often overlooked mode of belonging. Unlike the more common social or national forms of belonging, this variant foregrounds an attachment to the material world. It acknowledges that familiarity and bodily imbrication with place contribute to a sense of solace. As I will argue throughout the dissertation, this sense of belonging is important to understanding the magnitude of the ecological and climate crisis that we are facing. As my skating examples illustrates, we are part of a body/self/climate/land assemblage and are thus sensitive to disturbances and disruptions in our environment, perhaps in ways that we are only just discovering.

The central concern of this dissertation is the impact that climate change is having on human well-being. The ecological impacts of climate change are by now both well-documented and increasingly well-known to the broad public. Similarly, the heavy costs of extreme weather events intensified by climate change have become commonplace concerns for governments and insurance companies alike. What is only just beginning to be noticed is the emotional and psychological cost of climate change, yet this affective burden of the crisis is just as important, just as world-changing. When I began working on this topic I started saving articles and other references that I came across to the
emotional toll and anxiety-inducing nature of climate change. When I started this collection these pieces appeared as a trickle. A noticeable one, but still just a trickle. Remarkably, over the four or so years that I have been working on this project that trickle has turned into a steady stream. From an article in The Nation announcing the possible death by climate change of Phoenix, Arizona,¹ to assertions that weather extremes have become the “new normal,”² to a panoply of very Canadian pieces about the threat posed by climate change to outdoor hockey rinks (plus a new organization tracking climate change's impacts on outdoor rinks through the crowd-sourced www.rinkwatch.org).³ And in this year of the somewhat surreal winter Olympics in the controversial (and perplexingly tropical) Sochi, the future viability of this world sporting tournament was put in doubt, as we seem to be running out of sufficiently and reliably cold host sites for the Winter Games.⁴ As the Agence France-Presse reported, of the 19 cities that hosted the Winter Games from 1924 to 2010 only 10 to 11 would have a reliably cold climate (at least 30 cm of snow on the highest sites) in 2050, and only six would remain in 2080.⁵ Given these predictions, some of the images from the 2014 Sochi Olympics – such as the


⁵ Agence France-Presse.
cross-country skiers clad in shorts and t-shirts – seemed like premonitions of the Winter Games to come.

A few of these recent articles point more directly to the anxiety being caused by the experience of climate change. One piece, for example, notes that not only are some people actively perceiving climate change but that “[t]his feeling of having a firsthand account of global warming was so meaningful, it positively predicted concern for local risks related to climate change: think forest fires, drought, changes to animal and plant species, and public health.”6 Perhaps unsurprisingly, from the epicentre of psychoanalysis comes an article about a resurgent ecological direction in psychology.7 Of note in this field is the concern with the impact of the harm to the mind-nature relationship on mental health. The reporter notes that professionals in this field have coined a number of terms to identify the unease with the state of the planet: “nature-deficit disorder,” “ecoanxiety,” and “ecoparalysis.” As I will explore more fully in the chapters to follow, Australian psychologist Glenn Albrecht has proposed an overall category for mental health issues caused by the degradation of physical surroundings: “psycho-terratic syndromes.” Though he does not limit these conditions to unease caused by climate change, one condition in particular, the syndrome he calls “solastalgia,” is quickly gaining traction as a description of climate change-induced anxiety. He means this term, which he constructed by putting together the words “solace” and “nostalgia,” to identify the “the pain experienced when there is recognition that the place where one resides and that one

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6 Misty Harris. “Climate change threat more real to those with perceived personal experience: study,” *The Calgary Herald*, September 17, 2012.

loves is under immediate assault . . . a form of homesickness one gets when one is still at ‘home.’”

As I will examine more fully in Chapter 3, this term resonates because it identifies the growing unease and loss we are feeling as we come to know the impacts of climate change on our daily lives and cherished places.

These various expressions of malaise brought about by climate change point to the need to understand belonging not just in a social context, but also in a “platial” one. This latter element of belonging is often overlooked, making it more difficult to understand why the climate crisis has such a deep impact. While it is true, as I will explore in the first chapter, that nationalist accounts of belonging rely on a symbolic appeal to an attachment to land, these accounts do not explore the full extent of our relationship with land and environment. Besides, what is really at stake in the unease brought about by climate change is a much more material, embodied sense of belonging. When the places that generate a sense of belonging for us are put at risk we feel a threat also to ourselves. Some of our anchors in the world, some of the parameters of what make us, are eroding. The resulting alienation, dislocation, and feeling of being cast adrift is profound.

The focus on belonging in the context of climate change is important because it expands our picture of what is at risk in this crisis. As Timothy Morton argues, it is not just the planet that is being destroyed, but also our world. In fact, he contends that our

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8 Daniel Smith.
world has already been destroyed. For Morton, climate change signals the end of the
world because it elides the distinction between background and foreground. Where we
were once used to a clear distinction between weather as foreground – the topic of daily
polite conversation – and climate as background – the subject of scientists, and possibly
farmers – the two have now collided. To talk of one is now immediately to evoke the
other. Too bad about the rain lately, eh? Yeah, damn climate change. Better get used to it.

It is bad enough that we are living after the end times of the world, but Morton argues
that its dissolution also reflects back on us:

> The specialness we granted ourselves as unravelers of cosmic meaning, exemplified in the uniqueness of Heideggerian Dasein, falls apart since there is no meaningfulness possible in a world without a foreground-background distinction. Worlds need horizons and horizons need backgrounds, which need foregrounds. ... We have no world because the

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9 “The end of the world has already occurred. We can be uncannily precise about the date on which the world ended... It was April 1784, when James Watt patented the steam engine, an act that commenced the depositing of carbon in Earth's crust – namely, the inception of humanity as a geophysical force on a planetary scale... The end of the world is correlated with the Anthropocene, its global warming and subsequent drastic climate change, whose precise scope remains uncertain while its reality is verified beyond question.” Timothy Morton. *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 7.

10 Morton prefers the term “global warming” to “climate change,” arguing that the switch to “climate change” has resulted in a decrease in public concern stemming from the attitude that climate has always been changing. (7-8) But if his quibble with the terminology is due to a worry that cynics and deniers can use it to dismiss the phenomena, or that it fails to elicit the appropriate sense of urgency in the public, it seems that the same can be said about “global warming.” We have all heard the cynics quip, during a cold snap, that we are experiencing the proof that global warming is a fabrication. If isolated experiences of cold are enough to put the term “global warming” in doubt it is clear that this term also has its flaws. It seems to me that there are two good reasons to stick with “climate change” as the prevalent term. First, because not only temperatures, but also weather patterns, levels of precipitation, storm frequency and intensity, and ecological responses are affected. Referring to the crisis as “climate change” draws all of those consequences conceptually under the same umbrella. To bring a hesitant or suspicious public on side it is important that the term for the crisis highlight these other consequences and their interrelatedness. This seems especially important now that there is a growing public understanding (perhaps even an exaggerated one) that storms have been made more dangerous by climate change. The second reason to stick with “climate change” is a simple matter of good communications strategy. “Climate change” is the term now overwhelmingly used by environmental organizations, governments and international organizations. It has traction and the last thing we need in the midst of an urgent debate that already contends with a significant amount of ambiguity is a row over terminology. For these two reasons I will be using the terminology of “climate change” throughout this dissertation.
objects that functioned as invisible scenery have dissolved.¹¹

Morton's contention that the climate crisis already represents the end of the world is important because it gets us away from the more prevalent framing of climate change as a disaster-to-come. Discussions of climate change quickly evoke graphs predicting rapid future temperature rise, maps of anticipated expanded flood plains or storm paths, or narratives about the harsh circumstances to which we are condemning our children and grandchildren. The work of Ruth Irwin is a good example of the disaster-to-come narrative. Her piece “Reflections on Modern Climate Change and Finitude”¹² makes some important contributions to our understanding of the nature of the climate crisis by tracing its origins to an attitude of mastery over nature, and to a technological and capitalist framing of the world. Particularly important is her argument that the notion of sustainability is flawed because it in fact reproduces the logic that led to the climate crisis in the first place. As she argues, sustainability is always understood in a context of continuous and exponential economic growth and itself represents a modern technological approach to solving the crisis.¹³ In this piece Irwin also presents climate change as the moment of finitude. She argues that “[t]here is a distinct possibility that global warming could tip us into a climatic epoch that is non-conducive to human life. Climate change introduces the finitude of human civilization to view with a clarity that

¹¹ Morton, 104.


¹³ Irwin, 59.
has rarely before been seen.”

She reads this finitude (or, more importantly, the awareness of finitude) as productive of a new, more ecological orientation to the world since it “reflects back on our activities and norms and redefines them as life enhancing or life denying. We have better criteria for judging modern normativity.”

It is the knowledge of our finitude that pushes us to assess and alter our current norms. Sadly, in the case of climate change we have seen little proof that the knowledge of impending doom produces action. More importantly, this focus on finitude frames climate change as a disaster-to-come. Climate change is in this picture the event, the catastrophe that marks the end of the world, the calamity that awaits us. But we know that this is not the case. Climate change is a process, a system, and it is already underway. Yes, it will get worse, but it is already happening and it is already pretty catastrophic. Maybe not for me, writing on a pleasant spring day in Montreal, but for many people on this same day elsewhere on the planet it is bad. Just ask the manager of a water reservoir in California after this year's devastating drought. Or a homeowner in the Maldives who saw her home washed away by the rising ocean.

Climate change is happening now. It is a complex disaster unfolding according to different temporalities in different places, but it is nonetheless taking place everywhere on the planet in the present. Talking about climate change as the disaster-to-come is

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14 Irwin, 67.

15 Irwin, 69.

16 Irwin, 71.

dangerous because it immediately opens up a space for complacency, a space for putting off action. It reanimates the possibility of “the miracle,” of the technological solution that will save us.\textsuperscript{18} Most worrying, it sustains the delusion that there is time to adapt, that we can continue living as destructively as we are. Framing climate change as the \textit{disaster-to-come} only deepens and intensifies the crisis. And it reinforces our presentist orientation to the world. In a recent article for \textit{The Nation} Naomi Klein singles out this attitude as an obstacle to meaningful action to address climate change.\textsuperscript{19} She argues that “[b]ecause of the way our daily lives have been altered by both market and technological triumphalism, we lack many of the observational tools necessary to convince ourselves that climate change is real – let alone the confidence to believe that a different way of living is possible.”\textsuperscript{20} Developing those tools may help us to put in place the required measures to change the way we live.

In this dissertation I will attempt to make the present character and the affective cost of climate change sensible. At times to make the latter intelligible I will make recourse to projection, the very strategy I have just criticized. These projections are \textit{real} and it is important to reflect on what they mean. But I will try to avoid the traps of the large-scale framing as \textit{disaster-to-come} by linking these projections to very intimate – bodily and emplaced – knowledges. I hope that this anchor of visceral familiarity will

\textsuperscript{18} See Thomas Homer-Dixon. \textit{The Ingenuity Gap: Can We Solve the Problems of the Future?} (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2001).

\textsuperscript{19} “Another part of what makes climate change so very difficult for us to grasp is that ours is a culture of the perpetual present, one that deliberately severs itself from the past that created us as a well as the future we are shaping with our actions.” Naomi Klein. “The Change Within: The Obstacles We Face Are Not Just External.” \textit{The Nation}. April 21, 2014.

\textsuperscript{20} Klein.
allow me to avoid the runaway futurism of more abstract accounts. Feeling, even in its mimetic or anticipatory form, is intensely present, bringing invocations of future feeling or disruption of sensation into an immediate relationship with the present. I also hope that the place focus will alter the tenor of future-oriented statements. When connected to an intimate knowledge of place, projections do not lead to the gross abstraction that I have argued is dangerous, but rather to a more holistic conception of time and our place in it. They evoke a model of the passage of time that recognizes the influence of past actions on us and our world today and the seeds of future scenarios being planted in the present. It is the opposite conception of temporality to the one Klein diagnoses as currently dominant and problematic. It situates us within ecological, geological time. The focus on place will help develop a language of what Zadie Smith refers to as intimate words. Words that not only connect us to the crisis, but that acknowledge that we are engaged in a process of mourning. Mourning for the small things that are being lost as the climate shifts, such as the seemingly minor losses of ephemeral seasonal experience that make up what Smith calls “local sadness.” At first glance these small losses and local sadnesses may appear trivial compared to the apocalyptic, disaster-to-come narratives, but it is in these micro changes that we find the emotional tug of the crisis. It is these small losses


22 “The weather has changed, is changing, and with it so many seemingly small things – quite apart from train tracks and houses, livelihoods and actual lives – are being lost. It was easy to assume, for example, that we would always be able to easily find a hedgehog in some corner of a London garden, pick it up with cupped hands, and unfurl it for our children – or go on a picnic and watch fat bumblebees crawling over the mouth of an open jam jar. Every country has its own version of this local sadness.” Zadie Smith.
that are already chipping away at our sense of place-belonging.

The focus on belonging, place, feeling and malaise helps to enlarge our understanding of what is at risk in the climate crisis (i.e. it is not just the planet, but the experience of the earth as a world), but they can also help stretch our understanding of ethics. Environmental ethics asks us to expand our conception of community and obligations to include future generations, plants, animals and the broader natural world, and to think about responsibility in a way that is not constrained by notions of efficient cause and effect.\textsuperscript{23} Doing so allows us to see how we are fundamentally bound together and to the world. In my dissertation I adopt an ethics that operates in this expanded sphere, not only in terms of the actions and obligations it entails, but more importantly in terms of the sensibilities it engenders. In this way I follow Jane Bennett's model of ethics as a "complex interplay of code and sensibility."\textsuperscript{24} In \textit{The Enchantment of Modern Life} Bennett argues that models of ethics that consider only the codes that dictate ethical action are insufficient because they fail to account for the motivation that compels people to abide by these rules. Embodied sensibility is what animates moral codes and explains their motivational hold.\textsuperscript{25} This account of ethics is particularly relevant to the case of climate change because the scientific data and predicted doomsday scenarios that undergird most arguments about our moral obligations to curb consumption and other unsustainable practices have, to date, had disappointing results. This is in part because we

\textsuperscript{23} See James Garvey. \textit{The Ethics of Climate Change: Right and Wrong in a Warming World}. (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008).


\textsuperscript{25} Bennett, 131.
have not paid sufficient attention to the bodily *experience* of danger-to-place.

We are now beginning to inhabit a time when the lived experience of climate change's disruptions is catching up to environmental ethical codes. The recent hurricane that hit the Northeast United States is a case in point. Like all natural disasters, Hurricane Sandy was a traumatic event that revealed how integral the places that we hold dear are to our sense of belonging. Millions of people in the path of the storm not only felt Sandy's destructive force, but also, since many reports and statements by politicians linked the event to climate change, experienced it as an effect of the crisis. Hurricane Sandy demonstrated that climate change is coming to be felt not only as the destruction of places but also as the disruption of the sense of belonging that flows from these places. As we enter a more dire and tumultuous phase of the crisis this feeling will become more common. Not only will we better understand what is at stake with climate change once we account for the importance of place-belonging, it is imperative that we consider it in order to determine how to muster the will to undertake environmental ethical action. Perhaps by highlighting in public and popular discourse the unease and anxiety being felt as a result of climate change we can activate the sensibility that Bennett argues motivates ethical action. The senses of urgency and affective loss paired with ethical requirements might begin to inspire the considerable and arduous effort necessary to address the crisis.

Since I am interested in the everyday felt relationship with place and climate – and its disruption by climate change – I will employ a wide array of sources throughout the dissertation. In additional to texts in political theory, philosophy, geography and other academic disciplines I draw on visual art, film, literature, fairy tales, sports, radio
documentaries, personal anecdote, and other hodge podge materials. I turn to these non-academic sources to try to understand how place, land and climate act on us in various settings. The influence may not always be there at first glance, but with a little scrutiny it reveals itself. And once seen in all these unexpected places, the enormity of the disruption we are experiencing becomes clearer. It is in these moments where land and climate are not centre stage that we can understand how profoundly they are part of us, and part of how we understand the world. I had one of those moments while chatting with a friend doing his PhD in English at Johns Hopkins. After I briefly described my doctoral project, playing up the theme of the coming loss of winter (he is from Northern Michigan, so I thought this might resonate with him), he faced me with a pensive pause then said: “That means that poetry will no longer make sense.” Winter has long been a metaphor for death in poetry. Represented as the last of the four seasons which have come to symbolize stages in a human life, winter has come to stand for both death and conclusion (and perhaps also fulfillment). As part of a cycle that we know to be repetitive, it also hints at renewal. But this symbolism is only meaningful within a regular cycle. Future generations will obviously still know what is meant by the winter imagery in poetry, but they will not have the same visceral connection with it. A layer will be lost.

The argument in this dissertation divides into two halves. I devote the first two chapters to the task of understanding our close relationship with place, land and climate. In Chapter 1, *Land, Body and (Canadian) Belonging*, I contrast symbolic and material readings of land and belonging. By symbolic I mean an ideological conception of land that often underpins nationalism and claims of national belonging. I argue that national
belonging, which often makes appeals to “the land” as a source of attachment, in fact tends to conceptualize land in symbolic terms, reading characteristics into it. We find this in various writings on nationalism, even the more nuanced and critical studies such as Anthony Smith’s National Identity, Eric Hobsbawm’s Nations and Nationalism, Ernest Gellner’s Nations and Nationalism, Walker Connor’s Ethnonationalism, and Benedict Anderson’s Imagined Communities. The contrasting material reading of land corrals a few different elements. The patent physicality, in terms of the ground beneath our feet, the hills, the lakes, the trees, the rocks, but also the climatic material modulations such as rain and snow, make up the most obvious element. But in concert with the physical, there are also sensuous and emotional dimensions. The land is experienced through the sensorial register, implicating us in a bodily and responsive relationship with it, along the lines of what Donna Haraway describes as the material semiotic. For her the body is an object of knowledge that plays an active part in shaping human sensation and the cognitive experience of it.26 I argue in this chapter that the attachment that we develop to land (or our alienation from it) at an direct, intimate level adds an emotional element. This bears inclusion in the broad material reading of land because it identifies an emotional response connected to the physical and sensorial, rather than to the symbolic reading of land. To explore this understanding of land and belonging I turn to two vastly different sources: Johann Gottfried Herder and Sara Ahmed. Herder plays close attention to the interaction amongst land, climate, body and self. He draws out the way that land

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and climate play a role in the constitution of body and self, and how bodily capacities (chiefly sensation) contribute to a feeling of belonging in place. Ahmed also looks at bodily sensation but through the lens of the disruption of familiar sensation through migration. She provides a picture of both the limits and the adaptability of sensation and its role in grounding a sense of belonging. Together these two theorists help us to understand the constitutive and evolving role of land in creating a sense of belonging. Throughout the chapter, I make use of iconic Canadian and Québécois landscape and abstract art to illustrate how land has a material and sensorial impact on us.

In Chapter 2, *Place beyond Territory: Spatial Logics of Climate Change*, I push the ideas from the first chapter further to develop the notion of “place-belonging.” First I argue that it is place rather than territory, the traditional category employed in political science, that is critical to a sense of belonging and attachment. I contrast the territorial imaginary (with its abstract, state-focused frame) with a “platial” imaginary (with an embodied, experience-based frame). I argue that the deep connection between body and place is at the heart of an often overlooked mode of belonging: place-belonging. This mode, as mentioned earlier, relies on familiarity and bodily imbrication with place, and points to a particular kind of solace that we find there. Just as much as the more familiar social forms of belonging, this place-focused one is important in order to feel situated and ultimately, at home.

In the second half of the dissertation I turn my attention to the psychic-social disjunction and alienation brought about by climate change. In Chapter 3, *Eulogy for Winter: A Story of Climate and Anxiety*, I look more squarely at climate, arguing that it,
and more specifically, seasonality, is what provides the base tempo for our lives. The reliability of seasonal change provides a background setting, which is useful for planning and organizing purposes and is also in its own way comforting. Climate change is disrupting this reliability by, among other things, toying with the seasons and with expected weather patterns. It is throwing us off tempo. The increasingly unpredictable nature of seasons and seasonal weather not only makes planning more difficult, it also undermines our temporal anchor and rhythm. Unmoored, we are experiencing a kind of loss – an erosion (and eventual disappearance) of the solace that comes from place.

In the final chapter, *Cautionary Tales from the Front Lines of the Climate Crisis: Case Studies of the Arctic and the Small Island States*, I examine two places further down the path of climate change dislocation than the rest of the planet. The Arctic and the Small Island States share the dubious distinction, due to their particular geographic configurations, of experiencing climate change more quickly (and also more dramatically) than the rest of the world. As a result they are already undergoing literal destabilization and erosion. In both regions, I argue, we are seeing the solace that has long emanated from place transformed into a persistent anxiety. The constant threats of flooding, erosion, melting and collapse have residents in a continuous state of wariness towards the very ground beneath their feet. At the same time a sensorial understanding of place – especially important in an extreme climate – is being undermined. What we are seeing here is that the body/self/land/climate assemblage – as assemblage that is articulated most clearly in the first chapter – is being undone by climate change.
Like all PhD students I am frequently asked the question, “What is your thesis on?” I have learned to tailor my answer to my audience and have been pleased to find that when I describe my project to non-academics I am most often greeted with a nod of recognition, then a personal story illustrating a climatic challenge to belonging. We have all begun noticing weird weather. Balmy days in winter are no longer just a happy chinook, but are now tinged with the shadow of climate change. These observations collected together can be unnerving. An installation at the recent *Climate is Culture* exhibit organized by the Cape Farewell Foundation for the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto illustrated the unease that is infiltrating everyday observations of the weather.

Sharon Switzer’s #crazyweather superimposed tweets about “crazy weather” from

Figure 1. Screenshot from video. Sharon Switzer. #crazyweather (© Sharon Switzer)

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27 Sharon Switzer. #crazyweather. 10:00 digital video. Commissioned by Cape Farewell for Carbon 14: Climate is Culture. 2013.
around the world on a video image of a slowly revolving earth. At first the installation is merely intriguing, but viewed for the full ten minutes it becomes unsettling. Even terrifying. The cumulative effect of these anecdotal observations is to make the viewer unquestionably aware that she is living in the climate crisis.

A similar viewing experience was played out in living rooms across Canada this winter. In the lead up to the 2014 Winter Games the Canadian Olympic Committee launched a multi-platform ad campaign under the slogan “We are Winter.” Posters went up in bus shelters across the country of athletes at their sport and T.V. spots saturated airwaves and internet streams. In these ads a deep, authoritative and grave male voice spoke in slow, drawn out syllables – with many dramatic pauses – over shots of winter landscapes and of athletes preparing for and performing their sport.

Winter.

*It knows us better than we know ourselves.*

*It shapes and forges us into who we are and what we can become. And it knows we can accomplish great things.*

Winter is where we take flight. Where we find our power. Our balance. And where we search for the crucial seconds that will lead us to greatness.

*It was there for our first steps. It will be there for our last.*

Winter gives us everything and expects us to give it all back.

*We are Canada.*

*We are Winter.*

The ads were highly effective. They did what all good sports narrative do. They made the viewer relate to the athletes through shared experience – we have all been forged by winter – making each of us part of the overall story. The athletes may be those who excel,

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29 “We are Winter,” YouTube video, 1:01. Posted by Canadian Olympic Team, uploaded December 30, 2013, http://youtu.be/RTUoa4rmPWl?list=PLtZooWKrqeHQqkGxZxEDd-kVA6UQPFF
but we are all members of Team Canada.

But in the context of climate change, and with the backdrop of the bizarrely warm 2014 Olympic site where reminders of climate change were everywhere, the ads were also troubling. Unsettling. Mournful. If winter is what forges us, what makes us who we are, what makes us *Canada*, what happens when it disappears? If my strength comes from winter, is it also slipping away as temperatures rise? How can I be a balanced person when the world is so out of whack? Watching these ads over and over again felt more like listening to a requiem – *a dirge for our home and native land* – than to the hype accompanying an international sporting event. Perhaps that was in fact what we were all doing.
Chapter 1

Land, Body and (Canadian) Belonging

*The great purpose of landscape art is to make us at home in our own country.*
- The Group of Seven

*Tout est paysage.*
- Jean-Paul Riopelle

Growing up I spent a lot of time in art galleries. My hometown of Toronto boasts not only the Art Gallery of Ontario (made all the more enticing by the recent Frank Gehry renovations) but also a coterie of small, independent galleries ideally suited for weekend excursions. As a child and into my teenage years I went on outings downtown with my parents to explore these galleries and no trip outside the city was complete without a visit to the local art gallery, regardless of how small. My parents passed a deep love of art on to me while also exposing me to two very different approaches to it. My mother's appreciation thrives on context, theory and history. Standing in front of a painting with her means not only taking in the image, but also learning what it might symbolize, how it responds to other works of art, who the painter is, and what his or her influences and contemporaries were. To view a work of art with my mother is to receive a brief lesson in art (and often also Canadian) history. My father's approach is categorically different. It is a visceral, affective response that drives his enthusiasm. Colour, texture, form, nuance – these are what grab my father. Abstract art is his passion. To stand next to my father in front of a work of art is to learn to let it wash over you and engage your senses.

Perhaps because so much of the art that I saw was Canadian, and because I was
taught to understand it not only as part of my heritage but also as an evolving element of a cultural and personal present, I have come to view their two approaches to art as clues to two different, but complementary, modes of belonging. It is these modes of belonging – the narrative and the felt – that I will explore in this chapter, with the help of the Canadian art that played such a prominent role in my own education.

As Nira Yuval-Davis defines it, belonging “is about emotional attachment, about feeling 'at home' and ... about feeling 'safe'.” This fairly intuitive definition highlights what makes us seek out a sense of belonging – it promises a feeling of security and as such is associated with the idea of home, in particular with the domestic home. While this may seem a positive association, critical theory has alerted us to its perils, revealing a potentially dangerous and exclusionary paradox at the heart of belonging. Bonnie Honig argues that belonging is premised on an idealized conception of the domestic sphere that drives nationalist or ethnically-pure attempts to produce an impossible unified home at the collective level. This dream of purity relies on a hard line between home and

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32 “The dream of home is dangerous, particularly in postcolonial settings, because it animates and exacerbates the inability of constituted subjects – or nations – to accept their own internal divisions, and it engenders zealotry, the will to bring the dream of unitariness or home into being. It leads the subject to project its internal differences onto external Others and then to rage against them for standing in the way of its dream – both at home and elsewhere.” Honig, 585.
elsewhere that places difference outside and hence attempts to avoid the dilemmas, conflicts and negotiations that it entails. Honig rejects this overly simplistic conception and proposes a rethinking of home through an embrace of difference and its consequent dilemmas: “If home is to be a positive force in politics, it must itself be recast in coalitional terms as a differentiated site of necessary, nurturing, but also strategic, conflicted, and temporary alliances.” Home is thus less a static, secure, unchanging site and more an adaptable and responsive, challenging yet still potentially supportive, grounding. The success of the resignification of home as coalition depends “not only upon the capacity to see opportunity in crisis, but also on the ability to resist the forces that imbue us with an often overwhelming desire to go (to a nostalgic) home, or to found a home where we are, or to make a home out of the “I” that each of us is(n't).” This way home is not artificially removed from the political and social spheres, but rather acknowledged to be part of those spheres. Just as importantly, being at home is recast as an active state. It is no longer presented as a neutral condition, but rather as a type of engagement with political and social consequences.

Honig's argument is part of a broader critique that calls out the exclusionary nature of the boundaries of “belonging.” We see this critique in debates about the “politics of belonging,” an approach concerned with “the boundaries of the political community of belonging, the boundaries that separate the world population into 'us' and

33 “That line … keeps dilemmas at bay, the line held fast by a series of displacements and projections that reassures 'us' that we are safe from a radical undecidability that assaults Others elsewhere but only haunts us here from a distance.” Honig, 580.

34 Honig, 583.

35 Honig, 586.
This is belonging in an overtly political guise wherein judgements are continually being made about others and about which side of the us/them boundary line they stand on. The point here is that belonging is not simply generated by our own attachments, but also by the gaze of others and which side of the us-them line they place us on. These judgements and exclusions constitute what John Crowley terms “the dirty work of boundary maintenance.” A common response by feminist and other critical theorists to this boundary policing has been to embrace homelessness or a lack of belonging as an ethical stance. Exposing the negative effects of belonging has certainly been an important task of critical theory, but I want also to acknowledge its comforting and strength-giving dimensions. I think that these come to the fore when we examine the embodied and material aspects of belonging.

Critics of belonging have approached it primarily from a social perspective (even the domestic home is ultimately a social construct rather than a physical location), largely overlooking the role that the body (as receptor) and the environment (as locale) play in generating a sense of belonging. This is the blind spot where a significant component of belonging resides. Moreover, though it is often passed over in critical theory, this is the side to belonging that is highlighted in the word's very dictionary definition. The Oxford Dictionary defines belonging (when it relates to a person rather than to a thing) as

36 Yuval-Davis, 204.


38 In addition to those listed above, see in particular George Kateb, “Exile, Alienation, and Estrangement.” Social Research. 58 no.1 (1991), 135-138.
meaning “to fit or be acceptable in a specified place or environment.” Over the next 
three chapters I make it my task to resuscitate belonging by reintroducing the body, 
sensation and place to the concept. This endeavour is important, not only to give back to 
believing its warranted depth and complexity, but also to help shed some light on an 
overlooked dimension of the climate crisis. It is the body that provides the purchase on 
the world that leads to a sense of belonging. The body's familiarity with and sensations of 
place, weather and climate generate a feeling of attachment and then belonging. Climate 
change is altering the inputs, so to speak, to this feeling. It is insidiously, but also on a 
grand scale, destabilizing the operation of belonging.

I begin by looking at belonging in its national form. I will avoid the debates on 
nationalism and its dangers – which continue to receive the critical attention they deserve 
elsewhere – and instead focus on the ambiguous role that land plays in constituting a 
sense of national belonging. The importance given to land or territory within accounts of 
the basic characteristics of the nation runs the gamut from the non-existent (the nation as 
constituted by blood, or culture, or language) to the determining (especially in accounts 
of the nation as derived from the state or post-colonial liberation movements).

Blood and soil. Kinship and land. Ancestry and territory. These are the commonly 
– and controversially – understood foundations of the nation and national belonging. As 
Anthony Smith argues, “Myths of national identity typically refer to territory or ancestry 
(or both) as the basis of political community.”

1999), 125.

kinship, have been deployed and distorted in many assertions and defences of nationalism. In these moments soil is often overshadowed, or taken as an instrumental support for blood. Nonetheless, a bounded territory that is either inhabited or serving as a unifying image and that has a name, an institutional centre and a history is presumed as necessary to national identity. Simon Schama tells us that national identity “would lose much of its ferocious enchantment without the mystique of a particular landscape tradition: topography mapped, elaborated, and enriched as a homeland.” But this territory is not itself rife with ambiguities and tensions. Even the causal relationship between territory and national belonging is unclear. A number of scholars argue that rather than territory standing as a foundation for the nation it is nationalism that creates nations, and that both are brought about by the establishment of states.

The ambiguities of the role afforded to land or territory are apparent in two broad categorizations of nationalism: civic and ethnic. In the former, soil pre-empts blood, thus putting the emphasis on boundaries determined by the state which confer a legitimate claim to belonging to all those deemed fit for citizenship (by birth in or adoption of the territory). Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, privileges blood, seeing it as imbricated with soil, thus staking its claim on the soil: blood is spilled in defence of the soil, bodies


are buried in it, the soil nourishes (perhaps even births) current and future generations. Grosby argues that this “metaphorical infusion of biological descent into spatial location is sustained because those inherited territorially bounded traditions are understood as defining part of you. Indeed, in so far as your existence as a member of a nation (and, thus, elements of your self-understanding) is in fact dependent upon those activities of past generations that have secured the land necessary for life, then what is involved in this metaphor is not merely metaphorical!” Civic and ethnic nationalisms are often juxtaposed, with the former portrayed as the more open and adaptive, the more politically progressive and modern, mode. While this may be broadly true, Anthony Smith notes that civic and ethnic nationalism cannot actually be so neatly opposed. In reality, every nationalism contains – to varying degrees and in various forms – elements of both civic and ethnic nationalism.

Thus Smith argues that in all cases national identity is constituted by five fundamental features: “An historic territory, or homeland; [c]ommon myths and historical memories; [a] common, mass public culture; [c]ommon legal rights and duties for all members; and [a] common economy with territorial mobility for members.” Note that for Smith, as for many scholars of nationalism, territory becomes important to national


45 Grosby, 50.

46 Anthony Smith, 13.

47 Anthony Smith, 14.
identity and belonging when it can take on the mantle of “historic.” For the land to generate or ground national identity it must have been previously worked over such that it bears the marks of history:

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\text{the nation is formed around shared traditions that are not merely about a distinctive past, but a spatially situated past. Where there is a spatial focus to the relation between individuals, then place becomes the basis by which to distinguish one person from another. The inhabitants of a location understand themselves to be related to those whose self-understanding contains a reference to that location. The location, thus, is no longer merely an area of space; it has become a space with meaning: a territory.}\]

The historical particularities of the national territory are thus constitutive, in some way or another, of a sense of national identity and belonging, but, strangely, despite the fact that so much importance is given to the land it is rarely considered to have an impact in and of itself.\(^{49}\) Instead, its impact on national belonging is always derived from the social and historical meanings infused into the territory. Indeed, the meaning of the land becomes so important that in a way it becomes divorced from the land itself. This relationship comes the fore in cases of migration. The intense hold of the land on those who have left – and more importantly, on their descendants who may have never or only rarely experienced the land first hand – endures. As Smith argues, in the case of ethnic nationalism:

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\text{attachments to specific stretches of territory, and to certain places within them, have a mythical and subjective quality. It is the attachments and}
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\(^{48}\) Grosby.\(^{10}\)

\(^{49}\) Though, famously, Montesquieu elaborated a theory of climate in *The Spirit of the Laws*. He argued that the law should put in place regulations to oppose the vices of the climate. For example, “In order to conquer the laziness that comes from climate, the laws must seek to take away every means of living without labor.” (Montesquieu. “Chapter 7,” *The Spirit of the Laws*.) Conveniently, on all of Montesquieu's measures (ability to feel, industriousness, etc) both the character and the laws are best in Continental Europe.
associations, rather than residence in or possession of the land that matters for ethnic identification. It is where we belong. It is also often a sacred land, the land of our forefathers, our lawgivers, our kings and sages, poets and priests, which makes this our homeland. We belong to it, as much as it belongs to us. Besides, the sacred centres of the homeland draw the members of the ethnie to it, or inspire them from afar, even when their exile is prolonged. Hence, an ethnie may persist, even when long divorced from its homeland, through an intense nostalgia and spiritual attachment. This is very much the fate of diaspora communities like the Jews and Armenians.

Crucially, in this passage Smith opposes “attachments and associations” to “residence in or possession of” the land. By privileging attachments and associations over not only possession of but also residence in the land, the materiality of the land, and the material relationship with the land, drops to the background (or out of the picture altogether?). It is the fact of attachment, to which the specific object of attachment makes no apparent contribution, that is important. This strange relationship of attachment and territory is reminiscent of the notion of nationality put forward by the Austro-Marxists in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in which national identification “could attach to persons, wherever they lived and whoever they lived with, at any rate if they chose to claim it.”

National identification and attachment to land become modes of belonging to be chosen, rather than forces that latch on to us and themselves participate in the constitution of our identity.

The symbolic appropriation of land is particularly apparent in the case of ethnic nationalism. This discourse can, according to Walker Connor, “mystically convert what the outsider sees as merely the territory populated by a nation into a motherland or

50 Anthony Smith, 23.

51 Hobsbawm, 7. See also Otto Bauer, The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
fatherland, the ancestral land, land of our fathers, this sacred soil, land where our fathers died, the native land, the cradle of the nation, and, most commonly, the home – the homeland of our particular people...”

This sounds oddly like a religious conversion ritual, drawing the land into the national fold in the way that a new convert is admitted into a religious congregation. Connor argues that this conversion creates a “spiritual bond” between nation and territory such that “blood and soil become mixed in national perceptions.” Like the Christian Eucharist, the body and the blood of the nation are given to the land/convert to unite them as one body. It is the inhabitants reinscribing the land, and not also the other way around, to create this bond.

While we might think that this figuration of land as a passive object is unique to ethnic nationalism it is in fact also present in civic accounts. The civic mode of nationalism is presumed to be focused on the “physical and actual” rather than the “historical and symbolic.” Indeed, Smith contrasts civic with ethnic nationalism by arguing that it implies: “a belief in the importance of residence and propinquity, as opposed to descent and genealogy. 'Living together' and being 'rooted' in a particular terrain and soil become the criteria for citizenship and the bases of political community.” However, in the next paragraph, he goes on to say:

*The nation is conceived of as a territorial patria, the place of one's birth and childhood, the extension of hearth and home. It is also the place of one's*

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53 Connor, 205.

54 Anthony Smith, 20.

55 Anthony Smith, 117.
ancestors and of the heroes and cultures of one's antiquity. Hence from the standpoint of a territorial nationalist it is quite legitimate to annex the monuments and artefacts of earlier civilizations in the same place, appropriating their cultural achievements to differentiate and glorify the territorial nation, which may (to date) lack achievements of its own. ... In other words, the patria must become an historic territory.56

Thus the symbolic artifacts that imbue territory with a history, with a social context, have priority even within the civic frame. Territory is important only as a locale or site into which symbolic meaning is injected, even if the meaning is borrowed or stolen from previous inhabitants. We see this, for example, in the settler states of Canada, the United States and Australia, often considered the paradigmatic cases of civic nationalism. In these states, where Indigenous populations remain largely excluded and othered, elements of their culture and history have been taken up by their dispossessors in order to fashion a settler national narrative, distinct from their European origins.

There is one early account of nationalism and national belonging that did take the land, in and of itself, more seriously. It is worth taking some time to examine Johann Gottfried Herder's theory of nationalism here not only because it is an early expression of nationalism, but also because, unlike most theories of nationalism it better acknowledges the force of the environment and climate on the body and a sense of belonging. The way that Herder attends to the relationship between the body and its environment is unusual and sets the stage for a material understanding of belonging. For Herder the Volk – “virtually any group that has a name and a culture ... [and] is identifiable”57 – is the key

56 Anthony Smith, 117.

unit of human organization. Each Volk or nation has its own proper character shared by all inhabitants and distinct from all other national characters. One of the distinguishing features of Herder's notion of Volk is that this grouping gets defined both by linguistic and environmental factors. These criteria allow him to construct a theory in which differences between Volk are enduring, but not premised on racial difference. Indeed, Herder specifically rejected the idea of race. Humanity is for him one entity that naturally falls into separate groupings, as determined by the stamp of climate.

Language is a crucial demarcator for Herder because it is not only a symbolic system of communication, but it also constitutes the way in which we think and understand the world. Language is necessary since human beings inescapably experience the world with and through others. The differences in language result from different forms of experience and indicate differing visions of the world. Language alone, however, does not make a Volk, rather it works in tandem with environmental factors to create one. For Herder the climate and the physical environment one inhabits shape and condition not only a way of life, but also the body itself:

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58 "within or without the given spatial boundaries of a people, the identity cultivated by any Volk over the course of history would naturally preserve itself, regardless of whatever physical transitions take place." Russell Arben Fox, "Herder on Language and National Community," *The Review of Politics* 65 no. 2 (Spring, 2003), 253.

59 “Every distinct people is a nation, having its own national culture as it has its own language. The climate, it is true, may imprint on each its peculiar stamp, or it may spread over it a slight veil, but still without destroying its original character. This originality of character extends to families, and its transitions are as variable as they are imperceptible. In short, there are neither four nor five races, nor exclusive varieties, on this earth. Complexions run into each other; forms follow genetic character; and they are all, in the end, simply different shades of the same great picture which extends through all the ages and all the parts of the globe.” Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie*, quoted in Fox, 253-4.


61 Berlin, 169-170.
In the first place it is obvious why all sensual people, fashioned to their country, are so much attached to the soil, and so inseparable from it. The constitution of their body, their way of life, the pleasures and occupations to which they have been accustomed from their infancy, and the whole circle of their ideas, are climatic. Deprive them of their country, you deprive them of every thing.  

This relationship between body and land and body and climate becomes inscribed - branded even - onto the bodies of members of the Volk. Indeed, one capacity of the body - feeling - is for Herder conditioned by the land and climate and thus differs according to the demands of one's home environment. The body is for Herder intensely imbricated with the land and is not set against nature, but rather organically part of it. Just as importantly, the body and the self are not separate. Rather, the body plays an important role in determining identity and by extension the environment and climate influence identity and the construction of self. This influence may be gentle – nudging through

62 Herder, Reflections, 10.

63 "And what right have you, monsters! even to approach the country of these unfortunates, much less to tear them from it by stealth, fraud, and cruelty? For ages this quarter of the Globe has been theirs, and they belong to it: their forefathers purchased it at a dear rate, at the price of the Negro form and complexion. In fashioning them the African sun has adopted them as its children, and impressed on them its own seal: wherever you convey them, this brands you as robbers, as stealers of men." Herder, Reflections, 12.

64 "The most general and necessary sense is that of feeling; it is the basis of the rest, and one of the greatest organic preeminences of man. ... But how different is this sense, according as it is modified by the way of life, climate, application, exercise, and native irritability of the body!" Herder, Reflections, 34-5.
inclination\textsuperscript{65} – or more forceful. Herder argues, for example, that the attachment that people have to their physical home is strongest in the most inhospitable places.\textsuperscript{66}

Along with the landscape, Herder claims that climate also shapes \textit{Volk}. This argument stems from his conception of the climate as paralleling humanity as one single species that becomes naturally separated into various groupings. He argues:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Not only is the climate of every region periodically changed by the alteration of day and night, and the revolution of the seasons; but the jarring of the elements, the mutual action of sea and land upon each other, the situation of mountains and plains, the periodical winds that arise from the motion of the Globe, the changes of the season, the appearance and disappearance of the Sun, and many less important causes, maintain this salutiferous union of the elements, without which every thing would stagnate in drowsiness and corruption. We are surrounded by an atmosphere; we live in an electric ocean: but both, and probably the magnetic fluid with them, are in continual motion. The sea emits vapours; the mountains attract them, and send them down in rain and streams on every side. Thus winds relieve each other: thus years, or periods of years, fulfill their climatic days. Thus different regions and ages follow on another; and every thing on our Globe combines in one general connexion.}\textsuperscript{67}
\end{quote}

Thus nature, by dividing the world into regions with different physical and climatic manifestations, is instrumental in dividing humanity into various nations. Indeed, Herder argues that this is nature's intention. People have been dispersed into different regions on the earth because proximity inevitably leads to conflict.\textsuperscript{68} This dispersion also gives each

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{65} "climate does not force, but incline: it gives the imperceptible disposition, which strikes us indeed in the general view of the life and manners of indigenous nations, but is very difficult to be delineated distinctly." Herder, \textit{Reflections}, 20.
\item \textsuperscript{66} "Even the difficulties surmounted, to which body and mind are formed from infancy, impart to the natives that love of country and climate, which the inhabitants of fertile and populous plains feel much less, and to which the citizen of a European metropolis is almost a stranger." Herder,13. Also, "the most inhospitable countries have the strongest attractions for their natives.” Herder, \textit{Reflections}, 13.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Herder, \textit{Reflections}, 17.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Herder, \textit{Reflections}, 59-60.
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nation room to flourish. Thus, for Herder, difference and diversity were intended by nature, put in place to reduce conflict, and should be celebrated as being the proper order of things. Rather than attempting to homogenize - via colonization or via Enlightenment ideas - we should act to preserve and protect difference. Moreover, he adamantly rejects the idea that there is such a thing as a superior nation or Favoritvolk: “There is no Favoritvolk. A nation is made what it is by 'climate', education, relations with its neighbours, and other changeable and empirical factors, and not by an impalpable inner essence or an unalterable factor such as race or colour.” We are constructed by our material and social circumstances, not some primordial essence.

Since the Volk and the individual take part of their meaning from the land and climate it should not be surprising that for Herder belonging itself is also linked to them. Belonging is a state of being, but there is no such state that is not tethered to place. To belong one must be embedded in both a community and a place. One must be situated, and this on a number of registers: socially (group), temporally (historical stream), culturally (culture, tradition) and physically (milieu, Klima). This last element, Klima, is taken seriously as an element with influence in its own right. Isaiah Berlin argues that for Herder “the Klima (i.e. the external world) and physical structure and biological needs [...] in interplay with every individual's mind and will, create the dynamic, collective

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69 “the object of our diffusive parent was not to crowd her children together, but to let them spread freely. As far as it may be, no tree is permitted to deprive another of air, so as to render it a stunted dwarf, or force it to become a crooked cripple, thus it may breathe with more freedom. Each has its place allotted it, that it may ascend from its root by its own impulse, and raise its flourishing head.” Herder, Reflections, 61.

70 Herder, Reflections, 163.
process called society.” Herder's critique of cosmopolitanism – for its emptiness caused by a lack of being at home – stems in part from this conception of belonging. Cosmopolitanism, with its global focus, cannot attend to the local idiosyncrasies that provide the framework for embedded belonging. What we can take away from all of this is that for Herder there is a right fit with the land for both individuals and human groups. Herder illustrates this argument by way of examples of people who failed to thrive when removed from their home environment. Indeed, the right fit is so important to Herder that he claims that to lose it or be deprived of it can destroy a person.

If we turn our attention to the settler states – particularly Canada and the United States – we can find a distortion of the Herderian account of the importance of land and climate to belonging and national character. In these states territory is recognized as being constitutive of (settler) identity, but despite the claims made by the national narratives it is not the territory per se doing the constituting, but rather a symbolic territory overlaid onto and more or less disabling the power of the material one. In these cases territory takes on the symbolic mantle of fresh start, of shaking off tradition, of an equal playing field, of tolerance, of opportunity, of freedom and of adventure. These characteristics are then seen to be reflected in the people and the newborn nations that inhabit the territory.

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71 Berlin, 198.

72 Berlin, 198.

73 “Greenlanders do not thrive in Denmark. Africans are miserable and decay in Europe. Europeans become debilitated in America. Conquest crushes, and emigration sometimes leads to enfeeblement - lack of vital force, the flattening out of human beings, and a sad uniformity. The Ideen is full of such examples.” Berlin, 177.

74 Berlin, 197.
Once again territory gets into the blood of the inhabitants, but this time not through the blood and soil descent model, rather through a kind of osmosis of territorial traits. The vast, wild, untamed, empty\textsuperscript{75} land imbues its inhabitants with a rugged, adventurous, entrepreneuring, resourceful, self-sufficient character – with nuances among the United States, Australia and Canada (and, importantly, also Quebec).

In both Canada and the United States part of what lends the vigourous and emancipatory character to the land, and hence to its inhabitants, is the looming presence of the frontier. The seemingly inexhaustible expanse of wilderness beyond the frontier was originally a resource that could continually renew the key national characteristics. The crucial frontier for the United States was of course to be found in the West. Indeed, the Western frontier held such sway on the American psyche that even today it continues to be drawn on as the destination of an liberating journey, long after it has ceased to be an actual frontier. Evidence of this enduring influence pops up in as unlikely a place as a catchy gay anthem from the 1970s, “Go West” by the Village People.\textsuperscript{76} Long before the Village People sang the praises of the emancipatory power of the open air of the

\textsuperscript{75} I will address this misconception later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{76} “(Go West) Life is peaceful there
(Go West) In the open air
(Go West) Where the skies are blue
(Go West) This is what we're gonna do ...
There where the air is free
We'll be (We'll be) what we want to be
Now if we make a stand
We'll find (We'll find) our promised land.”

In the 1990s the British duo The Pet Shop Boys covered the song and produced an accompanying video that takes place in a bizarre disco-Soviet-space age-utopian-dream sphere. Was it the product of the unbridled creativity of an eccentric pop duo or a logical reimagining of the liberating power of the frontier in an age of exhaustive mapping and space travel? It is well worth a five minute YouTube detour to ponder that question.
American West, Henry David Thoreau professed a preference for walking westward because it was the direction for “sufficient wildness and freedom” and provided a horizon that “stretches uninterruptedly toward the setting sun.” Thoreau lauds westward migration as a journey “into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure.” The promise of, perhaps more than the encounter with, this cache of pristine wilderness became formative of the American identity precisely at the moment when the wilderness itself was coming under threat. Daniel Deudney argues that in the wake of industrialization “Americans began to turn to the wonders of nature, particularly in the West, as a source of ceremony and collective identity formation.” More than just a generator of a collective identity, the frontier was considered to have created the “American civic personality,” that is, the “‘rugged individual,’” the citizen capable of living and thriving in a marketplace society of mobile social atoms.

Eventually the frontier was lost as westward migration abutted the Pacific Ocean and with this loss came fears for the despoliation of the American character. No reserve of untamed nature, no laboratory for the rugged, self-reliant individual. It was these fears, Deudney argues, that motivated the creation of the national parks system in the United


78 Thoreau, 336.


80 Deudney, 138.
States. These parks would ensure the preservation of the wilderness considered essential to the formation of the American character. It is clear, then, that in this case the land is not so much appreciated in itself but rather as the incubator and generator of the prized American “civic personality.” Much like the earlier reversal in which the historic is really what is prized within the territory, here it is the civic personality, rather than the wilderness itself, that must be preserved.

In Canada the crucial frontier is with the North. Not only the extreme North of the Arctic, but also the vague North – the wild, cold region beyond the inhabited stretch along the 49th parallel. This was, and in some senses remains, the essential Canadian frontier. Like the American West, the Canadian North represented the unknown, the dangerous, the adventurer's challenge, but perhaps more than the American West it also represented solitude – the test of the self against the vast white void. Unlike in the American West, excursions to the Canadian North were generally just that – excursions rather than a first wave of settlement. The harsh conditions beyond the northern frontier have largely preserved its unoccupied and unknown character. As a space – and as a climate – the North is radically other and it is that very inhospitality that has ensured that it continues to represent an “escape from civilization” that non-northern Canadians

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81 “By preserving the stage for the perpetual reenactment of the generative constitution of rugged individuals, the basis of American national identity and community was preserved.” Deudney, 139.

82 For an exploration of the “mythical, mystical, or metaphysical associations evoked by the geographical north” see Anyssa Neumann, “Ideas of North: Glenn Gould and the Aesthetic of the Sublime” voiceXchange. 5 no. 1 (Fall 2011): 35–46.

83 Some did stay, but they were in the minority.

84 As in the American case, the indigenous presence is largely ignored.
can project their hopes and desires onto. For those Canadians who do not live in or know the North (most of us) it represents a kind of eternal winter. It is the cold, white, snowy land mass hovering above us, grounding us, and enticing us. Perhaps for us it also represents, as it did for the northern European Romantics, an escape from rationalism.\(^8\)

The North as eternal winter is a blank canvass for multiple aspirations and continues to hold a very real sway in the Canadian imagination, as it has “from the earliest days of colonial contact.”\(^9\) In the introduction of *The Idea of North*, the first in his mesmerizing series of contrapuntal\(^\text{10}\) radio documentaries, the pianist Glenn Gould articulated the relationship that many southern Canadians have to the North:

> I've long been intrigued by that incredible tapestry of tundra and taiga which constitutes the Arctic and Subarctic of our country. I've read about it, written about it, and even pulled on my parka and gone there. Yet like all but a very few Canadians I've had no real experience of the North. I've remained, of necessity, an outsider. And the North has remained for me, a convenient place to dream about, spin tall tales about, and, in the end, avoid.\(^\text{11}\)

As Gould explains it, the idea of North supplants the fact of the North in the Canadian imaginary. We are drawn to, even obsessed by, the North, but from the safe warm distance of the South. It dominates our imaginary, without requiring any first-hand

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\(^10\) Gould was inspired by Bach's musical style and counterposed the voices and other sounds in his radio series in much the same way that Bach counterposed treble and base lines in his contrapuntal compositions.


Over the remaining hour of the documentary Gould weaves together various narratives about experiences with the North. All of the interviewees are all white southerners, leaving the documentary with a serious lack of Indigenous northern perspectives.
experience. And this idea haunts us: “the North is at the back of our minds, always. There's something, not someone, looking over our shoulders; there's a chill at the nape of the neck. The North focuses our anxieties. Turning to face North, we enter our own unconscious.”

The Canadian romance of the North, and the notion that the North is in some ways representative of the whole country, is perhaps nowhere more explicitly articulated than in the work of the Group of Seven, Canada's most famous collection of painters. The Group's paintings of the Canadian wilderness have become iconic and their aesthetic was a determining force in shaping the Canadian vision of landscape and the land itself. Like so many Canadians, the Group of Seven (and one of its members, Lawren Harris, in particular) were enthralled by the (idea of) North. Indeed, they themselves claimed that their art was “founded on a long and growing love and understanding of the North.” It was also northward that they turned for their project of constructing a Canadian national identity out of the natural environment. The distinctive geography and climate of the North, they felt, could anchor “an independent aesthetic – homegrown, northern, and free of foreign influence.” Its influence was seen to infect all Canadians and also to protect

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90 It has often been noted that their paintings in fact primarily depict a few areas of the Precambrian Shield in Ontario, notably, Algoma, Algonquin Park, Lake Superior and Georgian Bay. In an interesting parallel to the American case, Algonquin Park is a large wilderness conservation area in the mid-North of Ontario, protected by the provincial government.


92 John O'Brian and Peter White. “Introduction” in O’Brian and White, Beyond Wilderness. 3.
them from the encroachment of an American identity. For Harris, a distinctive national identity is constituted by the fact that Canadians live “on the fringe of the great North and its living whiteness, its loneliness and its replenishment, its resignations and release, its call and answer, its cleansing rhythms.” The proximity and access to this great North puts us under the influence of this land.

The Group of Seven's paintings of the vast Canadian wild provided what Benedict Anderson refers to as the “shared image of [...] communion” that is necessary for the imagined community of the nation. Their work was instrumental in reshaping a Canadian nationalist sensibility and aesthetic because it intentionally broke with European landscape art traditions. Erin Manning argues that the “landscapes of the Group of Seven ... added a critical perspective to colonial art by refusing to adhere to British and Dutch principles of landscape painting, stating that the depiction of a different or “new” landscape was necessary to the inception of a Canadian nationalist imaginary.” Gone was the delicate foliage, the stage-like scenery, and the pastoral atmosphere of European landscapes. These paintings were free of people and privileged vitality and movement over fine detail and carefully choreographed settings: “Their paintings depict, with optimism and vigour, a land of bold effects, powerful weather conditions, and northern vastness. ... The key ideas were grandeur and beauty, a sense of the sublime, vastness,

93 O'Brian, 27.
94 Quoted in O'Brian, 27. O'Brian alerts us to the racial overtones that are also present in Harris' statement.
95 O'Brian, 23. As O'Brian notes, the imagined collectivity represented by these paintings was largely male, Protestant, English and white.
96 Manning, 158, note 3.
majesty, dignity, austerity, and simplicity.” The Group's aesthetic choices were meant not only as an artistic rebellion, but also as a nationalist assertion. They deliberately set out to illustrate how nature provides the crucial frame for the new Canadian “nation.” John O'Brian describes this framing of the Canadian national identity as “wildercentric” and sees in the Group of Seven's quest to express this identity a “predatory desire for wilderness.” Joyce Murray, author of one of the many studies of the Group of Seven's oeuvre, argues that their work: “helped to create our idea of Canada [...] and] has acted, as the Group of Seven said they hoped it would [...], as ‘a real civilising factor in the national life.’” Predatory and civilizing – two intriguingly contradictory descriptions of a project of national identity formation that is at once rebellious and exclusionary.

In order to paint these “wildercentric” scenes, the Group of Seven engaged in their own encounter with the frontier. Though they were all urban dwellers, they sought out "pristine" nature, venturing “farther afield, first into the unpopulated Ontario wilderness, then into the west and the north, to discover Canada in its primal glory.” Not only did they see themselves as discovering something essential in what it meant to be Canadian and in what Canada represented in these journeys and their art, they also saw themselves as entering into a cooperation of sorts with the land. Katerina Atanassova argues that “[t]racking along the virgin lakes, dense forests, and mountain peaks, [the artists] saw

98 O'Brian. 21.
99 O’Brien, 22.
100 Murray, 19.
101 Atanassova, 38.
themselves as trailblazers and believed that ‘some day … the land will return the compliments and believe in the artists.’”

Once a relationship of trust was established – perhaps through adequate representation of the land, its vastness and grandeur, the sense of the sublime found there or by channelling the spirit of the land, a spirit of "adventure and mystery” – the land would recognize that these artists were its intended partners. It would see in them sought-after abilities and encourage their endeavours. The act of painting in the outdoors was crucial to the Group's ethos (though the final compositions were executed in their Toronto studios where elements were altered, added or edited out for effect).

Ironically, the composition process and the mustering of the land for nationalist narrative purposes bears more parallels to the art and ideology of their European forebears than the Group of Seven would have cared to admit. Their depiction of nature remained allegorical and instrumental. Though proclaiming a phenomenological orientation to the wild, these artists in fact encountered it in a thoroughly ideological mode. Much like the nationalists discussed earlier in this chapter, the Group of Seven turned the land and climate into passive objects that served their ideological purposes. Rather than discovering the Canadian identity in nature, they read that character into nature, then featured it in the scenes they depicted. For example, the solitary, resolute and

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102 Atanassova, 38.

103 Atanassova, 38.
hardy jack pine of Tom Thomson’s The West Wind is seen by many as representing the Canadian spirit, but it was not simply a tree encountered by the artist on a windy day. The pine was framed and shaped by Thomson to resemble a human figure and to evoke a sense of empathy and recognition in the viewer. As a literal depiction of a settler nationalism the works of Thomson and the Group of Seven illustrate how, even in cases in which the land is taken as foundational to identity and belonging, it is in fact already symbolic.

It is interesting to note here a difference between English Canadian and Québécois landscape painting. Though landscape art is also an important tradition in Quebec, it is crucially different from its iconic Canadian counterpart. Québécois landscapes typically

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104 Tom Thomson is frequently considered to be, in effect, an additional member of the Group of Seven. He was friends with the painters who made up the Group, went on sketching trips with several of them, and articulated an artistic philosophy along the lines of the one adopted by the Group. It was his death on a canoeing trip before the formation of the Group that prevented him from becoming an official member of the Group.

105 See, for example, Anna Hudson, “Landscape Atomysticism: A Revelation of Tom Thomson,” in Concannon, 2011.

106 “The struggling pine, centred in the composition, begs to be read as a figure, a sacrificial soldier, and even a reference to the artist himself as a double for Canada.” Hudson, 30.
featured an inhabited or cultivated landscape.\textsuperscript{107} Guy Boulizon argues that “the Québecois landscape is essentially an “inhabited” landscape, created by a secular culture, that was not content to give it an exterior appearance, but rather moulded it deeply. As such, every true landscape from here is at once physical and cultural.”\textsuperscript{108} These landscapes are inhabited in a “strong” and “complete” sense of being marked by a specific culture.\textsuperscript{109} If the evidence of habitation is not presented through direct figuration in a painting there nonetheless remains trace evidence, such as the “rows, hills and historic traces of the seigneurial

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{image1.png}
\caption{Clarence Gagnon. \textit{Evening on the North Shore}, 1924. Oil on canvas, 77 x 81.6 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Photo © NGC.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{image2.png}
\caption{Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Coté. \textit{Winter Landscape}, 1909. Oil on canvas, 72.2 x 94.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Gift of Arthur S. Hardy, Ottawa, 1943. Photo © NGC. Notice the fence on the far shore.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{108} “le paysage québécois est essentiellement un paysage << habité >>, créé par une culture séculaire, qui ne s'est pas contentée de lui donner une certaine apparence extérieure, mais qui l'a modelé en profondeur. Si bien que tout vrai paysage d'ici est à la fois physique et culturel.” Guy Boulizon, \textit{Le Paysage dans la peinture au Québec.} (Laprairie, QC: Éditions Marcel Broquet, 1984), 13.

\textsuperscript{109} “La << constante >>, première et essentielle, qu'on remarque dans ces paysages, c'est d'être << habités >>; et habités au sense le plus fort et le plus complet du terme, c'est-à-dire marqués profondément par une << culture >> spécifique, historiquement et sociologiquement. Le paysage québécois est donc une Nature, rejointe, modifiée, humanisée, civilisée par une Culture.” Boulizon, 25.
era.” These traces serve not only to indicate a human presence, but also to mark these landscapes as participating in a different cultural history than the Anglo-Saxon one that infuses the scenes painted by the Group of Seven and other English Canadian painters.

The seigneurial rules around land ownership favouring narrow rectangular strips of farmland, for example, left an imprint on the land that does not exist in areas that were under English jurisdiction.

Notably absent from the landscape art that I have been discussing is any sign of Indigenous presence on the land. This absence is not simply an oversight but rather an example of the erasure of Indigenous presence by the settler narrative. This erasure has taken many forms: occupation, mistreatment and genocide (e.g. Trail of Tears); forced assimilation and cultural genocide (e.g. Residential Schools); theft of land and physical, social and economic segregation (e.g. treaties, reserves and reservations); and racism, especially systemic racism. Importantly, it has also been accomplished through the simple denial of a meaningful presence of Indigenous people. It is not so much a failure to acknowledge this presence – as in, it is not a parallel erasure to that of the in-itself materiality of the land – but rather an active relegation of this presence to the level of encountered environment. These omissions are in many ways foundational of the specific type of nationalism articulated in Canada, the United States and Australia. Just like the legal systems established by settlers in these colonies, the mode of national identity and belonging in these places was premised on *terra nullius* – the notion that “empty” land is

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111 Boulizon, 26.
“unowned and so open to claims of ownership.” Carole Pateman has argued that *terra nullius* is the legal fiction that is employed by the defenders of colonization and settlement in North America and Australia to justify their occupation of the land. These regions were viewed by the colonial powers as *terra nullius*, thereby effacing the Indigenous presence or categorizing Indigenous occupation as being on par with that of animals and thus unproductive and negligible. As the land was not cultivated and not divided into private property it was considered “worthless” by colonial powers and thus a candidate for conquest and settlement. Nonetheless, Pateman contends that despite the claims to having encountered an empty land, settlers in fact recognized the prior presence of Indigenous peoples when they established a “settler contract”: “a specific form of the expropriation contract [that] refers to the dispossession of, and rule over, Native inhabitants by British settlers in the two New Worlds [... and that aims] not merely to dominate, govern, and use but to create a civil society.”

As Pateman illustrates, the *terra nullius* argument was justified by Western political theory, in the writing of Locke and Grotius in particular. While it is clearly critical to the ensuing dispossession and juridical order that the land in these colonies was constructed as empty and unproductive, it seems that there is something more here. One observation in particular of Pateman's points to a justification of the settler sense of

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113 Pateman, 36.

114 Pateman, 47-49.

115 Pateman, 38.
belonging that is also present in the frontier narratives and works of the Group of Seven:

“Europeans have discovered a world that is in its first stage of history; a state of nature that exists in the seventeenth century. This (actual) state of nature waits to be transformed and developed, to be turned into a civil society. ... Lacking all the attributes of a civil condition, savages cannot undertake the transformation of their lands.” Amongst the other points being made here is this one: the land waits. The state of nature is a mode of social (dis)organization, but it crucially takes place in a setting of untamed physical nature. Transforming the social order occurs in tandem with the transformation of the unproductive wild into a productive seat for civilization, with the necessary resources available within easy reach. This idea of the land as waiting is as important as the notion of the land as empty to the sense of belonging that accompanies the settler narrative. If the land were simply empty then it could remain so. Land that is waiting, on the other hand, is land with potential, land with a destiny, and land in search of an actualizer. The quest to push beyond the frontier then is not simply about the character of the rugged American pioneer, or the robust Canadian adventurer, it is about playing one's part in unlocking the potential of the land – the land that is calling out for the adequate partner. The Canadian settler and travel writer William Francis Butler even felt that the land was lonely. This perspective then does not simply ignore the presence of Indigenous peoples, it supplants them as the inhabitants fit to claim the land. Indigenous residents are

116 Pateman, 54-5.

117 Calling it the “Great Lone Land” he claimed that “There is no other portion of the globe in which travel is possible where loneliness can be said to live so thoroughly.” Quoted in Peter C. Newman, “Introduction,” in Canada: The Great Lone Land. Ottmar Bierwagen. (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1989), 2.
already deemed to be the inappropriate partners of the land – inhabitants that failed to properly respond to its call. They can then easily be pushed aside, as they are considered to have failed to fulfil the needs of the land.

We can see this conception of the land as waiting in many of the Group of Seven's nationalist paintings. A familiar, and warranted, critique of the Group of Seven is that they present the Canadian landscape as an empty wilderness. In so doing they are charged with reinforcing the narrative of *terra nullius*. John O'Brian cites A.Y. Jackson's *Terre Sauvage* as the quintessential depiction of Canadian wilderness as *terra nullius*. Not only did the artist edit out of the painted scene the cottages and other evidence of human habitation present in reality, but the composition of the painting – the “balanced weight of the clouds and the rocks” – lend it a stillness and timelessness that “helped the painting to become an icon, a representation of norticity and emptiness. *Terra nullius.*”

More generally, Manning argues that in the Group's art, “[t]he landscape, foregrounded as the ‘true’ image of Canada, is

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119 “the canonical predominance of the white male wilderness painter, whose heroic landscapes signal the collusion of capital and political power that erased First Peoples from the map of Canada.” Hudson, 30.

120 O'Brian, 26.
understood as an essential proponent in the nationalizing attempts to relegate the discourse of ‘Canadian identity’ to notions of *vastness and emptiness*, where the nation represents the ideal image of an ordered universe, its limits fixed and identities secured. [emphasis added][121] O'Brian and White note that, as in other settler states, in Canada the idea of the land as wild and empty constructs it as something “there for the taking” that is subsequently mythologized. [122] Boulizon finds the same waiting in Québec's landscape paintings, even if these more frequently show the traces of human habitation. Refuting the characterization of these paintings as participating in an “aesthetics of the empty” [123] or as representing a kind of alienation or nihilism, Boulizon argues that these landscapes are “‘in waiting,’ far from mute, they are silent. And they speak much more loudly than the sonorous strikes of our loud romantics.” [124] The claiming of the land, and of the position of destined partner, need not be done through noisy proclamations. Having confidence in being the awaited partner is sufficient.

In works of contemporary Canadian art we find challenges to this depiction of the land as both empty and waiting. One notable example is Jin-me Yoon's *A Group of Sixty-Seven* (1996). In this work Yoon takes two iconic examples of Canadian landscape art

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[122] O'Brian and White, 4.


[124] “<< en attente >>, loin d'être muets, ils sont silencieux. Et ils nous parlent souvent bien plus fort que les éclats sonores de nos bruyants romantiques.” Boulizon, 30.
(Lawren Harris’ *Maligne Lake, Jasper Park* and Emily Carr’s *Old Time Coast Village*\(^\text{125}\)) as the backdrop to a series of portraits of members of Vancouver’s Korean community. Manning describes this work as a “subversion of the norms of the landscape through a critical reversal of the modes of representation foregrounded in these seminal works by Harris and Carr.”\(^\text{126}\) She sees the critical power in this work as emanating from the “superimposing onto the familiar empty “Canadian” landscape [...] the unassimilated images of immigrants who populate this very landscape.”\(^\text{127}\) This is undoubtedly true, but there seems more at work in the critique here, especially if we attend to the implications of the “land as waiting” discourse. The jarring presence of these bodies in familiar scenes

\(^{125}\) Unlike her male counterparts, Emily Carr frequently signalled the presence of Indigenous peoples in her painting. Though she turned away from depicting Indigenous peoples themselves, her landscapes frequently feature totem poles or other signs of Indigenous presence. Erin Manning notes this difference, arguing that Carr “problematises the use of the landscape by the members of the Group of Seven and their obfuscation of the native presence. [...] Her subject matter was largely relegated to native artifacts – most notably totems – that she painted in an attempt to record a disappearing culture.” Manning, 158-9, note 6. Carr did however fall into other typical colonial attitudes, namely associating Indigenous peoples with the natural rather than human world (Scott Watson, “Disfigured Nature: The Origins of the Modern Canadian Landscape,” in O'Brian and White, 217) and situating authentic indigeneity in the past (see Marcia Crosby, “Construction of the Imaginary Indian,” in O'Brian and White: 219-222).

\(^{126}\) Manning, 25.

\(^{127}\) Manning, 26.
of pristine nature highlights the fact that these are not the bodies that the nationalist imaginary presumes the land to be waiting for. They are Asian and (frequently) female bodies, not the white, male, European (or, sometimes, exclusively British) bodies that are constructed by the national narrative as the destined partners to the land. Where that narrative erases Indigenous bodies, as we saw with the Group of Seven's paintings, it also rejects non-white migrants by refusing to allow them to meld co-operatively with the environment. One group disappears while the other stands out, but neither fits in to the supposedly inclusive nationalist framework in this settler state.

These two radically different positions – of Indigenous people/bodies as invisible and racialized people/bodies as inescapably conspicuous – highlight the racial dimensions to the settler nationalist narrative. They also illustrate how the land, far from being a passive background materiality, is marshalled for the ideological project of settler nationalism. The “right fit” with the land becomes a litmus test for who belongs in the nation. It is the Goldilocks porridge test of national belonging. Too hot and you stick out. Too cold and you disappear. Just right and you engage in a symbiotic relationship with the land. It reflects your national character and you embody its strength and vitality. The perceived fit with the land becomes the gatekeeper to national belonging. Far from being a passive background the land becomes an agent and enforcer of exclusion.

Turning to the context of that other settler state, Australia, Arlene Moreton-Robinson, like Pateman, takes up the meaning and legacy of *terra nullius*. She argues that: "the sense of belonging, home and place enjoyed by the non-Indigenous subject - colonizer/migrant - is [...] derived from ownership as understood within the logic of
capital; and it mobilizes the legend of the pioneer, 'the battler', in its self-legitimization." Not only is the non-Indigenous mode of belonging, according to Moreton-Robinson, premised on an original theft legitimized through the fiction of *terra nullius*, it continues to be operational not only through the occupation of the land, but also through the mobilization of the pioneering character. This observation applies equally well in Canada and in the United States. Importantly, Moreton-Robinson argues that the legacy of the doctrine of *terra nullius* also implicates non-European migrants. But they cannot simply be grouped along with their European predecessors. Instead, Moreton-Robinson contends that the non-European migrants' “sense of belonging is tied to the fiction of Terra Nullius and the logic of capital because their legal right to belong is sanctioned by the law that enabled dispossession.” However, whiteness is the invisible measure of who can hold possession. This measure plays out, for example, when the government chooses, along race lines, which migrants are placed in detention centres and which ones are welcomed into the country. Related to these different senses of belonging are distinct Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships to the land. The key difference is that only the Indigenous relationship to the land can be characterized as ontological because the former “is constitutive of us [Indigenous peoples], and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, marks a radical, indeed incommensurable, difference between us and the non-Indigenous. This ontological relation to land

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129 Moreton-Robinson, 25.

130 Moreton-Robinson, 28.
constitutes a subject position that we do not share, and which cannot be shared, with the postcolonial subject whose sense of belonging in this place is tied to migrancy.”¹³¹ She describes this ontological relationship as a literal embodiment that survives the violence of colonization and colonialism.¹³² This orientation to land is markedly different from one that sees the land as hosting critical cultural and historic traces and sites and from the one that sees the land as generating national characteristics. Here belonging implies a literal mixing of body, land and ancestry.¹³³ Ultimately Moreton-Robinson juxtaposes Indigenous embodied belonging with a settler “body as separate” form of belonging premised on “Western ontology in which the body is theorized as being separate from the earth and it has no bearing on the way subjectivities, identities and bodies are constituted.”¹³⁴

Moreton-Robinson raises here something that is importantly distinct about Indigenous belonging from the modes of belonging that I have been exploring. In dramatic contrast to the articulations of belonging surrounding the frontier narratives and the empty wilderness of landscape painting, the ontological relationship with the land that she describes starts from the ground up, as it were. The frontier and empty landscape narratives are necessarily settler narratives. They are narratives that read characteristics into the land that are then to be read back into the (settler) inhabitants. In so doing, the

¹³¹ Moreton-Robinson, 31.
¹³² Moreton-Robinson, 32.
¹³³ We must be careful not to universalize this understanding to all Indigenous peoples.
¹³⁴ Moreton-Robinson, 36-37.
(settler) body remains separate from the earth. Indeed, the rugged adventurer of the frontier and of the wild is also the tamer of Nature, the precursor carving the path for later settlement and civilization. These orientations require an understanding of the self as ontologically separate from nature. Thus, as much as these narratives seem, on the surface, to indicate a closeness with nature and surroundings, they in fact reinforce a categorical separation. This separation is infused with power and exclusion (and violence). These narratives also obscure a genuine bodily relationship with the land and environment that exists even for non-Indigenous residents. This relationship is not some kind of reworking of the ontological relationship that Moreton-Robinson describes. That relationship is indeed properly a relationship experienced by Indigenous peoples. Nonetheless, there is a personal, direct, felt relationship with land that gets overlooked in most other accounts of belonging. It is a relationship that living in and experiencing the land generates. It is a more phenomenological than symbolic relationship. It does not supplant or rectify power dynamics among human groups involved in relationships to the land. Rather, it exists alongside (or perhaps underneath) those relations. Acknowledging this non-Indigenous bodily relationship to land does nothing to address the reality of dispossession, however, perhaps it can help to explain some of the resistance that settlers and, more importantly, their descendants, put up against the transformations and reparations required to address the reality and legacy of dispossession. And to be optimistic, a recognition of non-Indigenous embodied relationship with land and belonging might help to bolster the case of genuine belonging felt by later waves of migrants and their descendants that gets questioned in some of the exclusionary discourse.
of settler populations. Indeed, Sara Ahmed, to whom I now turn, gives us some tools to think about migrancy, belonging and embodiment.

For Sara Ahmed, the body and the sensations it undergoes are crucial to identifying and indeed to constructing the borders of belonging. Ahmed's focus on the body and on sensorial engagement in some ways makes her the heir of Herder. She shares with him the view that the body is integral to an experience and an understanding of belonging, yet, her notion of the body is quite different from Herder’s. She argues that “there is no body as such that is given in the world: bodies materialize in a complex set of temporal and spatial relations to other bodies.”135 Her focus on skin in particular allows her to give an account of belonging that is at once social and material. Skin figures prominently as an organ of the body that mediates the relationship with other bodies, laying out where borders are to be found. Yet this occurs through a seemingly paradoxical duality. On the one hand the skin represents a border, a boundary-formation. However, as a “border that feels” the skin is also “an affective opening out of bodies to other bodies, in the sense that the skin registers how bodies are touched by others.”136 Thus the skin is both border and gateway – a means of simultaneously separating and conjoining inside and outside. These reflections lead Ahmed to propose the idea of “inter-embodiment” according to which “the lived experience of embodiment is always already the social experience of dwelling with other bodies.”137 This experience expands skin from an organ

136 Ahmed, Strange Encounters, 45.
137 Ahmed, Strange Encounters, 47.
of an individual body to one held by the community as a whole. The “skin of the community” is a phenomenon that results when there is an “alignment of the subject with some others and against other others.”

For Ahmed, the bodies that engage in this inter-embodiment are human ones – bodies that are differentiated into (especially racialized) categories of familiar and strange that constitute bodies as carriers of difference. This is undoubtedly an important aspect of the inter body dynamic, and the one most relevant to the construction of race and racism that is the subject of her work, but her notion of inter-embodiment could be productively expanded to include an account of exchanges with non-human bodies. Indeed, traces of such a conception can already be found in her writings. In “The Skin of the Community” she makes reference to “objects” as other bodies that participate in the alignment that produces the skin of the community, but she does not explore the specific impact of these nonhuman entities. In “Home and Away” she comes closer to a Herderian outlook when she examines the relationship with locality. She speaks of “the lived experience of locality” as an “immersion of a self in a locality” such that “the locality intrudes into the senses: it defines what one smells, hears, touches, feels, remembers.” In this way “the subject and space leak into each other, inhabit each other.” The human/nonhuman inter-embodiment of locality comes to the fore most prominently at the moment of its disruption, namely, in migration. As Ahmed describes it, migration is not only a moment


of social dislocation but also one of sensorial disjuncture:

The journeys of migration involve a splitting of home as place of origin and home as the sensory world of everyday experience. What migration narratives involve, then, is a spatial reconfiguration of an embodied self: a transformation in the very skin through which the body is embodied. Hence the experience of moving often to a new home is most felt through the surprises in sensation: different smells, different sounds at night, more or less dust. When we came to Australia, what I first remember (or at least what I remember remembering) is all the dust, and how it made me sneeze and my eyes itch. When I returned to England, I felt the cold pinching my skin. The intrusion of an unexpected space into the body suggests that the experience of a new home involves a partial shedding of the skin, a process which is uncomfortable and well described as the irritation of an itch.[emphasis added]\[140\]

Ahmed's recognition of the formative impact of our surroundings and environment is a site of affinity with Herder, however, she does not share Herder’s conception of the indelibility of the marks resulting from the original or ancestral home which prevent attachments to elsewhere. Rather, for her migration leads to a splitting of home precisely because sensorial experience now takes place in the new home. The expanded sense of inter-embodiment would indicate that the surroundings in the new home interact with and have an impact on the migrant. This new impact does not erase the original or pre-existing one, but neither is it blocked by some sort of primordial link to the original home. Bodily sensation involves us in a constant, and constantly morphing, process of inter-embodiment. The growing familiarity with nonhuman objects and environment in the new home can stretch the “skin of the community” that we have not only with other


The jarring experience of new sensations can continue even after we have settled into a new home. About ten months after moving to Baltimore, and long after I had become comfortable and settled there, I was suddenly shaken in spring when I encountered an entirely new scent. Spring smells different in Baltimore. The defrosted earth of the gardens along my jogging route had a sickly sweet odour that I have never encountered elsewhere. This strange smell only lasts a few weeks, so in my five years there I never became completely used to it, and every spring felt a an echo of that initial dislocation.
human bodies, but also with nonhuman ones. This too helps to instil a sense of belonging in a new home.

Returning to Canadian landscape painting, we can see in this tradition an example of human/nonhuman inter-embodiment. Though not explicitly articulated in their painting philosophy, the paintings by Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven highlight a material relationship with the land, prompting a sensorial response in the viewer. This is yet another way that their work breaks from the European landscape art tradition. First, by painting from sketches done in place and carefully planning their compositions they succeed in placing the viewer at the scene. The frame of their works acts as a gateway, making the viewer feel that she is about to step into the depicted scene. This is a departure from the English and Dutch styles in which the framing reinforces the viewer's distance from the scene by accentuating the theatre-, fable- or allegory-like setting. These new Canadian landscapes invite you in, so that you feel an echo of what you would would sense in the scene itself: the suck of mud at your heels, the crunch of leaves underfoot, the burning cold on your cheeks. Looking at Lawren Harris' *Snow II* you know that with your next step the snow will hold your weight for an instant, before you sink in, up to your knees. What these paintings are exposing, then, is not just the “spirit of the country itself,”¹⁴¹ but also our

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¹⁴¹ Harris, quoted in Atanassova, 37.
sensorial relationship with land. The body of the viewer is felt as part of the landscape. Lurking behind the Group of Seven's ideologically nationalist aim is the inescapable impact of the land on its inhabitants (new and long-established).

Anna Hudson points to this entangled and responsive relationship with the land in her anti-canonical rereading of a Tom Thomson painting. In *Northern Lights*, a painting depicting the Aurora Borealis, an icon of northernness, Hudson sees Thomson as drawing out the “spectral signatures of elements radiating their excess energy” and pointing to the “elemental make-up” of landscape features. She sees him as going beyond a nationalist depiction of wilderness to a scientific one. In this work, Hudson argues, Thomson focuses on “the atomic world of quantum,” thus evoking a curious amalgam of joy and pathos, exemplified by the quantum dance of the aurora borealis in *Northern Lights*. That this would characterize Canada, in the end, as a polar country, is less nationalist than scientific. *Northern Lights* visualises the drama of solar wind carrying energy plasma (protons and electrons) to the earth’s magnetosphere. Once charged this field erupts in a substorm, releasing excess energy in a spectral display of photons, expressed in waves that sweep across the night sky. Thomson, the artist, sits in the middle of this atomic theatre, witnessing its quantum dynamic on a heavenly scale. The work of art achieves what science could not: it is an empirical record of metaphysical reality.

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142 Hudson, 31-32.

143 Hudson, 33.
This interpretation not only goes against the grain of more familiar accounts of the artist's intentions, it also highlights his attentiveness to his environment at a visceral level. Nonetheless, I find the characterization of his capacities as “scientific” to be off base. It seems that what is going on here is not a theoretical seizing and representing of the scene, in either nationalist or scientific terms, but rather an instinctual, gut reaction. Rather than Hudson's opposition of “nationalist and scientific,” we could read into this painting an opposition of nationalism and materialism. Or perhaps more accurately, in this and other paintings by Thomson and the Group of Seven, we can see a doubling of nationalism and materialism.

The reading of landscape painting as illustrating the imprint of the land on the body might help to explain the enduring influence of the landscape in Canadian abstract painting, and reveal how deeply the impact of the land runs. In the abstract painting that emerged in the 1940s, the Canadian landscape was no longer represented in any formally recognizable form, yet it remained a frequent subject. We find it in the work of the Painters Eleven, a diverse group of artists brought together in the 1950s by their common commitment to abstraction and modernism. One such painting is Kazuo Nakamura's *Square Infinity*. From this painter, who is fascinated by the geometrical forms found in nature...
and how they move from the visual to the conceptual realm, we get an image not immediately identifiable as a landscape, but that evokes an “aerial perspective of snow-covered fields viewed from an airplane.”

If geometric form is what drew Nakamura in, texture, movement and colour play that role for other abstract artists. In particular, the works produced by the Automatistes, a group of Quebec artists committed to working instinctually and without preconceived ideas about the works they produced, demonstrate these qualities. Their paintings often involve broad, rough brushstrokes; paint applied directly from the tube in vigorous, frenetic lines; or thick, coarse layers of paint, applied using a palette knife. Given that these artists approached their canvasses without a preconceived notion of what would appear there, we might say that when they identify their result with the land in some form they are indicating their entanglement with the land and the ways in which it acts on them. For example, Paul-Émile Borduas, the leading figure of the movement, produced two works (Joie lacustre and Trou de la fée) that have been associated with the rural landscape of his childhood in St-Hilaire, Québec. François-Marc Gagnon argues that “one recognizes in both works a vestige of nature despite their non-figurative character [...] both works were named after the fact and do not correspond to any conscious intention on the part of the artist. They imposed themselves on him, arriving from that profound zone where countryside corresponds neither to the nation nor, even less, to politics, but


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rather more to a place where fairies frolic and joy springs from the rocks and reeds.”

Indeed, another prominent member of the group, Jean-Paul Riopelle, seemed to recognize the inescapable impact of land on the self when he stated “Everything is landscape.” This statement, among other things, seems a tacit acknowledgment that landscape makes itself felt; that rather than being a rural vista, the land is always acting on us, on multiple registers.

The capacity of land and human bodies to affect and be affected by each other becomes more sensible to humans in these abstract works of art. Take, for example, Borduas' painting Jardin d'hiver. At first it seems a chaos of textures and movement. Sweeping gestures of black and red draw the gaze up to the top right corner. But soon a calm also emerges. The two spots of white in the centre anchor the eyes, securing the viewer amidst the bluster of the canvas. The tension between frenetic movement and serenity mimics a tension one

Figure 10. Paul-Emile Borduas. Jardin d'hiver, 1955? Oil on canvas, 33 x 40,6 cm.


146 “Tout est paysage.” cited in Boulizon, 14.
senses in winter, especially in a domesticated outdoor space like a garden. The exposure to aggressive elements such as blowing snow is balanced by the cozy feeling of an enveloping blanket of resting or calmly falling snow. An echo of this bodily sensation of tension gets evoked in the viewer of the painting who has herself experienced it. The painting relies on the sensations that the land provokes in its inhabitants to prompt a sensorial reaction, even when removed from the conditions themselves. The land has got under the skin of the viewer. Thus, like Thomson in *Northern Lights*, Borduas is here attuned to the elemental and sensory impact of the scene, drawing it to the fore and presenting it, unadultered, to the viewer.

I dwell on abstract art here because of its ability to intensify through mimicry the force of the land's impact on us. These artists are attuned to sensation and to the sensorial dimensions of our relationship with our environment. The spaces in which these works of art are viewed are removed from the depicted conditions and yet still can invoke the forces of climate and land. This suggests the depth of the impact that land has on us. To feel the winter tension in a climate-controlled and windowless art gallery is a testament to how profound the knowledge of winter is within the body.

Seeking a reorientation of Canadian landscape art, John O'Brian turns to an exchange in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*: "‘You and your landscapes!’ Estragon shouted at Vladimir. ‘Tell me about the worms.’ The wild art history of Canada also includes worms."\(^{147}\) Art – and the land it represents – is not just about pristine,
aesthetically pleasing images. It is also about the writhing material vitality beneath our feet. And in our bodies. In this vein, to understand the complexities of belonging we have to do more than simply redirect our gaze from the landscape to the worms at our feet. We have to situate ourselves in the line between landscape and worm. A line that forms a circle, or maybe a squiggle. A line that is at any rate anything but a straight one, with a beginning and an end. Narratives of national belonging, like the nationalist landscape paintings that incarnate them, fail to recognize the reverberations among worm, body and landscape, and all the many other material elements that participate in creating attachment. Landscape, the land, territory – whatever we call it, it is not simply something out there for conquering, myth-making, anchoring the nation, and drawing on for utilitarian purposes. It is experienced, it is sensed, and it shapes us. Not just in the sense of fashioning a national character, but in the sense of provoking bodily sensations and physical responses. Quotidian experience creates an intimacy with our environment and this in turn creates attachment. If we can say “I am of this land, this is where I belong” it is not because of some primordial, blood tie. We are put in synch by and with the land through the habits we form and the material exchanges that occur as we live there. Riopelle was right that “everything is landscape” - including us.

In the next chapter I will take up this attachment and exchange with our material environment and examine it through a slightly different lens. In developing the notion of “place-belonging” I focus more specifically on its emotional and affective dimensions. This take on attachment to land and place will help us to see how, as I will argue in the final two chapters, climate change is both unsettling and anxiety-provoking.
Chapter 2

Place beyond Territory: Spatial Logics of Climate Change

*Au moment où je mets les pieds dans une ville, je l'habite.  
   Quand je pars, elle m'habite.*  
   - Dany Laferrière, *Je Suis Fatigué*

*it is not that small white house I mean when I write the word home,  
   but the subtle kinetic familiarity that comes from  
   situating oneself in recognizable terrain, the feeling of knowing who you are.*  
   - Isabel Huggan, *Belonging*

In a corner of my living room sits a globe. It is a standard globe, like those that adorn countless living rooms and studies. This one came to me years ago from a friend of my grandmother's and has accompanied me in the various homes that I have occupied ever since. Despite billing itself a “true-to-life globe,” when it came into my hands it was already hopelessly out of date. Across the top the largest chunk of demarcated land is boldly labelled “Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.” Less prominent anachronisms include: Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Tanganyika, West and East Pakistan. Every once in a while I take the globe down from its perch to see how much more poorly it is faring. While searching out new errors my fingers encounter the bumps and ridges intended to represent major geological formations: the Himalayas, the Rocky Mountains, the Alborz mountain range. This relief is layered on top of a simple colour coding scheme: orange for desert, green for deciduous forest, green/blue for coniferous forest, light brown for grassland, pinkish white for tundra. These little groupings of textured and coloured paper are pitiful attempts at representing massive, majestic, and materially diverse natural formations. These inaccuracies and insufficiencies put the lie to my globe's self-
proclaimed veracity. Nonetheless, a globe is familiar, ubiquitous, and we tend to take it at its word (with some acknowledgement of the necessity of occasional borderline updates).

The living room globe is also our image, par excellence, of international politics. It presents the planet as a realm of territory. We are given a jigsaw-puzzle-like image of the earth, where bold lines cut out the shapes of states. And the puzzle is complete, with each piece assigned to a state jurisdiction. This image represents the default frame in political science, a discipline in which territory has become the marker of sovereign statehood. This framing has become so pervasive even in our everyday understanding that we immediately associate a state with its cartographic outline. Benedict Anderson calls this phenomenon “map-as-logo.”

Originating with imperial states' practices of colour-coding maps to indicate their own and rival empires' colonial possessions, this cartographic habit trained us to see the area within the border lines as detached from its broader geo-political context. The shape traced and coloured on the map was transformed into “pure sign” which became reproducible: “[i]nstantly recognizable, everywhere visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination.”

Though Anderson links this phenomenon specifically with the imperial gaze, it is more broadly relevant. State territorial borders have taken on not only strategic but also symbolic importance, evoking in their abstract shape recognition, identification and/or antipathy. As Anderson famously argues, this abstract form has been remarkably powerful in generating national allegiance and a sense of belonging.

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148 Anderson, 175.
149 Anderson, 175.
While this is undoubtedly true, I will argue that territory is insufficient to explain the full story of attachment. There is a visceral attachment that is not captured by the notion of territory, even if one includes its penumbra of nationalist associations. As Tim Ingold explains, territory situates us at a distance – with a bird's-eye, cartographic, state-centric perspective – even when we are living in it:

*the lifeworld, imaged from an experiential centre, is spherical in form, whereas a world divorced from life, that is yet complete in itself, is imaged in the form of a globe. Thus the movement from spherical to global imagery is also one in which 'the world', as we are taught it exists, is drawn ever further from the matrix of our lived experience. It appears that the world as it really exists can only be witnessed by leaving it, and indeed much scientific energy and resources have been devoted to turning such an imaginative flight into an achieved actuality.*

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This mode of ordering the world masks a more embodied understanding – one associated with place. Place acknowledges a more intimate and proximate relation to a world. It is a term more frequently used in geography, but imported into political science it can enrich our understanding of how the sense of belonging operates as a geo-political force. Reviving this “spherical” experience is important not only in order to fill in some overlooked facets of attachment and belonging, but also to foreground an ecological orientation to the world. By highlighting our corporeal and affective engagement with and participation in our surroundings, the platial perspective forces us to be aware of ourselves as part of an ecosystem. In our current era of ecological crisis this awareness is imperative, making a shift in ethos from the territorial to the platial urgent.

In making the case for this shift I will draw on the work of William Connolly,
with a supporting cast including Michael Shapiro, John Agnew, and Saskia Sassen, to elucidate the dangers of the concept of territory and its accompanying logic. This logic shows up even in the work of cosmopolitans and ecotheorists, scholars who appear to be working to undo it. That it endures illustrates how powerful the territorial logic has become. In the end I turn to several geographers, most notably Yu-Fu Tuan, Edward Relph and Edward Casey, to provide the theoretical foundation for an alternative, place-based logic.

As my example of the household globe illustrates, territory is a deeply familiar notion. Therein lies some of the difficulties with the term. Because it occupies a foundational position in international relations theory (and in our understandings of the state and sovereignty), its meaning is rarely examined. Perhaps the crucial starting point for understanding territory is to recognize that it is a concept derived from the abstract (Euclidean) concept of "space." Space is geometric: “a set of points or dimensions that measure distance, area and volume.” More broadly, space is “that most encompassing reality that allows for things to be located within it.” Territory is a subset of space

\begin{enumerate}
\item With the noted exceptions of J.G. Ruggie and John Agnew.
\item See Stuart Elden. “Missing the point: globalization, deterritorialization and the space of the world.” Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers. 30 (2005), 8. For Yi-Fu Tuan the body provides the units of measurement through which we assimilate space (e.g. a foot). See Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977). For Edward Relph “experiential” or “lived” space exists at the extreme end of a continuum of space, before it tips over into place. Edward Relph, Place and placelessness. (London: Pion, 1976), 8.
\end{enumerate}
specifically linked to the state and its organizing principles and needs. For French political geographer Jean Gottmann, territory not only “appears as a material, spatial notion establishing essential links between politics, people, and the natural setting,” it is also the “ideal link between space and politics.”

Following Foucault's argument in *Security, Territory, Population*, Stuart Elden argues that territory is more than land or terrain. Territory is land that can be administered, terrain that has been rendered an object of manipulation:

> [there was a] parallel shift from people to population and from land/terrain to territory. Territory is no longer merely the economic object of land, nor a static terrain; but territory is a vibrant entity, 'within its frontiers, with its specific qualities' (Foucault, 2004: 99-100). The strategies applied to territory – in terms of its mapping, ordering, measuring and demarcation, and the way it is normalized, circulation allowed, and internally regulated – are calculative. Territory is more than merely land, and goes beyond terrain, but is a rendering of the emergent concept of 'space' as a political category: owned, distributed, mapped, calculated, bordered and controlled.

Territory therefore entails a top-down, bird's-eye point of view which is taken by the state as it performs its requisite calculation and demarcation of land. Borders – a key element in the logic of territory – are determined and defended by the state and its appendages. The extent of territory and the resources contained within it represent the

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158 “a relation of property, a finite resource that is distributed, allocated and owned, a political-economic question. Land is a resource over which there is competition.” Stuart Elden, “Land, terrain, territory.” *Progress in Human Geography.* 34, (2010), 804. And “a relation of power, with a heritage in geology and the military, the control of which allows the establishment and maintenance of order. As a 'field', a site of work or battle, it is a political-strategic question.” Elden, “Land, terrain, territory,” 804.

159 Elden, “Land, terrain, territory,” 810.
depth and vigour of the state's power.

The familiarity of territory, and its ubiquitous association with the state, have also lent it a natural and ahistorical aura. Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden argue that:

*One of the most wide-ranging impacts of state space as territory is precisely to naturalize – at once to normalize and to mask – the diverse forms of spatial intervention that are mobilized through state interventions. It is above all this territory effect, we argue, that enables states to represent the impacts of their manifold spatial interventions as pregiven features of the physical landscape or as purely technical dimensions of the built environment.*

This 'territory effect' masks both the ways in which territory remains a matter of political struggle and the violence that not only founds but also maintains it. This violence is perhaps most apparent in territories carved out by colonization. Ingold argues that the colonizing impulse itself can be traced to the territorial conception of the planet as globe: “The image of the world as a globe is, I contend, a colonial one. It presents us with the idea of a performed surface waiting to be occupied, to be colonised first by living things and later by human (usually meaning Western) civilisation. Through travel and exploration, it is said, mankind has conquered the globe.” We thus come to see the world as “an object of appropriation for a collective humanity” and to figure humanity as transcending physical nature.

Colonization also – obviously – involved a high degree of violence directed at human beings. Achille Mbembe argues that “colonial sovereignty rested on three sorts of

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160 Brenner and Elden, 373.
161 Brenner and Elden, 367.
violence”: founding violence, the violence of legitimation and finally a banal, ordinary and everyday violence of maintenance - an authenticating violence. With the territorial dimension of colonization in mind we might add to this a fourth type of violence – the violence of erasure. This would include the narrative of colonized territory in which the land appears empty and uninhabited prior to colonial settlement. In Carole Pateman's terms, this is the convenient story of terra nullius. Michael Shapiro argues that this erasure is accomplished through both physical changes to the environment and nominal ones – destroying cultural practices attached to places by imposing new names, thus making “a new 'spatial history', transforming space into a place of settlement while erasing prior naming practices.” The process of erasure, Shapiro argues, was so successful that we have come to regard indigenous absence in settled territories as a pre-existing fact, rather than the consequence of an aggressive colonial spatial practice.

The violence of territory is not limited to its colonial manifestations. William Connolly argues that violence is in fact integral to the concept itself. Pushing beyond the more innocuous etymology of “territory” that derives from the Latin terra (earth) he points to the word's darker origins in terrere (“meaning to frighten, to terrorize, to exclude”) and territorium (“a place from which people are warned.' Territorium seems to repress the sustaining relationship to the land that it presupposes.”)


166 Michael J. Shapiro, *Violent Cartographies.* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 27.

167 Shapiro, 28.

sinister connotations allows Connolly to identify a tension in the concept: “To occupy territory, then, is both to receive sustenance and to exercise violence.”

Connolly moves beyond the simple geographic or spatial understanding of the word, arguing that territory represents a kind of logic: “Territory is sustaining land occupied and bounded by violence. By extension, to territorialize anything is to establish exclusive boundaries around it by warning other people off. A religious identity, a nation, a class, a race, a gender, a sexuality, a nuclear family, on this reading, is constructed through its mode of territorialization.”

This territorial imagination is dangerous because it not only relies on violence to establish and police geographic boundaries and exclusions, but because it also seeps into other registers of difference. Importantly, he alludes to the inescapability of the exclusionary dimension of territory when he says that “[t]o become territorialized is to be occupied by a particular identity.”

Though he is referring to the social identities of nation, class or race, this is also true with material territory. We see this in the cases of immigrants who, despite having successfully become naturalized citizens and therefore having achieved a kind of belonging in/to that state's territory, are stripped of citizenship if convicted of certain crimes. In these cases the vestiges of alien territory remain inscribed in the body of the naturalized citizen, preventing a full absorption by and in the acquired territory. The naturalized citizen is thus not only always in some way alien, but always in some way occupied by another territory: she is not simply thrown out of her adopted state, but deported to a specific foreign territory.

169 Connolly, xxii.

170 Connolly, xxii.

171 Connolly, xxii.
Connolly calls for a pluralization of the modern territorial imagination as a way to soften its exclusionary tendencies. I want to make another, not necessarily incompatible, appeal – to "platialize" our imagination. As I will argue later in this chapter, the concept of place draws out a different aspect of the human relationship to the material environment than does territory. It tends to invite cooperation between inhabitants rather than exclusion and lead us to think of ourselves as being part of our environment, rather than simply living on it.

In contrast, international relations (IR) theory falls into what John Agnew calls the “territorial trap.” This trap is the product of three geographic assumptions that he contends pervade IR theory:

First, state territories have been reified as set of fixed units of sovereign space. This has served to dehistoricize and decontextualize processes of state formation and disintegration. ... Second, the use of domestic/foreign and national/international polarities has served to obscure the interaction between processes operating at different scales ... Third, the territorial state has been viewed as existing prior to and as a container of society. As a consequence, society becomes a national phenomenon. This assumption is common to all types of international relations theory.¹⁷²

One of the consequences of the linking of security to spatial sovereignty, according to Agnew, is that political identity has come to be defined solely in state-territorial terms. A number of scholars have responded by showing how the territorial state is in fact a modern invention.¹⁷³ They point out that other forms of political organization preceded

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and then existed alongside territorial rule: in Europe feudal, monarchical and clerical jurisdiction overlapped, with authority tied more to issues than to geography, and it was not until the late Middle Ages that the notion of the sovereign state emerged.\textsuperscript{174} As Ruggie argues, "prior to that date, there were only 'frontiers,' or large zones of transition."\textsuperscript{175} This association of territory with the sovereign state was also far from inevitable. The ubiquity of the territorial state model was in fact, according to Hendrik Spruyt, the product of a survival-of-the-fittest style competition among organizing logics:

\begin{quote}
The dynamic of competitive advantage selected out those units that were more adept at preventing freeriding, standardizing weights and coinage, and establishing uniform adjudication. Equally important were the abilities of sovereign actors to coordinate their interactions with one another. ... territorial sovereignty proved incompatible with nonterritorial logics of organization... States thus increasingly only recognized similar units as legitimate actors in international relations.\textsuperscript{176}
\end{quote}

What the historical record shows is that, far from being the natural form of political rule implied by international relations theory, territorial sovereignty is the anomaly: “the distinctive feature of the modern system of rule is that it has differentiated its subject collectivity into territorially defined, fixed, and mutually exclusive enclaves of legitimate dominion. As such, it appears to be unique in human history.”\textsuperscript{177}

The close association between the concepts of territory and state has reinforced the abstract quality of both. The territorial state thus comes to name nothing more than “a

\textsuperscript{174} Spruyt, 3.
\textsuperscript{175} Ruggie, 150.
\textsuperscript{176} Spruyt, 6.
\textsuperscript{177} Ruggie, 151.
This “container view” of territory strips it of particularities. As Daniel Deudney argues, in international relations, where the “container view” of territory and state rules supreme, “the analysis of natural variables [is] largely absent.”

Though land is often understood as important to political identity and to national identity more particularly, the distinctive texture of a place is obscured. Particularities are of interest only insofar as they are "resources" for economic or military projects. This point of view is not necessarily in itself problematic, but as it has become more dominant it has pushed aside other modes of rule and other modes of relating to our environment. These other ways of relating to geography have been pushed to the background where, though they continue to operate, they are ignored. The territorial imagination has eclipsed many realities in our modern world, but perhaps one of the most significant is the current ecological and climate crisis. The idea that resources (land) within a territory are there for the state to exploit at will has not only contributed to the problem, but has also made it difficult to come up with adequate solutions.

One area within IR theory bucks the trend and takes the mismatch between state borders and matters of political concern seriously. Gaining prominence as globalization became an area of public and academic interest, the new cosmopolitanism looks to ecological and climate problems as emblematic of the inadequacy of the state sovereignty model. Globalization was the gateway into rethinking the state sovereignty/territory link

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178 Anthony Giddens, quoted in Elden, “Missing the point,” 11.


180 Deudney, 132.
for many cosmopolitans. With its four key characteristics of speed, scale, intensity and extensity\textsuperscript{181} globalization was recognized as representing a novel logic of power and organization. Crucially this logic - a logic of flows - is at odds with the long reigning territorial logic. It is the conflict - one in which the upper hand is being gained by the globalizing logic - that signals for these scholars the demise of the territorial state, or at least the demise of its hegemony.\textsuperscript{182} As the state has been “hollowed out” it is less and less able to fulfill its presumed role as “protector and representative of the territorial community, as a collector and (re)allocator of resources among its members, and as a promotor of an independent, deliberatively tested shared good.” At the same time, the “fate of a national community is no longer in its own hands.”\textsuperscript{183}

Not all scholars studying globalization see its particular spatial logic as spelling the end of the territorial state. Some see the changes in the world today as more complex than a simple victory of one spatial logic over another. James Rosenau does not see the challenge to territoriality as emanating solely from transnational challenges, but rather as coming from a spatial logic that is both greater and lesser than state territorial boundaries, and that links these spheres in novel ways. He argues that “the best way to grasp world affairs today requires viewing them as an endless series of distant proximities in which the forces pressing for greater globalization and those inducing greater localization


\textsuperscript{182} Held and McGrew, 7-8.

\textsuperscript{183} Held and McGrew, 34-5.
interactively play themselves out." He argues that the impoverishment of the capacity of states in the current era (which he terms “fragmegration” to highlight that it is engaged in a process of both globalization and fragmentation) has led to a decline in territoriality itself. Similarly, Saskia Sassen sees in today's world not a simple process of globalization, but rather a two-way change in spatial logic. In *Territory, Authority, Rights* she argues that most scholarship about globalization puts too strong an emphasis on the global spatial dimension, ignoring the ways in which the process of globalization in fact relies on and occurs within national space(s). Instead, what we are seeing today is

*a proliferation of temporal and spatial framings and a proliferation of normative orders where once the dominant logic was toward producing unitary spatial, temporal, and normative framings. A synthesizing image we might use to capture these dynamics is that we see a movement from centripetal nation-state articulation to a centrifugal multiplication of specialized assemblages.*

Stuart Elden also identifies globalization as a spatial logic, but unlike Rosenau and Sassen, he argues that it represents an expansion of the territorial logic. Territory continues to dominate under globalization, only now it is not bound up in a single state. This is because for Elden territory is not so much the fact of boundaries and division - the container view - but rather the logic of abstraction, universality and measurability. Globalization facilitates the expansion of this logic because it "rests upon

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185 Rosenau, 66.

186 Sassen, 2006.


188 Elden, “Missing the point,” 16.
exactly the same idea of homogenous, calculable space."\textsuperscript{189} With globalization, Elden argues, "the abstract space we have imposed over the world is taken more and more as real in itself, rather than as a reflection of something below it, something that it seeks to represent."\textsuperscript{190} As this abstraction captures bigger and bigger scales we lose even more of the particularities of our environment. We are drawn to look up and out, ignoring or deprioritizing the actual environment that surrounds us. Global virtual networks based on common interest become the relevant units.

Having identified the decline of the territorial state as a consequence of globalization, and the mismatch between territorial state jurisdiction and many issues that require regulation, cosmopolitans propose various models for coping with this mismatch. The most common answer is to suggest the development of a form of transnational governance. Ecological and climate issues are often pointed to as quintessential problems requiring transnational governance. This is because the difficulties in this crisis are two-fold. First, ecological and climatic problems do not respect territorial borders. Ecological problems have led to a "spatial mismatch" that means that "the interests of those exposed to environmental dangers often do not correspond with state ... priorities."\textsuperscript{191} Just as significantly, the problem reveals what Michael Mason terms an "accountability deficit" created by the lack of political structures corresponding to transnational and global environmental hazards that would allow those affected to act together to address the

\textsuperscript{189} Elden, "Missing the point," 16.

\textsuperscript{190} Elden, "Missing the point," 16.

hazards. Michael Mason argues that the cross-border nature of environmental degradation has “triggered an erosion of the legitimacy of state-based accountability.” Second, the state system is ill-suited to address this collective problem and international institutions have been unable to fill the gap. The nature and scope of the problem - the "ecological challenge" in Andrew Hurrell's terms - "has pushed states towards new forms of international law and global governance." Transnational governance is pointed to as the only avenue for effectively and legitimately dealing with the ecological problems we are facing.

The transnational environmental governance advocated by cosmopolitans must, according to Ken Conca, go beyond the existing international environmental regimes. He argues that these regimes have failed because they "are founded on highly stylized notions about territory, authority, and knowledge" whose reach is limited to causes of environmental harm that physically cross borders. As a result they are unable to prevent any impact on the equally important economic, social and political causes. Perhaps most damning, Conca contends that an international environmental regime would require a definitive understanding of both the problem and its solution before a relevant regime can be formed, thus condemning it to come into being too late to be of much use.

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192 Mason, 2.
193 Mason, 4.
196 Conca, 21.
197 Conca, 23.
Taking these concerns seriously, arguments for transnational governance identify tools in the existing international structures that can nonetheless be used to correct these deficiencies. Held singles out environmental law and agreements as one of a number of developments leading to “the growth of regional and global governance, with responsibility for areas of increasing transborder concern from pollution and health to trade and financial matters [that has] helped close the gap between the types of organization thought relevant to national and transnational life.” He sees the introduction of the concept of the “common heritage of mankind” at the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment as representing a “turning point in legal considerations” because it served as the basis for arguing that the world's natural resources should be developed for the benefit of all. This conceptual change establishes a legal requirement to consider “not just humankind as individuals but the global commons and our shared ecosystem” as promising. The new norms set out at environmental conferences and in international environmental law are seen by many as an acknowledgement of the duties that we owe to those beyond our own state borders. Robyn Eckersley sees these duties as requiring formal recognition of those to whom this duty is owed by stretching our understanding of the state. She argues that states must “confer reciprocal rights of citizenship (and with that, rights of political participation and legal standing) to people living outside the state territorial boundaries in those


199 Held, 15.

200 Held, 15.

201 Held, 14.
circumstances where they may be seriously affected by proposed developments taking place within a particular state." This sounds much like Elden's notion of the ever-expanding territorial logic. More common than the idea of reciprocal rights of citizenship is the proposal to recognize transnational communities. These communities – variously termed “overlapping communities of fate,” “affected publics,” and “communities at risk” - are:

composed of individuals who may not necessarily be co-nationals or, indeed, have any contact with one another. Their collective bond arises from the joint exposure to current or threatened environmental harm as consequences caused by the activities of others across political borders, and their common interest is in regulating those activities.

The existence of these communities is taken as evidence that decision-making at local, state and regional levels has failed to address the problems. Higher order decision-making bodies that can be made accountable to these publics are therefore required.

Cosmopolitans and ecotheorists are clearly right that there is a mismatch between the scope of ecological and climatic problems and the jurisdictions of our primary political actors – sovereign states. We have seen many international climate conferences fail because states are unwilling to cede jurisdictional ground, thereby undercutting

202 Eckersley, “Greening the Nation State,” in Dobson and Eckersley, 176.
203 Held and McGrew, 21.
204 Mason, 6.
206 Mason, 6.
proposed mechanisms for addressing the crisis. Indeed, the most significant international climate agreement to date – the Kyoto Protocol – has effectively failed because there was no means to enforce it, even among those states that did sign on. Nor was there a way to prevent signatory states, such as Canada, pulling out altogether when their governments decided they no longer wanted to participate. Nonetheless, the proposed transnational solutions remain naggingly unsatisfactory. First of all, why is it only ecological and climate harm that has brought these publics into being? Ecology and climate – even when healthy - operate across territorial boundaries. The governance/reality mismatch did not emerge with the crisis. It has simply been made visible by today’s crisis. A lasting solution will require a more substantive rethinking of territorial primacy. This leads us to the second insufficiency of the transnational governance model. Even when, like Mason, these scholars claim to be seeking a non-territorial solution\(^{208}\) they tend to fall back upon and reproduce the territorial model. Borders, measurement, calculation, abstraction, universality, control, mastery – all of these elements remain central to the proposed models of governance. Though they stretch the understanding of community beyond traditional territorial state borders, by assuming that we can predict ecological and climate consequences and consequently who the interpolated community members are, these cosmopolitans and ecotheorists continue to subscribe to a cartographic, birds-eye-view perspective. Their proposals remain firmly situated within the territorial imagination. In reality, these communities can only be determined post-ecological/

\(^{208}\) Mason, 174.
climatic destruction, meaning that they are of limited help in curtailling the crisis. Moreover, in order for transnational publics to hold polluters to account they must have matched institutional bodies that represent them. In the transnational governance scenario, boundaries still operate, hiving this public and its corollary institutions off from that public. The territorial logic is operational here because it continues to limit political imagination to specific issue/public/institution groupings. The logic is so powerful that the boundaries cannot be crossed, even within people who are members of multiple "affected communities" and may see resonances across various issues that interpolate them as community members. There is a distinct “smog” and “expanded flood zone” public. Though some people may be affected by both issues, they must be addressed separately. This problem recalls Connolly's appeal to pluralize our territorial imagination in order to take on the (false) divisions among identities. Part of the thinking that led to the environmental crisis we are currently experiencing was both a lack of foresight and an inability to connect the dots between actions taken in one domain and consequences manifesting in another (along with a wilful ignorance of these connections once they were made). This too is in part the legacy of territorial imagination. The emphasis on borders not only impacts the way we look at geography, but also infects our broader engagement with the world. Even if we are now aware of flows across borders, the continued dominance of the territorial imagination prevents us from becoming more attuned to many happenings within and across borders and to the flows themselves. Instituting solutions situated within the territorial imagination will therefore not

209 In addition, the consequences even from a single event will morph over time, meaning that the community will not remain static.
effectively address the eco/climate crisis.

The territorial imagination persists not only in the continued focus on bordering, but also with the type of causal logic at play. The search for a match between a public and a problem, or between a polluter and an accountability mechanism, assumes a simple form of causality in which cause and effect, or actor and victims, are easily identifiable. This further assumes a detached perspective from which this causality can be observed and mapped. The familiar causal model is particularly bad at explaining the ecological and climate crises. In these crises multiple causes interact to create complex and evolving problems. In these cases and to understand ecological problems, William Connolly's notion of emergent causality is more appropriate:

_Emergent causality is _causal_ – rather than reducible to a mere web of definitional relations – in that a movement in one force-field helps to induce changes in others. But it is also _emergent_ in that: first, some of the turbulence introduced into the second field is not always knowable in detail in itself before it arrives darkly through the effects that emerge; second, the new forces may become _infused_ to some degree into the very organization of the emergent phenomenon so that the causal factor is not entirely separate from the latter field; third, some of these forces also continue to impinge from the outside on the emerging formation; fourth, the new infusions and impingements may trigger novel capacities of _self-organization_ or _autopoiesis_ within one of the two systems that had not been spurred into motion before; and fifth, a series of resonances may now roll back and forth across two partially separated and partially conjoined force-fields – sometimes generating a new stabilization and sometimes intensifying disequilibrium._210

Emergent causality is more useful in the case of the eco/climate crisis because it is better able than the more familiar kind of causality to account for the complex and unforeseen factors driving climate change. Just as importantly, the emphasis on resonances and

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unforeseeable consequences encourages a cautious and thoughtful orientation to the world that is necessary in order to address the climate crisis (or at least to not further exacerbate it). Perhaps most importantly, emergent causality does not allow for a detached perspective. This detachment is at the root of the attitudes of control and isolation that have fed an anti-ecological orientation to the world. Instead, emergent causality implicitly situates us within the world. This position is much more conducive to the platial imagination.

Thom Kuehls starts to turn us away from the territorial and towards the platial through his conception of ecopolitics. Like the ecotheorists cited above, he is concerned with the scope of ecological problems that spill across borders. However, like Connolly, he regards this challenge to the sovereign territorial model as the symptom, rather than the heart, of the problem which is the inadequacy of the territorial model itself. He contends that

\begin{quote}
this sovereign territorial description of political space fails to contain politics along two basic lines: the inability of the space of sovereignty to contain the flows of political, economic, and ecological activity, and the extent to which both the territory and the population of sovereign states are constructed through practices that exceed the apparatus of state sovereignty.
\end{quote}

In essence, what Kuehls is arguing is that the territorial model has never worked. Both the physical effects of decisions and the governmental practices required to sustain sovereign states slide across territorial boundaries and more damning, the calling card of the territorial state – the border – has never operated in the way the model claims,

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212 Kuelhs, ix.
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revealing itself not to be an impenetrable fence but rather to be “pathetically porous.”\(^{213}\)

To theorize more effectively about ecological realities Kuehls proposes a model of ecopolitics that “takes place on the border lines - not just border lines between states, but border lines between human and nature, populations and territories, and sovereignty and government.”\(^{214}\) Crucially, he highlights the notion of interrelatedness, a reality overlooked by the territorial model.\(^{215}\) The fact that ecological problems exceed the space of the state does not lead Kuehls, like many ecotheorists, to advocate transnational solutions. This would be ineffective, on his understanding, since those solutions remain within a thoroughly territorial mode. Rather, he turns to an ecopolitics that is “transversal”: “It is not reducible to intra- or interstate politics, but slices across border lines of each, extending itself into different political spaces. Hence, ecopolitics cannot be waged solely within the striated space of the state or its corollary interstate system. It must be waged elsewhere.”\(^{216}\) He sees the actions of environmental NGOs, Greenpeace in particular, as operating in the smooth space beyond the state, “a space that blurs the distinction between matters of public and private, national and international, significance.”\(^{217}\) In doing so, Greenpeace exposes the lie behind the claim of territorial space.\(^{218}\) For example,

\[\textit{Greenpeace's protests \ldots deterritorialize French territory. They bring out}\]

\(^{213}\) Kuelhs, xiii.  
\(^{214}\) Kuelhs, xiv.  
\(^{215}\) Kuelhs, xiv.  
\(^{216}\) Kuelhs, 34.  
\(^{217}\) Kuelhs, 49.  
\(^{218}\) Kuelhs, 50.
transversal effects of France's 'sovereign' decision to test nuclear weapons. The consequences of the decision to test nuclear weapons are not contained by the striated space of state sovereignty. They occupy the smooth spaces of sea and wind currents, which carry the radioactive consequences of France's decision into other territories. They operate within a global ecology that cuts across national boundaries.\textsuperscript{219}

Kuelhs makes the transgressing of boundaries a virtue of ecopolitics. It is a political strategy and catalyst for action. Kuelhs is constructing an ecological equivalent to what, in the realm of Indigenous politics, Kevin Bruyneel terms the "third space of sovereignty." Bruyneel argues that in the United States Indigenous resistance

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engenders what I call a 'third space of sovereignty' that resides neither inside nor outside the American political system but rather exists on these very boundaries, exposing both the practices and the contingencies of American colonial rule. This is supplemental space, inassimilable to the institutions and discourse of the modern liberal democratic settler-state and nation.\textsuperscript{220}
\end{quote}

We must be careful not to draw too close an analogy between ecological and Indigenous politics, thereby obscuring the history of dispossession and resistance particular to Indigenous struggles. Nonetheless, we can productively draw out what is shared between the two movements: their unmasking of the contingent nature of boundaries (which undermines the naturalist and ahistorical assumptions about territory),\textsuperscript{221} and the boundary challenging that does not require doing away with boundaries outright, but rather topples their hegemony. Boundaries can – and perhaps must – be present in politics. They become dangerous when they take unchallenged precedence.

Bronislaw Szerszynski gets us closer to a place-centric perspective through his

\textsuperscript{219} Kuelhs, 53.


\textsuperscript{221} Bruyneel, 6.
turn to the local as a means to straddle the space between the cosmopolitan institutional solutions and the Connolly/Kuehls critique. He asks: “is it possible to care for a particular place in a way that is informed by a concern for the wider environment? Is it really possible to erase the tensions between concern for a particular place and concern for the globe as a whole?” These tensions play out as a conflict between "citizenly modes of relating to place" and the Heideggerian (by way of Ingold) 'dwelling': "the ongoing, corporeal engagement with one's surroundings that constitutes the primary mode of human “being-in-the-world”." We might rephrase this tension as a conflict between a territorial and a platial imaginary: the first mode highlights the relationship with the state and its framing of space while the second foregrounds embodiment and experience. Szerszynski sees the avenue for resolving the tension as occurring through a reconception of citizenship as “environmental-citizenship-as-wayfinding,” a mode that is “emergent from ongoing transactions and relationships” rather than “conceived in terms of abstract ethical principles … cartographic in ambition.” Szerszynski’s proposal is intriguing, but ultimately I do not think that it goes far enough. What is required is not just a celebration of the local, but a thorough exposition and empowering of the platial imagination so that it can hold its own against the territorial imagination.

The figure of place puts the emphasis on a different aspect of our relationship to the material environment than does territory. Place situates us inside and as part of a

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223 Szerszynski, 76.

224 Szerszynski, 95.
larger biocultural whole, on par with other organic and non-organic things. Interdependence and agonistic encounter, rather than exclusion and war, become the terms of experience. In "place," there are multiple forces that interact with humans, who are conceived as essentially embodied actors; on ‘territory’ we find humans who act upon a passive, abstract context, with little sense of how that context actively acts upon them. The figure of place acknowledges a more visceral type of belonging at work in the relationship between people and the nonhuman material world and it can thus provide some clues about the motivation required for taking the necessary steps to curb the ecological and climate crisis.

According to geographer Edward Relph, place is what grounds human existence: “To be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know your place. ... It is a profound and complex aspect of man's experience of the world.”225 Unlike territory, place is not a subset of space. It is related to space, but typically as its opposite. Yi-Fu Tuan distinguishes place from space not only in terms of abstraction, but also movement – where space implies openness and free movement, place suggests pause.226

Place requires not only this security and pause, but also feeling – in both its sensorial and visceral modes. As Yi-Fu Tuan puts it:

*Place is a center of meaning constructed by experience. Place is known not only through the eyes and mind but also through the more passive and direct modes of experience, which resist objectification. To know a place fully*

225 Relph, 1.

means both to understand it in an abstract way and to know it as one person knows another.  

So while territory involves a cartographic spatial logic – seen from above and tied to its representation on a map or a globe – place implies an experiential one more or less indifferent to universalizing modes of representation. Experience and sensation also impose a temporal distinction between territory and place: while territory is presented as ahiistorical, place implies duration. Indeed, experience and sensation over a longue durée (or, more accurately, a long enough durée) are what Tuan contends foster a sense of place:

Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement. It is possible to appreciate the visual qualities of a place with one short visit, but not how it smells on a frosty morning, how city sounds reverberate across narrow streets to expire over the broad square, or how the pavement burns through gym shoe soles and melts bicycle tires in August. To know a place is to also know the past: one’s own past preserved in schoolhouse, corner drugstore, swimming pool, and first home; the city’s past enshrined in its architectural landmarks.

Tuan is not arguing that to have a sense of place requires lifelong residency. His own biography, which involved emigrating from China and coming to feel at home in the United States, belies that idea. He is arguing that sense of place requires more than a passing visit. Similarly, John Agnew argues that sense of place entails a relatively slow speed and "refers to the subjective orientation that can be engendered by living in a place. This is the geosociological definition of self or identity produced by a place.”

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227 Yi-Fu Tuan, “Place: An Experiential Perspective.” Geographical Review. 65, no. 2, (1975), 152.

228 Tuan, “Place: An Experiential Perspective,” 164.

The emphasis on lived experience gets at the heart of the central difference between space and place. Edward Casey says: “‘We do not live in 'space.' Instead, we live in places.’” Similarly, we could say “we do not live in territory, we live in place.” Taking the experiential dimension of place seriously, Casey situates place between landscape and the body:

Body and landscape present themselves as coeval epicenters around which particular places pivot and radiate. They are, at the very least, the bounds of places. In my embodied being I am just at a place as its inner boundary; a surrounding landscape, on the other hand, is just beyond that place as its outer boundary. Between the two boundaries – and very much as a function of their differential interplay – implacement occurs. Place is what takes place between body and landscape. Thanks to the double horizon that body and landscape provide, a place is a locale bounded on both sides, near and far.

The focus on place as mediated by the body and on landscape is shared by a number of human geographers, who provide an account of place as made up of a dynamic and rhythmic landscape that engages and implicates the body and sensations. Landscape itself can be an abstract notion, akin in some ways to that of territory. This is due in large part to its origins and enduring close relationship to its significance in art, specifically painting. This mode of landscape as “visual ideology” lent itself to a linear perspective and dominion through a bird's eye view angle and was linked to the appropriation of space as property (“or territory”).

Despite this, "landscape" has recently been reclaimed by a number of geographers...

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231 Casey, *Getting Back Into Place,* 29.


233 Cosgrove, 51, 55.
who have attempted to present it as a less totalizing, more experiential concept. Gunhild Setten notes that, unlike the Italianate tradition that has been taken as paradigmatic, Dutch and Nordic landscape painting did not privilege the visual so absolutely. Instead, by populating landscapes with people, and particularly with labouring people, the Nordic tradition brings to the fore “people's customary practices in place.” She argues that landscape is in fact the result of local, customary practices and thus "is always in the making, adjusting to changing circumstance.” Kenneth Olwig also draws on the distinction between Italianate and Nordic art traditions to resuscitate the landscape concept. He sees in their divergence a difference between a spatial (tied to science and the absolutist central state) and a platial (derived from speech and narration) conception of landscape. This distinction informed his concept of substantive landscape “in which substantive [is] used to mean 'real rather than apparent', 'belonging to the substance of a thing', particularly in the legal sense of 'creating and defining rights and duties.'” He intends for this conception of landscape - which acknowledges social and historical shaping of human geographic experience - to serve as a critique of the “relationship between nationalism, xenophobia and wilderness aesthetics.” Edmunds Bunkšē deepens the substantive conception of landscape, drawing on sensations beyond sight:


237 Olwig, 284.

238 Olwig, 645.

239 Olwig, 285.
landscape is “a unity in one's surroundings, perceived through all the senses,”
absorbed through the senses, hence the importance of paying attention “to the earth
senses of touch, smell and hearing, and to the body as a whole – the senses that most
directly link external and internal landscapes.”

I take this detour via landscape because it seems that the emplaced, sensory notion
of landscape described by these geographers is central to our experience of place. What
these approaches illustrate is that place frames our lived, textured relationship with the
world around us. It is through place that a relationship between bodies - our own and
others in our proximity - emerges. We see them, but we also walk them, breathe them,
and modify them. Essentially, we participate in them. While the vast vistas that we
typically associate with landscape are crucial, so too are micro sensations that we more
readily associate with place. The contours of a familiar street, the lean of a particular tree,
a poorly maintained sidewalk that forces one to walk carefully, the smell of a pulp and
paper mill on the other side of the neighbourhood - these too dictate our bodily
engagement with our surroundings. Place is thus both vast and small, but crucially
textured, providing particularities to grab on to in order to make it our own. These
textures and characteristics of places anchor and situate us in the world. Indeed, echoing
Casey, Tom Mels argues that place and the body imply each other: “[c]orporeality is
essential to place and lifeworld, because we experience objects, their place and our own
place with our lived-living body. ... Just as we are always with a body, so, being bodily,

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240 Edmunds Vlademārs Bunkše, “Feeling is Believing, or Landscape as a way of Being in the World.”
Geografiska Annaler. 89 B no. 3 (2007), 222.

241 Bunkše, 225.
we are always within a place as well.”242 The bodily engagement is an important fact of habitation through which we discover place: “to inhabit the land is to draw it to a particular focus, and in so doing to constitute a place.”243

It is this element of feeling that points to the way that thinking in terms of place can help us to capture more of what is involved in "belonging." Here we can think of Tuan’s emphasis on experience and duration. Prolonged exposure to the contours of a place – urban or rural – make it so familiar as to become virtually an extension of the body. Tuan cites a farmer in the American Deep South of the United States. “To me the land I have is always there, waiting for me, and it’s part of me, way inside me; it’s as much me as my own arms and legs.”244 Cues from our surroundings operate at an affective level. Think of how many times, preoccupied with other things, you walk, drive, cycle or take transit home along a well-trodden route without really thinking about what you are doing. You arrive at your front door and suddenly realize you have no recollection whatsoever of your journey. Without needing to intrude on your conscious thoughts, features of the landscape (the big tree with the crooked trunk at the corner, the uneven piece of sidewalk, the particular rattle of the subway car as it approaches your station) signal to your mobile body where to turn or when to get up from your seat. This is not just way-finding, as in Ingold’s non-cartographic reading of the world, it is a corporeal familiarity and imbrication with place. The signals from these familiar and


243 Ingold, The Perception of the Environment, 149.

244 Yi-Fu Tuan, Topophilia. (New York: Columbia University Press,1974), 97.
personal landmarks act something like the signals from your brain to your nervous system – they result in action but do not require conscious thought. This feeling of deep connection between body and place goes a long way towards creating a sense of belonging. You notice this when your sense of place and belonging is suddenly disrupted. When the transit authority repairs the tracks such that the familiar rattle disappears you almost miss your stop because you haven’t received your audio cue to prepare to exit the train. Suddenly you have the uncanny feeling of being out of place. As you become familiar with the change you incorporate it into your knowledge of place and eventually its uncanniness fades.

Familiarity and bodily connection are necessary but not sufficient to belonging - what is also needed is the solace that place can provide. Place-based solace comes from the fact that familiar surroundings enable us to temporarily take a break from subjectivity and judgment. This is a feeling akin to what bell hooks describes as emanating from “homeplace.” hooks' "homeplace" is a site of repose that is at once political in its refusal of the dominant order and deeply personal as a site of rest and strength-gathering. It is a place that provides a sense of belonging, “where we return for renewal and self-recovery, where we can heal our wounds and become whole.”245 Initially in hooks' description "homeplace" takes the form of a constructed shelter:

Historically, African-American people believed that the construction of a homeplace, however fragile and tenuous (the slave hut, the wooden shack), had a radical political dimension. Despite the brutal reality of racial apartheid, of domination, one's homeplace was the one site where one could freely confront the issue of humanization, where one could resist. Black

245 bell hooks, Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics. (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1990), 49.
women resisted by making homes where all black people could strive to be subjects, not objects, where we could be affirmed in our minds and hearts despite poverty, hardship, and deprivation, where we could restore to ourselves the dignity denied us on the outside in the public world.

Later, however, she acknowledges that “homeplace” can also be nothing more than “a small bit of earth where one rests.” It is the pause and withdrawal from the social world described by hooks that anchors the solace and mode of belonging provided by place.

Tuan similarly notes the importance of withdrawal in order to gather and restore strength. He argues that “[p]rivacy and solitude are necessary for sustained reflection and a hard look at self, and through the understanding of self to the full appreciation of other personalities.” One of Tuan's most important contributions to the geographic literature is his notion of “topophilia.” He coined this term in order to describe our “affective ties with the material environment.” It is a term that is truly place-focused because it describes the attachment we feel at a highly local – bodily – scale. Tuan is clear that “topophilia rings false when it is claimed for a large territory. A compact size scaled down to man's biologic needs and sense-bound capacities seems necessary.”

Topophilia, for Tuan, is a grounding sentiment, a biological necessity, and is related to the pause, privacy and solitude that place provides. Tuan's conception does not bear the

246 hooks, 42
247 hooks, 47
248 Tuan. *Space and Place*, 65.
249 Tuan, *Topophilia*, 93.
explicitly political anti-oppression elements that are crucial to hooks' homeplace, but it too points to the importance of place as a foundation of the self outside the social realm.

What both Tuan and hooks show is that place – on a small, even micro scale – creates its own type of belonging. If we are – rightly – accustomed to thinking about the nativist, xenophobic or nationalist dangers of place as the rubric for belonging, given the way it is frequently deployed in nationalist discourse, hooks and Tuan show us another side of place and belonging. Nationalist and romantic versions tend to link it to a territorial imagination with its anxiety about borders. Mbembe describes this as “the exacerbation of identification with particular localities” that gives “rise to exclusionary practices, 'identity closure', and persecution.”

What partially exempts Tuan's and hooks' versions of place from this danger is their advocacy of allowing place-belonging to suspend the demands and pressures of the social world. Here, to belong is not to judge, not to exclude. There is just feeling. This may only be momentary and fleeting. But the material and corporeal foregrounding in place-belonging provide sustaining moments of respite.

Three elements - familiarity, bodily imbrication and solace - are key to this version of place-belonging. It is important to an ecological orientation to the world because place-belonging can attune us to patterns, relationship, and dependencies that we cannot see from the abstract distance of territory. Because the focus is on the sensing body more than the judging self, we can better feel when “something is off.” Our own observations of our environment are taken as meaningful, so the nagging, uncanny

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251 Mbembe, 87.
feeling that something has changed registers as a matter of concern. It is important that not only the state or nation has a recognized relationship with the environment. The platial perspective also gives authority to personal observation, which allows us to feel more intensely how ecological and climatic changes are real and urgent. Giving credit to these sensibilities can also be helpful in motivating action, making the shift in ethos from territory to place both important and urgent.

Typically environmental ethics asks us to expand our conception of community and obligations to include future generations, plants, animals and the broader natural world and to think about responsibility in terms broader than short-term efficient- causality. Doing so allows us to more explicitly acknowledge how we are fundamentally bound together and to the world. This is undoubtedly an important part of environmental ethics, but as we have seen in practice, so far it has failed to inspire significant changes in economic and cultural practices. An ethics that operates with this expanded notion of self-interest but also pays attention to the sensibilities the crisis engenders may also be needed. Jane Bennett's model of ethics as a "complex interplay of code and sensibility" makes a start here. In *The Enchantment of Modern Life* Bennett argues that models of ethics that consider only the codes that dictate ethical action are insufficient because they fail to account for the motivation that compels people to abide by these rules. Embodied sensibility, she argues, is what animates moral codes and

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253 Bennett, 156.
explains their motivational hold. This account of ethics is particularly relevant to the case of climate crisis because the scientific data and predicted doomsday scenarios that undergird most arguments about our moral obligations to curb consumption and other unsustainable practices have, to date, had disappointing results. This is in part because we do not yet have a sufficiently vivid sense of the harmful consequences of climate change (for many of us the impacts are just beginning to manifest themselves). The bodily experience of danger-to-place – a key motivation for ethical action in Bennett's account – does not yet widely exist. Despite mountains of analytic evidence, climate change has remained an abstract and distant problem for most people. The inaction in the face of climate change is thus not only a collective action problem, as the typical environmental ethics model suggests, but also a matter of a mismatch between ethical codes and motivating sensibility.

However, as increasingly dramatic news stories indicate, we are now entering a moment in which the lived experience of climate change's disruptions is catching up to environmental ethical codes. The recent hurricane that hit the Northeast United States is a case in point. Like all natural disasters, Hurricane Sandy was a traumatic event that revealed how integral the places that we hold dear are to our sense of belonging. Millions of people in the path of the storm not only felt Sandy's destructive force, they also, as many reports and statements by politicians and other public figures who linked the event to climate change illustrated, experienced it as an effect of the crisis. Hurricane Sandy demonstrated that climate change is coming to be felt not only as the destruction of

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254 Bennett, 131.
places but as the disruption of the sense of belonging that flows from these places. As we enter a more dire and tumultuous phase of the crisis this feeling will become more common.

The territorial and platial imaginations situate us very differently in the world. The territorial imagination has long framed the way we perceive the political and material world. We have thus tended to adopt a distant, abstract, bordered, enclosed and controlling orientation to our environment. This has led us to overlook an important mode of belonging derived from our bodily engagement with place. Just as importantly, the territorial imagination has both contributed to an anti-ecological mode of being in the world and allowed it to persist. Without denying the continued role of territory, pushing place to an equal position not only highlights the importance of place-belonging and the corporeal engagement we have with our surroundings, it also promotes a more ecological orientation to the world by activating Bennett's model of embodied ethics.

These first two chapters have been devoted to unveiling our close relationship with land and place. Acknowledging that land acts on us and that place establishes a particular kind of belonging allows us to understand that changes affecting them will also have an impact on us. In the next chapter I will pull climate and climate change into this story. More specifically, I will look at how climate change is unsettling belonging.
Chapter 3

Eulogy for Winter: A Story of Climate and Anxiety

Mon pays, ce n'est pas un pays, c'est l'hiver ...
Ma maison, ce n'est pas ma maison, c'est froideur.
- Gilles Vigneault, Mon Pays

Something about this landscape just don't feel right
Hyper air-conditioned and lit up all night
Like we just gotta see how comfortable comfortable can get
Like we can't ever bring ourselves to sweat.
Sweat in the summer, shiver in the winter
Just enough to know that we're alive.
- Ani DiFranco, Splinter

Figure 11. Photograph by Jacob Leibovitch. 2012.

I begin with a photograph. It is not a remarkable photograph. In fact, to most viewers it will be quite banal. An ordinary city street with a light dusting of snow. But I see in this photograph both melancholy and foreboding. It was sent to me in the winter of
2011-2012 by a friend in Toronto who knew that, living in Baltimore, I missed winter deeply. He wanted to give me a little connection to the season through the image of the overnight snowfall on his street. Though a kind gesture and a welcome sight, the photograph conjured in me a feeling of dread. Looking at that familiar scene of morning snow in my hometown I suddenly felt transported to a winterless future in which my only connection to this favourite season would be through a similar act - nostalgically gazing at photographs of winters past.

Looking at this photograph was not the first time I had experienced this premonition and dread about the end of winter. This fear about the coming demise of winter was a tool I used in my pre-graduate school job as the speechwriter for Jack Layton, then leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada. Climate change was an issue at the top of the party's agenda and dear to Jack's heart, so I found myself crafting many speeches on the subject. The primary task of these speeches was to convey the necessity and urgency of acting to curb climate change. The first speeches I wrote drew on the mountains of scientific predictions that have become familiar to many of us. These reports paint a bleak picture of the future, but we found that this was not enough to connect with audiences. Articulating the threat to the planet in terms of mounting greenhouse gas emissions and long-term climatic shifts - or even the dangers associated with the infamous 2°C increase scenario – proved to be too abstract. Audiences could
grasp these ideas intellectually, but not emotionally. The scenarios were in a sense too big.\textsuperscript{255}

The challenge in writing about climate change lies in conveying its urgency and magnitude without making the audience feel helpless and overwhelmed. Figures and projections do the first part of the job but fail in the second because they do not translate into a relatable scenario in which audience members see their place or their future. We encounter with climate change the same problem as the one faced by what Timothy Morton terms "hyperobjects." These are material objects, such as styrofoam and plutonium, created by capitalism that will not decay in our lifetimes or over a conceivable time period afterwards.\textsuperscript{256} The particularity of these objects is that because they will outlast us on a timescale difficult to fathom (e.g. thousands of years) they require "something like religion" to think about.\textsuperscript{257} Hyperobjects are so difficult to grasp that they "don't just burn a hole in the world; they burn a hole in your mind."\textsuperscript{258} To get a handle on hyperobjects we require special tools or a strategy to mediate our relationship with them. These objects are only indirectly conceivable and approachable only after this mediation. The same can be said for climate change. Not only is it a phenomena created by our consumption habits, but the scale of change and the timeframe implied make it similarly

\textsuperscript{255} The writers of The Day After Tomorrow, a 2004 Hollywood action film about climate change faced the same difficulties. A slow-moving and erratic change in climate does not make for a finger-biting, edge-of-the-seat blockbuster. To heighten the tension and render climate a more menacing foe the writers drastically sped up the rate of climate change in the world of the film. The result is one the most comical scenes I have witnessed in film in which several characters are literally forced to outrun a cold front.

\textsuperscript{256} Timothy Morton, The Ecological Thought. (USA: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2010), 130.

\textsuperscript{257} Morton, 130.

\textsuperscript{258} Morton, 130.
hard to comprehend. Apparently small changes in average temperatures foretell incredibly dramatic alterations to weather, coastal regions, farm land, cities, etc. The whole scenario seems like a dystopian Alice in Wonderland.

In order to make Jack's speeches on climate change effective, the speechwriting team realized that we needed to find a way to elicit a visceral response from the audience to the climate threat. The best way to do this was to supplement the scientific arguments with a picture of how the climate crisis would impact the listeners' daily lives. This would vary regionally, but the image that we returned to most frequently was that of the local outdoor skating rink. This was the example that seemed to resonate most with audiences. We argued that this quintessentially Canadian institution - ubiquitous yet at the same time intensely local - would disappear within one or two generations if nothing was done to curb climate change. This scenario hit just the right emotional chord. Everyone listening had memories of excursions to the local rink, whether to play hockey or simply to skate in endless circles during open community hours. Most had also seen the number of days that these rinks are open shrink during their lifetime as winter weather conditions have warmed. Suddenly the imminent extinction of this cultural institution seemed very real - and with it the loss of an activity that has bound many generations together as

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259 The speechwriting process is both structured and messy, solitary and collaborative, planned well in advance and frantically cobbled together at the last minute. Reflecting back on particular speeches it is sometimes difficult to remember who suggested what, or who coined which turn of phrase. In this case I can't say for certain who came up with the image of the skating-rink, but I suspect that it was Brad Lavigne, the Director of Communications for the New Democratic Party's Caucus Services at the time I was the speechwriter. It was certainly he who recognized the need to personalize the effects of climate change.
Canadian parents and grandparents bring young children to the local rink for their first skating lessons.\textsuperscript{260}

Undoubtedly this sentimental picture of the local skating rink is part of a romantic conception of winter in Canada that does not quite accord with the way that people actually experience the season, but the picture - and the threat to that picture - struck a chord precisely because of the sentimentality. The centrality of the local outdoor rink is an idea that has even found its way onto our currency. Our $5 bill has an image of children skating on an outdoor pond, the very picture of a happy and hardy Canadian winter.\textsuperscript{261} Narrating this idyllic winter scene are a few lines from one of Canada's best loved winter storytellers, Roch Carrier:\textsuperscript{262} "The winters of my childhood were long, long seasons. We lived in three places - the school, the church and the skating rink - but our real life was on the skating rink." The outdoor

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure12.png}
\caption{Canadian five-dollar bill.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{262} Carrier’s book \textit{Le chandail de hockey/The Hockey Sweater} is read by every Canadian school child, anglophone and francophone. It is exceptional for being a children's story in which bullies do not get the comeuppance traditionally doled out to them in moralizing children's literature.
skating rink (most readers would recognize Carrier to be implying that the rink is outdoors, given his age and the site of his most well-known story) is thus framed by Carrier as the anchoring site of winter life. This idea resonates cross-regionally, making it an ideal subject for the designers at the Canadian mint to adopt. The pertinence of this image is noted by another Canadian writer, Adam Gopnik, in his 2011 lecture series on winter:

*I keep in my wallet a five-dollar bill, a Canadian five-dollar bill, all blue on blue. It shows boys playing improvised hockey, skating on a frozen pond someplace in Ontario or Quebec or the Maritimes, an idealized Canadian lake, without adult supervision. ... Like all nostalgic images of national spirit, the picture works best in the absence of evidence and experience. I've never been to that pond and the odds are overwhelming that you haven't either. But the belief in that pre-lapsarian pond is a crucial part of the mystique of hockey.*

And not just hockey, but the mystique of the romantic Canadian winter, a mystique that is fundamental to Canadian identity. Point out that skating-rinks are at risk and suddenly so too is the identity of the listener. For her climate change is no longer a vast, complicated, abstract threat, it is here, now, and putting her world in danger.

By entitling this chapter “Eulogy for Winter” I employ a similar strategy here to the one I adopted in writing Jack’s speeches. In order to examine the impact of climate change on our psychological-affective landscape the story told in this chapter follows to some extent the logic of mourning. I do not invoke the theme of mourning in order to signal my participation in the re theorizing of the practice fruitfully undertaken by

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263 In fact, the central figure appears to be a girl.

scholars such as Judith Butler and Bonnie Honig. Rather, I employ the term to be somewhat deliberately provocative and to incite reflection on our current circumstances. My aim is to draw on everyday understandings of mourning and death in order to illuminate the stakes and reality of the current climate crisis. My hunch, as it was with writing Jack’s speeches, is that this frame will unearth the anxiety that we are feeling today about the impending demise of winter as well as the losses, Zadie Smith’s local sadnesses, that we have already experienced. It is importantly anxiety, in its everyday sense of “a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome,” that is made the protagonist of this story. Anxiety can creep up on us. It can operate on us almost without our being aware. We continue to function, but it gnaws away at us. Still, it is not debilitating in the way that dread (“great fear or apprehension”) or melancholy (“a feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause”) can be. Those more all-encompassing states may well become associated with climate change but they are not yet widespread. Anxiety more accurately diagnoses the feeling haunting us today.

A eulogy - the formal, recitative and contemplative moment in the mourning process - provides an occasion not only to mark an end, but also to reflect on the impact


and meaning of the entity coming to an end. In affording this opportunity to meditate on the present significance of winter, and of the seasons more broadly, the elegiac form avoids the trap of runaway futurism that I critiqued in the introduction. Instead, it serves as a narrative form that prompts us to see our present differently and to understand our place in the unfolding crisis. The seeds of this awareness have already sprouted. The anxiety that Jack's audiences felt at the prospect of the extinction of outdoor skating-rinks, the strange intermingling of foreboding and nostalgia that I experienced in looking at my friend's photograph, and the mounting number of laments in the media for the end of winter\(^{269}\) all point to a recognition that we are losing something fundamental about our homes.

In this chapter I will look forward to the loss not simply of winter, but of the seasonal cycle – of seasonality – itself, I will consider the changes that we are experiencing already, and I will peer back at the development of our relationship with winter. Through these perspectives, and marshalling sources from political theory, ecology, climate science, and literature to pop culture, I will make the case that in our daily lives we rely heavily on the cyclical, familiar and predictable nature of weather and climate. That it provides the tempo of everyday life. It is the rhythms and textures of weather and climate that engage our senses and lead to a deeper bodily attachment to place. The changes to climate and weather, especially in terms of the impact on seasonality, are having both practical and emotional impacts. Ultimately, I will argue,
Climate change is disrupting our sense of belonging by putting us off tempo and out of place.

Climate, weather and the seasons are indispensable to a feeling of place-belonging. All three contribute to the texture of place, providing protuberances for us to latch on to in order to anchor our sense of belonging. By changing the nature of place, climate and weather ensure that the former is not a monotonous backdrop but rather a dynamic and changing entity that demands our attention and response. Seasonal change is the most evident attention grabber. As the seasons transition so too does our behaviour - we trade outdoor activities for indoor ones, change our clocks to match our days to the sunlight, and install storm windows, winter tires or mosquito nets to ward off the dangers of different times of the year. In this way climate and the seasons provide the base tempo of life, mediating our relationship with place by determining the manner in which we engage with it. Weather inflects, animates and sometimes alters place. It can turn the familiar into the threatening (think of an open field during a blizzard or an urban street on an icy day) and the desolate into the abundant (think of a garden in luscious bloom after a long winter). The weather thus acts as one of the agents creating movement and texture in place. Climate, by contrast, establishes rhythm (tempo) by setting up recurring patterns. Just as the familiarity of landscape provides comfort, so too does the familiarity of these recurring patterns. Indeed, coming to know the seasonal patterns of a place is part of what generates a sense of belonging. Sophie-Laurence Lamontagne argues that it was in
learning to perceive the cycle of winter in Canada that early French colonists came to be accustomed to, adapt to, and eventually feel at home in their new abode:

*If we exclude the physiological signs of habituation, the apprenticeship forms through the familiarization with different means of control, such as the tracking of arrival indicators, that incite foresight, an understanding of the physical phenomena of winter, and, to a degree, the perception of the winter cycle.*

While Lamontagne insightfully points to the way in which habituation heightens our ability to perceive and thus adapt to new climatic conditions, she too easily brushes off the physiological attunement. As we will see later, the imbrication between body and both climate and weather is crucial to a sense of place-belonging. But first we must understand climate and weather themselves.

Weather and climate are closely intertwined terms that we employ regularly, yet continue to confuse. Weather is the more immediate term, meaning “the state of the atmosphere with respect to heat or cold, wetness or dryness, calm or storm, clearness or cloudiness.” It is what we check in the newspaper or on The Weather Network before walking out the door in the morning. Climate is a broader term, a sort of aggregate of weather expectations that: “in a narrow sense is usually defined as the average weather [...] The classical period for averaging these variables is 30 years [...] The relevant quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation and


Climate and weather, therefore, imply each other. Indeed, they are often found in each other’s definitions. The two phenomena are differentiated, as NASA explains, by a measure of time. Weather is what conditions of the atmosphere are over a short period of time, and climate is how the atmosphere "behaves" over relatively long periods of time. ... In most places, weather can change from minute-to-minute, hour-to-hour, day-to-day, and season-to-season. Climate, however, is the average of weather over time and space.

Beyond the temporal implications, weather and climate both have material consequences (precipitation, storms, erosion, etc). Through these material manifestations weather and climate inflect place and are engaged in the process of making place. In so doing climate and weather force an engagement with place that contributes to the construction of a sense of place-belonging. This process becomes clearer when we think of weather and climate in terms of seasons and seasonal change.

Seasons are overlaid on climate and weather as a conceptual means of understanding, ordering and anticipating the two phenomena. The conceptual framework is nonetheless based on observable environmental changes with a scientific explanation.

A season, according to NASA, is “[c]aused by Earth’s tilt, [it] is one of the four quarters of the Earth's orbit around the Sun. Each season occurs approximately every three months. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter follow each other in order, with several days separating the start of each season.”

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273 For example, Strauss and Orlove define weather as “the climate's manifestation in the present moment." quoted in Phillip Vannini, Dennis Waskul, Simon Gottschalk and Toby Ellis-Newstead, “Making Sense of the Weather: Dwelling and Weathering on Canada's Rain Coast,” *Space and Culture* 15 no. 361 (2012), 367.

into which the year is commonly divided: spring, summer, autumn or fall, and winter.\textsuperscript{275} The seasons – or seasonality – are a cycle marked by recurring changes in weather, ecology (e.g. animal migration and plant growth or decay) and levels of daylight. In many ways seasonality is straightforward and intuitive. Even the non-scientifically inclined notice that trees bloom or that birds fly south at around the same time and temperature every year. The more ecologically inclined study these phenomena under the rubric of phenology: "The study of the timing of recurring biological events, the causes of their timing with regard to biotic and abiotic forces and the interactions among places of the same or different species."\textsuperscript{276} Shari Fox, a geographer whose doctoral research focused on Inuit observations of environmental change, moves the definition away from the purely scientific by arguing that "the seasons provide a \textit{system of expected} climatic and environmental characteristics. [emphasis added]\textsuperscript{277} This system of expectations points to the social overlay on scientific observations. Seasons are thus determined both by climatic tendencies and by cultural and social conventions. Together the climatic, cultural and social aspects explain why there are different seasonal models. In the temperate West we are accustomed to thinking of a calendar year as divided into four discrete seasons, however, the number of seasons in fact varies according to geography and how precisely the climatic and weather changes are observed. For example, tropical


\textsuperscript{276} Marie R Keatley and Irene L Hudson. "Introduction and Overview" in \textit{Phenological Research: Methods for Environmental and Climate Change Analysis}. eds, Marie R Keatley and Irene L Hudson. (Houten, Netherlands: Springer, 2010), 2; citing the International Biological Program Committee on Phenology.

\textsuperscript{277} Shari Fox. “When the Weather is Uggianaqqut: Linking Inuit and Scientific Observations of Recent Environmental Change in Nunavut, Canada.” (PhD Dissertation, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2004), 52.
regions have only two seasons: rainy/wet/monsoon and dry. In temperate climates, where the four season model is dominant, ecologists actually follow a six season model: prevernal (early spring), vernal, estival (early summer), serotinal (late summer), autumnal and hiemal periods. In the Arctic the Inuit observe six to eight seasons (though there are variations in these designations among the various communities living in the Arctic) based on the lunar cycle and ice, sky, animal and plant changes. What makes the Inuit conception noteworthy is that it builds flexibility and variability into the understanding of the seasons themselves: “The cycles of reoccurring events upon which months (or moons) are named do not always arrive on time and early or late arrivals of seasons are 'normal' (MacDonald 1998). There is some evidence that extreme events should not be met with surprise.” There are, in addition, cycles layered both on top of and within the seasons of good and bad weather: “[b]ad weather always follows good weather, and good always follows bad at a variety of scales, from day-to-day to annual.” In spite of the flexibility of the Inuit seasons and the concentric cycles of good and bad weather, the seasons nonetheless operate as an ordering system. As Fox argues, “[d]espite its built-in variability, Inuit seasons and their characteristics form the baseline of understanding against which climate and environmental changes are recognized and assessed.”

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279 Fox, 51-2.
280 Fox, 52.
281 Fox, 52.
282 Fox, 53.
From these various seasonal models we see a difference not only in the climatic conditions they describe and anticipate, but also in the way seasonal frames relate to different modes of being in the world. Our four season temperate model not only does not line up exactly with the ecological seasons, but fixes the seasonal transition in terms of calendar dates (e.g. the first day of spring 2013 is March 20th) rather than observable conditions. This model is much more rigid and distant from the actual conditions than the flexible Inuit model, indicating a less responsive relationship with the climate. Yet even in the more removed seasonal model human beings remain wrapped up in climatic rhythms. As Glenn Albrecht argues:

> Despite our ability to tolerate a wide variety of biophysical conditions for social life, like other species, we rely on pattern and regularity in nature to offer us a reasonable degree of predictability in a sea of change and possibilities.\(^{283}\)

Perhaps most importantly the seasons have been used by humans as both a practical and social tool for organization. Seasonal predictability has translated into cultural and social habits. In fact, Albrecht argues that human phenology is the basis for culture itself:

> the phenology of place has its correlates in the phenology of culture and the mind. Pattern and regularity in nature are reflected in pattern and regularity in all human activity. Our endemic sense of place, belonging and our existential well-being are vitally connected to the rhythms and patterns of our home environment. The seasonal weather, the play of light, the ability to plant and harvest food, the breeding of domestic animals, the cultivation of food and gardening for pleasure, our sleep and rest patterns, outdoor sports and myriad other typically human activities are vitally linked to a reliable and predictable environment, including its climate. Without being deterministic, a

reliable and predictable environment and climate is powerfully connected to the very possibility of a distinctive culture (and agriculture). Albrecht's point is an important one, but we must also take his caution about determinism seriously. Seasonal predictability sets some important parameters for cultural development, but that development can nonetheless take various forms and continue to evolve. Canada, northern US states, Scandinavian countries, Russia and parts of China share similar climatic conditions, yet developed different responses to the climate and different cultures. In resisting the deterministic account of climate and in recognizing both the variability in climate itself and the malleability of our relationship to it, as demonstrated in the example of the French colonists in Canada, I hope to show that climate is crucial to a sense of belonging, but does not dictate the form that belonging takes.

Returning to the seasons themselves, we can understand them as both material and social phenomena. They are natural cycles that recur regularly and predictably, but by naming them and attributing particular characteristics to them, the seasons also represent a system of meaning to us. Perhaps the most important function of the seasonal frame is as a tool for anticipation and planning. It allows us to make sense of the world through expected climatic or weather behaviour. This holds true despite weather variability because the seasons are understood to set the goal posts for an expected range of weather behaviour. Exceptional events (e.g. storms, droughts, floods, etc) are in fact anticipated but expected to be irregular, if nonetheless recurring. The seasonal frame allows us to plan for a long-term future by identifying baseline weather parameters – the harvest is

done in the fall, summer is the best weather for construction projects, etc. It is because of their recurring nature that we can say that the seasons establish the base tempo of our lives. As I will argue later, losing this baseline tempo through climate change's alteration of the seasons is leading to an uncanny sense of dislocation in our most familiar places.

Even before climate change was recognized as a threat some thinkers were already worried that we were losing our engagement with seasonality. An important articulation of this fear can be found in Martin Heidegger’s critique of modern technology. In *The Question Concerning Technology* Heidegger contends that modern technology has transformed nature – indeed, the world itself – into a mere utility stockpile. He argues that modern technology “puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such.”

Nature, the environment, and the world are merely set upon under the frame of modern technology, rather than engaged with and lived in. The key to this new orientation lies in the ability to store or stockpile energy: “[Coal] is stockpiled; that is, it is on call, ready to deliver the sun’s warmth that is stored in it. The sun’s warmth is challenged forth for heat, which in turn is ordered to deliver steam whose pressure turns the wheels that keep a factory running.” This establishes an opposition between humanity and nature that takes us out of the tempo of the world. By stockpiling coal we can choose to have energy when we like, rather than when the sun and the earth choose to provide it. Heidegger's worries

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286 Heidegger, 15.

287 Although, as is made clear later in the essay, humanity itself also becomes part of the standing reserve.
here do not centre on a material change in the seasons themselves – such as we are seeing with climate change today – but rather on a change in how we engage with seasons due to the stockpiling capacity of technology. The effect is that we need no longer live according to the world’s tempo because the stockpile can provide for our needs immediately: “Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering.” Technology transforms a year – and perhaps time itself – into an endless, monotonous chronology rather than a varied and recurring cycle.

One consequence of this modern technological orientation is a loss of the seasons as tempo-setting tools. In an essay that examines climate change through the lens of Heidegger's critique of modern technology Ruth Irwin argues that "[m]odernity is exemplified by the shift from seasonal lifestyles towards a new mode of technology, economics, and consumerism, to what Heidegger calls the technological Gestell (1977). This is a scientific, economic, and technological horizon for knowledge that has an all-encompassing logic." Importantly, this new technological mode brings with it the loss of the seasons as “the shift in technology from craftwork to industrial mass production has alienated humanity from the seasonal tempo of the earth.” In an insight that foreshadows the argument at the end of this chapter, Irwin contends that with climate change the seasons are biting back. The unpredictability and increasing severity of

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288 Heidegger, 17.
289 Irwin, 51.
290 Irwin, 55.
291 Irwin, 55.
weather is undermining the means we had developed to distance the impact of the seasons themselves. Industrial pollution produced climate change, and climate change is now making the seasons unpredictable and ultimately unmanageable.

Technology is cast in a bad light in the Heideggerian account, but there are others who argue, contradictorily, that technology has in fact heightened our appreciation of seasons. In his lecture series and accompanying book *Winter: Five Windows on a Season*, Adam Gopnik argues that technology did not so much end seasonality as change our relationship to it, and to winter in particular. He argues that by removing much of the danger and discomfort of winter the invention of central heating brought into being a new emotion, the experience of winter as lovely or picturesque.292 By providing reliable and secure shelter from the elements central heating allowed us to enjoy and appreciate winter. This security, Gopnik argues, made the taste for winter a part of the modern condition because only in the modern age did people (in Europe and North America) come to be truly warm in winter.293 Winter was thus split into a season with a dual nature: sweet and scary. The long-standing threatening, cold, barren and dark side became simply the scary side of winter. A new, sweet side associated with a cozy indoor vantage point allowing us to appreciate the season's stark beauty, calm and quiet was born with the technological development. It is, as Gopnik points out, a Romantic vision of winter that endures to this day. Thoreau echoed this view when he argued: "In winter we lead a more inward life. Our hearts are warm and cheery, like cottages under drifts, whose windows

292 Gopnik, 12.
293 Gopnik, 3.
and doors are half concealed, but from whose chimneys the smoke cheerfully ascends."

This cheerful interior winter life Thoreau attributes to the "happy resistance to cold" which permits "the long winter evening around the farmer's hearth, when the thoughts of the indwellers travel far abroad, and men are by nature and necessity charitable and liberal to all creatures."

Tied to the cozy Romantic winter was an appreciation of the other Romantic sensibilities found in winter: the mysterious, the strange, and the sublime. All three were deemed to be a positive and purifying presence. People were thereafter drawn outdoors for the purification and improvement of their souls. Thoreau celebrates the “wonderful purity of nature at this season” as “a most pleasing fact,” invigorating, and a sign that virtue endures in winter.

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296 Gopnik, 3.

297 Gopnik, 12.

The above juxtaposed images offer a good illustration of the revolution in our relationship to winter. The first is a painting by the Swedish artist Louis Sparre (though painted while he was living in Finland) called *First Snow*. Painted in 1891 it depicts a mother and child in a dark, rustic homestead in a poor farming or rural community. The mother peers forlornly over her shoulder and out the window at the falling snow. The viewer can almost feel the first winter drafts seeping through the poorly insulated farmhouse and can understand the dread that the mother must be feeling at the onset of the months of winter cold and dark. The sense of foreboding has made the mother turn her back to the snowy scene, seemingly in order to deny the approach of winter, yet she is compelled to sneak a look outside nonetheless. She and her child are sheltered yet they are still very much subject to the harsh realities of the season. Without the benefit of insulation and central heating this family's home is a porous membrane to winter. It will take the edge off, but the cold will remain. The dark, enclosed setting of the painting also

**Figure 13.** Louis Sparre. *First Snow*, 1891. Oil on canvas, 91 cm x 111 cm. Antell Collections, Ateneum Art Museum. Photo: Finnish National Gallery / Matti Janas.

**Figure 14.** Photograph by Élise Newman, 2010.
gives the impression that winter will mean months of isolation and self-reliance for the family. Even if chronologically the painting fits within the Romantic period, the lack of access to crucial technologies means that the subjects cannot yet be situated in “sweet winter.”

The second image was taken by a friend of mine, Élise Newman, of her mother and nephew during a family Christmas in Montreal a few years ago. It is a luminous, almost monochromatic image that gives off a sense of cozy security. In the photograph Élise's mother Adèle holds her grandson Loïc in her arms and both squarely face the window, looking boldly (and warmly) out onto the deep winter beyond. Protected by the double-paned window, insulation and central heating Adèle is facing winter squarely and passing on to her grandson an appreciation of the beauty of the cold season. In this photograph Adèle and Loïc are firmly situated in sweet winter. Through the technical innovations making the home impervious to the harsh conditions on the other side of the glass this pair, in contrast to Sparre’s mother and child, are able to take themselves out of the season in a way and admire it as we admire the image itself.

These two images of winter capture an important facet of our changed relationship to climate. It is certainly true that technology has taken the edge off harsh conditions allowing us a more even baseline comfort yearlong. But it is a mistake to think that technological innovations have emancipated us from climate entirely. Even in an age of industrialized agriculture and central heating/cooling we are still obliged to shift our habits and activities with the weather and the seasons. Just as electric lighting has not eliminated the centrality of circadian rhythms, technology has not eradicated seasonality.
Our relationship with weather, climate and the seasons continues to take a variety of forms, but it can nonetheless be roughly divided into two categories (though as with most categorical divisions, the lines cannot be strictly policed). The first is a practical relationship. By “practical” I mean an everyday, hands-on, getting-through kind of pragmatism. At a basic level we rely on the cyclical revolution of the seasons for planning. A straight forward example of this is agriculture. Crops must be planted and harvested at particular points in the seasonal cycle and farmers undertake logistical planning to ensure that these activities occur at the right time. The same can be said of other endeavours – from the large scale to the very personal. For example, infrastructure must be engineered to withstand the demands and conditions of the seasons. On a more personal level, we may plan vacations to go off in search of preferred weather, we may switch recreational activities in the different seasons, adjust wardrobe, change the rooms we gravitate to in our homes based on light and warmth, and so on.

The second relationship with weather and climate is an emotional one. I do not mean here an overwrought sentimentalism. Instead I have in mind the way that a season, the overall climate and, most immediately, a weather event all elicit an emotional response from us. This can be positive (joy, exhilaration, comfort and solace) or negative (fear, alienation, and discomfort). For instance, the intense pleasure of a sunny summer day, the melancholic lethargy of a dark, rainy week, or the pervasive insecurity from a hail storm or freezing rain. The emotions evoked by climate and weather may be shared or deeply personal. Shared emotions may be influenced by cultural or national interpretations. Part of the pleasure (or discomfort) of seasonal activities comes from
their communal nature (harvesting, tobogganing, beach lounging, strolling on the first day of spring). The emotional response may also be due to more deeply personal experiences, such as a solitary contemplative walk, a lunch break taken on a favourite park bench, or a treacherous winter commute. The emotional responses add another layer to the way climate and weather provide the baseline tempo to everyday life. Certain emotions prompted by the seasons or weather recur on a regular basis, altering one's mood and orientation to the world.

II

Underwriting our practical and emotional relationships to weather and climate is our bodily engagement with these phenomena. Sensory experience plays a crucial role here. Weather variation in the different seasons engages the senses differently, entailing a changed relationship with place. As Philip Vannini et al argue "weather invokes the work of our senses. The weather brings forth a distinct sensual dimension to place. The weather immerses us into a world of sensations that underwrites our capacity to touch, taste, see, smell, and hear place, by affording us with possibilities for movement, for action." This "world of sensation" fills out what it means to be in place. Far from a passive experience, being in place demands constant attention from the senses, an attention that goes beyond a simple engagement of sight, hearing, touch, smell or taste. To properly understand how weather and climate deepen our knowledge of place we must understand

299 Former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau famously went for a long walk in the snow to come to the decision to resign from his position.

300 Vannini et al, 369.
sensation more broadly. I will follow Mark Paterson's conception of "somatic senses" that "acknowledges the multiplicity and the interaction between different internally felt and outwardly oriented senses [...] the different somatic senses collectively help constitute the under explored background feelings of embodiment, the self-perception of inner bodily states."\(^{301}\)

Coming to know place through weather and bodily sensation increases one's intimate knowledge of it. Timothy Ingold argues that landscape and body are complementary terms and that we come to know the former through the latter.\(^{302}\) Our senses cooperate to produce a more profound and complex understanding of place. Even when simply looking at a landscape we can feel it:

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\text{Through the exercises of descending and climbing, and their different muscular entailments, the contours of the landscape are not so much measured as felt - they are directly incorporated into our bodily experience. But even if you remain rooted to one spot, the same principle applies. As you look across the valley to the hill on the horizon, your eyes do not remain fixed: swivelling in their sockets, or as you tilt your head, their motions accord with the movement of your attention as it follows its course through the landscape.}^{303}\]

Ingold takes this idea of muscular consciousness in relation to landscape from Gaston Bachelard who describes this process as reliving the sensory experience of being in place in our imaginations.\(^{304}\) Changes in season and weather inescapably have an impact on this sensory experience of place. Just as we have a muscle memory of climbing or descending

\(^{301}\) Mark Paterson. “Haptic geographies: ethnography, haptic knowledges and sensuous dispositions.” \textit{Progress in Human Geography}. 33 no. 6 (2009), 768.


\(^{303}\) Ingold, “The Temporality of the Landscape,” 166.

\(^{304}\) Ingold, “The Temporality of the Landscape,” 167.
a hill when imagining a place, we will also have a muscle memory that accompanies the seasons or particular weather events, such as the change in gait required to walk on ice or through mud. We must add to this a sensory memory - of cold on skin in winter, of the drip of sweat in summer, of the smell of fresh rain in spring, of the crunch of leaves underfoot in fall. Like the whiff of Proust's madeleine that brought Marcel back not only to a memory of childhood, but also to an actual experience of childhood, the memory of weather or climatic conditions in an off-season viscerally recalls these sensations. The sensory memory is akin to a reliving. It is a re-sensing. Vannini et al push this notion further, arguing that weather actually marks our bodies:

weathering places often leave a lasting trace on our bodies, a mark of intense experiences or prolonged ones ... What lingers are affective sensations that may fall dormant for years but that once reawakened by weather conditions can bring one back into a particular weather-place and into the lived bodily experiences of the time. ... subjectivizing because the weather is in us, incorporated into our very identities, into our very dwellings and sensations ... In becoming subject to weather-places over time our bodies become our weather regions. Hence weather and climates become part of our character, of how we compare ourselves to others, of how we judge the day. The weather is persistent within our bodies.305

If weather comes to live in our bodies then we come to feel it in a particular way. Our bodies themselves become expressions of weather.306 Experiencing weather is then like exercising muscles. Some go unused - lie fallow - until called to action by the particular conditions, but they remain always present as part of the body.

The sensorial engagement with weather and climate is perhaps best understood in winter because it is during this season that we experience a sort of reversal of the senses.

305 Vannini et al, 373.
306 Thanks to Tim Hanafin for suggesting this point.
Winter conditions require us to use our senses differently, most obviously in the case of sight. In a true Nordic winter a coating of snow transforms the world of colour into a monochromatically white world. The loss of colour makes vision more difficult. A greater challenge to sight comes from a particular type of (temporary) blindness caused by an excess of white – blizzard conditions called "whiteouts" that turn a snowfall and its pervasive white into a dangerous threat. In these blizzards one's surroundings become so dominated by white that sight becomes useless for orientation. The snow is so heavy, or blowing around so violently, that one can not even see one's own hands. In these conditions it is possible to become so disoriented as to die of exposure steps from one's front door. In places prone to these blizzards residents rely on ropes tied to porch bannisters for orientation. A more physically damaging and long lasting (though not permanent) type of blindness in winter is commonly called snow blindness. Because in winter light is reflected off the white surface of the snow eyes are more susceptible to damage by an excess of UV rays. Today northerners prevent snow blindness by wearing sunglasses, but before these were prevalent the Inuit had developed protective snow goggles made from a solid piece of bone, ivory or wood with a small slit in the middle. These goggles prevent blindness by limiting the field of vision and the amount of

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307 “Photokeratitis: A burn of the cornea (the clear front surface of the eye) by ultraviolet B rays (UVB). Also called radiation keratitis or snowblindness. The condition typically occurs at high altitudes on highly reflective snow fields or, less often, with a solar eclipse. Artificial sources of UVB can also cause snowblindness. These sources include suntanning beds, a welder's arc (flash burn, welder's flash, or arc eye), carbon arcs, photographic flood lamps, lightning, electric sparks, and halogen desk lamps. Symptoms include tearing, pain, redness, swollen eyelids, headache, a gritty feeling in the eyes, halos around lights, hazy vision, and temporary loss of vision. These symptoms may not appear until 6-12 hours after the UVB exposure. Treatment consists mainly of keeping the eye closed with patches, after instilling a few drops of ophthalmic antibiotic solution, such as sulfacetamide sodium 10% with methylcellulose or gentamicin. Vision usually returns after 18 hours. The surface of the cornea usually regenerates in 24 to 48 hours. Prevention involves sunglasses with adequate UVB protection and full coverage of the eyes (side shields).” See “Definition of Photokeratitis,” last modified June 14, 2012, http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=19394
light that reaches the eye. Ironically, the solution to losing sight in these conditions is to preemptively handicap that capacity. On a sunny winter day in the Arctic one sees better by restricting the amount one can see.

Sight is also, contradictorily, in some ways enhanced in winter. The pervasiveness of white in winter can fool us into thinking about the season in solely monochromatic terms, however colour endures. Indeed, the pronounced white background of the season seems to make colour even more vivid. Consider the opening paragraph of the classic fable Snow White:

Once upon a time in mid winter, when the snowflakes were falling like feathers from heaven, a beautiful queen sat sewing at her window, which had a frame of black ebony wood. As she sewed, she looked up at the snow and pricked her finger with her needle. Three drops of blood fell into the snow. The red on the white looked so beautiful, that she thought, "If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as this frame." Soon afterward she had a little daughter that was as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as ebony wood, and therefore they called her Little Snow-White.  

In this scene the red of the spilled blood and the black of the ebony frame are intensified and made captivating by the pure white backdrop. In spring and summer they would be overshadowed by a lush, blooming vista and in fall by brilliant turning leaves. In the winter white attention is focused on the isolated intensity of the red and black. The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge was similarly struck by the heightened impact of colour in winter during a walking trip in Germany in 1799, writing in a letter to his wife:

But when first the ice fell on the lake, and the whole lake was frozen, one huge piece of thick transparent glass, O my God! what sublime scenery have I beheld. ... the Sunlight burnt upon the Ice in a strait road of golden Fire, all

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across the lake ... About a month ago the vehemence of the wind had shattered the Ice - part of it, quite shattered, was driven to shore and had frozen anew; this was of a deep blue, and represented [resembled] an agitated sea - the water that ran up between the great islands of ice shone of a yellow green (it was at sunset) and all these scattered islands of smooth ice were blood; intensely bright blood. [emphasis added]³⁰⁹

Against the white backdrop of winter colour seems to have become more vibrant for the poet. It is "intense," "deep" and even "burnt," as if branded onto Coleridge's vision. The blanketing of white snow having quieted the typical cacophony of colour, individual colours are able to be sensed directly and profoundly. Moreover, it is the primary colours that transfix him (yellow/golden Fire, deep blue, blood red), as if reconnecting him with an originary visual experience. These intense primary colours make the environment as a whole more alive to Coleridge, pressing in on his consciousness. Interestingly, both Coleridge and the Grimm brothers turn to the imagery of blood in their depictions of winter colour. We could read the focus on blood here as pointing to an admiration of the tenacity and perseverance of life in this harsh season. As with the Inuit snow goggles, the limitation on the scope of perception in these two cases makes a more attentive mode of vision possible, one in which vitality pushes in more strongly.

This heightened attunement to colour in winter also leads keen observers to notice that, despite its aggregate appearance, snow is not in fact white. Gopnik notes that the Impressionist painters developed a love of white when they turned to painting winter scenes.³¹⁰ With that love and attention came the knowledge that, as Monet explained,

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³⁰⁹ quoted in Gopnik, 13.
³¹⁰ Gopnik, 40.
snow is "a white that is made up kaleidoscopically of tiny touches of prismatic colour."\textsuperscript{311} Similarly, in many of the winter snow paintings of Nordic and Canadian artists there are undertones of colour, especially pink and blue.\textsuperscript{312} The apparent lack of colour in the landscape, therefore, seems to make us not only more aware of contrasts but also of the subtleties and nuances of colour. In winter, then, we focus less on the overall scene, which is an opaque white or a dull grey/brown, and turn our attention to localized contrasts, intensities and nuances. We become more attuned to and in synch with the micro world. The luscious bloom of spring or the blazing sun of summer can be overwhelming in their demands for attention. Winter, in contrast, requires close, deliberate attention.

While the most obvious sensorial modification is that of sight, hearing is also altered during the "inverted\textsuperscript{313} season. This is especially the case after a fresh snowfall. The quiet that comes with freshly falling snow is astounding. Indeed, the enveloping silence is a frequent observation made about winter. This silence is especially noticeable in urban settings. The blanket of snow dampens even the most raucous city. Sounds of the hustle and bustle disappear and suddenly one hears - and is forced to focus on - only the immediate environment. Sounds that one is normally completely oblivious to crowd in: the hum of electricity lines, the crack of expanding or breaking ice, the crunch of unhurried footsteps. As with the particular form of sight in winter, here once again the

\textsuperscript{311} quoted in Gopnik, 40.

\textsuperscript{312} For the Nordic artists see Pekka Halonen, Edvard Munch, and Nikolai Astrup. For the Canadian and Québécois artists see Lawren Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Maurice Cullen, Marc-Aurèle de Foy Suzor-Côté, and Ozias Leduc, Paul Emile Borduas.

\textsuperscript{313} see William Cowper, "The Winter Evening," quoted in Gopnik, 11: "O winter, ruler of the inverted year."
micro environment takes centre stage. We are aware of an auditory environment that we did not even know existed. Discovering these masked sounds deepens our knowledge of place.

Perhaps the most interesting sensorial reversal in winter – because it is the most alienating – is that of touch, or feeling. We must think of touch here not as "straightforward skin contact" but rather as a broader field that includes "internally felt bodily sensations." This more extensive understanding is commonly designated by the term "haptic." The word “haptic” helpfully “avoids superficial connotations associated with the everyday word 'touch', and in particular the assumption that touch [implies] only the sensuous experiences of the fingers.” In winter feeling is more all-encompassing than mere digital touch as it manifests differently at various points along a cold spectrum. At the more innocuous extreme the normally passive or receptive capacity to feel is turned into an active sensation. As Gopnik insightfully points out, in winter we have a need to enact, perform, and demonstrate what we are feeling. For example, at bus stops on cold winter days waiting passengers engage in a foot stomping, side stepping, tight circling, shoulder shaking dance that enacts their experience of cold. The interior, bodily experience is in this way turned outside for others to observe. Sliding up to the next stage on the scale of winter cold, feeling itself gets eliminated. Extreme

314 Paterson, 768.
315 See Paterson; and J.J. Gibson, The senses considered as perceptual systems. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966).
temperatures or prolonged exposure to cold simply turn extremities numb. Eventually the whole body becomes overwhelmed by this lack of feeling. At the furthest extreme feeling returns, turns back on itself and becomes its opposite. This is the eerie danger of hypothermia that leads those in its throes to shed clothing precisely when it is needed most. Prolonged exposure to extreme cold so disorients the body that it comes to experience the cold as heat.\textsuperscript{318} Hypothermia is a threat that hangs over everyone in the North but its impact on Arctic explorers has led to some epic and haunting narratives. One group of Arctic explorers sent on the increasingly futile searches for the lost Franklin expedition survived their bout of hypothermia by turning the reversal of sensation into a tool for survival. As Gopnik relates the experience described in the memoir of one of E.K. Kane's (an American naval master) crew:

\begin{quote}
[they suffered] from a hypothermia so severe that they would fall asleep for hours at a time standing up, then turn and wake, then turn and mutter, delirious, as a group ... Then they would pause, fall asleep, or keep themselves awake by eating snow - not as a frozen liquid, not for water, but because it burned their faces so intensely that it would keep them from hypothermic slumber. And stumble on, and hallucinate, and sleep for a few minutes, and burn their mouths awake and stumble on again.\textsuperscript{319}
\end{quote}

The reversal of feeling in winter does not so much make us aware of the micro environment – as in the case of sight and sound – as vividly attune us to the impact of climate on the body. When we approach the limit of body and climate we come to experience the world as radically other. Rather than feeling our body to be in harmony

\textsuperscript{318} “Often the affected person will lie down, fall asleep, and die. In some cases, the patient will paradoxically remove their clothes just before this occurs.” “Hypothermia,” last modified January 1, 2014. http://www.medicinenet.com/hypothermia/page3.htm#what_are_the_signs_and_symptoms_of_hypothermia.

\textsuperscript{319} Gopnik, 68.
with the rhythm of place, we experience a dangerous dissonance. We feel rejected and alien, just as Thoreau did on the summit of Mount Ktaadn.

This alienation is a spectre that haunts even the most devoted winter lover. Just as the reality of the awesome and indifferent - or perhaps cruel - majesty of nature confronts the great nature lover Thoreau at the very moment he expected to be immersed in its sublime beauty at the summit of Mount Ktaadn, winter enthusiasts inevitably confront the sheer inhospitality of the season. This leads to what Sophie-Laurence Lamontagne describes as a confused intermingling of attachment and resentment. These twin sentiments produce what she identifies as "winter syndrome" - a "mal-être" caused by a buffeting between mild days that foster hope and cold snaps that lead to depression. This syndrome can lead to a denial of winter, aided by the modern convenience of underground paths that allow urban dwellers to make their commutes and live their everyday lives without being subject to the caprices of climate. Interestingly, what Lamontagne reads as a pathological denial of winter, Gopnik sees as an adaptation that enables a positive urban experience of the season. He argues that the tunnels do not

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322 "un mal-être développé par les hivers en dents de scie, soit 'un jour de redoux, un jour d'espoir, un jour de coup de froid, un jour de déprime.' Lamontagne, 137, citing Françoise Pitt, "Le syndrome de l'hiver", L'Hospitalité, mars-avril 1989, 2.

323 Lamontagne, 138.

324 As in the Canadian movie Waydowntown about a group of young professionals in Calgary participating in a bet to see who can go longest without stepping outdoors. The movie opens a month into the experiment, a duration made possible by the underground parking and malls attached to the workplaces and homes of the characters. Predictably, and amusingly, the characters react increasingly erratically to their self-imposed enclosure as the movie progresses.
constitute a denial of winter and the outside but rather a permeable membrane with the outdoor streets that returns the city to the walker, thereby revitalizing urban winter life.\textsuperscript{325}

In his celebration of winter Gopnik links it to the other seasons arguing that it is precisely the harshness of winter that makes it possible for us to enjoy them. Applying the botanical term "vernalization" to humans he argues that in the:

\textit{simple paradox - the hardest weather makes the nicest wine - lies a secret that gives shape to the winter season, and to our feelings about it. Without the stress of cold in a temperate climate, without the cycle of the seasons experienced not as a gentle swell up and down but as an extreme lurch, bang! from one quadrant of the year to the next, a compensatory pleasure would vanish from the world. ... If we didn't remember winter in spring, it wouldn't be as lovely; if we didn't think of spring in winter, or search winter to find some new emotion of its own to make up for the absent ones, half of the keyboard of life would be missing. We would be playing life with no flats or sharps, on a piano with no black keys.}\textsuperscript{326}

In this passage Gopnik puts his finger on the reversal that is integral to those of us at home in a four season temperate climate. It is a reversal that seems necessary for us to experience the passage of time. In years of usually mild winters something seems off, even to those suffering "winter syndrome."\textsuperscript{327}

We sense how much our bodies are attuned to the cycling of seasons when that transitioning is thrown off because one role that winter plays for us is a reversal and re-attunement of the senses. Like my optometrist's advice that I take breaks from staring at my computer screen by looking out the window into the distance to rest my eyes by employing them differently, winter gives the senses a break by forcing them to function

\textsuperscript{325} Gopnik, 192.

\textsuperscript{326} Gopnik, 178-9.

\textsuperscript{327} Lamontagne, "L'hiver au Québec," 138.
differently. In winter we use those otherwise fallow weather muscles. By being exercised
differently in the winter months the senses get reinvigorated and prepped for the
following seasons. The reversals or alterations of sensation experienced in winter force us
to attend to place by our need to adjust our routine and make us aware of the shifting
rhythms within it.

Our affective relationship with weather and climate indicates that human
phenology is a complex phenomenon. It is clear that we do not receive purely
instrumental cues from the climate indicating, for example, when to plant crops or
undertake construction projects. Nor do the seasons only have a social or cultural
importance represented by traditional customs of group activities. We also have a deeply
personal and bodily relationship with weather and climate. This is perhaps most
evocatively illustrated by Seasonal Affective Disorder. The disorder is a medically
diagnosed "kind of depression that occurs at a certain time of the year, usually in the
winter." To treat the more common winter variety of the disorder doctors turn to light
therapy using a lamp that mimics sunlight from the sun thereby replicating the
sensorial experience of the missing season. We can think of the disorder as a climatically
caused parallel to homesickness. Also known as nostalgia, homesickness is a "sickness
caused by the intense desire to return home" that was considered "medically diagnosable
as a psycho-physiological disease ... until the mid-20th century." The cure for nostalgia

329 “Seasonal affective disorder.”
was found, quite simply, to be repatriation. In the case of both nostalgia/homesickness and seasonal affective disorder a physical change in the environment is what is required to treat what is often seen as a purely psychological condition. In both these cases bodily sensations dictate the overall well-being of the person. We can assume, then, that bodily sensations contribute to well-being even well short of these acute cases. Moreover, this well-being is strongly linked to a sense of belonging. The connection is intuitive in the case of homesickness but it is also present with weather and climate, both in the way these phenomena help attach us to place and in the solace that they can provide in their own right. We can start to see how a loss of familiar climatic conditions will be harmful to well-being.

In many ways weather is the medium through which we become intimately familiar and then attached to place. Not only does it engage our senses, it also forces us to interact with our surroundings in a variety of ways. In particular it requires that we have a reasonable knowledge and ability to predict how our surroundings will be altered by weather changes. For example, we know in a heavy rainstorm which drains are likely to overflow, or which trees are vulnerable to strong winds. Just as we grow more attached to other people as we come to know them more intimately, we also become more attached to place as we know it more intimately. Vannini et al argue that we reach a harmony with place through weather by “moving alongside atmospheric patterns.” They go further, arguing that more than simply creating attachment weather makes and remakes place

331 Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 223.
332 Vannini et al., 361.
itself.\textsuperscript{333} We could add to this that due to weather and climate we also physically remake place: e.g. we build dykes to mitigate the risk of flooding.

Beyond the way weather and climate attach us to place they can also provide a form of solace in their own right. This solace, and the way that weather and climate get us there, can take several forms. First, they do so through the reliable base tempo of seasonal change. Having this predictable rotation not only allows us to structure and plan our lives, it also provides comfort in knowing that there is an end in sight to the difficult time and an assurance that good times will return. Even the mother in the Sparre painting looking out with dread at the coming winter conserves some solace in the knowledge that the season will end and be followed by easier weather. This also means that there is always some dread haunting the more comfortable seasons. The price of solace in bad times is bittersweetness in good times.

Secondly, and less intuitively, weather can provide a kind of solace by unexpectedly making us aware of our environment and where we stand in it. Here climate and weather play different roles: climate creates a routine and weather breaks that routine. While the break (e.g. a violent storm) can be dangerous, destructive and destabilizing it can also be comforting in that it re-grounds us in our surroundings. The demands - or pleasures, such as an unexpected bright, sunny day - of weather can force us to attend to our material environs. Though this attention may involve arduous work, it may also be restful in that it takes us out of the flux of social life and resituates us in place. The comfort that this resituation provides may be particularly acute in the midst of

\textsuperscript{333} Vannini et al, 364.
a threatening or discomforting weather event. In some of my most emotionally painful moments I have taken great comfort in extended walks or runs in a cold, dark rain. The cold rain forces me to be conscious of my body and the unpleasant/pleasant sensation of cold water on my skin and a chill that eludes layers of clothing. This consciousness forces me to attend to something other than the pain I am feeling. The weather is in a sense insisting that I be present in the here and now despite all my psychic distractions. Layered on top of this immediate sensorial solace is another type that comes from the indifference of climate to my place or to my comfort. There is a system at work here that is completely beyond me. This goes some way towards diminishing my pain in that it is a reminder that my pain is of no importance to the world. There is a relief in this insignificance. In diminishing the significance of my problems this weather is rejuvenating. In these moments the weather serves as "a tool for cleansing, for emotional relief, for quenching hunger and taste, for walking in puddles. And at times the weather is a tool to self-medicate, a reason to escape pain and sorrow."334 The comfort derived from weather is a missing piece in predominant conceptualizations of our relationship with land.

While I want to focus our attention on the solace-giving aspect of weather and climate – since stress to it will have an impact on belonging – we should not entirely overlook the more negative and alienating relationship with weather and climate. As we have seen, climate can produce dread and weather can certainly cause great fear (tornado, hurricane, blizzard, etc). Weather can also wear you down. By the end of winter the lack

334 Vannini et al, 369.
of colour combined with slush and chill can be tiresome even for those not suffering from seasonal affective disorder. The extreme humidity and heat of Baltimore's summers make me so lethargic that I need to escape up north in order to get work done. Weather can affect us more nefariously, so that it makes us behave uncharacteristically or irrationally. There is a striking moment in *L'Étranger* in which the protagonist, Meursault, states matter-of-factly at his trial that he did not intend to shoot his victim, he did so because of the sun. In the description of the moments leading up to the murder Meursault seems trapped and then almost played as a puppet by the sun. The beach pulsates with heat that presses on Meursault's back, scorches his cheeks and causes his veins to seem to burst from his forehead. This combination of unbearable sensations compels Meursault to take a step forward, an act that he himself recognizes as foolish. The ensuing tension – and searing light reflected off the victim's knife – turns Meursault's body into a “steel spring” that releases on his gun's trigger.335 Far from feeling a harmony with place Meursault experiences an intense alienation that picks at his self and makes him act in a way that even he finds contrary to logic. The discomfort that Meursault feels in this sunny summer setting is so powerful that it seems he is being rejected by place, like an organ rejected by the body after a transplant. It is not just that he does not belong, he is being assaulted by the weather to underscore that fact.

Weather and climate clearly do not work solely towards establishing a sense of belonging and solace. As we turn to the impact of climate change in the next section the question that should lurk in our minds is, as the nature of climate and weather changes

will their alienating character outstrip their solace-giving one? And will this undermine place-belonging?

**III**

The regular seasonal cycle is one of the many things imperilled by climate change, and along with it our relationship with weather and climate. Much of the discussion of climate change to date has focused on particular catastrophic events or doomsday scenarios, but, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, the disruption (and eventual destruction) of seasons and their expected weather conditions deserve more explicit attention as it is likely to be destabilizing. The warming of the planet is toying with the climate in ways that are throwing off our familiar baseline tempo. As the climate changes we are losing the very thing that made the seasons such a useful ordering tool. This loss of predictability and reliability has practical, cultural and emotional consequences.

In the Arctic, where climate change is having an impact at twice the rate as in the rest of the world, the Inuit have begun referring to the weather as "uggianaqtuq," a word that means "to behave unexpectedly or in an unfamiliar way; unseasonably; [and that] comes from a term that refers to the actions of when a dog takes something in its mouth and shakes it violently." Intriguingly, this word also implies an intimate

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337 IPCC 2007, 30.

338 Fox, xxiii
knowledge of weather that leads to the uncanny feeling that something is off. In explaining the word’s meaning to Shari Fox, Terry, an Inuktitut translator, describes it as follows:

> It's like, if my sister came in the room and I just looked at her and I knew something was wrong. She didn't even have to say anything but I knew something was wrong right away, just by looking at her. That is uggianaqtuq. It is something unexpected, something different happens from what you usually expect.\(^{339}\)

The parallel made by the translator with the relationship to a close family member implies a visceral understanding of weather. This intimate knowledge allows Arctic residents to sense that the climatic balance has been thrown off. The recognition of this imbalance does not come from scientific data but rather from an intuitive feeling informed by a long and intimate relationship. *Uggianaqtuq* evocatively describes, therefore, not only the change in weather that climate change is inducing but also the deeply unsettling feeling that this change provokes.

Perhaps the most significant change to weather and climate producing this dislocation is the loss of predictability. More than the increase in extreme weather events such as hurricanes, droughts, floods, the loss of predictable and reliable weather is both unsettling and changing our relationship with the world. The increasing unpredictability of weather is transforming regular seasonal cycles into a less defined state of weather flux. As the transformation progresses our anticipatory orientation to climate will become increasingly untenable. It will necessarily be replaced by an orientation of response. We will no doubt still prepare for a variety of weather types and events, but we will be less

\(^{339}\) Fox, 1.
and less able to concentrate these preparations in particular time periods in which a specific range of weather events are expected. This loss of predictability has obvious practical as well as emotional and identitary implications.

The practical implications of increasingly extreme and unpredictable weather are daunting. While it is difficult to pin any single storm on climate change, scientists argue that the trend to a growing number and mounting intensity of storms can be traced to climate change. We can expect, therefore, that the huge cost of cleaning up after violent storms will be an increasing drain on government coffers and potentially damaging to the insurance industry. The growing number and intensity of storms will also have an impact on government disaster planning. As the "storm of the century" becomes the storm of the quarter century or of the decade, preparedness scenarios and infrastructure change.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy there have been a plethora of suggestions for ways to rebuild New York and New Jersey in such a way as to minimize

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341 In the city of Toronto's 2008 report on preparing for climate change, *Ahead of the Storm*, the authors use the example of the most expensive storm in the city's history - the August 19, 2005 intense rainfall that resulted in flash flooding, basement inundation, the washing out of a portion of a major thoroughfare (Finch Ave) and costs estimated at $4-500 million (CDN) in damages - to caution about the fallout from future storms made more violent by climate change. (Toronto Environment Office in Collaboration with the City of Toronto Climate Adaptation Steering Group and the Clear Air Partnership. *Ahead of the Storm… Preparing Toronto for Climate Change*, April 2008, http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of %20Toronto/Environment%20and%20Energy/Our%20Goals/Files/pdf/C/ ahead_of_the_storm_highlights.pdf, accessed August 2014, 11). It is estimated that Hurricane Sandy cost $65 billion, which pushed 2012 over the top in terms of record breaking clean-up costs: “The largest global disasters of 2012 were Hurricane Sandy (with a cost of $65 billion) and the year-long Midwest/Plains drought ($35 billion), according to the company's Annual Global Climate and Catastrophe Report, which was prepared by Aon Benfield's Impact Forecasting division.” Doyle Rice, “Hurricane Sandy, drought cost U.S. $100 billion,” USA Today, January 25, 2013.

342 Insurance losses have increased globally from 1965 to 1999 by 1300% due to more extreme weather events, according to a 2007 study by Munich Re Group (cited in *Ahead of the Storm*, 11).

343 See *Ahead of the Storm*. 
damage from future similar storms. The need to minimize storm damage becomes almost an existential concern for the densely populated and vulnerable New York City. Watching the footage of New York weathering Hurricane Sandy was uncannily like watching a Hollywood disaster film unfold in real time. All the elements were there: intense rain, high-velocity winds, encroaching surging waves, flooding, fires, loss of electricity, debris torn from buildings. But while a movie ends with the dawning of a new day and the community coming together to rebuild, in real time New Yorkers know that there may be many sequels to come. Some far worse than the original. Even if the city itself can be preserved and protected what it means to be a New Yorker will be fundamentally changed. A refrain that rang through much of the coverage of the hurricane was the exclamation: "This is not supposed to happen here!" Hurricanes are for New Orleans or the Florida coast. In the Northeast we deal with blizzards. The type of storm made the disaster uncanny for residents since it imposed the climate identity of another region on them. The increasingly widespread realization in the wake of Hurricane Sandy that the Northeast will in fact have to make hurricane preparedness a more prominent feature of its disaster planning puts further strain on that climatic identity. The infrastructure required to withstand more intense and frequent storms will be hugely expensive, putting more strain on government budgets at all levels. This will be especially difficult in the current age of austerity. Governments will not escape these increased costs by failing to invest as they will simply have to spend more on recovery after a storm.

More extensive disaster planning is not the only cost that will be added to infrastructure budgets. More erratic weather will mean that infrastructure in many regions
will need to accommodate a greater range of temperatures and weather types. The City of Toronto's preparations for climate change report identifies the need to make provisions for: hotter summers, more intense precipitation; more extreme weather, storms and increased wind speeds; and water level drop in the Great Lakes Basin. Erratic weather and seasonal shifts will have a huge impact even on basic infrastructure, such as roads as extreme temperature shifts that entail freeze-thaw cycles wreak havoc on road surfaces. As with challenges to infrastructure in general the impact of climate change on infrastructure in the Arctic is magnified. In this region melting permafrost is literally destabilizing the ground underneath the roads, opening up giant sinkholes on northern highways and causing bridges to collapse. In addition, the regionally-specific ice roads that provide a vital additional transportation route, critical for the importing of goods for local communities and supplies for the remote gold and diamond mines, are threatened by warming winters. Ice roads are built primarily across frozen waterways and connect with winter roads to provide a substantial winter roadway to isolated areas. As Arctic winters warm, therefore, the ice freezes later and thaws earlier, making the ice trucking season progressively shorter. The impacts of this shorter season on truckers (and to a lesser

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344 *Ahead of the Storm*, 33.

345 *Ahead of the Storm*, 8.

extent Arctic communities) is beamed into Southern homes on the bizarrely captivating reality television show *Ice Road Truckers*.

In all of these cases our ability to anticipate weather and climatic conditions more broadly is strained and the very nature of planning is changed. While the possibility of the unexpected is presumed in all types of planning – from disaster planning where it is the focus to infrastructure and agriculture where it is an extreme that must be accounted for – in the era of climate change this outlying event creeps increasingly into the mainstream. Equally important, the parameters that once gave a modicum of predictability even to these outlying events are losing even this minimal but useful reliability. We are seeing hurricanes in New York and snowstorms in California and Kansas (February 2013). The net of planning for the unexpected must be thrown ever wider, making it decreasingly effective. Planning thus becomes less a mode of anticipation and more one of response. Dealing with disaster has always entailed to a great degree a mode of response, but the idea behind disaster planning and risk management is to foresee to the greatest extent possible when disasters might occur, and with what intensity and scale. Disaster planning is premised on the idea of community resilience that “encompasses both the capacity of communities to ‘bounce back’ as well as their capacity to proactively and intentionally transform themselves in order to address or reduce the impacts of forthcoming shocks.” Taegen Edwards and John Wiseman. “Climate Change, Resilience and Transformation: Challenges and Opportunities for Local Communities.” in Weissbecker.

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north, mud slide region, etc. As these regions shift and bleed together (e.g. the Northeast US is now both a blizzard and hurricane zone and the Southwest Ontario tornado corridor is encroaching on Toronto) disaster planning will become less specialized. By having to prepare for more disaster scenarios governments and agencies will be less effective at dealing with any particular disaster type.

Another, less obvious, impact of climate change is the loss of the solace that climate and place provide together. As the familiar markers of home, homeplace, or simply a familiar comfort-giving place disappear these sites become uncanny and unsettling instead of solace-giving. Climate is one of those markers, and a giver of solace in its own right. The change that it is undergoing is bringing about this type of destabilization. If Seasonal Affective Disorder can be understood as a form of homesickness, as I argued earlier in this chapter, then the loss of seasons constitutes a more acute parallel. Australian psychologist Glenn Albrecht has devised a special term to describe precisely this feeling - solastalgia. He first developed the idea of solastalgia when studying the impact of open pit mining in New South Wales, Australia, on nearby residents but has since expanded the term to include other forms of stationary homesickness (i.e. homesickness not caused by the migration or displacement of the sufferers but due to the changes in the home place), including that caused by climate change. Albrecht’s neologism describes a psychological condition that is a subcategory of

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348 Ahead of the Storm, 11.
what he terms "psychoterratic illness" that engenders some physiological responses (e.g. physical pain). This condition develops because, according to Albrecht, our physical and mental health is tied to our vital relationship with place. Albrecht crafted the term "solastalgia" to deliberately evoke the notions of nostalgia and solace, defining it as the "pain or sickness caused by the ongoing loss of solace and sense of desolation connected to the present state of one’s home and territory." Solastalgia is caused by the "lived experience of negative environmental change manifest as an attack on one’s sense of place." More colloquially, solastalgia can be understood as the chronic condition of a type of "homesickness you have when you are still located within your home environment." Albrecht contends that the illness has "universal relevance in any context where there is the direct experience of transformation or destruction of the physical environment (home) by forces that undermine a personal and community sense

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349 "Psychoterratic illness arises from a negative relationship to our home environment, be it at local, regional or global scales. The negative relationship involves a loss of identity, loss of endemic sense of place and a decline in well-being. ... such conditions are 'existential' in that they represent a diminution of the quality of existence of well-being. Such existential syndromes can manifest as anxiety, mild distress, forms of depression and in extreme instances, suicide." Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 217-218.

350 Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 222.

351 Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 222.

352 "the sickness caused by the intense desire to return home." Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 223.

353 "Solace is derived from the Latin verb solari (noun solacium or solatium), with meanings connected to the alleviation or relief of distress or to the provision of comfort or consolation in the face of distressing events. Solace has connections to both psychological and physical contexts." Albrecht, “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living,” 226-227.


of identity" though its most poignant moments come from the direct experience of the transformation of a loved environment, such as in the practice of land clearing.\textsuperscript{357, 358}

In his speculations about climate change-caused solastalgia Albrecht points to the damage done to the seasons as a key factor leading to this condition. He argues that it is the change in seasons, specifically the cyclical pattern that humans rely on, and in particular the disjuncture of ecosystems that are no longer synchronized with seasons, that leads to the climate change variant of solastalgia.\textsuperscript{359} As climatic patterns and order (e.g. winds, tides, seasons) are changing so too is the long-term character of climate. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, Albrecht believes that the reliable and predictable nature of climate is linked to culture.\textsuperscript{360} It is what he contends provides the possibility of social ordering. This grounding is threatened by climate change’s strain on seasons. As predictability gives way to flux we can no longer plan ahead, making us anxious about an unreliable future and undoing the established social order. This uncertainty is leading to a sense of helplessness and paralysis that Albrecht argues hampers efforts to curb climate change today:

As uncertainty rises, I suggest that anxiety might turn into a form of helplessness or paralysis with the inability to make definitive decisions about what to do next entrenched in a non-predictable world. I argue that it is not that people are unconcerned about changing environments; it is just that they are unable to translate their concerns into any meaningful action.\textsuperscript{361}

\textsuperscript{357} Albrecht, "Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Living," 227.

\textsuperscript{358} The parallels to the experience of colonization are evident, especially in the case of the Inuit, who have experienced dispossession by a colonial power and are now experiencing a second climate change induced dispossession.

\textsuperscript{359} Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change.”

\textsuperscript{360} Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change,” 46.

\textsuperscript{361} Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change,” 48.
We are back to the problem I encountered when writing climate change speeches for Jack Layton. The overwhelming nature of climate change produces paralysis rather than a sense of urgency. The difference is that in Jack's speeches we tackled the paralysis with a direct articulation of what is at risk for audience members, whereas in the experience of solastalgia the uncanny, nagging feeling that a fundamental feature of place-belonging is at risk is not identified clearly and thus cannot serve to cut through the paralysis. Importantly, the threat to solace and belonging does not affect only those who already feel a sense of belonging in the affected place, there is also an impact on newcomers. Since learning to perceive and read the signs of the seasonal cycle is part of the process of habituation to place, as Lamontagne argued in the case of French colonists in New France, the loss of the seasons also hinders the ability to become intimately familiar and at home in a new place. As the rhythms of the place are increasingly irregular it becomes difficult to learn to put one's body in synch with them.

As climate change progresses seasons will become less defined and will eventually lose their meaning altogether. Reflecting on this eventuality, Gopnik notes that: "When we lose a powerful symbol of order, some other symbol comes to take its place. Human beings are matchlessly good at making them. But when we lose, through the vagaries of life or history, some powerful symbol of order, we feel the loss, and we should spend a minute mourning it." Gopnik puts his finger here on the intangible but nonetheless profound sense of loss accompanying the decline of seasonality. This is true even in the age of “sweet winter,” showing that despite our efforts we have not in fact

362 Gopnik, 216.
managed to step out of seasonality altogether. It can be difficult to articulate exactly what is being lost with this change, but we have a strong sense of loss nonetheless. One way that this is being sensed is through the loss of sense itself – or, more accurately, the loss of particular sensory experiences linked to the disappearing climatic conditions. As winter recedes permanently so too does our access to the feeling of cold, soft, enveloping quiet and blinding, pervasive whiteness. For those used to bracing against the cold for several months a year there is an uneasiness when that posture is not required. As the friend who sent me the photo at the beginning of the chapter wrote in a message he sent me at the end of that uncannily warm winter:

*This city is weird tonight. Turning into heavy rain and cold but not bitter. Feels like early spring already. But more than that it's a kind of outpouring. All winter felt like a threat unfulfilled but always expected. Now all of a sudden winter seems to have surrendered without firing any kind of real shot. That whip that I've experienced every year of my life like light in the morning just never came for more than a day or two ... [I thought] that tonight a Titan [had] fallen gushing surrender in an early spring rain.*

His body had been anticipating a "shot" or a "whip" of cold but all that energy went unanswered as winter gave way with a "gushing surrender." The early spring felt undeserved and the tension of preparing for harsh conditions was never resolved, leaving him feeling disoriented. Without being reductive and assuming that the capacity of sensation is diminished absolutely we can, and perhaps should, mourn the loss of a particular spectrum of sensation. This loss inevitably changes the way in which we can know the world and be in the world.

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As we enter deeper into the current crisis we become more aware of the climate as a system. Climate is shifting positions from the background where it set the tempo of everyday life to the foreground where it fuels our anxieties. We are becoming increasingly conscious of it precisely because it is ceasing to effectively play its role as temporal regulator. The adage that "climate is what you expect, weather is what you get" is more and more strained. We are accustomed to noticing weather - these observations are the basis of pro forma conversations worldwide - but now these remarks carry with them an anxiety about climate. As Morton puts it: "We can no longer have that reassuringly trivial conversation about the weather with someone in the street, as a way to break the ice or to pass the time. The conversation either trails off into a disturbingly meaningful silence, or somebody mentions global warming." Weather and climate are converging in this new world. Though I agree with Morton's general argument, I think what we are experiencing is climate, rather than weather, "no longer [existing] as a neutral-seeming background against which events take place." As climate forces its way into the foreground and abandons its tempo-setting, metronomic role, our world, and not just the planet, is being shaken.

In the next chapter we will travel to the front lines of the climate crisis and look at the very real impact that climate change is having on belonging and well-being.

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364 Morton, 28.
365 Morton, 28.
Chapter 4

Cautionary Tales from the Front Lines of the Climate Crisis: Case Studies of the Arctic and the Small Island States

_The land has deflated._
- Lukie Airut, *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*

My generation will live on to die on these islands. To see that my grandfather lies peacefully is a wonderful feeling. I definitely don't want to see his grave being washed away. This is us being humans. We have a connection to the past. And we have a hope for the future. And I don't want my children to lose that.
- Mohamed Aslam (Former Minister of Housing and Environment, The Maldives), *The Island President*

We take the ground beneath our feet for granted. It is always there, supporting our steps, our vehicles, our homes. It is so constant that it fades to the background, a simple platform for our lives. Occasionally, however, events push the ground to the fore: an earthquake, a sink hole, severe flooding that turns sewers into two-storey geysers. For a few days or weeks following these events we are more actively conscious of the ground – gingerly avoiding sewer grates as we cross the street or nervously eyeing every pothole. But as the destabilizing event fades away in time our habitual confidence in – and accompanying disregard for – the ground reasserts itself. Like Heidegger's hammer, the ground only appears to us as ground when it is broken. And necessarily so. As the support for every activity – and non-activity – that we engage in it would be

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debilitatingly distracting to be always conscious of the ground. For residents of the Arctic and Small Island States, however, climate change is making this necessarily indifferent relationship increasingly untenable. Melting permafrost and coastal erosion caused by climate change make the stability of the ground – and the homes, roads and lives built on it – a daily concern. In recent years houses, bridges, schools and roads have been lost as a result of the rapidly crumbling and destabilizing earth. The result is not only physical destruction, but also emotional scars and significant disruptions to habits, routines and ways of life. Perhaps most important, however, is the legacy of distrust and even threat from the land that these collapses cause.

At first glance it seems that the Arctic and Small Island States could not be two more different regions. We picture the Arctic as a vast desert of snow and ice, while the Small Island States, largely clustered in the South Pacific and Caribbean, are seen as the stuff of fantasy beach vacations. Yet, despite these differences, the two regions share the dubious distinction of being on the front lines of the climate crisis. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the Arctic is experiencing climate change at twice the rate of the rest of the planet, the low-lying Small Island States are already seeing the effects of sea-level rise, and the two regions are facing similar

\[368\] Situated largely in the South Pacific and Caribbean, the members of the Association of Small Island States are: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cape Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Seychelles, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. (See Alliance of Small Island States, “Members,” accessed January 28, 2014, http://aosis.org/members/)

\[369\] “Average Arctic temperatures have increased at almost twice the global average rate in the past 100 years.” IPCC 2007. Climate change 2007: Synthesis report, 30.
problems as a result of climate change “including the relocation of communities away
from coastal areas due to sea level rise and frequent storm surges, and the human and
economic impacts of changes to the marine resources upon which Arctic and SIDS [small
island developing states] communities depend.”\textsuperscript{370} Importantly, their geologic fates are
also linked. Rising global temperatures are causing Arctic (and Antarctic) glaciers to
melt, which in turn causes sea levels to rise, threatening to swallow up the low-lying
Small Island States.\textsuperscript{372} Recognizing their linked fates, activists in both places have begun
collaborating to incite action to address climate change.\textsuperscript{373} They self-consciously position
themselves as the barometer of climate change, or the canaries in the coal mine giving us
a preview of what awaits the rest of the planet as the climate crisis progresses.\textsuperscript{374} The
activists and politicians from these regions emphasize the (often overlooked) human

\textsuperscript{370} Much of the literature refers exclusively to this smaller subgroup of the Small Island States. As the
majority of Small Island States are also SIDS I will use the two designations interchangeably.

\textsuperscript{371} John Crump and Ilan Kelman, “Many Strong Voices from Arctic and Island Peoples,” in UNESCO,
\textit{Climate Change and Arctic Sustainable Development: Scientific, social, cultural and educational

\textsuperscript{372} The Small Island States are frequently described in this crisis as “sinking,” however this seems an
inappropriate description to me. The problem is not that the islands are plunging towards to ocean bed,
but rather that they are being engulfed by ocean waters. The threat comes from without, not within.
Moreover, describing the islands as being swallowed by the sea fits better with the way that islanders
describe their situation – as a menace from the water. Often this menace is described in agentic terms –
as if the ocean was deliberately bearing down on them.

\textsuperscript{373} See, most notably, the organization Many Strong Voices (www.manystrongvoices.org). This
organization works not only to raise the challenges both regions face, but also avoids framing the
residents as mere victims by stressing the resilience of the populations. For example, they published an
informational booklet entitled \textit{Many Strong Voices – turning vulnerability into strength} that states:
“Although natural and human environments in the two regions differ markedly, the effects of climate
change threaten the ecology, economies, and the social and cultural fabric of both regions posing serious
challenges for their sustainable development. While communities in both regions have adapted to
changing conditions in the past, climate change presents a new and formidable challenge.” “Many

\textsuperscript{374} See Watt-Cloutier, Fenge and Crowley, “Responding to Global Climate Change,” and Sheila Watt-
Cloutier, “Bringing Inuit and Arctic Perspectives to the Global Stage: Lessons and Opportunities,”
auto_slide&ID=264&Lang=En&Parent_ID&current_slide_num
dimensions of climate change, noting that it is not only their natural environment, but also their states, homes, cultures and ways of life that are endangered. For them, the climate crisis represents an existential threat. Rather than speculating about scenarios of long-term projected change, they are grappling with impacts today and asking whether they can survive as states, as people, let alone as land masses.

In this final chapter I will explore the novel threats to home, state and self posed by climate change in the Small Island States and the Arctic. And I will use these two front-line cases to examine how concepts introduced in previous chapters - solastalgia, place-belonging, and the body/self/environment assemblage - are playing out in places experiencing a more advanced stage of the climate crisis.

I

In September 2013 the IPCC published the first findings (The Physical Science Basis) of its newest state of the climate report (Fifth Assessment Report). As was widely expected, the report simply turned up the dial on the urgency of the climate crisis. “High probabilities” became “virtual certainties” and the tipping points loomed ever nearer – if not surpassed already. The Fifth Assessment Report predicts that global surface temperature increase over the 21st century is likely to exceed 1.5°C relative to 1850 to 1900 for all scenarios, likely to exceed 2°C for two, and more likely than not to exceed 2°C for one scenario. This warming will continue under almost all the scenarios beyond
2100. As global temperatures rise through the 21st century, so too will sea levels. Glaciers and ice sheets will melt and the ocean will warm (and hence expand), pushing sea levels above those observed during the period of 1971-2010. Once again, in this report the Small Island States and the Arctic were singled out as being amongst the most vulnerable places on earth. This vulnerability is due not only to the physical and material impacts of climate change, but also to the corollary social, cultural, economic, and, I will argue, affective, impacts. As John Crump and Ilan Kelman, the academic and bureaucratic forces behind the organization Many Strong Voices, argue:

_Societies and livelihoods in both the Arctic and Small Island Developing States are particularly vulnerable to climate change because of their close ties to land and sea environments. While communities in both regions have proven adept at adapting to changing conditions in the past, it is unclear whether or not those experiences and abilities will suffice to deal with ongoing social and environmental changes including climate change._

In the next sections I will look at the pressure that climate change is putting on belonging, the coherence of the self, and the legal and functional viability of the state itself. First, however, it is important to lay out a simple picture of the changes, both those already occurring and that are projected to occur.

In its 2007 Fourth Assessment Report the IPCC found that the characteristics of Small Island States make them especially vulnerable to climate change. The United

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376 IPCC 2013, 18.


378 IPCC 2007, 690.
Nations has noted that the Small Island Developing States share the following characteristics: small size, remotesness, vulnerability to external (demand and supply-side) shocks, narrow resource base, and exposure to global environmental challenges. The Small Island Developing States Network expands the last characteristic into two categories: 1) vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise, with a possible long-term threat to the very existence and viability of some SIDS; and 2) vulnerability to natural and environmental disasters heightened by their location, which exposes them “to the intensity and frequency of natural and environmental disasters and their increasing impact,” which in turn bring about “disproportionately high economic, social and environmental consequences.”

Importantly, as the IPCC notes, these characteristics not only make Small Island States more vulnerable to climate change in the first place, but also limit their capacity “to mitigate and adapt to future climate and sea-level change.”

To understand what this means let us look at a couple examples. Take Tuvalu, one of the more prominent Small Island States. Situated in the South Pacific, halfway between Hawaii and Australia, the country is made up of nine separate coral atolls, for a total territory of 26 square kilometres. Its highest point is only 5m above sea level.

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381 IPCC 2007, 845.

July 2013 the population was counted at 10,698. It is thus a tiny country, both physically and in terms of population. Now, take The Maldives, a country in the Indian Ocean, 340 km Southwest of India. This state is made up of 1,190 coral islands, which are grouped into 26 atolls (if all land forms are included, such as sand banks and reefs exposed only at low tide, the number increases to 2000). Of these islands, 200 are inhabited, with an additional 80 playing host to tourist resorts. The overall area of the country is greater than Tuvalu's, at 298 square kilometres, but its highest elevation is a mere 2.4 metres above sea level. In fact, it is considered the lowest country on earth because its average elevation is only 1.5 meters above sea level and 80% of its territory is less than 1 meter above sea level. In a documentary examining the country's material and political climate change challenges, former President Mohamed Nasheed explained that The Maldives “is a very low-lying country. We do not have even one hill.” It has a population of almost 400,000 with a quarter living on the capital island, Male. Furthermore, 47% of housing in The Maldives lies within 100m of the coastline.

It is clear, then, that in states such as Tuvalu and The Maldives every centimetre

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385 The Island President. Dir. John Shenk. Samuel Goldwyn Films, 2011. The film takes on the aura of a Shakespearean tragedy not only because of the nature of the crisis, but additionally because Mohamed Nasheed – who came to power in 2008 after a 20 year fight to put in place a democratic system in The Maldives – was forced out of office in 2012 in a coup orchestrated by his vice-president and loyalists to the former dictator (including the military). This account by Nasheed and his allies has been contested.


of sea-level rise represents a serious encroachment on their territory. This encroachment is also a broader cause for concern, since the islands are so small that there is no room to relocate their affected populations. In its *Fourth Assessment Report* the IPCC predicted that the “rapid sea-level rise that inundates islands and coastal settlements is likely to limit adaptation possibilities, with potential options being limited to migration.” The forecast has not improved in the ensuing years. Making matters worse, the costs of adapting to climate change in the Small Island States are prohibitively high – especially given that the majority are also developing countries. In The Maldives, for example, the sea wall built around Male, the capital, cost 600 million US dollars – and that is but one of their 2000 islands. The drain on government coffers imposes additional costs in terms of budgeting choices.

The Arctic is about as different a place as one can imagine from the Small Island States. It is a vast, ice-covered desert, surrounded by treeless permafrost. As the polar region at the northernmost part of the Earth, the Arctic consists of the Arctic Ocean and parts of 8 states: Canada, Russia, Denmark (Greenland), Norway, the United States (Alaska), Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. It can be defined as the region where the average temperature for the warmest month (July) is below 10 °C (50°F). The Arctic climate is characterized by a low amount or absence of sunlight in winter and long days during summer. Down south (as most of the world is, in relation to the Arctic) we often think of the Arctic as a vast, empty, frozen land, but it is in fact home to millions of people, and

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388 IPCC 2007, 733.

389 *The Island President.*

has been home to the Indigenous populations living there for thousands of years. Indeed, much of the Arctic has been inhabited since at least the end of the last ice age, and some areas for far longer.\textsuperscript{391} Today, between two and four million Indigenous and non-Indigenous people live in the region.\textsuperscript{392}

In terms of climate change, and in particular its impact on human well-being and place, this region is notable because for the past three decades it has experienced average temperature rise at twice the rate of the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{393} In its \textit{Fourth Assessment Report} the IPCC found that some regions of the Arctic “have shown the most rapid rates of warming in recent years.”\textsuperscript{394} Warming occurs more quickly here for five reasons. First, reflectivity, meaning that “[a]s snow and ice melt, darker land and ocean surfaces absorb more solar energy.” Second, “[m]ore of the extra trapped energy goes directly into warming rather than into evaporation.” Third, the “atmospheric layer that has to warm in order to warm the surface is shallower in the Arctic.” Fourth, “[a]s sea ice retreats, solar heat absorbed by the oceans in summer is more easily transferred to the atmosphere in winter.” And finally, “[a]lteration in atmospheric and oceanic circulation can increase warming.”\textsuperscript{395} The reality of this faster warming means that residents in the Arctic are already acutely aware of the impact that climate change is having – on their homes, ways of life, knowledge of their environment and vision of the future. Paralleling a strategy

\textsuperscript{391} ACIA, 62.

\textsuperscript{392} ACIA, 1000.


\textsuperscript{394} IPCC 2007, 655.

\textsuperscript{395} ACIA, “Impacts of a Warming Arctic,” 15.
adopted by the Small Island States, Arctic activists point to their more advanced stage of the climate crisis as a warning to the rest of the world. Describing their home as “a barometer of the globe's environmental health” and themselves (specifically the Inuit) as “the mercury in the barometer” they mobilize the image of the world's future in order to draw our gaze north to their predicament.

One notable impact of this warming in the Arctic has been the influx of new plant and animal species. In 2002 the Inuvialuit in Sachs Harbour, North West Territories, reported an invasion of “new species of birds, ducks, and fish.” Similarly, robins, a bird species so unknown in the region there is no word for it in Inuktitut, have been spotted. Plant species have also been moving north as warming has made conditions more hospitable for them. The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) predicted that this change in vegetation will only increase. The northward creep of plant and animal species are a result, according to the now famous climatologist, James Hansen, of slow feedbacks. These feedbacks gradually amplify an initial temperature change, thus accelerating the warming of the climate. The northward migration of vegetation

396 Watt-Cloutier, Fenge and Crowley.

397 Watt-Cloutier, Fenge and Crowley. These species were identified as barn owls, mallard and pin-tail ducks, and salmon.


399 “Climate change is projected to cause vegetation shifts because rising temperatures favor taller, denser vegetation, and will thus promote the expansion of forests into the arctic tundra, and tundra into the polar deserts. ... These vegetation changes, along with rising sea levels, are projected to shrink tundra area to its lowest extent in at least the past 21000 years, greatly reducing the breeding area for many birds and the grazing areas for land animals that depend on the open landscape of tundra and polar desert habitats. Not only are some threatened species very likely to become extinct, some currently widespread species are projected to decline sharply.” ACIA, Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, 10.

constitutes a dangerous slow feedback because “[e]xpanding vegetation, darker than tundra, absorbs sunlight and warms the environment.” This in turn causes the tundra (or, permafrost) to melt, releasing methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. The northward expansion of vegetation and melting permafrost also constitute what Thomas Homer-Dixon calls a positive feedback, that is “a causal cycle – essentially a vicious circle – in which warming causes a series of changes that reinforce warming.”

Melting permafrost is another worrisome positive feedback occurring in the Arctic. Permafrost is “ground that remains frozen for longer than two consecutive years, and it may or may not contain significant amounts of ice. ... [and] is generally thicker and colder as you move further north.” The top layer of permafrost is called the “active layer” and it “rises above 0°C for part of the year and undergoes annual cycles of freezing and thawing. As ground temperatures rise, the active layer thickens and the permafrost below thins.” Importantly, permafrost contains carbon deposits which are released as it melts. Homer-Dixon classes melting permafrost as a positive feedback on the carbon cycle, and a particularly dangerous one that “could literally be [a deal-breaker] for humanity. We may be quite close to creating circumstances in which the biosphere releases enormous quantities of carbon into the atmosphere. At that point, global-

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401 Hansen, 8.
402 Hansen, 8.
warming could become its own cause, and it wouldn't really matter what we do in terms of mitigating our emissions of carbon dioxide – the global ecosystem would take over.\(^{406}\)

Melting permafrost is clearly a concern for the planet as a whole, but in the Arctic it is already having immediate and concrete consequences. The homes and communities of the people living in the Arctic are often built on permafrost,\(^{407}\) so that as it melts their homes, roads, schools, bridges and other essential constructions are literally being destabilized. Melting permafrost leads to slumping and landslides,\(^{408}\) both of which can be destructive for buildings and infrastructure, and devastating for affected communities.\(^{409}\) Building on permafrost was long considered safe, so long as proper engineering techniques were employed. As temperatures warm and permafrost melts,

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\(^{406}\) Homer-Dixon, 38. This puts us at a tipping point: “We are at the tipping point because the climate state includes large, ready positive feedbacks provided by the Arctic sea ice, the West Antarctic ice sheet, and much of Greenland’s ice. Little additional forcing is needed to trigger these feedbacks and magnify global warming. If we go over the edge, we will transition to an environment far outside the range that has been experienced by humanity, and there will be no return within any foreseeable future generation.” Hansen, 9.


\(^{408}\) “Potential slumping and landslides are hard to detect. Even shallow slopes can be vulnerable, making it difficult to find suitable sites for building. Wrong decisions about siting can be costly, affecting buildings, roads, utility poles and pipes.” Natural Resources Canada, 4.

\(^{409}\) “In 2013, new record high temperatures at 20 m depth were measured at two northernmost permafrost observatories on the North Slope of Alaska, in the Brooks Range, Alaska, and in the High Canadian Arctic, where measurements began in the late 1970s. During the last fifteen years (1998-2012), active-layer thickness has increased in the Russian European North, northern East Siberia and Chukotka. In 2012 in west Siberia, the active-layer thickness was the greatest observed since 1996, and in the Russian European North it was the greatest observed since measurements began in 1998.” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Department of Commerce. Arctic Report Card 2013. M. O. Jeffries, J. A. Richter-Menge, and J. E. Overland, eds, http://www.arctic.noaa.gov/reportcard, 131.
however, this is no longer the case.\textsuperscript{410} For example, the thousand person community of Salluit in Nunavik, the extreme north of Quebec, has seen “damaged buildings, roads and embankments, and the relocation of 20 new homes from unstable land.”\textsuperscript{411} Much of this damage has been caused by a series of landslides that has been occurring since 1998.\textsuperscript{412} These landslides have forced the temporary closure of the airport road and the relocation of twenty homes.\textsuperscript{413} Making matters worse, the population is expanding, meaning more housing, infrastructure and other construction is required, yet there is little suitable land available for expansion.\textsuperscript{414} Given the grim predictions, Salluit, like other Arctic communities, now faces a dilemma: continue spending vast sums to repair, replace and relocate damaged buildings and infrastructure or relocate the entire community.

Finally, in parallel with their improbable tropical twins, some Arctic communities are threatened by sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Like permafrost thaw, coastal erosion is a serious problem because it threatens: “homes, subsistence sites, schools, airports, roads, fuel tanks, graveyards, other infrastructure and even the lives of hunters and travellers in communities.”\textsuperscript{415} In March 2009 the US Army Corps of Engineers completed a Baseline Erosion Assessment study that identified 26 communities in Alaska as

\textsuperscript{410} “Engineering and construction techniques for building on permafrost have been in place for some time and, until recently, permafrost has typically been considered a sound substrate for construction when appropriate engineering practices are applied. More recently, there has been evidence of permafrost degradation and soil failure related not to poor engineering practices, but to rising temperatures.” Natural Resources Canada, 2.

\textsuperscript{411} Natural Resources Canada. 1.

\textsuperscript{412} See Polak & Natural Resources Canada.

\textsuperscript{413} Polak.

\textsuperscript{414} Natural Resources Canada, 1.

\textsuperscript{415} Sharon E. McClintock. “Coastal and Riverine Erosion Challenges: Alaskan Villages' Sustainability.” in UNESCO, 123.
“priority-action communities,” meaning that as a result of coastal erosion (and the threat of more erosion) they required immediate and substantial help. The communities of Shishmaref and Kivalina are probably the best known of these cases. Shishmaref is located on Sarichef Island, one of a chain of islands all experiencing erosion. The sandy shore face, permafrost degradation and the acceleration impact of the infrastructure itself all make Sarichef and hence Shishmaref especially vulnerable. The coastal erosion is due in part to the disappearance of sea ice that once protected the banks of the island because its “absence allows powerful waves to undercut the banks already weakened by melting permafrost. The resulting erosion forces houses to be continually evacuated.”

Kivalina, a 400-person Inupiat community situated 120 miles north of the Arctic Circle on the tip of a thin barrier reef island, is eroding at an astoundingly fast rate: the “island has shrunk from 54 acres in 1953 to 27 acres in 2009.” The damage to the village was so great that the community voted in 1992 to relocate. Without help from government, however, the town was unable to undertake the costly move. In the interim, the town's predicament has only got worse. In 2006 the US Army Corps of Engineers deemed the situation dire and determined that the entire town needed to be

416 McClintock, 121.


418 McClintock, 123.

419 McClintock, 126.


421 Sharon McClintock points out that the “repeal of Section 117 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act (Omnibus Appropriations Act 2009, PL 11-8) which provided flooding and erosion funding to villages through the COE has struck a hard blow to village erosion prevention efforts. The act took away the COE's authority to fully pay for erosion or relocation projects with federal dollars.” UNESCO, 122.
relocated, at an estimated cost of USD $100-400 million.\textsuperscript{422} Still not having received sufficient aid to relocate, Kivalina filed a legal claim in 2008 against oil, electricity, and coal companies arguing that they constituted significant contributors of greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating global warming and in turn the erosion of Kivalina.\textsuperscript{423} The legal case claimed that these companies were a public nuisance under federal and state law and that they had engaged in a conspiracy to deceive the public about climate change.\textsuperscript{424} Kivalina sought damages of USD$400 million in order to cover the cost of relocation.\textsuperscript{425} Finding that climate change was too ubiquitous to be "fairly traceable" to the defendants' emissions the court denied the legal standing of the case.\textsuperscript{426} Kivalina appealed, but in September 2012 the appellate court decided not to reinstate the case.\textsuperscript{427} The legal avenues have now been exhausted for Kivalina, but the erosion continues and the town and its population remain in danger.

Coastal erosion, melting permafrost, encroaching plant and animal species, and sea ice change profoundly alter not only the nature of the land in the Arctic, but also its continuing viability as the ground for human settlement, for human homes. The next two sections will look at how these changes may be distressing, painful, and possibly even traumatic for residents.

\textsuperscript{422} Shearer, 115.

\textsuperscript{423} Shearer, 116.

\textsuperscript{424} Shearer, 116-117.

\textsuperscript{425} Shearer, 117.

\textsuperscript{426} Shearer, 122.

In both the Small Island States and in the Arctic the profound – even existential – threat posed by climate change is already being felt. This has had an impact not only on political action and government mitigation and adaptation strategies, but also, importantly, on residents’ sense of place-belonging. In both regions the dangers wrought by climate change have transformed the solace that place can provide (see Chapter 2) into an underlying and ongoing anxiety.

One way that this anxiety becomes apparent is in first-hand accounts from residents of both places that frequently personify the land and, especially, the ocean as a threatening force. This is not in and of itself new, but the way that the threat is expressed demonstrates the constant stress experienced by people in these regions. For example, in one of the “Portraits of Resilience” done for the organization Many Strong Voices, Renee Kuzuguk of Shishmaref describes her town's newly built sea wall as necessary because “the ocean was eating too much land.” The “eating” metaphor continues: “erosion eats our Island and we have less land. Erosion happens from our ocean. The ocean takes away from our Island. [emphasis added]” The use of “our” to describe the island on which Shishmaref is situated and the ocean itself demonstrates both the sense of personal attack and betrayal that is felt by these residents. The ocean that was once with them and part of their home has turned against them and targeted their home. In Kivalina there is a similar

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feeling of being under attack. Here it seems that residents experience the threat as a form of collusion among weather, land and ocean trapping them in a precarious position:

Due to the lack of ice formation along the shores of Kivalina, by October 2004 the land began falling. What had once been a normal occurrence of annual fall sea storms became a life-threatening event. As the stormy days progressed, the people became concerned over the amount of land falling into the ocean. The island seemed to be falling apart and disappearing into the Chukchi Sea before the very eyes of its inhabitants. Volunteers from the village began to work feverishly to hold the island together but every effort, every object placed along the edges, was being sucked into the angry sea. The volunteers worked through the pitch darkness of the cold fall night about the Arctic Circle trying to save the people of Kivalina and the island. Evacuation by air was not an option because of the weather conditions and because the village was surrounded by the rough waters of the sea storm. This meant evacuation was also not an option by boat to the mainland. There was nowhere to go and nothing the volunteers did worked to keep the island together – the people were trapped! [emphasis added]

In Kivalina and Shishmaref the threat from the land and ocean is felt as imminent and existential – much as it is in the Small Island States. As tiny islands, these two Arctic communities share many of the characteristics, constraints and challenges of their Southern cousins.

Elsewhere in the Arctic the feeling of being under attack is quite different. As the earlier discussion of permafrost melt hinted, instability and wariness towards the ground is being felt in communities and homes across the Arctic. The impact of permafrost melt was particularly dramatic – and illustrative of the panoply of damages it causes – in the community of Pangnirtung, Nunavut. In June of 2008 the combination of melting permafrost and river surge eroded the Duvall River banks (carving a 10-metre channel

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429 Kivalina Tribal Administrator Colleen Swan, quoted in Shearer, 100.
through the permafrost and down to the bedrock\textsuperscript{430}, dislodged the two bridges, threatened numerous homes, and cut residents on either side of the river off from each other and from services for several weeks. The municipality declared a state of emergency because “the hamlet's 1,325 residents had no access to the water reservoir, sewage treatment plant and garbage dump. They were forced to dump raw sewage into the river, which flows into the pristine waters of the Pangnirtung Fiord.”\textsuperscript{431} The incident left deep physical scars and required costly repairs.\textsuperscript{432} As with any disaster, this one created emotional upheaval. As one resident put it, simply: “Pangnirtung was really a hard place to be in those days.”\textsuperscript{433} But the incident also represented a watershed moment. Seeing and experiencing the physical damage residents understood that the nature of the land had changed and that their place on it had become newly precarious. Evie Anilnilliak, a resident of Pangnirtung, expressed these new-found anxieties in the film *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*: “It was obvious when the river burst. You could see exposed permafrost. The earth was collapsing into the river. I worry, thinking if it all melts, will we have any land left?” For Anilnilliak, as for others in Pangnirtung, it is hard to derive a sustained solace from place when she is constantly worried that it might collapse beneath her.


\textsuperscript{431} “Pangnirtung flood damage extensive: Nunavut minister.”

\textsuperscript{432} At the time the government of Nunavut pledged over CDN $500 000 in aid to the community. “Pangnirtung flood damage extensive: Nunavut minister.”

Climate change is also importantly affecting place-belonging in the Arctic by undermining the intelligibility of the local environment. Like permafrost melt, this has both practical and affective consequences. In the last chapter I looked at the solastalgia being created by the changes in weather and seasonality brought about by climate change. This sentiment is arguably manifesting in the Arctic in response to the material changes to the environment, especially when those changes alter the way that the local environment can be read. This may be in part because reading the land, weather and climate is crucial to survival in this region. The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment noted the importance of being able to decipher the environment in this region:

"Successful traveling and living in a cold-dominated landscape requires the ability to read subtle signs in the ice, snow, and weather. ... The ability to thrive in the Arctic depends in large part on the ability to anticipate and respond to dangers, risks, opportunities, and change. Knowing where caribou are likely to be is as important as knowing how to stalk them. Sensing when sea ice is safe enough for travel is an essential part of bringing home a seal. The accuracy and reliability of this knowledge has been repeatedly subjected to the harshest test as people's lives have depended on decisions made on the basis of their understanding of the environment. Mistakes can lead to death, even for those with great experience. Thus, information of particular relevance to survival has been valued and refined through countless generations, as individuals combine the lessons of their elders with personal experience."^434

Changes to the environment and to the weather and season can throw off these finely honed observations. Hunters have already begun noticing changes and have stopped trusting once reliable environmental signals. For example, tongue drifts (snow formations caused by wind direction) no longer provide the navigational assistance they once did.

Two hunters interviewed in the documentary *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* observe:

> There's hardly any tongue drifts these days. Tongue drifts are directional markers used for travel. They are formed by the north wind, which has changed. I learned to observe the ground if stars are not visible. [...] Our world has changed – land, sky and environment.\(^{435}\)

> Tongue drifts now point a different direction. When moving east, we crossed them sideways. Today, heading east, we go with the drifts. The shifting wind has caused this.\(^{436}\)

The challenge to their well-developed ways of reading their environment is causing Inuit hunters to feel unsafe and anxious.\(^{437}\) Shari Fox notes that “even well-tested skills of elders [...] can be rendered useless under the impacts of some recent environmental changes.”\(^{438}\) As a consequence, one elder reported to Fox that she is “now bringing almost everything with her on hunting trips because she is not sure if the weather will trap her out on the land.”\(^{439}\) Others have fallen through the ice, no longer able to gauge its thickness. Not only does the land now pose the threat of trapping hunters, the once reliable ice now endangers them by unexpectedly giving way. These changes begin to chip away at the sense of security – or at least their knowledge of when they are secure – on the land.

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\(^{435}\) Samueli Ammaq in *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*.

\(^{436}\) Herve Paniaq in *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*.

\(^{437}\) Aqqaluk Lynge, the president of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (Greenland) remarked that “Many [Inuit hunters] say their traditional knowledge is not as reliable as it was in the past for predicting safe ice conditions. This is a great source of anxiety for Inuit hunters.” Aqqaluk Lynge. “Facing the Impact of Global Climate Change: Recommendations from the Arctic.” in UNESCO, 106.

\(^{438}\) Fox, 135.

\(^{439}\) Fox, 135.
It is important to note that these changes represent a serious threat because in the Arctic, especially in rural communities, hunting remains critical to good nourishment. According to the ACIA: “Rural arctic residents in small, isolated communities with a fragile system of support, little infrastructure, and marginal or non-existent public health systems appear to be most vulnerable. People who depend upon subsistence hunting and fishing, especially those who rely on just a few species, will be vulnerable to changes that heavily affect those species.” This is in part because a trip to the grocery store in Northern communities is not a habitual chore, but a serious financial investment and a matter of difficult decisions. Basic staples in the North can be prohibitively expensive. For example, four litres of milk that cost CDN$4.40 in Ottawa cost CDN$10.39 in the Arctic city of Iqaluit, Nunavut and CDN $12.99 in the more remote community of Pond Inlet. The discrepancies become even greater with apples (a five pound bag costs CDN $3.28 in Ottawa, CDN$8.79 in Iqaluit and CDN$15.18 in Clyde River) and astronomical for a 24-can case of pop (CDN$5.97 in Ottawa, CDN$35.98 in Iqaluit and an unbelievable CDN$160.00 in Grise Fiord, Nunavut). Given these costs the food acquired through hunting is clearly indispensable as it allows Northern residents to stretch their food budget and eat nutritiously. Watt-Cloutier, Fenge and Crowley argue that in “a part of the world in which wage-paying jobs are scarce and imported food is

\[\text{ACIA, Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, 13.}\]

\[\text{“FAQ- How big is the price gap?,” accessed February 8, 2014, http://www.feedingmyfamily.org/index.php/faqs/item/92-how-big-is-the-price-gap? For a powerful illustration of the enormous price discrepancies for basic goods, see the photo gallery at the Northern food security advocacy group Feeding My Family website, which catalogues the prices of products familiar from our own grocery stores: http://www.feedingmyfamily.org/index.php/photo-gallery. For American readers, “pop” is the Canadian term for your “soda.”}\]
expensive, often exorbitant, highly nutritious country food [i.e. food acquired through hunting] shared with friends and relatives epitomizes what it means to be Inuit.”

Finally, the physical changes in the environment are also causing a deep nostalgia among residents. Perhaps most notable is the loss of the glaciers. These formidable fixtures of the landscape are melting, to the point of disappearing entirely in some cases. Even in Auyuittuq - “the land that never melts” - the glaciers are melting. Some of these glaciers have melted in a very short period of time, leaving a gaping hole in the landscape for local residents: “Ten years ago, it was very hot, everything melted. For two straight weeks it was +35 Celsius. For the first time we were in shorts, with no tops, working outside. During that period, most of the glaciers melted, and now they keep melting, since that time it was +35 outside. There are only a few glaciers left.”

Elisapee Ishulutaq, a resident of Pangnirtung, remarks in *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* on the loss of the glaciers with a real tone of grief: “Those beautiful glaciers, it seemed they would never melt. But they've mostly disappeared. We used to get ice from nearby glaciers for drinking water. All the glaciers by the shore are now gone.” The pain she feels at this loss is visible on her face as she speaks these words.

If we recall that place-belonging implies an intimacy with place such that the latter becomes like an extension of the body (see Chapter 2) it is perhaps clearer that these large scale changes to place (physical, material/climatic and biological) can be

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442 Watt-Cloutier, Fenge and Crowley.


444 Simon Idlout in *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*.

445 Elisapee Ishulutaq in *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*.
devastating. Indeed, we might say that they are experienced in much the same way that a bodily injury is experienced. Anyone who has had a serious injury knows that, beyond the physical pain and discomfort, there are also a series of emotions to be contended with: anger, sorrow, frustration, and even despair. Moreover, physical injury can also have a serious impact on mental health and well-being.\textsuperscript{446} Glenn Albrecht acknowledges the close link between body, place and mental well-being when he notes that changes to place can engender what he terms “psychoterratic” illness.\textsuperscript{447} He speculates that “internal physical environments (the body), internal mental environments (the mind) and external environments (changing and polluted ecosystems) might be caught in an escalating cycle of stress.”\textsuperscript{448} Solastalgia, the name given to the syndrome explored in the last chapter of feeling homeless in one’s home as a result of destructive changes to the local environment, is but one of a series of possible psychoterratic illnesses that he identifies, along with ecoanxiety, ecoparalysis and econostalgia.\textsuperscript{449} Some of the observations made by sufferers and related by Albrecht illustrate the close connection between body and place. He points, for example, to a Haida chief in British Columbia who found, when he came across a recently clear-cut forest, that he could not breathe.\textsuperscript{450} The destruction of


\textsuperscript{447} “As we carefully examine the responses to changing home environments, a range of ‘psychoterratic’ or earth-related mental health syndromes are thus revealed.” Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change,” 48.

\textsuperscript{448} Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change,” 48.

\textsuperscript{449} Albrecht, “Chronic Environmental Change,” 48.

\textsuperscript{450} Albrecht. “Solastalgia and the Creation of New Ways of Life,” 221.
this patch of forest, which he compares to losing a child and describes as being "as if the land had been skinned of life," is experienced physiologically. As place is an extension of the body, the violence done to it is also violence done to the body and felt by the body. The rapid disappearance of local glaciers, or the sudden slumping of land, landslides or break-off caused by permafrost melt and coastal erosion may similarly be experienced as a form of bodily violence. These events, and the sense of uncertainty and anxiety that follows them, create a sense of betrayal akin to that felt towards an injured or sick body that is no longer able to function or perform as we have come to expect.

III

This discussion of the physiological impacts of the damage done to place recalls the argument in the first chapter about the close connection among the material environment, the body and the self. These impacts are importantly different from the existential threat experienced by residents in these front-line communities. They are bodily and felt in the here and now, involving residents viscerally in the climate crisis. Revisiting the idea of the body/self/environment assemblage – and specifically its articulation by Herder and Ahmed – will help us to understand the stress being placed on this relationship by climate change.

In the first chapter we saw that for Herder the body is conditioned by its environment, is imbricated with land and has inclinations generated by climate. Just as importantly, the body and self are not separate because – as with the body – land and climate play a role in constructing the self. Indeed, climate and land play such an
important role in constituting both the body and the self that Herder felt that there is a material *right fit* for individuals and human groups. We saw how important Herder considered this right fit to be when he argued that to lose it or to be deprived of it could destroy the affected person. Interestingly, one example that he cites to make this case is that of Greenlanders displaced to Denmark who failed to thrive in their new environment.\(^{451}\) This example hinges on the displaced Greenlanders' loss of their Arctic landscape and climate. While Herder's example clearly involved a physical migration, we can nonetheless draw parallels with the experience of Arctic residents living through climate change today. The rise in temperature, the change in landscape (loss of glaciers, coastal erosion, landslides caused by melting permafrost) and the arrival of new plant and animal species together constitute extensive alterations on par with those implicated in a physical migration. In the climate change case the residents stay put while their world changes around them, but what is important on a Herderian account is that the body/self/environment fit is no longer right. Moreover, the fit cannot be reestablished, since the land and climate that match the body and self no longer exist or are changing at a tempo too fast for existential or psychological adaptation. The destruction of the place to which Arctic residents feel a sense of attachment and belonging causes, then, not only a feeling of bodily harm but also harm to the self.

One bodily capacity that is greatly affected, but largely overlooked, by climate change is that of feeling or sensation. This is the case in terms of the parameters of what this capacity encounters and thus the habits and expectations that it engenders. Sensation

\(^{451}\) Berlin, 177.
is the capacity that Herder points to as the fundamental mediator between the body (and thus, by extension, the self) and land and climate.\textsuperscript{452} As we saw in the first chapter, sensation is also something that Ahmed points to as crucial to the experience of belonging and migration. Sensation is the capacity through which "the subject and space leak into each other, inhabit each other."\textsuperscript{453} It is the mediator of inter-embodiment, especially important if we open up Ahmed's concept to nonhuman bodies, as I argued we should. The importance of this capacity comes to the fore in moments of disruption, such as migration, which are telegraphed by disjunctures in sensation. Once again, the sensorial disruptions being caused by climate change in the Arctic are akin to those experienced by migrants. Some sensorial experiences are disappearing while new ones are emerging. For example, in 2007 when Jack Layton, then leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, travelled to the community of Pangnirtung, Nunavut, he asked an elder and Parks Canada employee who had worked in the Auyuittuq National Park for over 30 years to describe the biggest change the man had noticed in his community. The answer was "green." There had never been any green on the slopes

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Jack Layton (R) speaking to Pangnirtung elder and Parks Canada official. The line of encroaching green is clearly visible on the mountain behind. Photo by Dave Weatherall. 2007.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{452} "But how different is this sense, according as it is modified by the way of life, climate, application, exercise, and native irritability of the body!" Herder, \textit{Reflections}, 34-5.

\textsuperscript{453} Ahmed, "Home and Away," 340.
surrounding the fjords. Now this colour was clearly visible. The new plants invading from the south had introduced a new colour into the local landscape. The visual field of his home had thus been altered profoundly. Just as Ahmed described the unfamiliar smells and sounds of her new post-migration home as a bodily reminder of her alienation, the intruding colour in Pangnirtung is a sight that acted as a similar source of alienation for Jack’s guide.

Similarly, Arctic residents have begun experiencing intense heat for the first time. This heat has simultaneously introduced new bodily experiences and changes to the environment. Though some observations of the changing temperatures can sound like hackneyed "when I was your age" reflections, there have been genuine changes. These changes have meant not only new encounters with heat, but also fewer and fewer encounters with extreme cold. This is particularly significant since the latter feeling has long been a foundational one in the Far North. Climate activists in the North have seized on the loss of cold in particular and have begun articulating their plight in terms of a “right to be cold.” On a practical, biological level cold is necessary for the functioning of Arctic ecologies. But these ecologies are the basis of human adaptation to the

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454 Jack Layton and Dave Weatherall, personal communication with the author, 2007. The photograph above was taken by Dave Weatherall during this conversation.

455 "I cannot say it's cold anymore. You younger generations think it's cold, you think you know cold. Well it used to be really cold in the past. We'd freeze our faces and wouldn't stop hunting. That was the only way to survive." Inusiq Nashalik in Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change.

456 IPCC 2013, 15.
environment, making the loss of cold not only an ecological, but also a cultural issue.\textsuperscript{457} Sheila Watt-Cloutier argues that: "What is happening affects virtually every facet of Inuit life, we are a people of the land, ice, snow, and animals. Our hunting culture thrives on the cold. We need it to be cold to maintain our culture and way of life. Climate change has become the ultimate threat to Inuit culture."\textsuperscript{458} Ways of life, and ways of understanding and being in the world that have grown up around cold are all put at risk by this climate warming. Indeed, the perceived danger is so great that the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) decided to make the human rights case not only discursively, but also legally. In 2005 the ICC submitted a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights with the claim that, as the source of approximately 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, the United States was violating the Inuit's human rights, as detailed in the 1948 Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man.\textsuperscript{459} Specifically, they claimed that the warming climate violated six rights: the right to life and physical security; the right to personal property; the right to health; the right to practice their culture; the right to use land traditionally used and occupied; and the right to the means of subsistence.\textsuperscript{460} The ICC asked the Commission to recommend that the United States:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item To Arctic Indigenous peoples climate change is a cultural issue. We have survived in a harsh environment for thousands of years by listening to its cadence and adjusting to its rhythms. We are part of the environment and if, as a result of global climate change, the species of animals upon which we depend are greatly reduced in number or location or even disappear, we, as peoples would also become endangered as well." Watt-Cloutier, Fenge, Crowley, 5.
\item Watt-Cloutier, “The Climate Change Petition.”
\item Watt-Cloutier, “The Climate Change Petition.”
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
• Adopt mandatory measures to limit its emissions of greenhouse gases in cooperation with the community of nations;
• Take into account the impact of US greenhouse gas emissions on the Arctic and Inuit before approving all major government actions;
• In consultation with Inuit, develop a plan to protect Inuit culture and the Arctic environment and mitigate any harm caused by US greenhouse gas emissions; and
• In co-operation with Inuit, develop a plan to help Inuit adapt to unavoidable climate change impacts.\textsuperscript{461}

Like the Kivalina case, this one was rejected by the Commission in 2006. Though the legal case failed, the framing of the impact of climate change in the Arctic as a threat to human rights might be seen as a shrewd political move – mustering moral sympathy and attention through the deployment of a familiar category. But this is not the only thing going on here. It is also a genuine grasping for a tool to express how profoundly, urgently and catastrophically the changes are being felt by Arctic residents. Indeed, even though their legal case failed, Inuit activists have continued to use the framing of “a right to be cold.”\textsuperscript{462}

The impact on sensation in the Arctic is not only significant for narrative or legal reasons. There is also something meaningful in the loss of experience itself. With the disappearance of extreme cold there is a register of human sensation that will no longer be employed. While this does not necessarily represent a narrowing of feeling per se – as the climate warms new sensations will be added on the warm end of the spectrum – it does mean that a certain knowledge of the world and of bodily capacity will be lost. As Adam Gopnik remarked regarding the eventual disappearance of winter (see Chapter 3),

\textsuperscript{461} Watt-Cloutier, “The Climate Change Petition.”

\textsuperscript{462} Sheila Watt-Cloutier has a forthcoming book entitled The Right to be Cold: One Woman's Story of Protecting her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet.
the loss itself is worth mourning. Bearing in mind the close connection among body, land/
climate and self, we should recognize that it also represents an ontological loss. Material
conditions that contribute to the construction of selves are simply no longer available,
meaning possible formations and evolutions are cut off.

By returning to Herder and Ahmed and looking closely at sensation we can see
how, in the Arctic, climate change is undoing the body/self/land/climate assemblage. The
same thing is likely happening in the Small Island States, but these countries face yet
another, novel, problem to which we will turn our attention now: climate change induced
statelessness.

IV

Small size, low elevation and location have all become imperilling characteristics for the
Small Island States as climate change causes sea levels to rise higher and higher. On these
islands, however, it is not just the nature of place and home that is put in danger, but their
very continued existence as states. Indeed, acknowledging this existential threat, the
Alliance of Small Island States crafted a declaration at their 2009 meeting in New York
stating that it is “gravely concerned that climate change poses the most serious threat to
our survival and viability, and, that it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable
development goals and threatens our very existence.” Echoing these concerns, the
Alliance adopted, at the same meeting, the motto (and accompanying campaign) “1.5°C

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463 Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. “Alliance of Small Island States Declaration on
documents/1566AOSISSummitDeclarationSept21FINAL.pdf
to stay alive!” Launched in anticipation of the 2009 climate conference in Copenhagen, the plea to keep warming below 1.5°C already seems a quixotic quest. Yet, perhaps because the stakes are so high, these states continue to push for climate action on a global scale. Their efforts, and the unique predicament they face, have increasingly drawn the attention of international agencies and legal scholars. In this final section, I will review the Small Island States' strategies and the implications of the legal and theoretical debates that have arisen from the novel form of statelessness their populations face.

The Small Island States' approach to climate change has two prongs. The first is negotiation and adaptation. Banding together and leveraging the empathy and moral sympathy of other states and populations (like the Arctic “right to be cold” framing), the states have tried to push the big emitters to curb their carbon outputs. The New York Declaration and the “1.5 to stay alive” campaign are examples of this approach. As part of their awareness-raising tactics the states have employed attention-grabbing media stunts – such as the well-publicized Maldivian underwater cabinet meeting. In speeches and other public appearances the spokespeople for these states emphasize the connection between the world's (primarily, the developed world's) energy consumption and its impact on their homes. In other words, they engage in awareness-building and shaming. For example, speaking to the UN in New York, then Maldivian president Nasheed told the assembled representatives (and global media):

464 “The ’1.5 to stay alive campaign’ was launched by AOSIS earlier this year and gained momentum at the New York meeting on climate change in September. There is now even a Caribbean song, and badges, t-shirts and stickers to raise awareness of the plight of small island and low lying states.” “Hot from the ’1.5 to survive' camp at COP15,” accessed January 31, 2014, http://blogs.dfid.gov.uk/2009/12/hot-from-the-1-5-to-survive-camp-at-cop15/#sthash.1veMyQ6q.dpuf.

If we can't stop the seas rising, global warming will destroy The Maldives. ... The threats posed to The Maldives from climate change are well known. Weather events will make it harder and harder to govern the country until a point reaches when we must consider abandoning our homeland. We in The Maldives desperately want to believe that one day our words will have an effect. And so, we continue to shout them, even though, deep down, we know that you are not really listening.\footnote{The Island President.}

As part of this strategy, like their Northern cousins, the Small Island States attempt to reframe climate change as an issue of human rights, with culture being put at risk.\footnote{During an interview in the lead up to Copenhagen Nasheed argues: “it's a human right. I mean, come on, we cannot not talk about our existence as a country. We've been there for the last 3000 years. We have a culture. We have a language. We have a civilization. ... If we can't come up with this understanding [at Copenhagen] then, you know, God help us.” \textit{The Island President.}} Again like the Arctic activists, the Small Island States adroitly position themselves as a sort of ghost-of-the-planet-to-come, a warning to the rest of the world of the fate that awaits us. In a speech to the UK Parliament, Nasheed stated: “If you can't defend The Maldives today, you can't defend England tomorrow.”\footnote{The Island President.} Our fate is linked to theirs. To save ourselves we must save the Small Island States.

The second, and reluctant, part of the Small Island States' approach to the climate crisis is their preparation for mass evacuation and the abandoning of their drowning homes. In the 1990s, already aware of the existential danger posed to its state by climate change, the government of Tuvalu came up with a plan to buy 2,000 acres of land in Fiji in order to re-establish its own state. This plan was, however, dramatically halted by the Fijian coup in 2000 and subsequent tensions in the country.\footnote{Rachel Morris, “What Happens When Your Country Drowns?,” \textit{Mother Jones}. November/December 2009.} Similarly, under President
Nasheed The Maldives began negotiating with Sri Lanka and Australia to purchase parcels of land for its citizens. These efforts are being undertaken by the Small Island States in anticipation of a time when their homes will either have disappeared or will have been made uninhabitable (e.g. due to frequent flooding, water salination, or erosion). The effort to acquire territory elsewhere is an attempt to soften the blow of becoming “climate change refugees.”

The notion of “climate change” or “environmental” refugee is a new and increasingly preponderant one. Journalists and advocates stumble over each other claiming to have identified the first climate change refugees: in the Carteret Islands, in the Alaskan villages of Shishmaref, Kivalina and Newtok, in Kiribati. Often these labels are blatantly erroneous. The affected populations in the Carteret Island and in Alaska, for example, have relocated or are in the process of relocating to other sites within the same country. They thus fail to fulfill a core element of the definition of


“refugee.” Nonetheless, the term clearly hits an emotional chord. Perhaps for this reason, though “the use of the term environmental or climate change ‘refugee,’ ... is widely employed [it] raises many objections due to its encroachment on the term commonly used and legally defined in the Refugee Convention of 1951 for the classification of refugees from violence and political intimidation.” Advocates consider the quick resolution of these debates to be vital as there already exist several million who could be described as environmental migrants. These numbers are predicted to increase to the tens of millions in the next 20 years and to the hundreds of millions within 50 years. Among the regions most likely to experience environmental emigration are the Sahel belt, the Bay of Bengal, dry land South and Central America, and Central Asia.

The Small Island States also make this list, but they are remarkable because they face the unique problem that climate change may eliminate the entire territory of their states. There is now an emerging consensus that without immediate action or creative solutions the entire populations of these Small Island States could find themselves stateless in the near future. If the debates around the legal definition of environmental

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476 Morton, Boncour and Laczko, 6.

477 Morton, Boncour and Laczko, 6.

migrants or refugees are not resolved those forced to flee these islands could also find that they fall through the cracks of international legal institutions in new ways. Losing the status conferred to them in their now-defunct states they would find themselves unable to access any of the protections offered to refugees by international law. They would have been made stateless in a way that we have not seen before. Not because they were rejected by their state or never had access to status, but because their state will have ceased to exist – physically, geographically, materially. What this means legally is increasingly up for debate, but before turning to these arguments it is important to get a theoretical purchase on the category of statelessness. To do so I now turn to the 20th century's most prominent theorist of statelessness – Hannah Arendt.

It was in the wake of the two world wars and the population upheavals they had created that Arendt turned her attention to the issue of statelessness. For her, the dramatic growth of statelessness in Europe of the 20th Century following the wars illuminated for the first time the paradox of the previously unacknowledged base for human rights:

We became aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerged who had lost and could not regain these rights because of a new global political situation.479

The stateless, who were deprived of citizenship at home, were unable to regain it anywhere else. This led to a situation in which the stateless were outlaws by definition,480 subject to arbitrary rule by the police,481 and owed the prolongation of their lives to

480 Arendt, 283.
481 Arendt, 290.
charity rather than to right.\textsuperscript{482} Importantly, the loss of rights suffered by the stateless did not occur in one fell swoop, but rather through a lengthy process.\textsuperscript{483}

On several occasions in “The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man” (the chapter of \textit{The Origins of Totalitarianism} where she turns her attention to statelessness) Arendt stresses that though statelessness itself is not a new phenomenon, it took on a new meaning in the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. It was the century's new global political situation that created the calamity of the stateless – the loss of and inability to regain rights. Arendt argues that “\textit{[o]nly with a completely organized humanity could the loss of home and political status become identical with expulsion from humanity altogether.}”\textsuperscript{484} This all-encompassing political organization meant that “\textit{whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether.}”\textsuperscript{485} Exile, always a catastrophic experience, now also became dehumanizing. Being deprived of citizenship meant also being denied human rights and recognition. The stateless were thrust outside of humanity and denied the characteristics considered to make one human.

Arendt's framing of the calamity of the stateless illustrates her privileging of the formal, juridical importance of place. The relationship between place and belonging, as well as the importance of belonging itself, are pushed to the background. Indeed, she is perplexed by the “surprising stubbornness” of the stateless who retain their nationality

\textsuperscript{482} Arendt, 296.

\textsuperscript{483} Arendt, 296.

\textsuperscript{484} Arendt, 297.

\textsuperscript{485} Arendt, 294.
after they are exiled.\textsuperscript{486} This may in fact be baffling from a formal, status-focused perspective, but if we take seriously the importance of place-belonging and the tight bond among body, environment and self, this stubbornness is more understandable. After a traumatic expulsion from their home the stateless may cling to nationality as the last link to the place they were forced to flee. Arendt seems to give a nod to the importance of place-belonging when she argues that: “[t]he first loss which the rightless suffered was the loss of their homes, and this meant the loss of the entire social texture into which they were born and in which they established for themselves a distinct place in the world. [emphasis added]”\textsuperscript{487} However, as with the concept of territory deployed in nationalist narratives (see Chapter 1), it is once again the social that is allowed to obscure the material and nonhuman elements that also help to constitute human life. The distinctiveness of place in this scenario derives from the social texture established there. The material relations with place are not what are important but rather the social relations housed there.

Another hint at the importance of place to belonging pops up when Arendt notes that after the First World War many “people took refuge in statelessness … in order to remain where they were and avoid being deported to a “homeland” where they would be strangers.”\textsuperscript{488} Her explanation for this voluntary statelessness rings true, but it does not seem to be the only possible one. Many may have done their utmost to remain where they were because that place was home, because they were attached to it. What is missing in

\textsuperscript{486} Arendt, 282.

\textsuperscript{487} Arendt, 293.

\textsuperscript{488} Arendt, 278.
her account is a notion of local sensations, such as the familiar feeling of springtime release brought on by the whiff of newly blooming local flowers, or the protection one feels within the cocoon of familiar rows of apartment blocks. The loss of this material texture is mourned and reinforces a sense of homelessness for those forced from their homes. Indeed, we tend to feel a deep sense of empathy when we see images of neighbourhoods bombed or shelled in wartime. Not only do we feel for the loss of life, we also recognize that the material conditions of belonging have been damaged. The targeting of that material foundation is in fact deployed as a wartime technique, garnering the name “domicide”: “the deliberate destruction of home by human agency in pursuit of specified goals, which causes suffering to the victims.”

By consistently ignoring the material pull of place Arendt overlooks an explanation for the behaviour of the stateless - clinging to nationality or voluntarily choosing statelessness - that she herself hints at.

The privileging of the social when talking about place is reinforced in Arendt’s account when she argues that what is unprecedented in the calamity faced by the post-war stateless is the impossibility of finding a new home:

Suddenly, there was no place on earth where migrants could go without the severest restrictions, no country where they would be assimilated, no territory where they could found a new community of their own. This, moreover, had next to nothing to do with any material problem of overpopulation; it was a problem not of space but of political organization.490

It seems that Arendt is suggesting that the stateless people’s calamity would disappear if


490 Arendt, 293-4.
they could be integrated into another social order – by assimilation or by the creation of a new state on a new territory. The latter option was effectively undercut in the 20th Century by the absence of any unclaimed land on the planet. The only option open to the stateless, therefore, was to be assimilated into already established states. As no states were willing to naturalize (or in some cases, reneged on their already granted naturalizations) the 20th Century stateless were trapped without rights or status. It is notable that here space is simply a form of political organization. Arendt leaves no room for place understood as a richly textured local entity. Her use of the word “place” here makes it no more than a synonym for “territory” and “space.” Indeed, it is clear throughout the chapter that Arendt is concerned with a mismatch between national minorities and state territoriality. As we saw with the case of environmental problems in Chapter 2, highlighting this mismatch and the challenges it generates is important, but when the solutions suggested employ the same territorializing logic they simply reinscribe the problem. Arendt recognizes this and rejects the ultimate territorialization that would come in the form of a world government. Indeed, she powerfully shows how the problem is with the territorializing logic itself. It is the stateless people who become deterritorialized through state juridical decisions, placing them in a precarious position, even when they have not undertaken a physical displacement. She helps us to understand the link, therefore, between territoriality and (legal) personhood. But, her

491 She argues near the end of the chapter that: “[n]ot only did loss of national rights in all instances entail the loss of human rights; the restoration of human rights, as the recent example of the State of Israel proves, has been achieved so far only through the restoration or the establishment of national rights.” Arendt, 299.

492 Arendt, 285.

493 Arendt, 298.
privileging of the territorial and the social over the platial obscures the importance of place to belonging and to the construction of the self. These latter elements help us understand how statelessness is not only precarious and dehumanizing, but also chips away at the foundations of the self. This in turn might help shed some light on the seemingly illogical choices made by some stateless people.

Despite the limitations of an exclusively territorial lens, used as part of a broader conceptual toolbox it continues to yield important insights into the predicament of stateless people. Indeed, the absence of unclaimed territory that Arendt identifies as an obstacle resonates with the predicament of the Small Island States. The territorial constraints are all the more acute for these populations as they witness the loss of their territory, and with it the possible erosion of their citizenship status. In a submission to a meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) highlighted that the “[d]isappearance of a State due to loss of territory or the permanent exile of the population or the government is without precedent.”494 The submission further noted that “where such a situation would be permanent, statehood could be questioned”495 and is therefore worrisome because it would render the entire populations of the disappeared countries stateless. In a paper prepared for the UNHCR’s Expert Roundtable on Climate Change and Displacement (February 2011) Susin Park notes that:

494 UNHCR, 2.
495 UNHCR, 1.
According to the definition in Article 1 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (hereafter, ‘the 1954 Convention’), a stateless person is ‘a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law.’ Should a State cease to exist, citizenship of that State would then cease, as there would no longer be a State of which a person could be a citizen. In the case of low-lying island States, the question would thus be whether a State would continue to exist if its entire territory were submerged and/or if the entire population and the government were in exile.496

Later in the same paper she observes that in the few cases of state extinction that have occurred there has always been a clear successor to replace the defunct state.497 What makes the situation of the Small Island States unique, then, is that they cannot turn to a successor state. Indeed, there is “no precedent for loss of the entire territory of a State or the exile of the entire population of a State.”498

In response to this scenario the UNHCR outlined three options that would prevent this widespread statelessness: the acquisition of territory ceded to the affected state(s) by another state, the union of the island state(s) with another state, or the adoption of other nationalities by the citizens of the affected state(s).499 Similarly, Ilan Kelman, an expert on the impacts of climate change on small island states at the Center for International Climate and Environmental Research – Oslo (and, as we saw in Chapter 1, one of the people behind the organization Many Strong Voices) argues that Small Island States are faced with two alternatives: either they must abandon their identity and community in

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497 Park, 6.

498 Park, 6.

499 Park, 2.
order to integrate elsewhere or they must resettle in a place similar to their home and recreate their community there.\textsuperscript{500} He notes, like the UNHCR, that the second option requires another state to cede part of its territory to the stateless group, although he adds the additional requirement that the ceded land bear a physical resemblance to the lost territory. In this way, Kelman, unlike Arendt and the UNHCR, acknowledges the importance of place to identity. It is notable that those states exploring the possibility of acquiring new territory have looked primarily to other states in their geographic and climatic region. This may be due to a familiarity with and existing relations with neighbouring governments, but there may also be an element of wanting to keep to a minimum the degree of change experienced. Even if the imbrication with the local environment will be disrupted, some solace may still be derived from a relatively familiar climate.

While the UNHCR gave a nod to the importance of family unity and “due regard” to the preservation of group identity in its submission to the Working Group, the agency is, perhaps understandably, more preoccupied with the formal and legal mechanisms required to avert mass statelessness: multilateral comprehensive agreements, effective nationality, and dual nationality.\textsuperscript{501} These concerns are due to the likelihood of a situation that would parallel the pattern that Arendt identified in the case of the post-war stateless in which the loss of status and community deprived the stateless of a voice and forced them to rely on the charity of others. An important difference from the situation Arendt

\textsuperscript{500} Ilan Kelman, “Island evacuation,” \textit{Forced Migration Review} 31 (2008), 20. Though I would argue (and will shortly) that it would be a different community created, given that the landscape and weather would be different.

\textsuperscript{501} UNHCR, 3.
described is that the residents of today's at-risk states are effectively placed in this voiceless and rightless position before losing their status or their community. In addition, in trying to protect their populations, the governments of these states effectively assume a position akin to that of Arendt's stateless people. Perhaps the most telling illustration of this pre-emptive helplessness occurred at the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference. In arguably the most arresting moment of the summit Ian Fry, a middle-aged bureaucrat from Tuvalu's Ministry of the Environment, broke down in tears in the midst of his address to the plenary session. In a speech that quickly reached viewers around the world Fry admitted to having woken up that morning to find himself weeping over the impending demise of his country. Pleading with the assembled politicians and policymakers to take action to curb climate change he ended his remarks by stating: “The fate of my country rests in your hands.” Fry thus acknowledged in a fairly straightforward manner that Tuvalu and the other at-risk small islands are relying on the charity of the other states for their very survival as states. While it may well be the case that states this minuscule effectively never have much of a voice on the international stage, that voicelessness takes on a particularly sinister tone in this case. It removes their ability to even fight for their survival. States already find it damaging when they are unable to secure the conditions for their prosperity. But relying on others to secure the conditions of their existence chips away at the foundation of the state institution. It is not simply a paradox of the state’s autonomy being underwritten by other states, but its very existence. We can assume then that the residents of the Small Island States will suffer a double

statelessness: as citizens of a state experiencing the stateless condition and then as stateless people themselves. Even if they are able to secure a second citizenship they will at the very least experience the first type of statelessness, what we might call statelessness once removed. But the repercussions stretch beyond this double statelessness. They also condemn citizens to an irreversible homelessness. Once the geo-place of home is lost there is no possibility of return. Salman Rushdie describes the experience of migration in his characteristically vivid style:

*I am speaking now of those of us who emigrated ... and I suspect that there are times when the move seems wrong to us all, when we seem, to ourselves, post-lapsarian men and women. ... And as a result – as my use of the Christian notion of the Fall indicates – we are now partly of the West. Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. 503*

While for ordinary migrants the home that they have left may change in many ways that are alienating, aspects of it will remain that continue to make the place familiar. For climate exiles there is the additional trauma of knowing that one of those stools has been razed from the earth.

To make matters worse, the dangers posed to these Small Island States make them, in effect, lame duck states. They retain the vestiges of state power, yet the status that they confer on their citizens is not equal to that of states that can ensure at least a stable territorial future for their populations. The Small Island States cannot offer refuge and relocation to affected citizens, as a larger state could, since the entire territory of their states will be submerged. And as the land becomes increasingly unstable and

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uninhabitable, costs and dilemmas mount for these largely developing countries. In a rare moment of discouragement, former Maldivian president Nasheed remarked on his return from Copenhagen: “We worked very hard for a deal in Copenhagen. But in hindsight, coming back to The Maldives, you realize how impossible the whole thing is. We are having to spend less on healthcare, less on education, and then use that money on concrete and on sea walls.”

As the territory of these states increasingly comes under threat we might see a situation in which the states themselves will become devalued to the point that their residents will begin to suffer Arendt's “fundamental deprivation of human rights.” The place that they inhabit will no longer be one that “makes opinions significant and actions effective.” The residents may all believe that addressing climate change requires immediate and drastic action, and they may undertake such action themselves, but unless other states do the same these gestures are meaningless.

As the impending disappearance of the Small Island States gains attention there has been a burgeoning debate amongst legal scholars about whether legal identity (and its corollary citizenship status) endures even with the loss of the physical entity. A key

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504 *The Island President.*

505 Arendt, 296.

506 Or at best, quixotic and moral: “We know that the Maldives becoming carbon-neutral is not going to stop us from annihilation, but at least we can die knowing that we've done the right thing.” Mohamed Nasheed. *The Island President.*

question in this debate is whether the state has control over its habitable territory since, according to legal scholarship, habitable territory is “a foundational element of the modern international legal conception of statehood.” Heather Alexander and Jonathan Simon argue that one reason control over habitable territory is critical is that it undergirds essential rights, especially the right to return. Alexander and Simon conclude that the proposal to continue recognizing submerged states as states would be no more than an “empty fiction” designed in an attempt to preserve cultural identity and legal rights, but that would in fact stand in the way of long-term solutions.

These tiny states have been placed, through the damage wrought by climate change, at the intersection of environmental, material, social and juridical dilemmas. As the crisis deepens, the noose formed by these various elements grows tighter and tighter.

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508 Alexander and Simon, 22.
509 Alexander and Simon, 23.
510 Alexander and Simon, 25.
Conclusion: Two Portraits of Land after the End of the World

The Ocean Flower

At the Ocean Flower everything seems designed to delight your senses. Divine and relaxed living by the ocean truly characterizes the Ocean Flower properties. A sustainable destination to live – for generations to come.  

A female voice coos these words, luring the spectator into a fantasy world of luxury and easy living. The Dutch Docklands Company would have us believe that it is creating an “idyllic island of dreams” on this artificial island resort being constructed in The Maldives. “The Ocean Flower,” as it has been christened, is “a pioneering development that takes its name from a typical Maldivian flower, … the first of five spectacular oceanfront developments in the Maldives … being developed by Dutch Docklands International in a joint venture with the government of the Maldives.” The other “floating developments” – territory being artificially constructed to float on the Maldivian ocean – include a golf course, a star-shaped hotel and conference centre, and a series of private islands that can be custom designed to take whatever shape that the owners desire. These “exclusive” developments are designed not for islands residents losing their homes to climate change, but rather as a distant utopian getaway for rich foreigners. The ad makes its targeted clientele clear not only by its message and resort-like images, but also through the almost total lack of non-white figures – save for a pair of hands, seen administering a calming massage. Indigenous Maldivians will only be


present to ensure the comfort of the foreign owners.

Watching the luxuriant ad you are lulled into forgetting that these artificial islands are located on the front lines of climate change, at the epicentre of the sea-level rise menace to territory. Once that awareness returns, however, you notice that the narration is saturated with double-speak. These engineered floating developments are billed as being “in harmony with nature,” a place where “stress melts away” and where “getting away from it all means immersing yourself in everything.” Best of all, though positioned in the midst of a state frantically, and one might say quixotically, building sea walls to stave off inundation while also reluctantly making evacuation plans, the ad concludes that the Ocean Flower promises a “sustainable destination to live – for generations to come.” You cannot help thinking that either the Ocean Flower's designers are maliciously disingenuous about these artificial islands and the rising seas, or they are on to something in suggesting that only highly engineered territory will survive the climate crisis. At the Ocean Flower life after the end of the world is like a distopian science fiction novel. The ultimate gated community, these artificial islands not only reinstantiate privilege, they heighten its link with survival. Want to survive the coming flood? Buy yourself a catastrophe-proof bunker. Non-elite need not apply.
Nowhereisland

Our goal had been to find a new island that had been revealed by the retreating glaciers and to claim it for our own. The island towards which we now sped exceeded all expectations. Roughly an hundred paces long, fifty wide, and fully thirty feet high. The terrain was largely muddy moraine holding many varieties of rock within its frozen clutches. We came across the nests of eider ducks, and several purple sandpipers were seen quickly departing.514

These words mark the first concrete moments of an extended art project spearheaded by British artist, Alex Hartley. The artist's aim was to identify a piece of land that had never experienced human contact. This he found in 2004 in the form of a small island in the Norwegian High Arctic, revealed by a receding glacier.515 Having discovered this as yet uncharted land mass, Hartley placed a claim note (in English and Norwegian) in a tin-can, protected within a cairn, and launched the next stage of his project – creating a new nation.516

The first step towards juridical existence was achieved in 2006 when the Norwegian Polar Institute agreed to formally recognize the island, include it on all of its subsequent maps and charts, and name it Nyskjaeret.517 Next Hartley carved out a portion of that island transforming it into the new nation of “Nowhereisland”518 which then


515 “The territory for Nowhereisland was revealed from within the melting ice of a retreating glacier, located in the northernmost polar landmass. This remote High Arctic archipelago of Svalbard is a landscape shaped by the rapidly receding ice cap and marked by minimal human history; for many years a no-man’s land touched only by whaling, prospecting and exploration.” “Origins,” accessed March 6, 2014, http://nowhereisland.org/#/embassy/origins/

516 Hartley uses the term “nation” to denote both a population and territory.


518 The name has a double meaning, both “Nowhere Island” and “Now Here Is Land.”
undertook a journey south, culminating at the port of Weymouth, UK, as part of the 2012 London Cultural Olympiad. Officially, “Nowhereisland became a nation on 20 September 2011. It is formed from territory under the jurisdiction of another nation state. The territory was physically removed with permission from that state. It travelled on board a ship and was declared a nation as it passed into International Waters at 80° 14N 10° 30E.” Without an indigenous population, Nowhereisland went in search of citizens. The journey south was part of this quest. For the artist “[t]he significance of Nowhereisland as ‘a nation heading south in search of a population’ was heightened by the fact that anyone who has ever set foot on Svalbard [the Norwegian province in which it was discovered] has arrived from further south, and will return that way sooner or later.” Hartley threw open the citizenship application process so that anyone who chose to could become a citizen through an online form. Over the year of the project 23,003 people were officially granted Nowherian citizenship. At the end of the yearlong artistic life of Nowhereisland Hartley parcelled out its territory to those citizens who wanted to hang on to a piece of it for posterity.

This ephemeral nation and artistic project was intentionally “formed in acknowledgement of the failure of existing nation states to address interconnected global crises, which include but also extend beyond climate change.” The discovered island was not only a product, in a certain sense, of climate change (via the receding glacier) but

521 I am one of those 23,003, with my citizenship certificate still prominently displayed on my fridge.  
522 “Origins.”
also made vulnerable by it. Having lost the protection of the glacier and hence becoming exposed to the elements, the island is itself slowly eroding. Upon his return visit Hartley “estimated that at least a third of the island had disappeared back into the sea between 2004 and 2011 and it is predicted that the island has just 10-15 years left.” It was also, perhaps, an exaggerated illustration of territoriality after the end of the world. Simultaneously created and destroyed by climate change, its short term existence as a site with meaning and as host of a kind of belonging is primarily in the hands of one person (the artist). The materiality of the land, its impact on us, is more obscured than ever. By playing with its very emplacement, the artist in fact worked against the island’s natural properties, in a sense turning it into an embodied abstract territory. As climate change obliges us increasingly to intervene with and to engineer land, perhaps this obscuring of natural materiality and instantiating of abstraction will become more widespread. Where, then, will we be living?

Nowhere Island and The Ocean Flower, these two artificial constructs, are two magnified examples of what we can expect as we enter deeper into the climate crisis and life after the end of the world. On the one hand, the Ocean Flower heralds a science fiction-like version of land. Engineered to be idyllic, it is in fact static and sterile. It is “land” without history, without movement. And it is constructed against the climate, not by it or with it. In this artificial place there is no natural collusion between land and

523 “Origins Nyskaeret.”

524 Those of us who signed on as citizens may also have contributed, but as the project was imagined and executed by Hartley, and lasted such a short time, he can claim the major part in each of its elements and expressions.
climate, two factors so crucial to the moulding of body and self. On the other hand, Nowhereisland is land condemned through the very conditions of its birth. A receding glacier that reveals the land while revoking its protection. A site that can never really provide a foundation for belonging since any attempt to found a deep sense of place-belonging there would be undercut by the anxiety caused by mounting existential challenges. This is land that incarnates crisis.

At first the Ocean Flower and Nowhereisland seem very foreign. So too do the Arctic and the Small Island States, the places that have been the subjects of this final chapter. Indeed, most of us do not know these latter places first hand, nor will we. But as the people living there keep telling us, their present is our future. Residents in the Arctic and Small Island States are already experiencing climate change as an existential threat - to their homes, but also, in some important sense, to themselves. The land has been destabilized and washed away, forcing them to be wary and uneasy about the very ground beneath their feet. The solace provided by place - a quality crucial to place-belonging - has been replaced by anxiety. Perhaps most worrisome, the knowledge garnered about place and the sensations engendered by it are being undermined and lost. Rather than feeling a kind of intimacy and imbrication with the land, therefore, Arctic and Small Island State inhabitants are feeling rejected by it. The assemblage of body/self/land/climate has come apart, leaving residents literally and affectively adrift. If instincts, intuitions, expectations and sensations about the land are off then the “right fit” has been lost. Rather than serving as a grounding for the self, the environment now serves as an undoing. Just as a building is not sound on an unstable foundation, the self is at risk when
the body/environment relationship is out of whack.

In the Arctic and Small Island States, inhabitants are now living a quixotic presence. They are clearly literally present on their land, but as the crisis deepens, and the threats to their homes intensify, that presence appears to be increasingly impractical. Indeed, as news breaks that an ice sheet in the Antarctic has now begun an irreversible collapse which will trigger greater sea-level rise than previously predicted, their presence seems almost fanciful. It is a nostalgic existence even before the material erasure of their homes. And it is poignant because it is also so understandable. How do you simply let go of a place that is constitutive of who you are? Are you yourself still present when it disappears? Or does an important part of you disappear when that place goes? The pathos of the exile has long been a theme in literature. The pathos of the climate change exile is adding a new chapter.

Activists in the Arctic and Small Island States tell us that they are the canaries in the climate change coal mine. We need to take their words seriously. Their experience prefigures our own path. This is a crisis defined by interconnections. While we are not all going through it in precisely the same way, we will all experience a destabilization of place and belonging. Place is an important part of what makes us who we are. It is grounding, it is tempo-giving, it is solace-giving. As the damages to place wrought by climate change in the Arctic and the Small Island States show, we have created a crisis that is destructive not only of our environment and ecologies, but of our homes, of our

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world and of ourselves.

So, what do we do about it? What can we do about it?

It’s a little late to be asking these questions, you are probably thinking. These are the critical questions that drive many dissertations, books, articles, speeches and, importantly, the work and passion of climate change activists. But they were never the questions driving my dissertation. Even so, they hovered in the background throughout. And after a steady diet of climate science and worrying reports for the last several years, while watching governments largely continue to point fingers and deflect attention rather than put in place robust measures to address the crisis, I will admit to not being overly optimistic about the answers. We are already well down the road to devastating changes, as the activists from the Arctic and Small Island States have been telling us. We may have (some say almost certainly have) already rushed over crucial tipping points at full speed. Even the most ardent climate change activist will now admit that even if we were to put in place the most rigourous and far-reaching measures to address the crisis today we will still need to find ways to adapt. But adapting to a continually worsening climatic context will be difficult, if not impossible. This is not just the case in concrete, pragmatic and infrastructural terms, such as finding new materials for construction that will be both robust and flexible, solid and porous. It will also importantly be difficult to adapt our sense of belonging. We typically overlook this challenge when talking about climate change. While belonging can and frequently does adjust to new circumstances, it is not infinitely elastic. It requires a stable “new normal” to become accustomed to, to latch on
to, to rely on as familiar. Belonging needs some reliability, yet scientists, and our own experience, tell us that we are entering a period of increasing unpredictability. A period of increasing flux.

The twin term to adaptation is resilience. As I argued in Chapter 3, resilience implies bouncing back, which in turn suggests an end to the disaster that provokes the need for it - a calm post-disaster period of recovery and reconstruction. But what can this mean, at least for us humans, in the context of climate change? Climate change is a complex system with an undetermined (and undeterminable?) duration. Conceivably (as in, in a manner in which we can conceptually grasp) it will last several thousand years, but having pushed past those all important tipping points we are now enmeshed in a Gordian game of climate dominos with unimaginable branches and time spans. As a hyperobject, climate change is so expansive that a “post” is so remote as to be, in reality, unthinkable. The “post-climate-change” has no meaning in human terms, and thus cannot serve as an anchor for resilience.

So, we can adapt, but we can’t bounce back. This may seem excessively bleak, but this is our reality. There is no way around the dismal truth, much as the climate change deniers try. And yet, throwing up our hands and saying “there is nothing we can do” is not an acceptable response. Today the question of mitigation is increasingly pertinent. We may now be living in the age of the climate crisis, but how this disaster plays out is still an open question. As James Hansen and Thomas Homer-Dixon explained, crossing the tipping point engages feedback loops that we cannot control, but there are factors that do remain in our control and that can influence the speed and
severity of the crisis. We haven’t driven off a cliff, waiting for a sudden drop like Wile E Coyote. We are cycling down an extremely steep hill with brake pads worn almost entirely away. Pulling on the brakes won’t bring us to a dead stop, but it will still slow us down. And with some strategic thinking we might be able to navigate to the turn-off that leads to a more gentle hill, or even a plateau. The first step is to acknowledge that we are on this path. That climate change is not a disaster-to-come. That it is happening now.

We know this because we sense this. As I argued in the introduction, the focus on belonging, place, feeling and malaise that I have adopted helps to enlarge our understanding of what is at risk in the climate crisis. It is not just the planet. It is our world, the meaning that we derive from and read into the earth. Here is where sensation, where place-belonging and where the close fit amongst body, self and environment come into play. We can sense that something is off. We can tell that things are out of whack. That the weather is *uggianaqtuq*. If Jane Bennett is right, and I think she is, that ethics is a “complex interplay of code and sensibility” and that embodied sensibility is what animates moral codes and explains their motivational hold then we need to capitalize on these feelings to kickstart political and behavioural change. We need to activate that sensibility and motivate ethical action. We need to use the unease and anxiety we are feeling to do that.

Let us make every tweet about “crazy weather” a political one.

Let us transform those mundane conversations about the weather that turn to awkward silence into a call to action.

Let us make every trip to an outdoor skating rink a joyous embrace of the world
we want to save.

We know what we need to do. There are changes required on the macro and on the micro level. There are big, system-level, political endeavours that need to be made. So far very few have been made. We can’t stop pushing for them. We can’t get distracted from them. There are also small, personal changes that are needed. Changes that, in aggregate, will have a huge impact. Many of us have made some of them, but there are so many more we can make. Always more. Attuning ourselves to the anxiety that we are already feeling will help with the motivation, but we can make it more explicit. We can pause in these moments of anxiety, in the encounters with local sadness, and renew our commitment to act ethically. *To act.*

We may have crossed the threshold into the age of the full blown climate crisis, but let us make sure that we have also been tipped out of the age of complacency.
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Curriculum Vitae

Education

PhD  
**Johns Hopkins University**, Political Science  
(Political Theory and International Relations), 2014  
Thesis: *The Senses of Climate Change: The Politics of Belonging in the Age of the Climate Crisis*  
Supervisor: Dr. Jane Bennett

Masters  
**London School of Economics**, Political Theory, 2006  
Thesis: *How Globalisation is Reinvigorating Social Contract Theory*  
Supervisor: Dr. Katrin Flikschuh

BA  
**McGill University**, Political Science, 2005

Honours and Awards

2013  
**Alternate**, *Charlotte Newcombe Fellowship 2013-2014*

Academic Appointments

2013-2014  
**Invited Researcher**, Le Centre d’études et de recherches internationales (CÉRIUM)

Teaching and Research Interests

Climate Change  
Belonging  
New Materialism  
International Relations Theory  
Global Environmental Politics  
Contemporary Political Thought  
Weather and seasons (especially winter)  
Identity (especially Canadian, Québeccois, and Nordic)  
Place  
Art
Teaching Experience

2013  Instructor, Johns Hopkins University
Course:  *Climate Change and the Politics of Belonging*
        (AS.191.224.21)
        • Designed syllabus and assignments.
        • Wrote and delivered lectures and facilitated a discussion on course topics
          and materials.
        • Introduced students to the basics of climate change and ethics of climate
          change.
        • Challenged students to think differently about climate change, through
          the lens of philosophy, contemporary political theory, and art.
        • Graded major and minor papers.
        • Helped students improve their argumentation and writing.

Instructor, Johns Hopkins University
Course:  *The End of Winter*
        (AS.191.217)
        • Designed syllabus for short winter term, intended for experimental courses.
        • Wrote and delivered lectures, directed group work and facilitated class discussions.
        • Challenged students to think about the impact of climate change on seasons and associated habits and traditions.
        • Introduced students to existential threat of climate change in the Arctic.

2012  Instructor, Johns Hopkins University
Course:  *The Politics of Home*
        (AS.191.209.21)
        • Designed syllabus and assignments.
        • Wrote and delivered lectures and facilitated a discussion on course topics and materials.
        • Introduced students to the notion of home in various academic disciplines: political theory, philosophy, geography, cultural studies, feminist thought, and anthropology.
        • Graded major and minor papers.
        • Helped students improve their argumentation and writing.

2009  TA, Johns Hopkins University
Course: *Contemporary International Politics*  
(AS.190.209)  
- Led class discussions about course material and themes.  
- Helped students to understand basic concepts and texts in International Relations.  
- Helped students with essay writing and exam preparation.  
- Graded midterms, exams and final papers.

**Conferences**

**2014**  
**June 13**  
Toronto Treehouse Group Talk  
“Eulogy for Winter”  
**May 27-29**  
Canadian Political Science Association  
"Assault on the senses: Climate change and the challenge to world-making"  
**April 17-19**  
Western Political Science Association  
"Assault on the senses: Climate change and the challenge to world-making"  

**2013**  
**Aug 29–Sept 1**  
American Political Science Association  
“Eulogy for Winter: The Tale of Climate and Anxiety”  
**June 4-6**  
Canadian Political Science Association  
“The Last Days of Winter: The Impact of Climate Change on Home and Belonging”  
**March 28-30**  
Western Political Science Association  
“The Last Days of Winter: The Impact of Climate Change on Home and Belonging”  

**2012**  
**May 4-5**  
Colloque de la recherche étudiante en science politique,  
“Unravelling Home: Climate change's erosion of our place in the world”  
- Présentation faite en français  
**Feb 18-19**  
“Institutions, Narratives, and Identities” University of Florida Political Science Graduate Student Workshop,  
“Precarious Balance: Challenges to place and home in the era of climate change”  

**2011**  
**March 16-19**  
International Studies Association  
“Precarious Balance: Challenges to place and home in the era of climate change”
2010
June 16-18  Essex Conference in Critical Political Theory.  
“Precarious Balance: Challenges to place and home in the era of climate change”

Publications


Professional and Administrative Experience

2014  Senior Communications Officer, Canadian Union of Public Employees

2013  Election Day Organizer, New Democratic Party (NDP) of Canada's Bourassa By-election campaign  
Scriptwriter, NDP Convention Montreal 2013, New Democratic Party of Canada

2010-2013  Undergraduate Coordinator, Political Science Department, Johns Hopkins University

2010  Organizer, “Dangerous Crossings: Politics at the Limits of the Human,” Graduate Student Conference, Johns Hopkins University

2009-2010  Grad Student Colloquium Co-Chair, Political Science Department, Johns Hopkins University

2006-2008  Speechwriter, Office of Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>2007</td>
<td><strong>Voter Contact Coordinator</strong>, NDP Campaign in the Outremont By-Election</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td><strong>Constituency Assistant</strong> to Toronto City Councillor Adam Giambrone – Ward 18</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Regional Coordinator</strong> (Québec and BC), NDP federal election campaign</td>
<td><strong>Election observer</strong>, Canadian Election Observers Mission, Ukraine</td>
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<td>2003-2004</td>
<td><strong>Youth representative</strong>, NDP Election Planning Committee</td>
<td><strong>Co-chair</strong>, Election Planning Committee of the Québec Section of the NDP</td>
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<td>2003-2005</td>
<td><strong>Female Québec representative</strong> to the NDP executive</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td><strong>Volunteer Coordinator</strong>, Jack Layton NDP Leadership Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001-2005</td>
<td><strong>Co-chair</strong>, New Democratic Youth of Canada</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td><strong>Northern Riding Development Organizer</strong>, Ontario NDP</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td><strong>Executive Assistant</strong> to the Ontario NDP Leader’s Office</td>
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**Languages**

- **French** – fluent written and spoken
- **Spanish** – basic written and spoken