Climate Champions and Discourses of Climate Change: An Analysis of the Communication of Climate Change in Large Corporations

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the communication of climate change in large corporations. Over the last 40 years, concern about climate change has increased and climate-protecting behaviour is now widely advocated by many actors, including businesses. This thesis adopts a discursive approach to climate change and aims to understand how a particular group of people, namely 'climate champions' in large corporations, talk and think about climate change in their daily lives.

The theoretical part of the thesis begins from the assumption that neoliberalism is the dominant discourse at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It considers the relationship between neoliberalism and the natural world and examines how climate change has been discursively constructed in this neoliberal context. The main focus of the thesis is the different ways of actually dealing with climate change based on the distinction between climate change as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system and climate change as a fundamental problem. The main part of the theoretical framework identifies seven climate discourses that are rooted in this distinction. The discourses either conform to the principles of neoliberalism (reformist discourses) or reject neoliberal ideas (revolutionary discourses).

Empirically, the project attempts to analyse the everyday communication of climate change by using these seven discourses. Specifically, it focuses on the role of designated 'climate champions' (individuals given responsibility for promoting climate protecting behaviour) in large corporations. The thesis uses interviews with 44 participants to identify which discourses the champions drew upon when they talked about climate change. It focuses on the dominance of particular discourses and how dominant ideas are reinforced or challenged on a daily basis. The thesis concludes that, although reformist discourses were indeed very influential, the champions drew upon many different discourses when they promoted climate protecting behaviour and discussed climate change. They both reinforced and resisted reformist discourses depending on the audience and the context in which they were talking.

For my Grandma, who would have been very proud

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Contents

Chapter 6

Motivating Behaviour Change

128

Chapter 7

Acting on Climate Change

163

List of Tables

Table 3.1 – Checklist of elements for the analysis of discourse

Table 3.2 – Analytical categories for the analysis of climate discourse

Table 4.1 – Climate champion case studies

Glossary

CCPC	-	Cities for Climate Protection Campaign
CDA	-	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDM	-	Clean Development Mechanism
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CER	-	Certified Emission Reduction
CSA	-	Community Supported Agriculture
CSR	-	Corporate Social Responsibility
CO_2	-	Carbon Dioxide
DECC	-	Department for Energy and Climate Change
DEFRA	-	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	-	Department for Transport
GAP	-	Global Action Plan
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	-	Greenhouse Gas
EM	-	Ecological Modernisation
EU15	-	Countries in the European Union prior to the accession of ten candidate countries on 1 May 2004
ICLEI	-	International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	-	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR	-	International Relations
MDP	-	Measure of Domestic Progress
M.Sc.	-	Masters in Science
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organisations
N_2O	-	Nitrous Oxide
PR	-	Public Relations

REDD+	-	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UN	-	United Nations
UNFCCC	-	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USA	-	United States of America
WTO	-	World Trade Organisation
WWF	-	World Wildlife Fund

Chapter 1

Introduction: Researching the Problem of Climate Change

'Certainly, we will not get a grasp of whatever is the whole of the matter by microscopic recording of face-to-face interaction. However, it may be enough to begin with if we can – for the first time – hear the macro order tick' (Knorr-Cetina 1981, p.42).

My research interests in the politics of climate change are rooted in a longstanding concern about environmental problems more generally. At a young age, environmental problems made me very anxious. What do we do if we run out of natural resources? How will we cope if the sea levels rise? Am I in any danger? As I got older, my concern extended to the wider world. It was *unfair* that people in developing countries would bear the brunt of climate change. It was *wrong* to destroy the natural world. The issue became one of moral significance. I believed that we had a responsibility to look after the world and that dealing with climate change would require changing the way we currently lived our lives. However, when I began researching climate change, I became increasingly aware of the controversy that surrounded this issue. The 'consensus' about climate science was contested, approaches to dealing with climate change were disputed and public opinion about the issue appeared to be full of contradictions.

This background is not intended simply to 'set the scene' for my research focus. Rather, it is meant to illustrate my initial encounter with different ways of thinking about climate change (fear, justice and concern for the natural world) and the development of my own epistemological position (from certainty about what was true and what should be done to uncertainty about my own knowledge and beliefs). The overall purpose of this project is to identify how people talk and think about climate change in modern society and how dominant ideas about climate change are reproduced or challenged on a daily basis. It is important to begin with my own epistemological position because epistemology plays an important role in the project. What do we know about climate change and how does the transfer of knowledge construct a particular way of thinking and acting in relation to the problem?

In this chapter I will begin by outlining the epistemological approach of the project. In section 1.1 I will address the science of climate change and discuss the distinction between climate change as a physical and social issue. I will argue that climate change as a physical process is occurring independent of our interpretation of the problem but that the way we understand and deal with climate change is socially constructed. The project focuses on the latter of these issues (climate change as a social phenomenon) and adopts a constructivist perspective. In the sections that follow I will outline the origins and development of the project itself. Section 1.2 will introduce three different areas that I initially felt were important for the purpose of addressing the problem of climate change: the value-action gap; individual behaviour change; and neoliberal governance. I will explain why I was interested in each of these areas and the research questions that they presented. In section 1.3 I will discuss my own contribution to the literature on climate change and how I have tried to develop an original research project that builds on previous work in these three areas. Once I had established what I wanted to do it was necessary to find a specific social context for the research and section 1.4 will provide a brief outline of this context. My research focused on 'climate champions' in large corporations. I will explain who these people were and why they were relevant to the research I was undertaking. In section 1.5 I will introduce the specific research questions that I set out to address and in section 1.6 I will provide a chapter outline for the rest of the thesis.

1.1   Climate Change: A Physical and Social Phenomenon

For the purpose of introducing the project, I will begin in the way that I first encountered the issue: with the science of climate change itself. It was the scientific authority of this account that informed my initial understanding and beliefs about climate change as an issue. 'Climate change' is an alteration in weather patterns over an extended period of time. It is primarily caused by the release of gases such as carbon dioxide (CO_2) and nitrous oxide (N_2O) into the atmosphere. This leads to the enhanced greenhouse effect and a consequent warming of the Earth, commonly known as global warming. The natural greenhouse effect is the process through which the Earth's surface is kept at an average temperature of $14^{o}C$. Greenhouse gases (GHG) trap enough heat within the atmosphere to maintain a temperature that suits life on the planet. When there is an increase in greenhouse gases, however, the enhanced greenhouse effect occurs. There is an imbalance between the heat radiating

in and out of the Earth's atmosphere with more being retained. This imbalance leads to an increase in the Earth's average temperature. Over the past few decades there has been a warming of the planet due to this enhanced greenhouse effect.

In its most recent assessment report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that, 'warming of the planet is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations in increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global sea level' (IPCC 2007, p.30). These increased temperatures will lead to a variety of impacts on the planet and its inhabitants. At a basic level, the increased heat will cause warmer climates, more intense heat waves and a consequent increase in heat related deaths. Increased temperatures will also foster a favourable environment for the spread of diseases. Other direct impacts of the increasing heat will be drought and desertification. In terms of more indirect impacts of climate change, a warmer climate will cause the melting of polar ice caps and glaciers, which will lead to an increase in sea levels and consequent flooding of low lying and coastal areas. Research also indicates that higher temperatures will lead to more extreme weather around the world. As a result of these impacts, the IPCC predicts that by the middle of the twenty first century there will be over one hundred and fifty million environmental refugees.

In its second assessment report the IPCC outlined some of these major changes in the Earth's climate system and stated that it 'is unlikely to be entirely natural in origin' (1995, p.22). There was a significant level of uncertainty about the influence of human activity on the environment, but it was argued by many scientists that the main reasons for climate change were anthropogenic. Twelve years later, the most recent report states that warming of the climate 'is *very likely* due to the observed increase in anthropogenic GHG concentrations' (IPCC 2007, p.39; emphasis in original). According to the confidence ratings of the IPCC, 'very likely' indicates that the scientists are 90% confident in the accuracy of their findings.

On the basis of scientific information, my own approach to climate change was initially positivist: we can identify the 'true' causes of climate change and we can 'fix' the problem with the 'correct' approach. We emit too much carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and therefore we must change our carbon intensive lifestyle. I believed that this was the 'right' way to deal with climate change. By the time I began writing my thesis, however, I had encountered a myriad of different perspectives on

the science of climate change and what should be done about the problem. Hulme (2009) considers the evolution of climate change from a scientific to a social issue:

As society has been increasingly confronted with the observable realities of climate change and heard of the dangers that scientists claim lie ahead, climate change has moved from being predominantly a physical phenomenon to being simultaneously a social phenomenon… Far from simply being a change in physical climates – a change in the sequence of weather experienced in given places – climate change has become an idea that travels well beyond its origins in the natural sciences (pp. xxv-xxvi).

Hulme argues that this transition of climate change from physical to social phenomenon has led to many different ideas about the issue and many different ways of thinking about the problem (if indeed it is a problem at all). My research into climate change as a social (and political) phenomenon made me question my positivist standpoint. If there are so many conflicting ideas about climate change, did I have the 'right' approach? Did I know the 'truth' about climate science? Indeed, was there even a 'truth' to be discovered?

However, this did not alleviate the concerns I still had about climate change. Regardless of the debates and controversy, I believed that there was a problem and that something needed to be done about it. It was my contention then (as it is now) that climate change was indeed a 'real' problem that was occurring, independent of the way in which we interpreted it. The physical processes were objective. It was the social processes that were constructed. This is a position that is most commonly referred to as 'critical realism' and incorporates what Bhaskar (1998) refers to as two sides of 'knowledge':

Any adequate philosophy of science must find a way of grappling with this central paradox of science: that men in their social activity produce knowledge which is a social product much like any other…This is one side of 'knowledge'. The other is that knowledge is '*of*' things which are not produced by men at all: the specific gravity of mercury, the process of electrolysis… (p.16; emphasis in original).

Of course, climate change is a slightly more complicated issue than gravity or electrolysis because part of the problem is that we are interfering with the physical reality. Climate change is not occurring independent of our actions. However, the results of our actions, the physical processes, are occurring independent of our *interpretation* of them. We can have objective knowledge about the levels of carbon dioxide and the rise in sea levels. It is the social processes that are subject to various

different ideas and ways of thinking and it is upon the social processes that this project will focus. This is the position I started from when I began the thesis. I wanted to carry out research that would consider the controversy surrounding climate change, but also possibly have an impact in dealing with, what I believed to be, a 'real' problem.

1.2 The Roots of the Research Project

My initial research into climate change generated many different ideas about the issue and potential areas for analysis. However, there were three areas that I felt were particularly interesting and generated potentially important research questions. First, there appeared to be a significant 'gap' between commitments to tackle climate change and actual action. Why did countries, localities and individuals profess concern about climate change but then do nothing to tackle the problem? Second, a lot of climate policy and academic research appeared to concentrate on individual behaviour change. Did individuals have an important role to play in the mitigation of climate change and was individualistic action the best way to deal with the problem? Finally, neoliberalism, as an economic and political project, appeared to be having a significant impact on the governance of climate change. Why was this the case and what impact did it have on how we deal with climate change? In this section I will consider each of these topics.

1.2.1 *The Value-Action Gap*

The commitment to tackle climate change is evident at all levels of politics. In 1992, 154 countries signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The text of the Convention stated that the parties were 'concerned that human activities have been substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions' and that they were 'determined to protect the climate system for present and future generations' (UNFCCC 1992, p.3). The Convention represented the first official political acknowledgment of climate change as a human induced threat and the first international commitment to action.

Over the past 20 years the political commitment to this cause has remained strong. There are now 194 signatories to the Convention. Representatives and state leaders have met at least once a year since 1995 and 184 of them have ratified the

legally binding Kyoto Protocol. At the 2011 Conference of the Parties in Durban, statements were heard from over 160 states, which expressed deep concern about the problem of climate change and the need for a strong commitment to action (UNFCCC 2011a). Harris (2009) argues that 'climate change is now a mainstream part of the international politics agenda' (p.1).

However, when it comes to implementing these commitments, progress has not been significant. The United Nations (UN) website states: 'the Kyoto Protocol sets standards for certain industrialised countries. Those targets expire in 2012. In the meanwhile, greenhouse gas emissions from both developed and developing countries have been increasing rapidly' (UN 2011). The binding commitments of Kyoto have had little impact internationally, while the Durban Conference did 'little or nothing to reduce emissions and defers action for almost a decade' (Tollefson 2011, p.299-300).

At the national level, the failure to meet emissions reduction targets has almost become an accepted inevitability. The United States has yet to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and, at the Durban Conference, Canada became the first country to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol after previously ratifying it[1]. There are examples of countries that have achieved their emission targets (including the UK), but they are the exception rather than the rule. Lorenzoni and Hulme (2009) claim that, 'in Europe, despite fervent central support for mitigation, only the UK and Sweden are on course to meet their Kyoto Protocol commitments' (p.383). It is fair to claim that, 'by any reasonable measure, the steps taken so far to address climate change have failed' (Barrett 2009, p.1).

The 'gap' between values and action is also evident at the individual level. Individuals claim that they are committed to the mitigation of climate change, but then do not act upon this professed commitment (Blake 1999; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002). According to Hale (2010), 'the annual survey of public attitudes conducted for DEFRA finds consistently high claimed behaviours, in particular on recycling, food waste and energy efficiency. The prevalence of these behaviours is much less widespread in practice' (p.261). Research into this gap between attitudes and actions has focused on specific areas such as household waste and recycling (Barr

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[1] The Canadian Environment Minister was clear that, domestically, Canada would 'continue to do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions' (Kent 2012).

et al 2001) and support for climate change policy (Dietz *et al* 2007). There has been a lot of research into the reasons why people express concern about climate change but then do not engage in climate-protecting behaviour.

When I began researching the problem of climate change I was keen to contribute to this body of literature. Lorenzoni *et al* (2007) argue that 'in relation to climate change, there is a need for in-depth research that examines inconsistencies and ambiguities in beliefs, values and actions' (p.448). Like many other scholars, I wanted to understand why the value-action gap existed and if it could be addressed. I was also interested in the connections between state politics and individual action on climate change. If there was a value-action gap at both levels, could the problems be attributed to the same or similar factors?

1.2.2   Individual Behaviour Change

The second area that I was interested in is closely related to the first. It is often suggested that the value-action gap can be addressed by finding ways to change the behaviour of individuals. Indeed, both national and local government have frequently highlighted the importance of individual behaviour change in the implementation of climate policy (DEFRA 2007; DEFRA 2008; Southerton *et al* 2011; DECC 2011).

A lot of research in this area is rooted in psychology and sociology. For example, the work by Barr *et al* (2001) was based on the value-action gap in the context of household waste, but the focus was on environmental values, situational variables and psychological variables. How do we use our understanding of these factors to change the behaviour of individuals? Similarly, Dietz *et al* (2007) look at the value-action gap in the context of climate policy, but they focus on a combination of various social and psychological factors, such as 'personal character', 'trust' and 'future orientation' (p.191).

Other research in this area has attempted to provide a more sophisticated account of individual behaviour change. In January 2008 DEFRA published a report entitled, 'A framework for pro-environmental behaviours'. Among other things, the report outlines DEFRA's environmental 'segmentation model', which 'divides the public into seven clusters each sharing a distinct set of attitudes and beliefs (towards the environment, environmental issues and behaviours)' (p.41). These clusters include 'concerned consumers', 'waste watchers' and 'positive greens'. Once we

identify the motivations of a particular cluster of the population, we can work on particular ways to change their behaviour. For example, 'waste watchers' are concerned with local and national environmental problems rather than global environmental issues. One way to motivate this type of person would be to target behaviours that 'relate to their concern about the UK countryside' such as water management in the garden (DEFRA 2008, p.57). Research by other scholars has also advocated the importance of a 'tailored approach' to behaviour change. Leiserowitz (2007) argues that 'messages about climate change need to be tailored to the needs and predispositions of particular audiences' (p.57).

The process of individual behaviour change was another area where I felt I could engage in interesting and worthwhile research. I could identify different factors that prevented behaviour change and investigate how individuals could overcome these barriers. This is the kind of work that can 'provide a useful reference tool for policymakers at the local and national level' (Barr *et al* 2001, p.2031). The research would incorporate my interest in the value-action gap, it could be of theoretical and practical importance and it could potentially have a discernible impact on the problem of climate change.

1.2.3 *Neoliberal Governance*

The final area that I was interested in was the apparent dominance of neoliberal policies in the context of the environment. Neoliberalism is an economic and political project that advocates free markets, self-interested individualism and a minimal role for the state. The term 'neoliberalism 'can be traced back to the 1930s when an economist named Alexander Rustow attempted to 'indicate the distinction between the prevailing pro-collectivist liberal ethos and the principles of traditional liberalism' (Turner 2008, p.4). The theory of neoliberalism rejected the prevailing collectivist policies of the time and promoted values such as individual freedom and private property rights. However, in the years that followed, most economies retained a system of central planning and the regulation of markets. Neoliberalism remained a 'minority argument' (Harvey 2005, p.2). According to Turner (2008) the 'immediate years after the Second World War' represented 'liberalism's darkest hour' (p.1). There was academic interest in the revival of liberalism in the form of the Mont

Pelerin Society[2] but most states adhered to the theory of 'embedded liberalism' and embraced 'principles of community, rational planning and institutional design' (Turner 2008, p.1). This system delivered strong economic growth during the 1950s and 1960s. However, towards the end of the 1960s, many states were facing high unemployment and inflation. The economic crises that followed 'polarized debate between those ranged behind social democracy and central planning…[and] those concerned with liberating corporate and business power and re-establishing market freedoms' (Harvey 2005, p. 13). Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, it was the latter approach that gradually became dominant.

According to von Werlhof (2008), 'the political economy of neoliberalism began in Chile in 1973' (p.95). In the aftermath of a violent political coup, Chile experienced the roll-back of community organisations such as health centres and a decrease in economic regulation. This ultimately led to the 'revival of the Chilean economy in terms of growth, capital accumulation and high rates of return on foreign investments' (Harvey 2007, p.26). Neoliberal 'experiments' followed in several countries, including New Zealand and Sweden. Once the ideology was adopted in the United States and the United Kingdom, neoliberalism began to exert global influence:

> It was only when the United States under Reagan and the United Kingdom under Thatcher adopted neoliberal programmes of privatisation, government spending cuts, deregulation and marketization that neoliberalism, sometimes referred to as the 'Washington consensus', became dominant (Humphreys 2009, p.320).

Since the 1970s, neoliberal ideology 'has become the dominant model for political economic practice today' (Mansfield 2004a, p.313).

Neoliberalism quickly became influential in the realm of environmental politics. According to McCarthy and Prudham (2004), 'free-market environmentalism [has] proliferated since the Reagan-Thatcher years, in forms such as tradable emission permits, transferable fishing quotas, user fees for public goods, and aspects of utility privatization' (p.279)[3]. As I began researching the problem of climate change, it

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[2] The Mont Pelerin Society represented a 'small and exclusive group' of passionate advocates of traditional liberal ideals. The society formed in 1947 with Friedrich von Hayek at the centre. Members were labelled 'neoliberal' due to their adherence to traditional liberalism and 'those free market principles of neo-classical economics' (Harvey 2005, p.19-20).
[3] Neoliberal approaches to environmental issues have been labelled in a number of different ways, including 'free-market environmentalism', 'neoliberal environmentalism' and 'green capitalism'. In the context of some analyses the distinction between these terms is important. However, the purpose of

became apparent that the issue was being dealt with in a particular way. There was a 'prevalence of neoliberal influences on environmental solutions' (Andrew *et al* 2010, p.612).

The proliferation of neoliberal environmental governance has become the subject of a great deal of controversy. For some theorists, 'free-market environmentalism' offers us a 'pragmatic alternative to political environmentalism' (Anderson and Leal 2001, p.viv). According to Anderson and Leal (2001), market prices 'signal increasing scarcity and provide rewards for those who mitigate resource constraints by reducing consumption, finding substitutes, and improving productivity' (p.3). Thus, according to proponents of a neoliberal approach, 'the most effective and efficient way to protect the global climate system is to assign property rights for greenhouse-gas emissions and to trade these rights on international markets' (Bailey 2007, p.431).

Other theorists are critical of neoliberal approaches to environmental problems. Heynon and Perkins (2005) investigate urban private property and the 'neoliberalization of nature'. They describe a situation in Milwaukee where Dutch elm disease destroyed over 200,000 trees. 99% of the city's public forest was replaced, but only 4% of the city's 'urban forest' was located on public land. It was of no real benefit to individual people to replace trees and the government had no authority over private land. This meant that many trees were never replaced. Heynon and Perkins (2005) accept that the distribution of urban trees may seem like a 'mundane' issue to many people (p.99). However, they argue that this issue is symptomatic of neoliberal approaches to the environment more generally. The privatisation of land and the prioritisation of property rights over government regulation led to further environmental problems. The loss of urban trees 'cumulatively affects climate, air quality, and the quality of life' (p.110).

Many other academics support this critical position. Dryzek (1996) argues that, 'a predominantly instrumental orientation on the part of human beings in the context of their interaction with... the natural world is destructive' (p.27), while Bakker (2007) claims that privatization, 'introduces a pernicious logic of the market' (p.437). Therefore, 'the protection of our environment is best served, not by bringing the environment into a surrogate version of the commercial world, but by its

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this section is simply to outline the influence of neoliberal governance on environmental issues. I will therefore use the terms interchangeably to describe neoliberal environmental governance.

protection as a sphere outside the world of commodity exchange and its norms'
(O'Neill, 1997, p.550).

I found these debates about neoliberal environmental governance particularly interesting. Was this an approach that could effectively deal with a problem such as climate change and, if not, why did it remain so prominent in modern society? In addition, this area could potentially be linked to the value-action gap and individual behaviour change. Prudham (2009) argues that 'green capitalism' involves 'harnessing capital investment, individual choice and entrepreneurial innovation to the green cause' (p.1595). Could neoliberal ideology and individual behaviour change (and choice) be linked to one another and if we were dealing with a value-action gap in a world dominated by neoliberal approaches did this mean that neoliberalism was indeed failing to solve environmental problems?

1.3 Approaches to the Problem of Climate Change

When I began the thesis I spent a lot of time researching the three areas outlined in the previous section. I thought about the role of neoliberalism and individual behaviour change and I developed my own ideas about why people do not act on climate change. In this section I will explain how my initial ideas evolved into a research project. I began from a normative perspective and in section 1.3.1 I will discuss why this approach seemed to be the most appropriate for the project: what should we do about climate change? In section 1.3.2 I will explain how my initial ideas evolved into more empirical questions: why are particular approaches to climate change dominant in modern society? What effect does this have on the way we deal with the issue? Ultimately, I decided to engage in a discursive project. In section 1.3.3 I will explain why this approach was appropriate and how it related to the three different areas in which I was interested.

1.3.1 The Political Project

There were two main ways in which I could study climate change as a social phenomenon: an empirical project or a normative project. Ransom (1997) discusses the difference between these two approaches:

A fundamental distinction in social and political thought is between the 'ought' and the 'is'. One of the tasks of political science, for example, is to explain how particular societies and institutions actually work. Political philosophy produces theories of how the world ought to be, though this task is by no means its exclusive domain (p.1).

My initial inclination was to take a normative approach. How *should* we deal with the issue of climate change? If there is a value-action gap then there must be a problem with current approaches and, hence a 'better' way to deal with the issue.

I considered engaging in a critical analysis of neoliberal environmentalism and possible alternatives to the neoliberal project. The literature in these areas was extensive. Research into neoliberalism had focused on the privatisation of environmental resources such as water (Bond 2004; Bakker 2007), the oceans (Mansfield 2004a; 2004b) and even the climate itself in the form of carbon trading (Lohmann 2010). The theory of ecological modernisation – where environmental management is a positive-sum game and pollution prevention pays – had also received a lot of attention (Pepper 1999; Mol and Sonnenfeld 2000; Mol 2000; 2002; Gibbs 2003; Curran 2009). Finally, many scholars had researched key features of neoliberal environmentalism such as ethical consumption (Meyer 2001; Rowlands *et al* 2003; Greenberg 2006) and the individualisation of responsibility (Maniates 2001; Kent 2009; Reynolds 2010). A lot of this work considered the role of neoliberalism in a specific area and presented a critical analysis of the approach.

Many other scholars offered alternatives to neoliberalism. It was argued that environmental issues such as climate change should be considered in terms of ethics (Whitworth 2001; Kamminga 2008), human rights (Woods 2006; Caney 2008), responsibility (Brown 2003; Page 2007) and justice (Shrader-Frechette 2002; Maltais 2008; Parks and Roberts 2010). We should focus on the intrinsic value of nature (Haigh and Griffiths 2009; Soper 2000) and we should re-evaluate the neoliberal conception of growth and progress (Hines 2003; Seyfang 2005; Hinton and Redclift 2009). Most of these scholars were engaging in the kind of analysis that I was keen to contribute to. They were critiquing current approaches to climate change and/or presenting a 'better' way to deal with the problem: how the world 'ought to be' (Ransom 1997, p.1).

However, as I explored this literature I became increasingly aware of two things. First, it would be difficult to make an 'original' contribution to such a vast

body of literature. Second, and perhaps more importantly, this vast array of literature did not appear to be making any difference to the dominance of neoliberalism or the problem of climate change. The 'neoliberalization of nature' did indeed appear to be 'fated, inescapable and evolutionary' (Heynon and Robbins 2005, p.6).

1.3.2   An Empirical Approach to Climate Change

My interest in the problem of climate change began to evolve as my focus shifted to more empirical questions. In the face of such overwhelming criticism, why do neoliberal approaches remain so prevalent? If there are so many alternatives to neoliberalism, why have we not changed the way we deal with climate change? According to Ransom (1997) I had begun my investigation into climate change with political philosophy: trying to work out how the world ought to be. As my research developed I had moved towards political science, thinking about how things worked and why this was the case.

Ransom (1997) argues that 'frequently, these two branches of political thought… stand in critical relation to each other' (p.1). I was not convinced that this had to be the case. In fact, I saw an important connection between the 'ought' and the 'is'. Surely, knowing how something 'is' is a precondition for working out how it should be? How can we challenge the dominance of neoliberalism if we do not know why neoliberalism is so dominant? How can we advocate a 'better' way of doing things if we do not understand why things are the way they are? I therefore decided to engage in an empirical project. My research would focus on the world as it was at the moment. Why were particular approaches to climate change promoted and others neglected? How did the world work in the context of climate change? It was my contention that this kind of knowledge could be used to inform more normative work. If we know how the world works then we can begin to challenge the dominant (and arguably wrong) ways of dealing with climate change.

1.3.3   A Discursive Approach to Climate Change

I began to explore other research that had considered the dominance and reproduction of particular ideas in society. This quickly led me to the work of Michael Foucault. Foucault was interested in how things had come to be the way they are. He wanted to understand how the world worked and, more specifically, how

particular thoughts and ideas had become 'normal' or 'natural'. This resonated with the kind of work I wanted to do. How had particular approaches to climate change become accepted as 'normal'? How were these 'normal' ideas reinforced in society? Foucault argued that ideas are reinforced through the operation of power at different sites of interaction. For Foucault (1982), 'power relations are rooted in the system of social networks' (p.141). When one individual communicates with another (a site of interaction) power is exercised through the transfer of knowledge. Therefore, if we want to understand how this process works, we must analyse 'every manner of speaking, doing or behaving in which the individual appears and acts as a knowing subject' (Foucault 1984b, p.59). If we want to understand how particular ideas have become dominant then we must analyse the reproduction of these ideas and the operation of power at the micro level. How were people thinking and talking about climate change in everyday life? What ideas were they communicating to other people?

I therefore decided to take a discursive approach to climate change. We can understand how meaning (discourse) is constructed by looking carefully at the way language is used (discourse analysis). We can understand how and why particular approaches to climate change are dominant by analysing everyday communication about the problem. The project would not be a Foucauldian analysis of climate change, but it would draw on particular aspects of Foucault's work as well as the work of other discursive theorists.

This approach could potentially incorporate my interest in the value-action gap, individual behaviour change and neoliberal environmentalism. First, I could study neoliberal environmentalism from a discursive perspective. I could look at different perspectives on neoliberalism – ecological modernisation, privatisation, justice and consider how these ideas were being used in everyday language. Why are some discourses dominant when others were not? Second, I could study individual behaviour as a construction of these dominant discourses. How did dominant climate discourses construct 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour? The project would not consider how we *should* deal with climate change. Rather, it would investigate how we do deal with climate change and why this is the case. Finally, this could potentially provide some insight into the value-action gap. Is the value-action gap a result of dominant discourses and the construction of 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour? The combination of these three areas in a discursive

project might act as a first step towards a fuller understanding of the problem of climate change.

1.4 The Context for the Project

A discursive approach involves the analysis of language and communication. It was important to find a context where climate change was being discussed on a daily basis and where the individuals who talk about climate change appear and act as 'knowing subjects' (Foucault 1984b, p.59). Climate change is a topic of discussion in many different areas of society and there was already some discursive research in the context of climate change and local policy (Lindseth 2004; Slocum 2004a) and climate change and the media (Boykoff 2008; Olaussen 2009). There was also a very limited amount of discursive research in the context of climate change and business (Livesey 2002; Joutsenvirta 2009). Given the prominence of neoliberalism in the project, I decided that business would be a very relevant context for analysis. Business is the institution at the heart of the neoliberal project and, as such, it has played a prominent role in the development of neoliberal environmental governance. Many businesses have made an effort to implement climate-protecting production processes and/or invest in environmental products and services (Rhee and Lee 2003; Hoffman 2005; Jeswani *et al* 2008). Large corporations have also played an increasingly important role in international climate negotiations (Paterson 2001b; Bernhagen 2008).

In addition, businesses have begun to focus on the internal promotion of action on climate change and many large corporations, including Aviva, Coca Cola, EDF Energy, Tesco and Virgin, have introduced so-called 'climate champion' schemes. A 'climate champion' is an employee who is given responsibility for promoting climate protecting behaviour in the workplace. Champions are provided with training on the science of climate change and communication techniques and are then expected to promote behaviour change amongst their colleagues. The role is voluntary and the schemes are designed to establish a network of individuals to lead on environmental initiatives throughout the business. Ideally, these designated individuals are strategically located across the company and it is expected that their collective effort will help to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions of the organisation and promote climate-friendly behaviour among employees.

The climate champion scheme appeared to be a very appropriate context for the research. Climate champions were individuals who had knowledge about climate change and were discussing the issue on a daily basis. By analysing how they communicated with their colleagues I could identify the discourses that they were drawing on and how these were being reproduced in everyday interactions. Moreover, business was a very interesting context for discursive analysis of climate change. If we can find resistance to dominant neoliberal discourses at the heart of neoliberalism then we might assume that resistance is possible in other contexts. Finally, it appeared that this kind of scheme was becoming increasingly popular. I found evidence of a climate champion project or something very similar in over 50 businesses across the UK. Given their increasing numbers and presumably pro-environmental point of view, I felt that gaining access to the champions would be relatively straightforward.

1.5 Research Questions

On the basis of my approach and the context of the analysis I identified four main research objectives for the project: (i) to identify the climate discourses that were being used in everyday communication (ii) to understand how dominant climate discourses constructed 'appropriate'/'inappropriate' ways to talk and think about climate change (iii) to analyse how dominant discourses were reproduced and reinforced in everyday interactions (iv) to identify possible resistance to dominant discourse and analyse how this operated at sites of interaction.

Identifying Climate Discourses

The first research objective focuses on the different climate discourses that were being used by the champions. What discourses did the champions draw upon when they talked about climate change as a problem and promoted behaviour change in the workplace? Did they draw on different discourses depending on the situation and the audience?

Understanding the Discursive Construction of Motivation and Behaviour

The second research objective focuses on 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' ways to talk and think about motivation and behaviour in relation to climate change. What kind of motivations did the champions use to encourage behaviour change and

what kind of actions did they promote? How were 'appropriate' motivations and actions constructed by dominant climate discourses?

Analysing the Reproduction of Dominant Discourses

The third research objective focuses on the reproduction of dominant climate discourses. Did the champions act as a 'passive subject' by reinforcing dominant discourses and how did they do this on a daily basis? Did the reinforcement of dominant discourses vary according to context?

Identifying Resistance to Dominant Discourses

The final research objective focuses on resistance to dominant climate discourses. Did the champions have a capacity for resistance as 'active agents' and did they actually challenge the dominant discourses? If so, how did resistance operate at different sites of interaction?

1.6   Chapter Outline

I have divided my argument into eight chapters. In chapter two I will begin by elaborating on the theoretical approach that I introduced in section 1.3.3. I will outline a discursive approach to climate change and consider why this approach is appropriate for the project. I will discuss the general features of a discursive approach and the difference between descriptive and critical discourse analysis. I will then consider some of the strengths and weaknesses that might be associated with a discursive approach in the context of an issue like climate change. These include the constructivist underpinnings of discourse analysis, the analysis of politics at the 'micro level' and the problems associated with agency and prescription. I will argue that critical discourse analysis is necessary when researching a social phenomenon like climate change. The final part of the chapter will then consider a discursive approach in the context of my own project. I will discuss the previous literature that has used a discursive approach in related contexts: business and climate change; individual behaviour change; and the study of climate champions. I will explain how my project will build upon work that has already been done.

In chapter three I will further develop the theoretical framework of the project by providing an account of how we should distinguish different climate discourses. I

will begin by considering how we might go about analysing discourse. What do we actually look at in order to identify different climate discourses? Drawing on the work of Dryzek (1997), I will outline six fundamental components that we can identify as constituting any discourse of climate change. For example, I will argue that each climate discourse is based on a particular account of human nature and a particular set of key values. I will then use this 'six component' framework to analyse the discourse of neoliberalism. I will argue that neoliberalism has a significant influence on the ways in which we deal with climate change and therefore plays an important role in all climate discourses. The chapter will then distinguish different discourses of climate change. The main focus of the thesis is the different ways of actually dealing with climate change based on the distinction between climate change as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system and climate change as a fundamental problem. The main part of this chapter identifies seven climate discourses that are rooted in this distinction. The discourses either conform to the principles of neoliberalism (reformist discourses) or reject neoliberal ideas (revolutionary discourses).

Chapter four will then outline the methodology of the project. I will discuss the research process, including how I selected a sample of businesses, the process of conducting the interviews, and how I analysed the data. I will also discuss the issues of ethics, reliability, validity and generalisability that I faced during the project. Finally, I will consider my own role as a researcher and the effect that this may have had on the project. Given the normative origins of my research, I was conscious of my own potential bias as a self-professed environmentalist and someone who wanted to find a 'better' way to deal with climate change. I will explain how I dealt with these issues and attempted to reduce any influence that my own position might have had on the project.

In chapter five I will begin the empirical analysis. I will consider the role of the climate champions in terms of their training, their knowledge and how they constructed the problem of climate change. I will argue that most of the champions had a good general grasp of the science of climate change and that they drew on scientific discourses when they talked about the problem. The majority of the champions rejected discourses of scepticism and pessimism. They believed that climate change was happening and that we could do something to tackle the problem. Moreover, based on scientific facts, many of the champions constructed climate change as objectively 'true'. However, climate change was frequently constructed as

a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system rather than a fundamental problem. I will argue that this construction of the problem might suggest the prevalence of reformist discourses when the champions encouraged climate-protecting behaviour. The chapter will also consider how the champions talked about the limitations of their role. How should they translate their knowledge and ideas to other people and what were the limits of their actions? I will argue the champions' perception of their role was heavily influenced by the neoliberal conception of individual sovereignty and rights. Champions who had claimed that climate science was objective were reluctant to challenge other people's beliefs. Climate protecting behaviour had to be communicated in a way that did not interfere with the individual's right to choose. This again indicates the dominance of reformist discourses and suggests a limited capacity for resistance.

Chapters six and seven will focus on the promotion of behaviour change. Both of these chapters will identify climate discourses and analyse how different discourses were reinforced or resisted by the champions. Chapter six will analyse motivations for changing behaviour. I will argue that most of the champions talked about monetary gains and self-interest when they tried to encourage behaviour change in other people. Several champions did talk about 'doing the right thing' and a concern for the climate itself, but these were often constructed as secondary considerations. I will then outline the champions' own motivations for getting involved in the scheme and engaging in climate protecting behaviour. When the champions talked about their own motivations they referred to justice, future generations and a concern for the natural world. However, they did not feel that these were 'appropriate' motivations to use with other people. Chapter six will also consider barriers to climate protecting behaviour. I will argue that most of the barriers that people talked about were rooted in a dominant neoliberal discourse.

In the second half of chapter six I will look at the reproduction and resistance of dominant discourses. I will argue that many of the champions reinforced dominant ideas simply by using these to promote behaviour change. Many of them drew on revolutionary motivations when they talked about themselves, but they did not communicate them to other people and they often constructed them as 'silly' or 'clichéd'. This further reinforced dominant reformist discourses as the 'appropriate' way to talk about climate change. Finally, the champions also reinforced dominant discourses by responding to neoliberal barriers with reformist solutions. However,

there was some evidence of resistance. The fact that the champions did acknowledge more revolutionary motivations indicates resistance to dominant ways of thinking. In addition, many of them did identify problems with the neoliberal approach and the fact that this was perhaps not the 'best' way to approach the problem. Resistance did occur, but this was very limited.

Chapter seven will consider the actual actions that were being encouraged by the champions. I will identify 'appropriate' actions in the workplace and the discourses that the champions drew upon when they talked about these actions. I will argue that the most 'appropriate' actions were small, straightforward and did not take up a lot of time (e.g., recycling, switching off monitors). The champions were therefore reluctant to encourage fundamental changes to the way people lived. Moving to an alternative lifestyle was often considered a step 'backwards' in terms of commonly accepted notions of 'progress'. The champions were willing to engage in some actions that were a little out of the ordinary, but they were often reluctant to promote these actions to other people. Chapter seven will also consider the role of the state, business and 'the people' in the context of action on climate change. I will argue that many participants expected the government to facilitate behaviour change through recycling facilities and a strong infrastructure for public transport. Some champions also talked about the importance of enforced action on climate change. However, this idea was not widely supported. Finally, the champions talked about the importance of collective action. Again, however, this was constructed in a particular way. We should all work together to tackle climate change, but the construction of 'working together' involved everyone performing individual actions such as recycling or using public transport. It did not involve campaigning as a collective force.

In the second half of chapter seven I will discuss the reinforcement and resistance of dominant discourses. I will argue that the champions reinforced dominant discourses in several ways. First, they constructed environmental concern as a little out of the ordinary. They considered themselves to be environmental, but they rejected a revolutionary version of environmentalism, which involved being an 'activist' or a 'saint'. Second, when they talked about success they referred to small, reformist changes. They rejected the idea of fundamental change. The champions did engage in a little resistance by talking about the possibility of change and challenging mind-sets. However, often this 'change' was from pure neoliberalism to reformist

accounts of climate change. It was not revolutionary change. In the context of action, resistance was again very limited.

Finally, chapter eight will provide a conclusion to the thesis. I will begin by considering the four research questions that were introduced in section 1.5. In answer to the first two research questions I will argue that, overall, neoliberal and reformist discourses were dominant and that this had a significant effect on the construction of 'appropriate' ways to talk and think about climate change. Specifically, I will return to the seven climate discourses that I outlined in chapter three and discuss how each of these was used by the champions in their everyday language. I will then consider the role of the champions as 'passive subjects' or 'active agents'. In answer to the second two research questions I will argue that, in general, the champions did act as 'passive subjects' and reinforce dominant climate discourses. There was some capacity for a more subversive role, but this was often limited to particular sites of interaction. I will finish the chapter with some final research considerations. I will evaluate the success of a discursive approach and discuss some methodological improvements that might have strengthened my overall analysis. I will end with some ideas for further research and a brief discussion of the normative implications of the project.

Chapter 2

A Discursive Approach to Climate Change

The problem of climate change can be studied in two main ways. We can take a normative approach: how should things be? Or we can take an empirical approach: how do things work? This project focuses on climate change as an empirical problem. Why do so many people profess concern about climate change, but then not act in climate-protecting ways? Why are neoliberal ideas so prevalent in modern society? What effect does this have on the governance of an issue like climate change? Specifically, the project takes a discursive approach to climate change. It argues that there are lots of different ways of thinking and talking about climate change as a social phenomenon. Ideas about climate change are constructed and reinforced on a daily basis through the communication of individuals. These discourses of climate change then play an important role in the construction of 'appropriate' language and behaviour. The thesis aims to investigate how people talk about climate change and how this language constructs 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' responses to the problem. It also focuses on the reproduction or subversion of dominant discourses.

In this chapter I will outline the foundations of a discursive approach to climate change and the way in which it will be used in the project. In section 2.1 I will discuss the general features of a discursive approach and distinguish between descriptive and critical discourse analysis. In section 2.2 I will consider a discursive approach to climate change. I will explain how the features of a discursive approach (as outlined in 2.1) are useful in the context of climate change. I will discuss the constructivist underpinnings of discourse analysis, the analysis of politics at the 'micro level' and the problems associated with agency and prescription. Throughout the section I will look at the strengths and weaknesses of this kind of approach. Finally, in section 2.3 I will consider a discursive approach in the context of my own project. I will discuss the importance of business, individual behaviour change and climate champions and I will explain how my research relates to and builds upon previous discursive work in the area of climate change.

2.1 A Discursive Approach

A discursive approach or 'discourse analysis' has been widely used in a number of academic disciplines. It advocates analysis at the micro level, investigating the construction of meaning through language and interaction. For proponents of a discursive approach, this level of understanding is a pre-condition for effective research. If we can understand how meaning is formed and reinforced in everyday interaction we can produce a more comprehensive account of the social world.

This section will outline the role of a discursive approach in qualitative research. In section 2.1.1 I will consider the features that are fundamental to all types of discourse analysis, including the theoretical assumptions and the level of analysis. In the two sections that follow I will outline two types of discourse analysis: descriptive (section 2.1.2) and critical (section 2.1.3). The project will employ critical discourse analysis to investigate the problem of climate change, but it is important to be clear about the distinction between the approaches.

2.1.1 Features of a Discursive Approach

There are three features that are common to all types of discourse analysis. First, a discursive approach is based on a constructivist understanding of the world. It disputes any contention that we can discover the 'true' nature of social phenomena. Instead, a discursive approach contends that the social world is constructed through language and the production of meaning over time. Green (2002) describes constructivism as 'the idea that most socio-political phenomena are constructed through human social interaction and the resultant shared understandings of their value and meaning, as opposed to being naturally occurring' (pp.5-6). Discourse analysis is a constructivist approach which focuses specifically on language as the means through which shared understanding is established.

Social constructivism moves away from positivism and 'factual statements about the world that can be tested and proven to be true or false' (Pettenger 2007, p.2). It proposes that the answers to social problems and indeed the problems themselves are relative to the context in which they are situated. Thus, 'all forms of knowledge are historically relative' (Downing 2008, p.vii). A discursive approach questions the foundations of our knowledge and contests the idea that we can know

the 'truth' about something. The approach seeks to understand *how* things become accepted as true or false.

The second feature of a discursive approach is that it analyses the construction of reality through language or 'discourse', making the general assumption that language is constitutive of reality. Reality is socially constructed, but more specifically it is constructed through our use of discourse in everyday interaction. Language is not a 'neutral means of reflecting or describing the world' (Gill 1996, p.141). Rather, language plays a role in constructing a particular version of reality as 'true' or 'correct'. When we study a research problem we must consider how it has been constructed through the 'talk and text' that are used to describe it (Wetherell *et al* 2001, p.i). At the most basic level, a discourse is 'a shared way of apprehending the world' which is 'embedded in language' (Dryzek 1997, p.8) and discourse analysis is 'the close study of language in use' (Taylor 2001, p.6). Thus, by looking carefully at the way language is used (discourse analysis) we can understand how meaning (discourse) is constructed.

Finally, to investigate the social construction of the world through language, a discursive approach encourages analysis at the micro level. It contends that the interactions between individuals are a vital area for analysis. This is the site where ideas and beliefs are formed and translated. If discourse is 'an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena', then it is important to study the sites at which these ideas, concepts and categories are put together (Hajer and Versteeg 2005, p.175). Pettenger and Cass (2007) claim that the micro level is where 'politics, economics and science gain value and meaning' (p.244). It is through their everyday interactions and language that people make sense of the world and the phenomena that they encounter. If we wish to make sense of the world then we must study the site where meaning and sense is constructed.

2.1.2 Descriptive Discourse Analysis

At the most basic level 'discourse' is simply a specific group of words forming some kind of meaning. Fairclough (1985) claims that when we analyse 'discourse' by this definition we are engaging in 'basic, non-explanatory' discourse analysis, the goal of which is to 'describe without explaining' (p.753). This form of

analysis may, for example, highlight the fact that a speaker consistently uses indirect forms of request (Fairclough 1985, p.753). It will not seek to investigate why this is the case or acquire any further information about the situation. According to Haggett and Toke (2006) this approach is often used in social psychology. There is 'no presumption about the nature of social relations...focus remains on form, structure and function of language in each instance' (p.113).

A local explanatory approach would attempt to go beyond this basic analysis by looking at the immediate context of the situation (Fairclough 1985). It may acknowledge the age, gender or relationship of the people that are engaged in an exchange and the influence that these factors have on their interaction. For example, if a person consistently uses deferential language, a local explanatory approach may consider the contextual factors of the exchange to determine why this might be the case. In this example, deferential language might occur in an exchange between a young person and an older person. This approach offers a more sophisticated analysis than the descriptive approach, but it remains in the territory of linguistics.

2.1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis offers a more in-depth approach. It shares the three fundamental components of all discursive approaches. Its theory of knowledge is rooted in constructivism, it analyses language as constitutive rather than neutral and it focuses on the micro level as the sphere of analysis. However, it goes beyond linguistics and description by situating discourse in a wider social setting. The focus is on the social situation and how this can be understood through discourse (Haggett and Toke 2006, p.113). Critical discourse analysis does not simply investigate how a specific ensemble of words creates a specific meaning or set of meanings. Rather, it challenges the foundations of our knowledge and questions the power that is implicit in the establishment of what is 'true' and 'natural'. It is critical because it is not only concerned with how meaning is constructed, but also why one particular meaning may feel 'natural' when others do not. How does discourse operate to construct 'truth' at the societal level? What role does power play in this process?

For critical discourse analysis, 'discourse' is more than just words and specific meaning; it is the rules that underlie meaning and how it can be constructed. A discourse is embedded in social relations and is instrumental in constructing

knowledge that people believe to be 'true' and the actions that they understand as 'appropriate'. All forms of discourse present reality in a specific way depending on the words, ideas and concepts that are employed in speaking. However, for critical theorists, the discursive process is more complicated than this. It is not simply a case of presenting any version of reality by choosing from an infinite range of ideas, concepts and categories. Rather, discourse limits the options that are available to construct ideas. Discourse is 'the unwritten rules and structures which produce particular utterances' (Mills 2003, p.54). It is not just any combination of words to produce any arbitrary meaning; it is the rules which dictate what can and cannot be said. For critical theorists, 'discourse' is imbued with power. It is through the successful exercise of power that particular discourses become 'true' and specific words and actions become 'appropriate'. Knowledge and power are therefore inextricably linked:

By picking out what to emphasise and what to present positively or negatively, knowledge shapes the world it describes. Knowledge is linked to power not as a result of some perversion of its true function or essence... but as the unavoidable result of its own activity (Ransom 1997, p.19).

Through the communication of a piece of knowledge, power is being exerted on the receiver of knowledge through the very act of knowledge giving. It controls them in as much as what they are being told is portrayed as 'true' and this affects the way they see the world. The very exercise of transferring knowledge is imbued with power relations.

Hall (2001) argues that 'power relations permeate all levels of social existence' (p.77). As the fundamental component of politics, power exists, quite explicitly, at the international level and in the relations between the state and its citizens. However, power is also prevalent in the relations between individuals. Given the constructivist nature of the world, 'meaning' and 'truth' are invariably subject to contestation. Power is therefore exerted through the production of knowledge and meaning. We see 'politics as a struggle for discursive hegemony in which actors try to secure support for their definition of reality' (Hajer 1995, p.59). Successful power relations stem from the establishment of a particular version of reality as 'true'. Carabine (2001) claims that, 'some discourses are more powerful than others and have more authority or validity... dominant discourses tell us the "truth"' (p.275).

Critical discourse analysis is interested in this process. How do things become established as true? Why do some discourses become dominant? Fairclough (2001) claims that critical discourse analysis 'aims to show non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social relations of power and domination and in ideology' (p.229). This kind of exploratory endeavour is evident in the work of other important critical theorists, not least Michel Foucault. Foucault aimed to 'circumvent the anthropological universals in order to examine them as historical constructs' (Florence 2003, p.3). He was interested in how things came to be the way they are (Ransom 1997, p.2). There are differences between the specific works of critical theorists, but this underlying interest in power and the construction of knowledge is common to them all. Critical theorists are interested in how 'truth' is established and how it is maintained. Indeed, van Dijk (2001) claims that, the main preoccupation of critical discourse analysis is 'the role of discourse in the (re) production and challenge of dominance' (p.300).

For critical theorists the most useful way to explore these processes is to analyse interaction at the micro level. According to Rabinow and Rose (2003), Foucault did 'fieldwork in philosophy' (p.ix). He studied the everyday talk and text (the micro) in order to understand how 'truth' was created at the societal level (the macro). Foucault (1982) argued that 'we have to refer to much more remote processes if we want to understand how we have been trapped in our own history' (p.128). Critical discourse analysis contends that there is a reciprocal relationship between everyday communication or action and societal discourses. Critical theorists study 'micro events' and 'macro structures' and see 'the latter as both the conditions for and the products of the former' (Fairclough 1985, pp.739-40). Everyday interaction (micro events) contributes to the reproduction of dominant societal discourses (macro structures). Conversely, dominant societal discourses limit the options available for communication at the micro level. Particular language and actions are 'appropriate' and therefore available for use because they are congruent with the dominant discourse, which tells us the 'truth' about what we should say and how we should act. Close analysis of the micro level can help us to understand how this process works.

2.2 A Discursive Approach to Climate Change

In the context of environmentalism, discourse analysis has already been widely used. Many studies have considered the general relationship between

discourse and the environment (Dryzek 1997; Darier 1999; Fischer and Hajer 1999; Harre *et al* 1999; Hajer and Versteeg 2005; Feindt and Oels 2005). Others have focused on a specific environmental or policy issue. These have included environmental problems, such as ozone depletion (Liftin 1994) and flooding (Penning-Roswell *et al* 2006), as well as policy issues, such as planning (Sharp and Richardson 2001) and local government legislation (Garrison and Massum 2001). Work has also considered environmental discourse in the media (Rydin and Pennington 2001; Peterson 2007) and critical discourse analysis of eco-tourism (Stamou and Paraskevopoulos 2004).

The discursive work on climate change is less extensive but growing. Studies have considered discourse in climate policy (Lindseth 2004; Slocum 2004a; Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006; Fletcher 2009; Methmann 2010) and climate discourses in the media (Weingart *et al* 2000; Carvalho 2007; Boykoff 2008; Doulton and Brown 2009; Olausson 2009). In this section I will conduct a critical literature review of current discursive work in the area of climate change and address the potential strengths and weaknesses of this work. In section 2.2.1, I will consider two important criticisms of the relationship between constructivism and climate change. I will argue that constructivism is indeed a useful approach to the problem of climate change. In section 2.2.2, I will look at the importance of analysing climate change at the micro level and in section 2.2.3 I will discuss the work that has already been done in this area. Section 2.2.4, will then consider the distinction between descriptive and critical analysis and the importance of critical discourse analysis as an approach to climate politics. Finally, section 2.2.5, will discuss the role of agency in discourse analysis and the prescriptive potential of an empirical project.

Given the similarity in themes and approaches, the section will also draw on discursive work on the environment more generally, where applicable.

2.2.1 *Social Constructivism and Climate Change*

All discursive approaches assume a constructivist understanding of the social world. This has implications for the applicability of the approach to political problems. It has particularly important implications for a political issue like climate change. In this section I will consider two potential weaknesses of the approach. First, it is argued that constructivism is unhelpful because an approach based on relativism

cannot provide definitive solutions. If there is no 'correct' way to deal with a social problem, then what is the point in researching it? Second, for some people, a constructivist approach to knowledge also implies the absence of an objective reality. If nothing exists, then it does not make sense to talk about approaches to climate change at all. I will respond to both of these criticisms and argue that a constructivist approach can be applied to the issue of climate change and can provide some important insights into the problem.

Traditionally, political research has taken a positivist stance:

The political science discipline has consistently aspired to be [such a] scientific community, seeking knowledge that is not merely the functionally rational stuff of organized life but the objectively true data that facilitates substantive reasoning' (Ricci 1984, p.17).

The contention of political science was that there was a 'truth' to be discovered. The social world could be studied in a similar way to the natural world and the role of the political scientist was to find an objective way of arriving at definitive conclusions about political and social problems (Weisberg 2007). As such, the problem of inaction on climate change has been investigated through a number of positivist approaches.

International Relations (IR) scholars have considered the problems inherent in international climate negotiations, including procedural issues (Christoff 2010; Dimitrov 2010), lack of enforcement (Barrett 2009) and a weak institutional backdrop (Haas 2008)[4]. At the national level, researchers have cited problems such as 'short-termism' (Carter 2008) and the limited power of governments in the global economy (Hale 2010). In addition, social scientists, economists and psychologists have sought to understand why individuals do not engage in climate protecting behaviour despite professions of concern (Kollmus and Agyeman 2002; Lorenzoni and Pigeon 2006; Patchen 2010). This work is all based on the assumption that there is an objective reality which can be investigated through the use of positivist tools of analysis. Patchen (2010), for example, provides a survey of existing research of people's attitudes towards climate change. The conclusion to his article lists many factors which influence the behaviour of individuals and the measures that must be taken to

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[4] Haas (2008) notes that the UNFCCC has 'only 12 senior staff...with a large number of consultants and other staff. It has a modest budget of US$ 26 million per year' and it has 'few synergies or horizontal linkages' to other international regimes (p.3).

remedy these problems. Thus, the identification of definitive problems enables the development of authoritative solutions.

A constructivist approach to climate change challenges the positivist assumptions of the aforementioned research. For discursive theorists it is not possible to find definitive solutions to political problems because 'solutions', and indeed the problems themselves, are socially constructed. Discourse analysis centres on the 'conviction of the central importance of discourse in constructing social life' (Gill 1996, p.141). Rather than looking for particular problems inherent in climate negotiations or barriers to individual action, a discursive approach questions the way in which climate change is constructed:

Constructivism allows us to view climate change from a new perspective with the hope of uncovering processes, actors and structures that have been obscured in the current framing of climate change... what is it that we truly know about climate change, and how have we come to know this? (Pettenger 2007, p.7).

The main problem with this approach is that it still leaves us with many unanswered questions. It cannot offer an objective solution to the problem of climate change in the same systematic way positivists might claim to be able to do. However, it does remain a useful way to approach the problem of climate change. Despite the positivist research that has been conducted on climate change as a political problem, we have made little progress towards decreasing or even stabilising carbon emissions. A discursive approach suggests that there is perhaps something deeper going on here. Hajer (1995) claims that 'social constructivism and discourse analysis add essential insights to our analysis of contemporary environmental problems' (p.3). By looking at the construction of climate change we can question the knowledge that we currently have about causes, consequences and solutions. Constructivism can 'lead us to understand how certain meanings have emerged and been framed, while others have been obscured' (Pettenger 2007, p.11).

Another potential problem with a constructivist approach to climate change is that, for some people, constructivism implies the rejection of an objective reality. The epistemological position of constructivism (that knowledge is relative) leads to the ontological assumption that nothing exists. According to Jones (2002) 'it is frequently assumed that there is an inherent incompatibility between social constructionism and environmental concern' (p.247). This concern has been expressed by a number of

scholars. Milton (1996) states:

If the environment were nothing more than a cognitive construct, we could change it by constructing different truths, different meanings; we could will environmental dangers out of existence by thought alone. Thus, the constructivist model is incompatible with environmental activism, which depends on the recognition of an independent reality that can be modified by human actions (p.54).

The fundamental assumption about the problem of climate change is that we are modifying independent physical processes. If constructivism does not recognise this independent reality then it does not make any sense to talk about a constructivist approach to climate change.

Feindt and Oels (2005) acknowledge this problem and respond to the criticism:

Saying that environmental problems are socially constructed does not mean that there are no illnesses, malnutrition, loss of species and natural beauty, floods etc. caused by contaminated water and polluted air, by drought, logging or a rising ocean level. Instead, it means that there is not one authoritative interpretation of these events but multiple contested interpretations (p.162).

A discursive approach does not deny reality. Rather, it argues that the description of physical processes is interpretive. Archer *et al* (1998) assert that 'science is a social product, but the mechanisms it identifies operate prior to and independently of their discovery' (p.xii). Events can occur independently of human interaction with them. However, these events are only comprehensible to us through our interpretation of them. Wynne (2002) argues that, 'physical reality still courses through these contending and overtly less determinate representations and meanings' (p.462). A discursive approach simply asserts that there can be no one 'authoritative interpretation' of these processes. Thus, in the context of climate change we adopt 'an ontologically realist yet epistemologically relativist position' (Jones 2002, p.250). These arguments support the critical realist perspective that I adopted at the beginning of the thesis. We can take climate change to be an independently 'real' problem, but then study the construction of climate change as a social phenomenon.

These latter criticisms about the reality of climate change itself do reinforce the earlier weaknesses associated with a discursive approach to political problems. It becomes even more difficult to pinpoint a 'solution' to the problem. Wynne (2002) concedes that 'to question the existing realist representation of scientific framings of

climate change prediction does undermine the realist basis which tells us what should be done' (p.461). However, the contention of discursive theorists is that the construction of the problem itself may tell us why certain 'solutions' have not worked and particular 'problems' have appeared entrenched.

Hence, when we study climate change in this way we acknowledge the physical processes, but we focus our analysis on the construction of our knowledge about them and the behaviour that follows from this. A constructivist approach to climate change allows us to question our own assumptions about the subject and think more deeply about the related knowledge and behaviour that we have, thus far, taken for granted.

2.2.2   The 'Micro' Politics of Climate Change

A discursive approach to climate change analyses the problem at the 'micro' level of politics. It argues that politics exists in the contestation of meaning and 'truth' in the everyday communication of individuals. Traditionally, political research on climate change has focused on the state as the key actor in climate negotiations and policy enforcement. Much has been written about global climate conferences (Paterson 2001a; Soroos 2003; Christoff 2010; Dimitrov 2010) and the failure of national governments to implement reduction targets (Hulme and Turnpenny 2004; Pielke 2009). The role of local government has become increasingly important as a subject of research (Hunt 2004; Bulkeley and Betsill 2005). There has also been some research into the role of individuals in climate policy. For example, Moser (2006) talks about local climate initiatives and argues that 'none of the mitigation and adaptation efforts can succeed without engaging urban residents to support the development or realization of such policies' (p.1). Similarly, Engel and Orbach (2008) consider the different reasons for which individuals might support local or national climate change policy.

A discursive perspective does not deny the importance of studying international and national climate politics or the relationship between individuals and climate policy. However, it contends that all levels of politics can be analysed as discursive constructions at the micro level. The Kyoto Protocol was signed on behalf of nations but by individuals. It is a group of individuals who attend international climate meetings and discuss climate policy and commitments. It is individuals who

are asked to change their everyday practices and be more climate friendly. We should analyse the everyday communication of climate change because power is inevitably exercised through the transfer of ideas:

'Politics' here are considered as the management and contestation of policies through social relations infused with power, authority and varying perspectives... 'politics' involve proposals, ideas, intentions, decisions and behaviours with a focus on processes that prop up, challenge, lurk behind, support and resist explicit actions (Boykoff *et al* 2010, p.3).

This kind of power exists in all interactions, whether it is a conversation between two heads of state or between two climate champions. Of course, these two situations are not the same. An interaction between two climate champions is not subject to the same influences and constraints as a conversation between two heads of state. However, both of these situations are examples of 'everyday communication' in the sense that we are analysing an interaction between two specific individuals. In both cases we can learn about the transfer of ideas through a close analysis of the language that is used and the ideas that are generated. The context of the conversation may be different, but the purpose of the analysis is the same. Chilton (2002) argues that, 'the doing of politics is predominantly constituted in language' (p.3). The construction of knowledge and solutions to climate change at all levels of politics is fundamentally based on the interaction between individuals and the power struggle over meaning and 'correct' ideas. If we wish to understand where our knowledge has come from and why it is considered common sense we must focus our analysis at the micro level of politics.

2.2.3 Discursive Work on Climate Change

A discursive approach to climate change has been used in a number of different areas. One area that has proven particularly popular for this kind of analysis is the media. For example, Olaussen (2009) considers media framing of responsibility and collective action in the context of climate change. Among other points, he notes the 'numerous similarities between media and international policy discourse on the issue of climate change' (p.432). Doulton and Brown (2009), on the other hand, identify discourses of climate change and international development. They categorise eight different discourses in this area and compare their basic components. Both of

these studies use discourse analysis to investigate how climate change is constructed in the media.

Using the media for discursive research on climate change is useful for several reasons. In the modern world, it cannot be denied that the media exerts a great deal of influence on many political issues. For example, Herkman (2010) states: 'there is a broad consensus about the inherent connection between today's parliamentary politics and the media' (p.701). This kind of influence is particularly important in the case of an issue like climate change. Doulton and Brown (2009) claim that the media is a 'critical arena' for climate change debate and that 'what is written in the media influences public perceptions and thence policy: it matters' (p.191). Similarly, Boykoff (2008) investigates climate discourse in the context of the media and argues that the media 'significantly influence on-going public understanding of climate science and policy' (p.550). A discursive approach is useful in this context because the discourses that are used in the media are influential in the establishment of dominant societal discourses. This is the material that people are exposed to on a daily basis. It is often where they find the 'truth' about the world. The media is also useful because the data is so readily available. It is a convenient context that offers an important perspective.

However, there are also some important weaknesses associated with analysis of the media. McCombs and Reynolds (2002) investigate the selection process for the publication of newspaper articles. They contend that the stories that are chosen are frequently the ones which will grab the attention of a reader. They claim that the 'result is a limited view of the larger environment, something like the highly limited view of the outside world available through a small window' (p.6). The selection of discourses is not only based on the reproduction and challenge of dominance; it is influenced by the need to sell newspapers. It could, of course, be argued that this in itself is an important consideration for discursive analysis. However, it introduces methodological problems for any project that carries out discursive climate research in this area.

Discursive research on climate change has also focused on politics and policy at a number of different levels. Lindseth (2004) researches the Cities for Climate

Protection Campaign (CCPC)[5] and takes a constructivist approach to investigate 'how CCPC has constructed the local level as a relevant geographical space for climate protection' (p.326). Slocum (2004a) conducts a similar analysis of the CCPC campaign, which focuses on the discursive construction of citizens in local climate policy. At the international level, Methmann (2010) investigates the mainstreaming of climate change in world politics. He argues that global institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF employ particular climate discourses in order to implement 'business as usual' policy (p.369). Fletcher (2009) offers a similar discursive analysis at the national level, addressing the role of competing climate discourses in the construction of US climate policy.

These political contexts all offer important perspectives on the climate change problem. Hajer and Versteeg (2005) argue that discourses 'delimit the range of policy options and thereby serve as precursors to policy outcomes' (p.178). Given the importance of discourse in the construction of policy, it is vitally important to apply a discursive approach to the policy context. This is the context in which decisions about climate change are debated and agreed. In sum, media and politics are important areas for analysis and have both been researched quite extensively.

In addition to looking at the areas that have been researched it is also important to note the kind of material that is being analysed. Studies have looked at 'talk' through methods such as interviews and participant observation and 'text' in published documents. For example, Lindseth (2004) and Slocum (2004a) both analyse the construction of climate discourse in local policy but they analyse different types of material. Lindseth (2004) analyses 'strategic documents' that have been published by the CCPC campaign (p.326). Slocum (2004a) interviews 'heads of city departments and NGOs that would have some connection with climate change' (p.768). Although, the approach and the area for analysis is the same, these two studies can provide different perspectives based on the actual material they are analysing. Weingart *et al* (2000) combines the two approaches because he analyses scientific publications, but also carries out 'extensive interviews with leading German climate researchers' (p.263). His research provides an analysis of climate discourse in both 'text' and 'talk'.

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[5] The CCPC campaign was a project born out of the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) which was set up in the 1990s. This global programme invited local councils to join together in tackling environmental issues at the local level.

2.2.4 *Descriptive versus Critical Analysis on Climate Change*

The vast majority of discursive studies on climate change describe their methodology as 'critical' discourse analysis (CDA). For most of them the essential feature of CDA is that 'texts are considered as they are situated in context' (Boykoff 2008, p.555). We could engage in descriptive analysis of a particular text on climate change, but this would provide a very limited account of the issue. For example, basic descriptive analysis might indicate the repetition of certain words or the frequent use of rhetorical devices. A local explanatory approach might consider factors such as the author of the document and their age or gender, but it would still concentrate solely on the linguistic attributes of the text. As a social issue, climate change is inevitably situated in context. We cannot investigate the construction of ideas about the issue without considering the social structures in which they are situated. In relation to climate change, 'discourse is more than simply the use of language as a tool for communication. Discourse conveys subjectivity, knowledge and power' (Pettenger 2007, p.10).

Critical discourse analysis identifies particular (climate) discourses and considers how these discourses are operating in society through the transfer of knowledge. For example Bond (2000) identifies environmental discourses in post-apartheid South Africa. He then considers how these discourses are reinforced in society through the 'growing hegemony of orthodox economic prescription' (pp.59-60). Similarly, Backstrand and Lovbrand (2006) identify three climate discourses in international policy. They advocate CDA as a 'useful tool since it enables an analysis of the power relationships and conflicting knowledge claims underlying dominant narratives on how to manage the global threat of anthropogenic climate change' (p.50). Slocum (2004a) does not explicitly refer to 'critical discourse analysis' but she does adopt a critical discursive approach. She talks about neoliberal discourse as a dominant ideology and analyses the reproduction of this discourse in interview data. She argues that neoliberalism is dominant and considers how it operates as a 'normalising regime' (p.765).

According to van Dijk (2001) the 'critical presupposition of adequate critical discourse analysis is understanding the nature of social power and dominance' (p.301). We must identify (climate) discourses and investigate how these discourses operate in society. How is 'truth' established and maintained? If a discursive

approach is going to be useful in the ways I have suggested in the preceding sections then it must necessarily be critical in nature. Descriptive accounts are valuable in many contexts, but they cannot reveal the role that dominant climate discourses play in the construction of 'appropriate' behaviour and they cannot explain the construction and maintenance of dominant discourses in society.

2.2.5 Dealing with Climate Change

So far, this section has attempted to critically analyse the current literature on discursive approaches to climate change. I have considered the strengths and weaknesses of social constructivism and micro analysis as part of a discursive approach to climate change and I have assessed the type of discourse analysis that has been carried out by other researchers. This final sub-section will deal with two issues which are important in the context of discursive politics in general, but even more pertinent to an issue like climate change: the role of agency and the limited prescriptive potential of discourse analysis.

One of the most frequent criticisms of discourse analysis is the lack of attention it pays to agency. If discourses construct the language we can use and the actions we can carry out, are we simply slaves to discursive structures? This was a particular criticism of Foucault's work. One of Foucault's unchanging aims was to 'learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks and so enable it to think differently' (Ransom 1997, p.57). Despite this aim, critics contend that he did not leave much room for people to think differently. Lukes (2004) argues that Foucault takes away the autonomy of the subject. If power relations exist in all interactions how can there be any autonomy for individuals? He claims that, 'Foucault undermines the rational, autonomous moral agent' (p.92). This is a potential problem for climate change politics. If dominant climate discourses are operating through the construction of 'appropriate' language and behaviour, how can individuals change their behaviour? Can we challenge dominant climate discourses?

For Foucault (1984a) resistance to dominant discourses was possible. He claims that, 'in power relations there is necessarily the possibility of resistance because if there were no possibility of resistance, there would be no power relations at all' (p.34). More specifically, Foucault distinguishes between power and

domination. Domination is the relationship between a master and slave where one agent forces another to act in a particular way. Relations of power only work if people are free and a relation of power is successful only when a free person acts in accordance with the dominant discourse (Foucault 1982, p.135). In their discursive account of climate change policy, Backstrand and Lovbrand (2006) specifically subscribe to a 'notion of agency' in discourse analysis. They argue that, 'political power stems from the ability to articulate and set the terms of the discourse' (p.52). Similarly, Slocum (2004a) notes the resistance inherent in climate discourse: 'Multiple publics bring different discourses to the fore through avenues other than the [Cities for Climate Protection] campaign that will interact with it, potentially changing the terms of political discourse in the process' (p.779).

Furthermore, the very fact that discourses are constructed indicates that they are not immutable; if they are constructed then they can be challenged. Carabine (2001) claims that 'individuals are active agents and discourses are themselves in a state of constant reconstitution and contestation' (p.279). Power relations work through us but we are simultaneously reproducing them; we are doing something active in this process. This leaves room for resistance and a challenge to the dominant discourse. A discursive approach is important because analysis at the micro level exposes how dominant discourses are reproduced. It is also likely to indicate signs of resistance and evidence of subversive discourses which challenge the established 'truths' surrounding climate change.

The other issue to be addressed is the prescriptive potential of a discursive project. If we accept a constructivist approach to the problem of climate change then how can we advocate any kind of solution to the problem? Jones (2002) asks, 'if interests and power relations shape problem definitions, how can convincing cases be made for remedial action to prevent environmental problems' (p.248)? Discursive analysis does not advocate a 'better' way to do things. The problem of climate change and any proposed solutions are social constructions and, as such, they are not 'right' or 'wrong'; they are one interpretation of the issue.

For some, this may be considered a fundamental flaw in the project. What is the point of studying discourses of climate change and analysing the reproduction and subversion of dominant discourses, if one does not conclude with a prescription for improvement? Discourse analysis cannot identify specific problems and suggest

potential responses in the same way as the positivist work of Hale (2010) or Patchen (2010) claims to do.

Hajer and Versteeg (2005) claim that when it comes to an issue such as climate change, 'the real contribution of this approach is not to be found in its prescriptive force, but in the ability to trace the discursive power struggles underlying environmental politics' (p.181). The point is not to present a 'better' version of the world or to criticise the way the world is at the moment. Rather, the point is to challenge the assumption that this is the way the world has to be. By understanding the 'power struggles' in debates over climate change we can identify possible alternative paths through the history of environmentalism. This is the critical nature of the discursive project:

A critique is not a matter of saying things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest' (Foucault 1981, p.155).

The project is not a critique of dominant climate discourses. It is not engaged in the search for better ways to tackle the problem of climate change. It is a critical discursive project which seeks to analyse the prevalent discourses of climate change and expose these as social constructions. The point is to illustrate the reinforcing relationship between the politics of climate change in everyday life and societal climate discourses. The analysis of these relationships addresses the question: *how* does this work? The contribution of a discursive approach lies in its ability to illustrate the many potential versions of the world.

However, that is not to say that the conclusions of a discursive analysis could not be applied to a more normative project. A discursive analysis can only tell us *how* power relations operate and *how* dominant discourses maintain that status. However, in doing so, it does challenge the inevitability of dominance and indicates sites of resistance. This information could be usefully applied to challenge these forms of power. By nature, the conclusions of a discursive project cannot be prescriptive, but they can be used as the basis for further critical work with potentially normative conclusions. It may be that the project can provide the analytical basis for such a normative critique.

2.3 Business, Behaviour Change and Climate Champions

In the remainder of the chapter I will outline my own project. The focus of the project is the communication of climate change in large corporations. I will be analysing the use of climate discourses in this context and the power relations inherent in everyday communication. The context of the project is the business sector with a specific focus on designated 'climate champions' (individuals who have taken on the responsibility of promoting climate protecting behaviour in the workplace). In this section I will address three important aspects of this context. In section 2.3.1, I will look at the role of business in climate change politics and as a forum for individual behaviour change. In section 2.3.2, I will consider the importance of individual behaviour change for an issue like climate change. I will argue that, although there is a great deal of literature on individual behaviour change, this has not been widely addressed through a critical discursive framework. Finally, in section 2.3.3, I will outline the role of 'climate champions' in the research project and as agents of change in the context of climate change. The section will draw on my previous analysis of discursive work on climate change and indicate the originality and significance of this research project.

2.3.1 Business and Climate Change

The project will apply a discursive approach to climate change in a business context. In this section I will consider the relevance of business as a context for climate change in general and for the project more specifically. In the modern world, business plays an increasingly important role in the problem of climate change. This role has been interpreted in several different ways. In a negative sense, business contributes to the problem. Large multinational corporations are among the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. The most recent report from the IPCC states that, 'the largest growth in greenhouse gas emissions between 1970 and 2004 has come from energy supply, transport and industry' (IPCC 2007, p.36). Multinational corporations, especially those in the energy sector, are responsible for a large proportion of these emissions (Sæverud and Skjærseth 2007). In fact, 'greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from a selection of Global 500 companies approximate that of the USA and the EU15 combined', while 'emissions from individual companies – excluding emissions from supply chains – compare to that of entire nations' (Patenaude 2011, p.260).

In addition, businesses have historically played a role in efforts to prevent governmental regulation of greenhouse gas emissions:

In the period leading up to Kyoto a considerable number of large multinationals in particular had started to spend much time and effort in trying to influence, both individually and through a range of business associations, their government's stance on an international climate treaty and emissions reduction policies. With only some exceptions, companies initially opposed the adoption of such measures and regulation (Kolk and Pinkse 2009, p.3).

This oppositional role dominated business strategy towards the environment for over a decade. The Global Climate Coalition, for example expressly 'opposed governmental action on climate change, and claimed to represent six million companies' (Hale 2010, p.260). Business both questioned the validity of climate science (Grundmann 2007) and stressed the negative economic impact of carbon regulations (Kolk and Pinkse 2009).

More recently, however, many businesses have changed their position in relation to climate change. Hale (2010) claims that, 'there are signs of change... [t]he Corporate Leaders Group in the UK has been an influential advocate of progressive policy positions, and a range of business coalitions supported specific government action at the 2007 global climate change talks' (p.260). Given their contribution to CO_2 emissions, large multinationals have come under pressure to 'do their bit' toward mitigating climate change by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions (Jeswani *et al* 2008, p.47). They have responded to this pressure in a number of ways. In the political sphere, business has played an increasingly important role in international climate negotiations (Bernhagen 2008). Most corporations have also made a concerted effort to display 'environmental excellence' or 'minimum harm to the environment' (Rhee and Lee 2003, p.175). Many companies have taken a proactive stance to emission reductions (Borial 2006). For example, some companies are voluntarily improving their operations by 'utilizing green materials and processes' (Hoffman 2005, p.24) and some are 'going "carbon-neutral" by "offsetting" carbon emissions that they themselves cannot reduce' (Llewellyn 2007, p.55). Many large companies, including Aviva, BT, Cadbury, Coca Cola, EDF Energy, Tesco and Virgin, have also introduced climate champion schemes to promote pro-environmental change from the 'bottom-up'.

The relationship between business and climate change has been extensively researched. Scholars have considered the different ways in which companies approach climate change (Pinkse and Kolk 2010; Weinhofer and Hoffmann 2010), the success of their efforts (Sæverud and Skjærseth 2007) and their motivations for action (Paterson 2001b; van den Hove *et al* 2002). This final area of research has been the subject of some contestation with considerable disagreement about the problem of 'greenwashing' (Tokar 1997; Beder 2000). In the context of international policy, research has included investigation into public-private partnerships (Andonova 2010) and the importance of accountability (Clapp 2005). Discursive research in this area is available, but is far more limited.

In 2002, Livesey conducted a discursive study of ExxonMobil's approach to climate change. She analysed a set of corporate documents and identified the way climate discourse was used. Her conclusions include an overview of different climate discourses (scientific, economic, etc.) but the main objective of the article is to compare a discourse analysis approach to a rhetorical approach. She does not explore the problem of climate change except as a context for her analysis of methodology. Joutsenvirta (2009) conducts a similar project. She investigates the role of a 'language perspective' in the analysis of corporate responsibility, claiming that the contribution of this perspective is a 'neglected issue' (p.241). Again, her conclusions point to the discourses of responsibility that are evident, but her main aim is to demonstrate the utility of a language approach. Joutsenvirta (2009) also uses written text as her data. She analyses 'environmental writings from Enso and Greenpeace during 1985–2001' (p.243)[6].

The current project also uses a discursive approach to analyse climate change in a business context. Business plays an increasingly important role in addressing the problem of climate change and many businesses have implemented environmental projects such as the climate champion scheme. A discursive approach in this context is both valuable and under-researched. Scholars have considered the importance of a discursive approach in the context of climate change and business. However, they have not used the approach to analyse how specific environmental schemes operate on a daily basis. My project will attempt to use critical discourse analysis to identify different climate discourses and how they operate in a business context. I will

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[6] Stora Enso is a forest company, which debated with Greenpeace about the use of forests between 1985-2001.

investigate the climate discourses that are drawn upon by the champions to construct the problem of climate change and promote individual behaviour change. This not only provides a unique perspective on the problem of climate change, it also provides an investigation into the role of business as a context for the reproduction or resistance of particular climate discourses.

2.3.2 Individual Behaviour Change

Theories of individual behaviour have played an influential role in environmental research for many years. Tribbia (2007) asserts that, 'researchers from a variety of disciplines have examined the internal and external forces that foster and constrain an individual's actions' (p.239). At the individual level the 'value-action' gap is regarded as a big part of the problem of climate change. People profess concern about the threat of climate change and commit to action, but do not engage in climate protecting behaviour (Blake 1999).

Kollmus and Agyeman (2002) provide an overview of 'a few of the most influential and commonly used frameworks for analyzing pro-environmental behavior' (p.240). Among others, they discuss the 'information-deficit' model, which assumes that an increase in knowledge about the environment will lead to pro-environmental behaviour[7]. They evaluate the 'Theory of Reasoned Action' and the 'Theory of Planned Behaviour', examining the correlation between attitude and behaviour[8] and they outline models of 'Altruism, Empathy and Pro-social behaviour'[9]. All of these models emphasise specific factors to which we can attribute inaction on environmental issues, such as climate change. Similar research has also highlighted the importance of 'practical impediments' including 'lack of time, lack of money or lack of storage space' (Blake 1999, p.268), as well as the established environmental habits of individuals as barriers to change (Bamberg and Schmidt 2003). This individualistic approach to behaviour change is still very influential (DEFRA 2007; DEFRA 2008; Southerton *et al* 2011; DECC 2011).

More recently, however, academics have begun to challenge the dominance of an individualistic approach to behaviour change. Shove (2010), for example,

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[7] See Burgess *et al* (1998).
[8] See Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and Ajzen and Fishbein (1980).
[9] For theories of pro-social behaviour see Eisenberg and Miller (1987). For theories of altruism see Schwartz (1977) or, more recently, Allen and Ferrand (1999).

comments on the 'potentially useful and influential resources of a vast range of social theory that lies beyond the dominant paradigms of economics and psychology' (p.1273-1274). She claims that, rather than focusing our energy on models of ABC (attitude, behaviour and choice), we should be 'diverting resources into the development of alternative...models of social change' (Shove 2010, p.1282). Moloney *et al* (2010) support this position:

The current dominance of the 'rational choice model' of consumer behaviour which is reinforced by the 'techno-economic' model of change prioritises technological solutions and is preoccupied with the individualisation of responsibility for environmental problems (p.7622).

According to both Shove and Moloney *et al,* we should reject models of incremental, behaviour change and, instead, turn our attention to theories of 'social practice'.

Theories of practice and 'performance' have been used in number of different ways. Reckwitz (2002) considers practice theory as a specific branch of cultural theory and contrasts it with other theories that fall into this category (e.g., culturalism, mentalism, textualism etc.). Other researchers have applied the concepts of 'practice' and 'performance' to areas such as consumption (Warde 2005; Shove 2010) and the environment (Shove and Walker 2007; Hargreaves 2011). An emphasis on practice rejects 'individually focused behaviour change' and 'begins with the collective or social context shaping and framing our daily actions' (Moloney *et al* 2010, p.7617). This kind of theory has particular relevance for problems such as climate change and individual behaviour change. If we are to approach the problem of behaviour change we must consider it as a social construction. We must understand how (non) climate protecting behaviour is embedded in the historical evolution of social practices and the 'performance' of everyday (environmental) actions.

The theoretical basis of the current project shares several important features with these theories of practice and performance. A discursive approach also challenges the individualistic models of behaviour change and advocates a focus on the social construction of behaviour. Similarly, in both approaches the individual is influenced by social 'structures' (practice or discourse) while still exerting a degree of agency. According to Hargreaves (2011), practice theory 'does not…render individuals as passive dupes beholden to the dictates of practice, but instead conceives of them as skilled agents who actively negotiate and perform a wide range

of practices in the normal course of everyday life' (p.83). In section 2.2.5, I made a similar argument about a discursive approach. Discursive power relations work through us but we are simultaneously reproducing them; we are doing something active in this process. Moreover, both approaches appear 'to be tied to an interest in the 'everyday' and 'life-world' (Reckwitz 2002, p.244).

However, a discursive approach can be distinguished from 'practice theory' in two fundamental ways. First, the theories focus on different units of analysis. For practice theory, the 'core unit of analysis' is 'the practice itself, rather than the individuals who perform them or the social structures that surround them' (Hargreaves 2011, p.82). Discourse analysis, on the other hand, is concerned with the interaction between individuals and the construction of shared meaning. The core unit of analysis is this 'site of interaction' where 'power relations' operate in the transfer of knowledge (Foucault 1982). Second, in a discursive approach the focus is on discourse and language. In practice theory 'discourse and language lose their omnipotent status. Discursive practices are one type of practices among others' (Reckwitz 2002, p.254).

The current project is rooted in a critical discursive understanding of behaviour change. In the context of climate change, I would argue that the everyday communication of individuals can provide important insights into the problem of individual behaviour change. Discursive practices are one practice among others. However, they are sufficiently important to justify independent study.

To some extent, this kind of approach to individual behaviour change has been explored. Kenis and Mathijs (2012) also challenge the dominance of individualistic models and investigate the importance of discourse, power and knowledge in relation to the construction of climate change. However, although they refer to the 'dominant discourse' (p.57), they do not specifically identify what this is or how it contributes to action or inaction on climate change. The role of power and knowledge will be investigated in the current project. However, it will be studied as part of the reciprocal relationship between societal climate discourses (the macro level) and everyday communication (the micro level). In this way, the project will attempt to offer an alternative approach to the value-action problem and complement other work that has also challenged the individualistic models of behaviour change.

45

2.3.3 Climate Champions

The role of individuals in promoting change has been the subject of much research. There has been considerable discussion of 'change agents' in organisational studies and social psychologists, among others, have identified various roles that individuals can play in the process of social and behaviour change (Caldwell 2003; Caldwell 2005). The importance of change agents has been recognised in an environmental context. For example, studies have considered the importance of grassroots environmental activists (Horton 2006), environmental citizens (Bell 2005) and, more recently, celebrity role models in climate campaigns (Boykoff *et al* 2010). The conclusion from Boykoff *et* al (2010) about these change agents reflects the general trend of these studies:

It could be argued that it is precisely this championing of (climate) causes that is needed to pioneer a new-millennium reflexivity, usher in meaningful change and inspire emergent engagements and movements (p.10).

On this account, individuals can play a key role in the promotion of climate-protecting social change.

A small number of studies have specifically examined the role of designated climate or environmental champions in large organisations. In 2005, Alexander *et al.* outlined the importance of key individuals in promoting climate-protecting behaviour change in local authorities. They identified both formal and informal climate champions in Hampshire County Council and interviewed 20 champions. Their research focused mainly on the attributes of the champions and provided some useful conclusions about the characteristics of climate champions who were successful in promoting some change in the organisation. Other studies in this area have focused on issues such as the techniques of 'championing' (Andersson and Bateman 2000). More recently, there have been two studies of environmental champions in the private sector (Lewis and Juravle 2010; Gliedt *et al.* 2010). Lewis and Juravle studied 'sustainable investment champions', while Gliedt *et al.* studied 'environment champions'. Both studies conducted in-depth interviews and considered the influence that champions can have on specific business decisions. Lewis and Juravle focused on the promotion of sustainable investment, while Gliedt *et al* investigated the corporate decision to voluntarily purchase premium-priced Green Electricity. Both of these

studies conclude that champions can play an important role in encouraging pro-environmental decisions in a business context.

Finally, there has been a limited amount of research into environment champions and the work of Global Action Plan (GAP)[10]. Hobson (2001; 2003) and Hargreaves (2008) have conducted specific research on environment champions in the community and the workplace, respectively. Hobson (2001; 2003) carried out focus groups and interviews with participants of the Action at Home initiative[11] whilst Hargreaves (2008) carried out an extensive ethnographic study of environment champions at a large construction company. Both of these studies were concerned with the production of pro-environmental behaviour and, in this way, they are the most similar to my own project.

There has been some valuable research into pro-environmental behaviour and change agents. This project builds on previous work in several ways. First, the main focus of the project is the issue of climate change. Officially, the individuals in my study were variously designated as 'climate champions', 'environment champions', 'energy champions' and 'sustainability champions'. Indeed, in some cases, this flexibility in terminology existed within the same institution but all the champion schemes were primarily concerned with climate change. The aim is to study how designated climate champions construct the issue of climate change and how they approach the problem of stimulating climate-protecting behaviour in their company and among their colleagues. Second, the theoretical basis of the project is rooted in the discursive construction of climate change as an issue. The project begins with an in-depth analysis of climate discourses and uses this theoretical analysis to identify climate discourses in everyday language. Finally, the project looks at the role of champions in the reproduction of discourse. In section 2.2.5, I argued that discourse analysis does allow a 'notion of agency' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, p.52). As we reproduce discourse we are doing something active and therefore there is always the potential for resistance. The thesis considers the role of champions as 'passive

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[10] Global Action Plan is an international network of not-for-profit organisations that was founded by David Gershon in the United States in 1989-90 (Hargreaves 2008, p.79). GAP offers a fixed term programme for behaviour change. Champions are expected to take an audit of areas such as waste and energy use and then spend a month promoting good practice in each area. A second audit is taken at the end to determine the success of the various initiatives. The general aim is to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions through individual behaviour change.

[11] Action at Home is 'a 6 month voluntary scheme that aims to encourage changes in individuals' household consumption practices by providing information, support and feedback' (Hobson 2001, p.107).

subjects' or 'active agents'. Did they reinforce or challenge dominant discourses and how did this process operate on a day to day basis?

2.4 Conclusion

The focus of this project is the communication of climate change in large corporations. It is a project that is situated in critical discourse analysis. I am interested in the way the champions use climate discourses to communicate about climate change and promote behaviour change. In this chapter I have argued that a critical discursive approach has some important advantages in the analysis of climate change communication. The interview data from the champions will provide a detailed account of climate discourse in everyday language. It will also indicate the dominance of particular climate discourses and the connected 'appropriate' responses to the problem. Analysis of this material is important for three reasons. First, it will illustrate the actual climate discourses that are drawn upon by the champions in a business context. Second, it will potentially generate insight into the climate discourses that construct 'appropriate' individual actions on climate change and how this process works. Finally, the analysis will indicate any signs of resistance to the dominant discourse and the implications this has for the types of actions that are encouraged and/or discouraged. This analysis has implications for the effective communication of climate change in the workplace and the wider discursive politics of climate change. If we can provide an insight into the reproduction and/or resistance of dominant climate discourses (how does this work?) then we can potentially apply this knowledge to more normative projects (how we can we make things better?).

Chapter 3

Discourses of Climate Change

A discursive approach to climate change acknowledges the problems that are inherent in climate knowledge and the variety of approaches to dealing with the issue. In this chapter I will provide a theoretical analysis of climate change as a constructed subject. I will consider the construction of climate change as a problem and I will identify seven climate discourses, which will be used as the framework for analysing the way that climate champions talk about climate change. I will argue that neoliberalism plays an important role in the construction of climate change as a problem and the ways in which we attempt to deal with it.

In section 3.1 I will begin by considering how discourse can be analysed. What do we actually look at in order to understand a particular discourse? I will consider how other researchers have analysed discourses, specifically focusing on the work of Dryzek (1997). In section 3.2 I will explain how I have drawn on Dryzek's approach for my own research. In section 3.3 I will outline the importance of neoliberalism as a context for climate discourses. I will analyse neoliberalism as a discourse and consider the relationship between neoliberalism and the natural world. Section 3.4 will then consider the construction of climate change as a problem. I will look at four ways in which the problem is discursively framed: scepticism (not a problem); pessimism (an insoluble problem); reformism (a small problem or 'glitch' in the neoliberal system); and revolution (a fundamental problem with the neoliberal system). If climate change is framed in a sceptical or pessimistic way, it is either no problem at all or it is an insoluble problem. In either case we cannot examine the discursive construction of solutions – because there are none. However, if climate change is discursively framed in a reformist or revolutionary way, it is a problem that requires or can have a solution. So, we can examine the discursive construction of those solutions.

The rest of the chapter will analyse seven discourses of climate change, which provide an account of the problem and how it should be solved. Section 3.5 will look

at those that follow neoliberal ideas (reformist discourses) and section 3.6 will look at those that reject the basic principles of neoliberalism (revolutionary discourses).

3.1 Analysing Discourses of Climate Change

Discourse is defined as 'a shared meaning of phenomena' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, p.51) or 'a shared way of apprehending the world' (Dryzek 1997, p.8). By drawing on a particular discourse, individuals can form a mutual understanding of a given phenomenon. But how do we identify a particular discourse and distinguish it from others? Hajer and Versteeg (2005) offer a definition of discourse which provides some insight into this problem:

'Discourse' is defined here as an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices (p.175).

Each discourse represents a specific set of features which renders it unique and identifiable. If we can recognize the fundamental characteristics of a discourse we can identify that discourse in language. Dryzek (1997) provides one of the most detailed examples of this kind of analysis in an environmental context. He contends that, 'in order to see why and how these discourses have developed, and to what effect, it is necessary to pin down their content more precisely' (p.15). Analysis requires a close examination of the basic components that make-up a discourse. Dryzek identifies nine environmental discourses and analyses each one of them on the basis of four fundamental features (p.18).

Checklist of elements for the analysis of discourse
1. Basic Entities Recognised or Constructed
2. Assumptions about Natural Relationships
3. Agents and their Motives
4. Key Metaphors and other Rhetorical Devices

Table 3.1

The 'basic entities' are 'the "ontology" of a discourse' (p.16). These are the things that 'exist' in a particular account of the world. For example, some discourses will recognise 'humans' while others will recognise 'males' and 'females'. Some discourses will acknowledge the existence of the eco-system as an entity in its own

right; other discourses will consider an eco-system solely as a resource. 'Assumptions about natural relationships' are assertions about, for example, the co-operative nature of human beings in social systems or the conflict inherent in the market. 'Agents and their motives' considers the actors that play a role in a discourse. For example, Dryzek talks about 'rational consumers', 'enlightened elites' and 'virtuous citizens' (p.17). Finally, Dryzek highlights the importance of the metaphors and rhetorical devices being used in discourses. These include, for example, 'spaceship earth' and the 'war against nature' (p.17). These four basic components can then be used to analyse any given (environmental) discourse.

Many subsequent authors have replicated Dryzek's categorisation of environmental discourses (Hulme 2008; Doulton and Brown 2009) and/or drawn upon the discourses he sets out (Gray 2000; Carvalho 2007; Santos 2012). For example, Doulton and Brown (2009) investigated discourses of climate change and international development in the UK press. The analysis was based on Dryzek's four general components but was adapted to suit the purpose of the project. The authors argue that, 'the analysis is of a much more specific issue; consequently the discourse components identified are less generalised' (Doulton and Brown 2009, p.192). In particular, they use the component 'assumptions about natural relationships' but adapt this to be a category about the 'impacts of climate change... degrees of uncertainty; possible solutions' (Doulton and Brown 2009, p.193). They also complement Dryzek's components with 'surface descriptors' (specifying information about the newspaper itself) and 'normative judgements' ('what should be done and by whom, to solve climate change') (Doulton and Brown 2009, p.193). Their work is testament to the fact that Dryzek's approach 'can be usefully adopted for more specific topics' (Doulton and Brown 2009, p.192).

The thesis will draw on Dryzek's work in a similar way to Doulton and Brown. The specific issue in this case is the communication of climate change in large corporations. I am investigating the discourses that are being used by climate champions in the workplace. The analysis will be based on a set of fundamental components that can be used to identify specific climate discourses. The main difference between my research and the work of Doulton and Brown is that their analysis of different climate discourses is situated in a particular issue (climate change and international development in the UK press). They do not begin by addressing a 'broad platform of universal environmental discourses' in the same way

as Dryzek does (Doulton and Brown 2009, p.192). However, I would argue that climate change as a topic is sufficiently important to warrant a detailed analysis of *climate* discourses in the same way as Dryzek investigates *environmental* discourses. I will therefore begin with an analysis of 'universal' climate discourses and then draw upon these discourses to analyse a specific issue (the communication of climate change in large corporations).

3.2 Analytical Categories

For the purpose of analysis, I have developed a list of six fundamental components. To some extent these are based on Dryzek's four categories; they do cover many of the same ideas. However, there are also some important differences. Most notably, I have separated 'key agents and their motives' into two distinct categories and I have combined 'basic entities' and 'assumptions about natural relationships'. With reference to the latter, the focus is on four specific entities/two specific relationships which are fundamental to the issue of climate change: the relationship between the state and the market and the relationship between the environment and the economy. I have also added 'key values' and 'account of social change'. Both of these components have an important role to play in discourses of climate change. Key metaphors and rhetorical devices will be acknowledged as an underlying communicative technique in all of these components rather than a distinct category in its own right.

Analytical categories for the analysis of climate discourse
1. Relationship between Environment/Economy
2. Relationship between State/Market
3. Role of Key Agents
4. Account of Human Nature/Motivations
5. Key Values
6. Account of Social Change

Table 3.2

Relationship between the Environment and the Economy

We are dealing with climate change in a neoliberal world. One of the most important tensions is the relationship between the natural environment and the man-made economy. As climate change has become increasingly important as an issue, this relationship has been re-evaluated (Gibbs 2003; Curran 2009). Some climate discourses focus on the intrinsic value of the natural world while others acknowledge the natural world only insofar as it supports the economy. This category does similar work to Dryzek's 'basic entities'. However, I will also consider the nature of the relationship as harmonious, co-operative or one of conflict.

Relationship between the State and the Market

The relationship between the state and the market is again based on the dominance of neoliberalism. The role of these basic entities is fundamental to the way climate change is tackled. Neoliberalism does give more credence to the role of the state than classical liberal approaches but the market is still paramount (Cerny 2008). Climate discourses which focus on reform tend to attribute more importance to the ability of the market to deal with the problem. Revolutionary approaches, on the other hand, challenge the prominence of the market and focus attention on the role of the state as a regulatory body or a sphere for collective action.

Role of Key Agents

Dryzek (1997) states that all 'storylines require actors, or agents' (p.16). This component focuses on the agents that play a role in different climate discourses. This may be a group of concerned citizens, an environmentally conscious business or a self-interested individual. I have intentionally altered Dryzek's category to focus not only on 'key agents', but also on the 'role' they play. This is important because the same key agent could feasibly fulfil two different roles. For example, an environmentally conscious consumer is one agent. However, they could fulfil the role of passive environmentally conscious consumer by purchasing green products or they could 'rewrite the passive consumer script by asserting themselves as activist consumers who bike to work rather than buying more gasoline' (Slocum 2004a, p.779).

Account of Human Nature

This component is linked to the 'role of key agents'. Dryzek's combination of 'key agents and their motivations' is reasonable. However, I would argue that, in the context of climate change, the motivation of key agents is sufficiently important to warrant its own category. Furthermore, the idea of motivations is based on an even more fundamental component: accounts of human nature. Human nature is an important consideration when analysing the way we approach climate change. De Groot and Steg (2007) claim that 'environmental problems are rooted in human values' (p.331). If we assume human beings are essentially egotistical this will have certain implications for the way we would expect them to respond to the issue of climate change. If humans are more altruistic we would expect them to respond to climate change in a different way. Human nature therefore has important implications for discourses of climate change and will be dealt with as a category in its own right.

Key Values

The final two categories are not specifically based on Dryzek's work. However, they encompass some important ideas in the context of climate change. Different climate discourses are based on a multitude of key values. Some discourses will focus on quality of life and wellbeing, while others promote the importance of growth and accumulation. Some concepts will occur in more than one discourse, but will be used in different ways. For example, concepts such as 'progress', 'needs' and 'rights' are subject to varying definitions and are employed for different purposes. Key values play an important role in the overall approach of any climate discourse.

Account of Social Change

The final component to be considered in each discourse is the account of social change. This will be more important in some discourses than it is in others. In particular, this component reflects the general difference between discourses of reform and discourses of revolution. The former will encourage gradual, incremental change; the latter will promote the need for a fundamental overhaul of the current system.

Categorising Discourse

The categorisation of discourses is a complicated process. The purpose of the foregoing analytical categories is to allow for a thorough and systematic analysis. However, there are two issues to consider. First, any distinction drawn between discourses will be arbitrary to some extent. Dryzek (1997) contends that, 'complete rupture or discontinuity across discourses is rare, such that interchange across discourse boundaries can occur' (p.8). Backstrand and Lovbrand (2006) note a similar difficulty in their analysis of discourses. Discourses overlap and the components of one discourse can be similar to those in another. This chapter distinguishes between seven discourses of climate change. Overlap will be acknowledged, but I would argue that these seven discourses are sufficiently different to justify analysis of each in its own right and allow for a useful application to my data.

Second, there is inevitably more nuance in each of the discourses than can be allowed for in such a broad categorisation. Discourses of individualism incorporate what could also be discourses of consumerism; discourses of justice include ideas about duty and human rights. The categorisation of climate discourse could be further divided beyond seven distinct discourses. However, I would argue that investigating and applying the components of seven climate discourses is sufficient for a detailed analysis of the data. I will retain focus on the main discourses but acknowledge further distinctions in the data where it is applicable.

3.3 The Context of Climate Discourse: Neoliberalism

Before embarking on a discourse analysis of climate change it is important to acknowledge the context in which the issue is situated. Neoliberalism is commonly accepted as *the* political and economic ideology for the modern world (Massey 2000; Plehwe and Walpen 2005; Jessop 2010). It has enjoyed an unprecedented ascent to global dominance and it touches the lives of almost everyone on the planet. Harvey (2007) argues that 'neoliberalization has in effect swept across the world like a vast tidal wave of institutional reform and discursive adjustment' (p.23). As such, neoliberalism plays an important role in many current issues, particularly the problem of climate change. The aims and values of neoliberalism are widely regarded as a major contributory factor to climate change, while neoliberal ideology plays an

important role in dominant approaches to dealing with the problem. This section will analyse the discourse of neoliberalism, both in general and in relation to climate change. The purpose of this is twofold. First, it is important to employ the six abovementioned categories and illustrate their use as tools of analysis. The second purpose of the analysis is to outline the nature of neoliberalism and to examine the relationship between neoliberalism and climate change as the context for the rest of the chapter.

3.3.1 Neoliberal Discourse

Despite the widespread use of the term, there are theoretical disagreements over the development and ideological components of the term 'neoliberalism'. For many theorists, neoliberalism can be traced to its 18th and 19th century roots in the form of economic liberalism (Turner 2007; Kirk 2008). 'Old' and 'new' liberalism share the same basic components: 'self-interest and individualism' and 'the proscription of public (state) interference with market forces' (von Werlhof 2008, p.95). The distinct feature of *neo*liberalism is the global scope of its influence (Larner 2003; von Werlhof 2008). For others, neoliberalism exhibits further divergence from its liberal roots because it also allows a more active role for the state in 'designing, promoting and guaranteeing the free and efficient operation of the market' (Cerny 2008, p.1). There is disagreement over the term and 'the notion of a consistent set of defining material practices and outcomes that comprise neoliberalism is problematic' (McCarthy and Prudham 2004, p.276). However, despite areas of disagreement, there are fundamental components that appear in almost all accounts of neoliberalism. Turner (2008) argues that, 'in many respects its various schools meet on common ground in terms of their aims, arguments and assumptions, which makes them constitute a coherent and distinctive ideology' (p.6). For the purpose of the thesis I will base my own definition of neoliberalism on the areas of 'common ground' which exist in the various accounts. I will analyse the discourse on the basis of my own analytical categories.

The most important feature of neoliberalism is the emphasis on the market. Neoliberalism advocates 'unencumbered markets and free trade' (Harvey 2007, p.22) and 'unfettered free markets' (Andrew *et al* 2010, p.612). Accordingly, the role of the state is minimal. The purpose of the state is to ensure that markets can operate freely. For neoliberals, 'political involvement in economic activity (e.g., regulation of

corporations, support for regional industries or particular sectors, or social protection for the poor) is just interference in an otherwise natural process' (Mansfield 2004b, p.566). The relationship between the state and the market is not necessarily one of conflict but neither is it co-operative. There is not an equal balance of power between the two entities. It could be argued, as Cerny (2008) claims, that the state plays a role in ensuring the free operation of the market (as distinct from classical liberalism). However, this does not mean that there is equality in the state/market relationship. The market is the more important entity and the relationship is harmonious to the extent that the state accepts the dominance of the market.

In any account of neoliberalism the key values centre on growth, profit and efficiency. The focus on 'continual growth in both capacity (stock) and income (flow) is a central part of the neoclassical growth paradigm' (Daly, 1996a, p.15). In the past, economics was seen as the pursuit of accumulation for the purpose of human happiness. Redclift (1984) argues that economics was originally the 'philosophical search for ways of maximising human happiness' (p.5). In modern society, however, the purpose of accumulation is increasingly to achieve accumulation. The economic process, 'rather than being used for the sake of achieving the final goal of life, tends to become the final goal in itself. Since output is then not limited by any final goal, the desire for it becomes infinite. We get hooked on growth' (Alonzo-Smith 1996, p.183). The role of key agents is inevitably based on these key values. The key agents in a neoliberal discourse are businesses and self-interested rational consumers. The role of business is to produce goods and services for consumption and to sell these commodities for a profit. The neoliberal conception of economic corporations is that their main objective should always be the pursuit of profit (Friedman 1962). Accordingly, the role of self-interested rational consumers is to consume these goods and services in order to generate growth and profit. Inevitably, these features of neoliberalism are linked to the importance of the market. Mansfield (2004b) argues that, 'markets are supposed to work through the dynamics of individual decision making in competitive settings' (p.566). The logic of neoliberalism is rooted in capitalism more generally. If everyone makes decisions based on their own interests the invisible hand of the market leads to the most profitable and efficient outcomes (Smith 1976).

The neoliberal account of human nature underpins many of the other features. Read (2009) argues that, 'it is an ideology that refers not only to the political realm,

or to an ideal of the state, but to the entirety of human existence. It claims to present not an ideal, but a reality; human nature' (p.26). Humans are self-interested, utility maximisers and, according to Walker (2006), 'neoliberalism accepts as fact that human nature is essentially selfish' (p.140). For this reason, the market directed, profit-driven imperatives of neoliberalism are the most 'appropriate' system for society. The key values of neoliberalism therefore also incorporate rights of individuals to freedom and property (Plehwe and Walpen 2005; Kirk 2008). Self-interest is paramount and is best served by the priority of the market over the state and the individual over the collective.

Finally, a neoliberal account of social change is rooted in progress, based on the key values of growth, accumulation and profit. Pepper (1999) argues that a neoliberal definition of progress 'primarily consist[s] of indefinitely increasing material consumption' (p.28). People should consume as a means to 'improve' one's lifestyle (Redclift 1995, p.11). Social change is the outcome of individual choices in a competitive market. According to neoliberalism, this process of social change and progress will ultimately lead to 'the good society' (van Elteran 2009, p.178) or 'human well-being' (Harvey 2007, p.22).

The idea that neoliberalism has become globally dominant or 'hegemonic' is widely supported (Larner 2003; Robertson 2004; Barnett 2005; Cerny 2008; Humphreys 2009). Indeed, Birch and Mykhnenko (2010) argue that, 'in the three decades since the election of the first ideologically committed neoliberal government in May 1979, neoliberalism has gone truly global, reaching every corner of the world' (p.8). If a discourse is 'a shared way of apprehending the world' (Dryzek 1997, p.8) then neoliberalism is the dominant discourse in modern society. It is the discourse that underpins all other ways of thinking:

Neoliberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse and has pervasive effects on ways of thought and political-economic practices to the point where it has become incorporated into the commonsense way we interpret, live in, and understand the world (Harvey 2007, p.23).

The 'pervasive effects' of neoliberalism have important consequences for the natural world, particularly an issue such as climate change.

3.3.2 Neoliberalism and the Natural World

The most widely held assumption about anthropogenic climate change is that it is caused by the carbon intensive activities we have engaged in over the last 100 years:

When a century long trend toward warmer temperatures resumed in the 1980s and then accelerated, even casual observers noticed a correlation with population, urbanization, industry, fossil-fuelled electrification and transportation, and deforestation (Onuf 2007, p.xii).

These assumptions can be directly related to the relationship between neoliberalism and the natural world. In its original form (before the acknowledgement of climate change as a problem), this relationship was fundamentally one of conflict. The relationship between the environment and the economy was problematic due to the components of the neoliberal discourse and the ethos of traditional environmentalism. The goals of continual growth and accumulation are contradictory to the logic of conservation and frugality necessary for environmental preservation (Meadows *et al* 1972). The natural world is valued only as a resource for use in the economy. Dryzek (1996) argues that, 'a predominantly instrumental orientation on the part of human beings in the context of their interaction with... the natural world is destructive' (p.27). We have emitted carbon into the atmosphere as if its capacity for absorption was limitless. We have not accounted for any damage we have caused. The neoliberal account of human nature has encouraged people to focus on their own interests without concern for the collective good or the state of the natural world. Kollmus and Agyeman (2002) argue that, 'person's with a strong selfish and competitive orientation are less likely to act ecologically' (p.244). The role of key agents (business, self-interested individuals and rational consumers) has been to continue producing and consuming – and, consequently, emitting greenhouse gases.

Finally, the relationship between the state and the market has meant that people have been encouraged to consume freely and excessively without any imposed limitations by the state. Hale (2010) claims that neoliberalism imposes 'ideological handcuffs' on the state (p.257). The values of freedom and rights mean that the state is reluctant to interfere in the prerogative of individual interest and choice. Furthermore, 'its role in climate change policy is consistently underplayed' (Hale 2010, p.258). The state has been unable to perform its traditional regulatory role and

correct the environmental problems caused by the culmination of numerous individual acts.

The contradictory relationship between neoliberalism and environmental conservation leads to potentially dangerous consequences. Many argue that this dominant discourse is the primary, if not the only, reason for environmental problems, such as climate change (Beder 2006; Lohmann 2009; Andrews *et* al 2010). However, despite widespread criticism of the damage that it has caused, neoliberalism has remained central to debates about the problem of climate change and the way we should deal with it.

3.4   Constructing the Problem of Climate Change

The problem of climate change 'first emerged as an issue of public concern within the context of the environmental movements of the 1970s and 1980s' (Jamison 2010, p.811). Over the past 40 years the issue has become increasingly prominent in scientific, political and academic debates. In the first instance, 'the perception of climate *change* as something dangerous that must be avoided is established in the scientific discourse' (Weingart *et* al 2000, p.267; emphasis in original). The problem of climate change originated in scientific disciplines and is presented in scientific language. Moreover, science has played a dominant role in the establishment of climate change as a political problem:

The speed with which scientific knowledge of climate change has been translated into an international diplomatic consensus is remarkable, if not unprecedented. It is testimony to the authority of science to provide legitimacy for political action (Demeritt 2001, p.307).

The scientific findings of the IPCC are acknowledged as an important part of the foundations for political consensus on climate change (UNFCCC 2012).

As an issue in today's society, climate change can be located in a number of different discourses and the problem of climate change is constructed in a number of different ways. Science still plays a dominant role in this construction. In its most recent assessment report the IPCC stated that, 'warming of the planet is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations in increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global sea level' (IPCC 2007, p.30). Furthermore, this warming of the planet and the consequent changes in

climate are '*very likely* due to anthropogenic greenhouse gas increases' (IPCC 2007, p.39; emphasis in original). Hence, there is a strong consensus that climate change is occurring and that it can be attributed to human activity (King 2004; McMichael 2006; Pittock 2009; Dessler and Parson 2010).

However, this is not the only position on climate change. In fact, in many ways, the issue is surrounded by controversy. Debate continues over whether or not there actually is a problem and, if there is, who should deal with it and how? The following sections will outline the construction of climate change as a problem. I will consider discourses of scepticism, pessimism, reform and revolution.

3.4.1 Scepticism: Not a problem

A frequent response to the problem of climate change is that there is no problem at all. This reaction can be categorised into two separate discourses: denial that climate change is happening and the construction of climate change as a good thing. Ereaut and Segnit (2006) analyse media in the UK, including newspapers, radio news clips and websites and note the presence of these discourses in modern society. They distinguish between two types of scepticism: 'Rhetorical scepticism' which is a 'non-expert discourse, but one that attacks the expert discourse as "bad science"' (p.16) and 'expert denial', 'characterised by a tendency to construct climate change as being predominantly caused by 'natural' (in other words, not man-made) factors' (p.17). They also refer to the position that 'proposes seriously that climate change brings benefits' (p.18) – the 'warming is good' discourse. These discourses are variously acknowledged by other academics. Jamison (2010) reviews literature on 'discourse' and refers to an 'oppositional position' which is associated with 'self-proclaimed sceptics' and denial of the problem (p.811), while Doulton and Brown (2009) analyse broadsheet newspapers and describe a discourse of 'optimism': 'viewing climate change as no problem for development, in fact, if anything, it is seen to be beneficial' (p.194).

These discourses dispute the construction of climate change as a problem. They have been drawn upon in many different contexts. Among the most prominent cases of climate change denial have been those associated with industry and 'big business'. Historically, businesses have played a major role in efforts to prevent government regulation of greenhouse gas emissions. Hale (2010) claims that, 'for

over a decade, the Global Climate Coalition opposed governmental action on climate change, and claimed to represent six million companies' (p.260). This opposition was frequently based on denial of climate change as a problem. For example, van den Hove *et al* (2002) outline the role that the oil industry played in fighting against emission regulation, primarily through denial of the science (p.5). Similarly, governments (the US as a case in point) have rejected calls for a strong response to climate change on the basis of uncertain scientific knowledge (Grundmann 2007, p.422). Many commentators draw links between the reluctance to regulate emissions and 'powerful carbon polluters' short-term interest in squeezing out their profits and continuing to burn fossil fuels' (Charman 2008, p.31). The features of neoliberalism are evident in the values and goals outlined in this account of the problem.

The denial of climate change has also been prominent in the media (Antilla 2005; Gavin and Marshall 2011) and is evident in surveys of the general public. Bulkeley (2000) notes that participants in her research 'expressed doubt and scepticism about the climate change knowledge that they received' (p.329). Scepticism about climate science amongst the general populous is variously attributed to factors such as a decrease in the 'authority of science' (Berkhout 2010, p.568) and a lack of trust in government and science (Hale 2010, p.256). Whatever the reasons for this construction of climate change it remains a discourse that is present in society. Mckie and Galloway (2007) argue that discourses of scepticism have 'fading salience' and seem 'increasingly futile' (p.368). Despite this, the discourse remains and is an important discourse in the construction of climate change as a (non-) problem.

3.4.2 *Pessimism: Too Big a Problem*

A less prominent discourse is the pessimistic construction of climate change. Climate change is constructed as a problem, but it is too big a problem for us to handle. This leads to discourses of 'alarmism' (Erenaut and Signit 2006), 'alarmist defeatism' (Hobson and Niemeyer 2011), 'disaster strikes' (Doulton and Brown 2009), 'catastrophe' (Lovelock 2006) and 'looming tragedy' (Dryzek 1997). Hulme (2008) claims that discourses of fear are the 'increasingly dominant portrayal of anthropogenic global climate change' (p.10). Links are being drawn between extreme weather events and changes in the global climate (Epstein 2005; Kafatos *et al* 2006). Scientists refer to 'tipping points' (Pittock 2009, p.94) and 'dangerous interference

with the climate system' (Schneider 2004, p.256) while the media use 'a quasi-religious register of doom, death, judgement' (Erenaut and Signit 2006, p.13). This discourse acknowledges the problem of anthropogenic climate change but dismisses any action as futile. However, the response from the general public is often not consistent with the main messages of this discourse. While surveys report high levels of concern about the problem of climate change (Norton and Leaman 2004; Lorenzoni and Pigeon 2006; World Bank 2010) this is seldom constructed as urgent, or even as the most important problem[12]. Furthermore, according to survey data, concern about climate change is rarely constructed as a futile endeavour; most people believe that something can be done about it. Patchen (2010) collates a number of surveys to report on the efficacy of individuals in dealing with climate change. He states that in a 2006 survey of Americans, only 22% felt that it was not possible to reduce the effects of global warming at all (p.53).

A discourse of alarmism is interesting as a way to construct the problem of climate change. If we focus on the media then it does appear that the discourse is becoming increasingly dominant (Doulton and Brown 2009). However, the increase in media alarmism does not directly correlate to concern and resignation in other areas of society.

3.4.3   Reform: A 'Glitch' in the System

The constructions of climate change discussed in the previous two sections are consistent with the absence of any action to tackle the problem. These discourses deny that there is a problem, promote the benefits of climate change or reject the possibility that we can do anything about it. In any case, the result is that we do nothing differently. The opposite approach is that we do attempt to tackle climate change. However, the ways in which we attempt to deal with climate change are based on the construction of what the problem is. Starting from the assumption that some form of action is necessary and possibly efficacious, there are two fundamental ways in which the problem of climate change is constructed.

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[12] Norton and Leaman (2004) report that whilst the majority of Britons see climate change as the most important *environmental* issue, it is not considered the most important issue overall: 'When asked which global issue –terrorism, global warming, population growth or HIV/Aids – poses the most serious threat, terrorism comes top by some margin. By a factor of almost 2:1, the public see terrorism as more important than global warming (48% vs 25%)' (p.5).

The first construction in this context is that there is no fundamental problem with the current neoliberal system. There are simply some minor issues that must be addressed. In a purely neoliberal discourse, the relationship between the environment and the economy is one of conflict. However, discourses of reform contend that conflict exists only because there are some issues that have not been taken into account. For example, previously, the use of natural resources and carbon sinks was not considered as part of any standard economic calculations. Reformist discourses acknowledge that this is an important oversight in neoliberal economics. Climate change therefore becomes an 'externality', a cost that must be incorporated into the economic system so that the market can deal with it effectively. Janicke *et al* (2000) argue that, 'every economic practice causes structural environmental stress in so far as without additional cleaning technology, it would cause actual environmental damage' (p.133). If we can employ cleaning technology, we can avoid environmental damage and problems such as climate change.

Jamison (2010) acknowledges this construction of climate change as the 'dominant position'. It is associated with belief in climate change and the promotion of 'a substantial lowering of the emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and a transition to what has been termed a "low-carbon society"' (p.811). We have not considered the damage we have done. Neoliberalism is not the problem. The problem is our failure to recognise the need for cleaner technology and market mechanisms that facilitate climate protecting products and behaviour. Once we recognise climate change as a problem we can address it within the context of neoliberalism.

3.4.4 Revolution: A Fundamental Problem

The alternative construction of climate change as a problem is what Jamison (2010) refers to as the 'emergent position'. This construction accepts the problem of climate change, but stresses 'the importance of dealing with climate change in ways that take issues of justice and fairness seriously into account' (p.812). More fundamentally, this construction challenges the entire system of neoliberalism and encourages completely different ways to tackle the problem.

The problem of climate change is not about market failures and 'tweaking' the neoliberal system. Rather, neoliberalism itself is constructed as the fundamental cause of the problem. The root causes of climate change are the pursuit of profit, limitless

growth and the self-interested orientation of individuals. Neoliberalism cannot be expected to solve the problem of climate change when these fundamental principles have not changed:

An abundance of eco-political measures are being considered and implemented. Yet the key principles governing western practices of production, circulation, exchange and consumption remain immutable. The key principles of consumer capitalism, i.e. infinite economic growth and wealth accumulation, which ecologists have always branded as fundamentally unsustainable, remain fully in place (Bluhdorn and Welsh 2007, p.187).

Lorenzoni *et al* (2007) support this position arguing that, 'as an issue linked fundamentally to energy consumption, climate change challenges virtually every aspect of modern lifestyles and the prevailing paradigm to consume freely' (p.454). The problem of climate change is associated with energy consumption, accumulation and waste. Discourses of revolution argue that this construction of the problem is fundamental to the ways in which we must deal with it. Any viable solution to the problem of climate change must challenge the underlying assumptions of the system that created it.

The rest of the chapter will provide a systematic analysis of seven climate discourses that represent different ways of dealing with the problem of climate change. The analysis will be based on the six analytical categories outlined at the beginning of the chapter. The discourses will be situated in the context of neoliberalism and categorised into discourses of reform and discourses of revolution. This will reflect the two fundamental ways of constructing the problem.

3.5 Dealing with Climate Change: Discourses of Reform

Discourses of reform are the dominant ways in which we deal with climate change in the modern world. They are based on the construction of the climate problem as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system:

To the extent that neoliberalism, with its calls for letting ''the market'' address myriad social and economic woes, has become the dominant model for political economic practice today, it should be expected that environmental governance, too, would be shaped by the neoliberal imperative to deregulate, liberalize trade and investment, marketize, and privatize (Mansfield 2004a, p.313).

Discourses of reform are congruent with neoliberal values and are based on

incremental change and maintenance of the status quo. I will consider three climate discourses in this section: ecological modernisation; individualism; and privatization.

3.5.1 *Ecological Modernisation*

The discourse of ecological modernisation (EM) is probably the most well-known neoliberal response to environmental problems. The most important modification to neoliberalism that EM proposes is in its account of the relationship between the environment and the economy. In its pure form neoliberalism did not acknowledge the existence of the environment as anything more than a resource (Blowers 1997). The relationship between the environment and the economy was one of conflict. The neoliberal pursuit of continual growth and self-interest was contradictory to the traditional environmental ethos of conservation and concern for the natural world. As an approach to climate change, EM attempts to alter this relationship in three main ways. First, problems such as climate change must be taken seriously. Mol and Sonnenfeld (2000) argue that, 'complete neglect of the environment and the fundamental counter-positioning of economic and environmental interests are no longer accepted as legitimate positions' (p.7). Climate change cannot be ignored; it is a problem that must be addressed. Second, although the environment remains a resource, it must be treated as 'society's sustenance base' rather than a limitless supply of materials and sinks (Mol and Spaargaren 2000, p.23). The climate is fragile and it must be respected for the important role it plays in our lives. We must ensure that the effects of climate change do not harm us and that we can continue to use natural resources in a way that meets our needs and wants. Finally, and most notably, the relationship between the environment and the economy is constructed as one of harmony. Hajer (1995) states that, 'environmental management is seen as a positive-sum game: pollution prevention pays' (p.3). This transformed relationship between the environment and the economy is the 'distinct feature of ecological modernization' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, p.52). We can have a healthy environment *and* a healthy economy. There is no longer a conflict between conservation and growth. Conservation is necessary for a healthy economy and careful or 'managed' growth is conducive to environmental protection.

Despite the transformation of this fundamental component, however, many of the key features of neoliberalism remain unchanged. The key values of the discourse still focus on growth and profit. Pepper (1999) argues that, 'ecological modernisation

sees environmental protection not as an impediment to capital accumulation but as a potential source of further accumulation' (p.3). Similarly, assumptions about human nature remain unchanged. EM has proven a very popular approach to climate change because, 'the economic advantages to countries and companies leading the field in environmental performance improvements have been recognised as considerable' (Christoff 1996, p.478). Self-interest and the pursuit of profit remain paramount. Backstrand and Lovbrand (2006) consider the discourse of EM in the context of international climate negotiations. They note that:

The investments in climate mitigation projects in developing countries enabled by the CDM[13] have also been widely embraced by the international business community. CDM projects are commonly portrayed as a market opportunity that can boost competitiveness (pp.60-61).

This example also illustrates the continued importance of freedom as a value in this discourse. CDM is a popular tool for climate change mitigation because it promotes market competition, but also because it does not impose 'strict targets and timetables for a stabilization of greenhouse gases' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, p.60).

Given the importance of freedom, the state/market relationship also remains largely unchanged from a pure neoliberal discourse. If anything, EM affords more power to the market in an environmental context. Since previously climate change was not a neoliberal consideration, it was the role of the state to ensure the regulation of emissions. As climate change is subsumed into the neoliberal discourse, the role of the state becomes further 'decentralised, flexible and consensual' (Mol and Sonnenfeld 2000, p.7). According to EM, the market can do a more efficient job of regulating emissions than the state. There is therefore a 'move from command and control to economic instruments' (Young 2000, p.12). The relationship between the state and the market becomes more co-operative over climate change, but the market retains control as the most important entity (Young 2000; Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006).

Ecological modernisation is a co-operative venture. Although the balance of power is unequal, many key agents play a role in this climate discourse. Government,

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[13] The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), defined in Article 12 of the Protocol, allows a country with an emission-reduction or emission-limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol (Annex B Party) to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO_2, which can be counted towards meeting Kyoto targets (UNFCCC 2011b).

business and scientists are all expected to work together to tackle environmental problems. Pepper (1999) claims that, 'technological and managerial experts, businesses and industry all become key actors in fulfilling the environmental agenda' (p.3). Climate change can be solved through technological innovation and sophisticated management of the environment.

The discourse of EM necessarily includes an account of social change. It is a discourse constructed to incorporate environmental concerns, including climate change, into the dominant discourse of neoliberalism. The very essence of the discourse is a change from the traditional destructive relationship between the environment and the economy. However, this change is consistent with the values of neoliberalism. Progress, in terms of material wealth and human well-being, is still expected to occur as the outcome of individual choices in a competitive market. The difference is that the market must now incorporate environmental concerns:

The assumption here (and the assumptions are usually unquestioned) is that a process of industrial innovation encouraged by a market economy and facilitated by an enabling state will ensure environmental conservation (Blowers 1997, p. 847).

Hence, science and technology provide 'innovation' and the 'diffusion of new technologies' for environmental protection (Spaargaren 2000, p.325). A neoliberal market ensures that this process remains efficient and competitive and profit is generated for 'green' businesses. However, this account of social change is firmly rooted in a tradition of reform. Ecological modernisation has a 'strong bias in favour of consensus and conflict avoidance... it seeks to avoid addressing basic social contradictions' (Reitan 1998, p.15). Environmental problems such as climate change are internalised through market mechanisms but the market it not considered as part of the problem. This discourse therefore focuses on gradual and incremental change.

It should be noted that some theorists do acknowledge a stronger version of ecological modernisation (Christoff 1996; Hajer 1996; Pepper 1999). The components of this altered discourse do allow a stronger role for the state and a more radical account of social change. However, for purposes of clarity, I will 'equate the discourse of ecological modernization with the weak version, since it arguably represents the predominant discourse in global rhetoric and practice' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, p.53).

3.5.2 Individualism

The discourse of individualism is also based on a reformist account of social change. The neoliberal emphasis on growth and consumption remains paramount. The main difference between this discourse and ecological modernisation is the locus of action and the relative responsibilities of key agents. Individualism concentrates on the private sphere and the role of individuals in tackling climate change. Individuals can 'retro-fit their house with compact florescent light-bulbs and shower timers' (Hobson 2008, p.546), they can add green products to their weekly shopping list (Seyfang 2005; Greenburg 2006) and they can switch to 'green' energy (Rowlands *et al* 2003). Barkenbus (2010) also points out the numerous changes a person can make to their driving habits in an attempt to reduce emissions. They can purchase 'more fuel efficient vehicles' or 'vehicles that utilize low-carbon fuels (e.g. electricity, natural gas, or ethanol)' or they can 'operate their current vehicles more efficiently' (p.762).

The key agents in this discourse are individual consumers acting as neoliberal subjects. Their role is to make environmentally friendly purchases, but purchases nonetheless. Slocum (2004a) claims that, 'passivity is the hallmark of the consumer' (p.765). People are not expected to challenge the system; they are expected to make environmentally friendly consumption choices. It should be noted that some accounts of individualism do afford a slightly more radical role to the individual consumer. Clarke *et al* (2007) argue that, 'ethical consumption, understood as an organised movement, seeks to use everyday consumption as a surface of mobilisation for wider, explicitly political aims and agendas' (p.233). There is an element of 'citizenship' in the practice of consumption. Consumerism is 'increasingly seen as a public arena of activism and the expression of citizenship' (Seyfang 2005, p.290). However, Smart (2010) acknowledges the complicated relationship between the individual and market forces. Although consumers can dictate the success of available products, they can only purchase those products that are available (p.37)[14]. Indeed, later in her paper, Seyfang (2005) concedes the limits of consumerist action:

A person might choose one brand of washing-machine over another because of its greater energy-efficiency, but what they cannot easily choose is to purchase collectively and share common laundry facilities among a local group of residents. Consumers are effectively locked in to particular

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[14] A similar argument is made by both Maniates (2001) and Sanne (2002).

consumption patterns by the overarching social structures of market, business, working patterns, urban planning and development (p.297).

Hence, an individualistic account of social change is based on small, incremental actions that an individual can make without drastic alterations to their way of life. Individualism is concerned with maintaining the overall structures of society and placing responsibility for problems like climate change on the shoulders of those who live and work within that system (Maniates 2001; Kent 2009). Consumption is not challenged. Rather, it is framed as an arena for positive individual action, 'as in calls for "green consumption" or the moral imperatives of recycling' (Conca *et al* 2001, p.1).

The discourse retains many of the key neoliberal values. The focus is on consumption and individual freedom. Hobson (2001) argues that 'a state of "consumer sovereignty" exists, where freedom and consumption are inextricably linked' (p.100). Although the discourse is centred on the responsibility of individuals, this is still couched in essentially voluntaristic terms. Kirk (2008) contends that 'neoliberal informed approaches to climate change mitigation would favour tools such as voluntary eco-consumerism, rather than use of regulatory tools such as tax incentives' (p.161). Accordingly, value is placed on the importance of choice. It is the responsibility of the individual to reduce their own carbon emissions, but it remains their choice to act (Clarke *et al* 2007).

The importance of knowledge is also prevalent in this discourse. The role of knowledge in creating climate-protecting behaviour is a subject of some controversy. The 'information deficit' model of pro-environmental behaviour is 'based on a linear progression of environmental knowledge leading to environmental awareness and concern (environmental attitudes), which in turn [is] thought to lead to pro-environmental behaviour' (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002, p. 241). The model has been subject to criticism for its tendency to over-simplify the issue (Chess and Johnson 2007). However, the provision of information is important in discourses of individualism. If people are informed about the benefits of individual action (both for themselves and for the climate) they are more likely to act. Proponents of individualism often highlight the role of information in encouraging climate-protecting behaviour (Clarke *et al* 2007; Barkenbus 2010).

70

The account of human nature in this discourse is also consistent with key neoliberal values. People are individualistic and materialistic by nature, they 'respond to economic incentives and make rational choices determined by their personal preferences and the (predominately economic) constraints they face' (Berglund and Matti 2006, p.555). For this reason, the market still plays a dominant role in the discourse of individualism. Marketing strategies and incentives are used to influence individual choice. Advertising presents information about the attractiveness of 'green' products, appealing to materialistic and self-interested concerns. Charman (2008) enthuses that, 'environmentally friendly products are hot - the newest marketing fad - and already a multibillion dollar market' (p.31). The individual is the most important agent but the market plays a fundamental role, structuring the products and choices that are available (Seyfang 2005). The state, on the other hand, remains an auxiliary entity. Since the environment is a concern for the market, Maniates (2001) claims we have seen a 'depoliticization of environmental degradation' (p.34). Government climate policy remains, but it is 'dominated by individualistic culture and a market-led approach to sustainable consumption' (Seyfang 2004, p.334).

The main difference between individualism and ecological modernisation is that they attribute the responsibility for dealing with climate change to different agents. In an ecological modernisation discourse the onus for action is on business and technology; it is located in the realm of production. In a discourse of individualism, responsibility lies with the consumer:

Sustainable consumption addresses the 'demand side' of the market, just as end of pipe technologies, renewable energy and commercial waste management address the 'supply side'. It places the responsibility for change unequivocally within the domain of the individual consumer (Hinton and Redclift 2009, p.9).

Rational consumers are expected to make pro-environmental choices and encourage the provision of 'green' products.

In this climate discourse, the relationship between the environment and the economy is relatively harmonious. Seyfang (2004) claims that there is 'acceptance of certain environmental limits', but that there is also a 'reliance on experts to identify these as the basis of setting market frameworks' (p.332). The messages that come out of the discourse are very environmentally friendly: 'live lightly on the planet' and

'reduce your environmental impact'. However, these sentiments are 'paradoxically a consumer-product growth industry' (Maniates 2001, p.34).

3.5.3 Privatisation

The privatisation of nature has received a lot of attention in academia. Studies have focused on the commodification of water (Bond 2004; Bakker 2007; Bakker 2010), the privatisation of oceans and fisheries (Mansfield 2004a; Mansfield 2004b) and property rights associated with the environment more generally (O'Neill 2001; Castree 2003). Unsurprisingly, the prominence of climate change as an issue has led to 'one of neoliberalism's potentially greatest class projects: the attempt to privatise the climate itself' (Lohmann 2010, p.78).

Privatisation is a distinct feature of neoliberalism. It has led to the dissolution of the public realm and public services (Clarke 2004, p.27) and the creation of markets where they previously did not exist (education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) (Harvey 2007, p.22). As such, reformist approaches to climate change do include discourses of privatisation. Strictly speaking it is difficult to commodify the climate itself. Lohmann (2010) claims that, 'the earth's climate-regulating capacity is… a quintessential Polanyian "fictitious commodity"' (p.79). However, the problem of climate change is linked to other 'commodifiable' resources. Trees, for example, have the 'ability to decrease energy consumption, and thus carbon emissions, by moderating temperature extremes' (Heynon and Perkins 2005, p.100). Indeed, international initiatives such as REDD+ have involved placing a price on the conservation of nature[15].

Moreover, pollution itself can be privatised. The trading of carbon emissions associated with international climate policy is tantamount to privatising the climate: '"Cap and trade'' essentially turns pollution into a commodity that the polluters and others can sell' (Charman 2008, p.33). The assumption of this discourse is that the unregulated use of common resources, including the atmosphere, has led to environmental degradation, including climate change. However, if the natural world is privatised, it can be valued and protected. Humphreys (2009) argues that, 'if forests

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[15] Essentially, REDD+ is 'paying forest owners and users – either through national governments or directly – to fell fewer trees and manage their forests better. Famers, companies and forest owners can simply sell forest carbon credits and less cattle, coffee, cocoa or charcoal' (Angelson 2009, p.1). The initiative was first introduced in December 2005.

are to be conserved they should be given economic value in market mechanisms. Forests without economic value will be at risk of deforestation and forest degradation' (p.321). Similarly, 'market forces will fix the price of carbon emissions at a level that will reward low polluters and provide a financial incentive for high polluters to invest in clean technology in order to reduce future emissions' (Humphreys 2009, p.321). The relationship between the environment and the economy is therefore one of protection. It is necessary to bring the environment into the economic calculus to ensure it is valued correctly and not exploited. The key values of the discourse are therefore the protection of natural resources based on the establishment of private property rights (Bakker 2007, p.432). In addition, neoliberal values such as profit and market competition play a role in the climate discourse of privatisation.

The account of human nature in this climate discourse is again based on self-interest. However, in this case it is directed towards the protection of the natural world. As with the discourse of individualism, the concern is with utilizing self-interest for the benefit of the climate. Hardin (1968) famously stated that, 'freedom in a commons brings ruin to all' (p.1244). The inclination of every man is to overuse the commons for his own individual benefit when the consequences will be shared by all. The same is true of the global atmosphere. The effects of climate change are not felt proportionally by those who caused the problem. Self-interest therefore dictates that we should continue to emit carbon and maintain our own standard of living because we will not have to deal directly with the consequences. A discourse of privatisation attempts to overcome this problem by introducing a sense of 'ownership' over environmental problems. If we own something we are more likely to care for it; it is in our interest to look after it. O'Neill (2001) cites a famous example of this argument in the words of Aristotle: 'Men pay most attention to what is their own: they care less for what is common; or at any rate, they care for it only to the extent to which each is individually concerned' (p.697). If we put a price on pollution or privatise a forest it is in the interest of the relevant country or corporation to regulate their emissions or take care of the trees. Self-interest is then directed towards temperance and preservation.

The key actors in this discourse are the self-interested individuals and corporations who are involved in a system of property rights. The discourse of privatisation often plays out at the international level with climate policy translated

into market instruments. Bakker (2007) argues that, 'the Kyoto declaration embodies an increasingly dominant philosophy of development... a mode of resource regulation which aims to deploy markets as the solution to environmental problems' (p.432). The market again takes power away from the state as property rights and the problem of climate change is transferred to the private sector.

The discourse of privatisation provides an account of social change again based on neoliberal values and principles of reform. The underlying mechanisms remain the same as they would in a purely neoliberal discourse. Change occurs through the aggregation of individual preferences in a competitive market. This is particularly important for a discourse of privatisation because the process of 'privatising' the environment is central to the internalisation of environmental problems. Placing property rights over trees or carbon emissions is the fundamental basis for 'bring[ing] environmental goods into the market exchange' (O'Neill 2001, p.699).

3.6 Dealing with Climate Change: Discourses of Revolution

Discourses of revolution represent a fundamental challenge to neoliberalism. Proponents of these discourses argue that neoliberalism cannot be expected to deal with a problem that it created in the first place:

The greatest challenge of the global environmental crisis is to overturn our historically deeply embedded assumption that 'progress' via unlimited exploitation of natural resources is both inevitable and desirable (Oosthoek and Gills 2005, p.288).

Climate change is constructed as a problem that is inherent in the neoliberal system. As such, revolutionary approaches pose a challenge to the key neoliberal values and relationships. I will consider four climate discourses in this section: Sufficiency; deep ecology; justice; and democratic citizenship.

3.6.1 Sufficiency

The discourse of sufficiency is rooted in a fundamental challenge to key neoliberal values. Neoliberalism is based upon growth, profit, efficiency and accumulation. Therefore discourses of reform draw upon these values as the basis for environmental protection. Individualism, for example, promotes 'green' consumption.

We can continue to consume as long as this is done in an environmentally conscious manner. Sufficiency, on the other hand, is concerned with limits, well-being and quality of life. Seyfang (2005) considers the difference between these two standpoints:

> The central point of departure for the alternative approach to sustainable consumption is the question of economic growth. Mainstream strategies for sustainable consumption assume this is a necessary prerequisite, despite the failings of indicators such as GDP... These alternative sustainable consumption proposals entail cutting absolute levels of consumption in order to reduce the ecological footprints of modern industrialised societies (pp.298-299).

The discourse therefore challenges the global spread of neoliberal values. For many, the defining feature of neoliberalism is its global reach and influence (Larner 2003; von Werlhof 2008). Discourses of sufficiency promote the benefits of localisation and living lightly on the planet. Hines (2003) claims that, 'emphasis is not on competition for the cheapest, but co-operation for the best' (p.1). Discourses of sufficiency also offer alternative definitions of neoliberal values such as progress and development. Mainstream rhetoric concentrates on gross domestic product (GDP) as the measure of a country's development. GDP is the 'typical index used… to measure progress and welfare' (D'Acci 2011, p.48). A discourse of sufficiency challenges this default position. Daly (1996b) argues that we need 'development without growth. Growth is to get bigger, development is to get different' (p.268). Sufficiency focuses on quality rather than quantity; it considers 'needs' as opposed to 'wants' (Hines 2000).

The account of social change is rooted in this alternative conception of development and progress. We can address problems such as climate change by redefining our goals as individuals and as a society: 'If "progress" in development did not primarily consist of indefinitely increasing material consumption, then "progress" would be less likely to constrain global environmental carrying capacity' (Pepper 1999, p.29). Proponents of this discourse argue that we need an alternative way of gauging progress. Seyfang (2005) suggests that some measure of domestic progress (MDP), evaluating happiness and well-being, may be preferable to GDP[16]. This redefinition of progress and a localised economy and society would potentially lead to a smaller carbon footprint. Barkin (2003) claims that, 'there would seem on the

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[16] Since 1950 GDP has rapidly increased, while MDP has 'barely grown at all'. In the last 30 years GDP has grown by 80% while MDP has fallen (Seyfang 2005, p.299). For further information see Jackson (2005b).

face of it to be a strong compatibility between this anti-globalization position and the demands of dealing with climate change' (p.9). We can reduce the emissions caused by the global transportation of products by buying locally (Seyfang 2008, p.188). We can reduce our food miles by shopping at a farmers market (Feagan 2008, p.164) or investing in a community supported agriculture scheme (CSA)[17].

The account of human nature in this discourse is that individuals can look beyond their own self-interest and work towards the common good. Princen (2003) argues that a discourse of sufficiency acknowledges the capability of people to recognise limits: 'Sufficiency as an idea is straightforward, indeed simple and intuitive, arguably "rational". It is the sense that, as one does more and more of an activity, there can be enough and there can be too much' (p.43). Individuals are the key agents, but their role is to work towards the overall wellbeing of the community. Hence, they can recognise the limits of their activities and consider what is best for the community rather than for their own personal gain. Hinton and Redclift (2009) contend that this 'alternative discourse…involves frugality, thrift and a kind of voluntary austerity' (p.4). Localisation also constitutes 'a rearranging of patterns of economic interaction that promotes economic integration regionally rather than globally' (Barkin 2003, p.8). Markets are supported by local people (as key agents) and the system operates in a sustainable manner.

The relationship between the state and the market is remarkably similar to reformist approaches to climate change. The market maintains the prominent position. Indeed, Hines (2003) argues that 'localisation can be thought of as the flow of ideas, technologies, information, culture, money and goods with the end goal of protecting and rebuilding economies worldwide' (p.1). However, the role of the market is entirely different to the neoliberal conception of the market. The local economy supports the local society and is, in turn, supported by that society. There is no pursuit of unlimited accumulation, as there would be in global markets of neoliberalism.

Given the alternative conception of the market and the key values of this discourse, the relationship between the environment and economy is one of harmony.

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[17] In its simplest form CSA involves local people investing in a farm or crop in advance of the harvest. This guarantees an income for the farmer and shares the risk amongst the investors. In return the investors get a share of the harvest, often this is a vegetable box but it could also be fruit, eggs or meat. (Cox *et al* 2008, p.204).

Resources are not used to excess and the balance of the climate is respected with fewer emissions from local, smaller activities (Douthwaite 1999; Schumacher 1999).

3.6.2   Justice

A justice based approach to climate change challenges the widely accepted neoliberal account of human nature and offers an alternative account of social change. For many of the reformist discourses we can deal with climate change by appealing to self-interest and changing the behaviour of individuals, states and corporations. Climate change can be a win-win business; profits can be made through a more efficient use of materials and processes. Individuals can reduce their fuel bills and improve the local air quality through taking public transport and buying 'green' products. Reformist accounts of social change rely on incremental alterations based on penalties and incentives (Dobson 2007, p.277). A discourse of justice disputes the basis of this approach. Climate change is not about self-interest and the inducement of climate-friendly behaviour. Fundamentally, climate change 'is an ethical issue' (Gardiner 2004, p.556). We should not deal with climate change because it will bring benefits to us. We should deal with it because it is the right thing to do. For Jamison (2010) this discourse epitomises the challenge to neoliberal accounts of social change. The 'emergent position' accepts the problem of climate change, but stresses 'the importance of dealing with climate change in ways that take issues of justice and fairness seriously into account' (p.812).

The impacts of climate change will be felt disproportionately around the world and 'those who currently emit the most greenhouse gases are not likely those who will be most harmed by global warming' (Brown 2003, p.229). Accordingly, a discourse of justice deals with values of fairness, responsibility and rights. Beckman and Page (2005) state that, 'the issues of who (recipients) should get how much (pattern) at whose cost (burden bearers) are of great importance for our understanding of justice both within and between generations' (p.528). A discourse of justice contends that these are the most important considerations that should be made when dealing with climate change. Indeed, one of the most debated issues in international climate policy is the question of responsibility in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Soroos 2001; Dimitrov 2010).

The fundamental difference between this discourse and more reformist accounts is the conception of persons. All individuals are bearers of fundamental rights by the very virtue of being human. Whilst neoliberal discourse emphasises the right to freedom and property, a justice discourse concentrates on the basic welfare rights of individuals. Each person has a right to their most basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, security). Accordingly, our approach to the problem of climate change should be considered as a matter of human rights:

Persons have a human right not to suffer from the ill-effects of global climate change. Climate change undermines persons' human rights to a decent standard of health, to economic necessities, and to subsistence (Caney 2008, p.551).

The conception of individuals in this discourse can also be related to its account of human nature. Individuals are not solely self-interested rational consumers. Rather, they are capable of acting justly. In fact, it is assumed that 'the capacity for a sense of justice is possessed by the overwhelming majority of mankind' (Rawls 1999, p.443). Thus, we can recognise the justice-based implications of anthropogenic climate change and accept some of the responsibility for mitigation.

Given the emphasis on human rights and human nature, the key agents in this account are individuals. However, different theorists place varying degrees of importance on gender, race and socio-economic situation. Arora-Jonsson (2011) for example, writes about the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women, while Barnett (2006) argues that 'poverty is a key determinant of vulnerability to climate change' (p.123). Discourses of justice also consider the role of future generations and non-human nature.

The relationship between the environment and the economy is an interesting aspect of this discourse. The environment is perceived to be more than a mere resource as it is in many neoliberal accounts of climate change. In some accounts of justice the natural world is deemed to have rights and be worthy of protection on the basis of its intrinsic worth (Baxter 2000). However, it is not necessarily the most important consideration. In most discourses of justice, the primary focus is on the rights and needs of individuals (Thomas and Twyman 2005; Woods 2006; Caney 2008). That said, it is often the case that protection of the natural world is consistent with ideals of justice. Shrader-Frechette (2002) argues that, 'protection for people and planet go hand in hand' (p.5). In this discourse the harmony between the two entities

does not rest on the fact that protection of the natural world can boost the growth and profit of the economy. Rather, the premise is that a stable, just economy will be naturally lead to a protected and stable climate.

The relationship between the state and the market is another area that represents a challenge to reformist approaches. Although the economy is important, it should not be given primacy in the same way it would in neoliberal accounts of social change. Bond (2000) argues that a climate discourse of justice, 'sites the issues of ecological damage within a socio-political context first and foremost, and poses firm moral and distributional questions about that context' (p.36). The economy should be used to create wealth and prosperity, but it is the role of the state to ensure that this is done in a fair and just manner. Many theorists in this area also advocate the importance of democracy in accounts of justice:

To correct problems of environmental justice, it will be necessary to improve the principles and practices of distributive justice... it will also be necessary to reform the principles and practices of participative justice' (Shrader-Frechette 2002, p.24).

It is important that the benefits and burdens of climate change are fairly distributed but it is also important that people are involved in the decision making process. The state should therefore play an important role in ensuring both distributive and participative justice on the issue of climate change.

3.6.3 Deep Ecology

The most fundamental challenge that this discourse poses to neoliberalism is rooted in the relationship between the environment and the economy. The discourse of sufficiency challenged key neoliberal values. It criticised the ever-increasing pursuit for growth and profit favouring instead well-being and quality of life. The discourse of justice embodied a similar challenge, focusing on values of fairness, responsibility and basic human rights. The latter discourse also challenged the neoliberal conception of human nature, arguing that principles of justice should temper the self-interested imperatives of the neoliberal subject. A discourse of deep ecology proposes perhaps the most fundamental challenge to reformist discourses. The environment should not be valued as resource for our controlled development or as a resource to improve the quality of all human life. Rather, it should be valued because it is intrinsically important: 'Nature and its diversity have intrinsic value

irrespective of human uses and interests' (Dryzek 1997, p.156). Soper (2000) considers the relationship between our conception of nature and the way in which we treat it:

What bearing do our attitudes to nature, or our ontological conceptions of it, have on the way we treat it? Are changed perceptions of its worth always conducive to improved practice? Is the development of respect for nature's intrinsic value an essential precondition of such improvement (p.88)?

For advocates of deep ecology, respect for nature's intrinsic value is indeed a precondition of its protection. The relationship between the environment and economy is unequal, but it is the environment that is granted more importance.

The neoliberal relationship between the state and the market is also challenged in this discourse with particular criticism of privatisation discourses. There are two important reasons for this criticism. First, the natural world is not a commodity. If we value something for its intrinsic value then we cannot equate it to a commodity; something that is for sale:

Under the self-regulating market of liberal capitalism, market signals alone are necessarily insufficient in governing the allocation of nature to meet economic and competing social demands (e.g. for clean drinking water) because nature in its various forms is not a commodity, that is, not produced for sale (McCarthy and Prudham 2004, p.281).

Second, a climate discourse of deep ecology argues that, even if it were possible to commodify nature, this would not result in its protection. The purpose of involving the private sector in the protection of the climate is to introduce the logic of the market. This will account for environmental damage, such as climate change, and incorporate it into the economic calculus. We can prevent damage before it occurs or charge countries and corporations for the damage that they cause (Robertson 2004). Money can then be re-invested in green technology and carbon offsetting projects.

However, Bakker (2007) claims that privatization, 'introduces a pernicious logic of the market... answerable to shareholders and with the over-riding goal of profit' (p.437). If nature is only protected as a resource then its protection is subject to its value as a resource. Fulcher (2004) argues that it is 'not the nature of a thing that matters but the possibility of making a profit out of it' (p.14). If it is profitable to cut down a forest and use the land to graze cattle or build upon then the 'over-riding goal of profit' will make that the main consideration. To demonstrate this problem Sagoff

(1988) describes a situation near his hometown in the USA. There was a piece of protected land on which developers were keen to situate a mall. Despite the protected status of the land and the protests of local people, the mall was built, suggesting that 'the price that land (or any other resource) might command on the free market determines or measures the value of the competing uses to which it may be put' (Sagoff 1988, p.193). A discourse of deep ecology insists on the problems of market intervention in natural processes. The state must protect the commons on the basis of its intrinsic value.

An account of social change for this climate discourse is based on fundamentally reconceptualising our relationship with the natural world and challenging the key values of neoliberalism. The problem of climate change is rooted in our valuation of the natural world as a resource. We must consider the problems that climate change will cause for the natural world (as encouraged in some discourses of justice) and we must approach the problem by protecting the earth on the basis of its intrinsic value. In this eco-centric discourse, 'man should not place himself at the centre and regard the value of non-humans as purely instrumental. The entire ecosystem with all its living beings should be central' (Kamminga 2008, p.684). Thus, the key agents in this account are eco-systems, non-human nature and the natural world more generally. We must approach climate change by challenging both the neoliberal conception of the natural world and its account of self-interested human nature.

3.6.4 *Democratic Citizenship*

A discourse of democratic citizenship has been variously detailed in the literature and has some resonance with 'civic environmentalism' (Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006); 'environmental citizenship' (Bell 2005; Dobson 2007); and 'democratic pragmatism' (Dryzek 1997). The discourse puts individuals at the heart of solutions to climate change. However, the role of the individual is not as a passive consumer or a neoliberal subject. Rather, the individual is a change agent or a citizen. In this capacity individuals can put pressure on states and corporations to regulate emissions (Hale 2010) and they can implement action at the grassroots of society (Horton 2006; Rootes 2007). The work of individuals as change agents is evident in many climate initiatives, such as Transition Towns (Ockwell *et al* 2009) and potentially the climate champion programme itself. As citizens, individuals are also

expected to deliberate about important climate related issues and agree upon action for change:

Rather than being management problems that governments or experts can solve for us, when seen as ethical problems, they become problems for us all to address, both as political actors and as everyday moral agents' (Jamieson 1992, p.150).

Our role is to deliberate about the type of society we want to live in and then implement action for change. Backstrand and Lovbrand (2006) claim that there is a 'participation gap' in modern society (p.55). We must address this problem in order to deal with climate change.

In this climate discourse the key actors, key values and the account of human nature are intertwined. The key values focus on collectivism, responsibility, deliberation and the common good. Individuals are constructed as 'citizens' who are concerned with the common good and the public interest (Dobson 2007). The account of human nature therefore challenges the neoliberal focus on self-interest:

On the other hand, we have the citizens, individuals whose decisions are based on a separate set of values, with their acts motivated by an altruistic concern for a larger community. That is, they may refrain from individual short-term gains if the society at large is better off in the long term (Berglund and Matti 2006, p.555).

This concern for the common good generates a collective response to climate change and, consequently, an important role for the state. An environmental problem such as climate change sits squarely in the sphere of political responsibility and governance. Sagoff (1988) argues that, '[environmental problems] are primarily moral, aesthetic, cultural and political and they must be addressed in those terms' (p.6). The relationship between the state and market is completely unequal. Climate change is not an issue for the market to deal with: 'economics may be able to tell us how to reach our goals efficiently, but it cannot tell us what our goals should be or even whether we should be concerned to reach them efficiently' (Jamieson 1992, p.147). Making decisions about our shared goals and the kind of society we would like to live in is a collective endeavour. According to this discourse it should be done within the realm of the state and not on the basis of market indicators.

The role of the state is not as 'another'; it is not separate from the general population. The state is the embodiment of our collective goals and interests. Indeed,

Sagoff (1988) contends that, 'social regulation expresses what we believe, what we are, what we stand for, not simply what we wish to buy as individuals' (p.17). The state is the sphere for collective action and then potentially the enforcement of our collective goals.

The relationship between the environment and the economy is not especially prominent in this discourse. The reason for this is that climate change is not constructed as an economic issue; it is a political issue. As a discourse of revolution, democratic citizenship constructs the problem of climate change as a fundamental flaw in the neoliberal system. Contrary to the more dominant reformist approaches, democratic citizenship cannot reconcile neoliberal imperatives and approaches to the problem of climate change. The account of social change in this discourse is a fundamental challenge to neoliberal values and accounts of human nature.

3.7 Conclusion

The categorisation of climate discourses is a complicated process. The distinctions between discourses are contestable and any classificatory scheme will exhibit some element of arbitrariness. Inevitably, there will be overlapping components and many further internal nuances in each discourse. Individuals can draw upon a multitude of discourses at any one time. Moreover, different accounts of human nature and the role of key agents are not exclusive. People can be both consumers and citizens, appealing to self-interest and altruism depending on the situation (Berglund and Matti 2006). Reformist discourses, which draw on neoliberal values and ideology, represent the dominant construction of the climate change problem as well as the dominant approach to dealing with it. Heynon and Robbins (2005) acknowledge that neoliberalism can feel 'fated and inescapable' (p.6). However, there are also many discourses of revolution which are 'challenging the master narrative of neoliberalism' (p.7). The problem of climate change and how we should deal with it remains an issue of debate and controversy.

The development of analytical categories and the categorisation of climate discourses offers a useful way to analyse the multitude of climate discourses present in modern society. In this chapter, I have detailed the analytical approach of the project and situated discourses of climate change in the context of neoliberalism as the dominant societal discourse. I have considered the construction of climate change

as a problem as well conducting a systematic analysis of seven climate discourses[18]. This attempt to map the theoretical terrain will be drawn upon in the second half of the thesis. I will use both the climate discourses and the analytical categories to investigate the communication of climate change in large corporations.

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[18] Please see Appendix A for a Summary of Analytical Categories and Climate Discourses

Chapter 4

Methodology and the Research Process

The focus of the project was the everyday communication of climate change. I was interested in the climate discourses that were being used by individuals and the relationship between micro level interaction and dominant climate discourses. The project was organised around the following research objectives: (i) to identify the climate discourses that were being used in everyday communication (ii) to understand how dominant climate discourses constructed 'appropriate'/'inappropriate' ways to think and talk about climate change (iii) to analyse how dominant discourses were reproduced and reinforced in everyday interactions (iv) to identify possible resistance to dominant discourse and analyse how this operated at sites of interaction.

The previous three chapters have outlined the context for the research and the role of discourse analysis in approaching climate change as a problem. In any discursive project the theoretical framework and methodology are closely connected. Taylor (2001) claims that 'it is this theoretical underpinning rather than any sorting process which distinguishes discourse analysis' (p.39). As such, the methodology has been discussed to some extent. I have already explained how I will carry out the actual research because it is inextricably linked to the way I have theorised the problem. However, there are many further methodological issues to consider. This chapter will detail the research process and address the potential limitations of the project.

In section 4.1 I will discuss how I selected a sample of participants and developed the questions that I would ask them. I will provide details about the process of conducting the interviews and how I analysed the data. In section 4.2 I will discuss some important research considerations about the strengths and limitations of my project. I will focus on the ethics, reliability and validity of the data. I will also discuss the problems I faced as I tried to generate a sample of businesses that represented different sectors. Finally, section 4.3 will provide some reflections on the

research and the challenges I faced as a researcher. I will consider my own bias as a 'self-professed environmentalist' and the problem I faced as I attempted to reconcile a constructivist approach with my desire to 'make a difference'.

4.1 The Research Process

This section will provide an overview of the research process documenting the decisions and obstacles that I faced over the course of the project. The account is mostly chronological.

4.1.1 Selecting a Sample

The context for the project was businesses with a specific focus on 'climate champions'. My initial research had indicated that 'climate champion' schemes were increasingly common in many large corporations, as well as other organisations in society. I was keen to generate a sample of companies from different business sectors that had all implemented some form of 'climate champion' scheme. I hoped that the representation of different sectors might make the conclusions of the project applicable to corporate climate champion schemes more generally. Given the increasing prevalence of the 'climate champion' scheme I felt this was an attainable goal.

I began the project by using web-based research to identify multinational corporations that had climate champion schemes and that were acknowledging or actively pursuing environmental goals or objectives. In this preliminary stage I mainly used search engines to locate information on, for example, 'business and climate champions', 'green businesses' and 'business and climate change'. This initial research generated information on over 50 businesses. A smaller sample of businesses was then selected on the basis of fulfilling at least four out of a list of five criteria. In addition, the businesses had to have some form of climate champion scheme. The five criteria were: clear evidence of environmental projects (as well as the champion scheme); evidence of environmental concern in annual and/or corporate social responsibility reports for the past three years; some media coverage for environmental activities; links to environmental organisations (e.g., The Climate Group, WWF, together.com, etc.); and some form of acknowledgment or award for environmental commitments. The use of specific criteria would hopefully allow me to

make comparisons between businesses that were similar in terms of their environmental commitments. This process narrowed my sample down to 25 businesses.

The list of 25 businesses encompassed companies in various sectors, including finance, consultancy, energy, retail, media, production and transport. My intention was to compile a sample that included businesses in a range of sectors and interview champions in each of these businesses. This was not as straightforward as I had first assumed. With no prior contacts in the businesses I began from scratch, either calling the company switchboard or sending an email to a named environmental contact on the website. For the majority of the businesses I could not get past this first obstacle. I was frequently directed to websites or annual reports and I received many polite declines to my interview invitations.

However, in eight out of the 25 cases I spoke directly to an environmental or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) manager who was interested in the research and willing to be involved. In all eight cases the manager was keen to discuss my research in more detail before I interviewed the champions. Bell (1991) comments on the importance of being open with research participants at the beginning of a project:

No researcher can demand access to an institution, an organisation or to materials. People will be doing you a favour if they agree to help, and they will need to know exactly what they will be asked to do, how much time they will be expected to give and what use will be made of the information they provide (p.42).

I travelled to meet six out of the eight managers in person to discuss the aims of my project and learn about their own views on climate change and the champion scheme. As requested, I contacted the other two managers by telephone. I provided every manager with information about the aims of the project and the anticipated length of each interview and the project itself. Two of the managers requested feedback about the champion scheme and I subsequently offered a similar arrangement to the other managers. Korezynski (2004) notes that this is frequently the case when dealing with 'gatekeepers'. When negotiating access to an institution, 'researchers often offer the gatekeepers or individuals a benefit that would accrue from access being granted. In formal settings this might take the form of a written report of the findings' (p.3). My research would provide the manager with a useful overview of the champion scheme from the perspective of those who had been involved.

The provision of the report was important for two reasons. In the first instance it helped me to gain access to the champions and actually conduct the project. In addition, I felt that it added value to the 'impact' of my research. A brief report about the success and challenges encountered by the champions had the potential to improve what I felt to be a worthwhile scheme. The information would help the manager to identify strengths and weaknesses and make appropriate changes 'on the ground'. It was agreed that feedback would be subject to the consent of the champions themselves[19].

The initial purpose of the manager interviews was to discuss access to the champions. However, most of the managers were equally happy to engage in a detailed discussion about the champion scheme and their own views on climate change. These initial interviews provided a wealth of data about climate discourses and the process of behaviour change in the workplace. I therefore decided to incorporate the 'manager interviews' into the main research project[20]. The sample of companies in this stage of interviewing was limited to five sectors (construction, consultancy, energy, finance, and retail).

All eight managers were very helpful, but gaining access to the champions remained a challenge. Overall, I managed to secure interviews with champions in four out of the eight companies. One of the managers arranged a focus group with his champions. A further three managers asked me to get back in touch. Upon further correspondence, I was provided with a list of champions to contact. In two out of the remaining four businesses the manager decided that it was not feasible for me to interview the champions. This was either due to time, resources or distance. The final two managers did agree in principle, but further contact was infrequent and a list of champions was not forthcoming. The four climate champion case studies were in the consultancy, energy and finance sectors.

4.1.2 Asking Questions

The theoretical underpinnings of the project necessitated the collection of qualitative material. I was interested in how the champions approached their role and

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[19] Please see Appendix B for an example feedback report. Reports were provided for companies A, B and C. The manager from company D requested a transcript of the focus group as an alternative to the report. This was provided once the transcription was complete.

[20] Throughout the analysis I will refer to the language of the 'champions'. However, I will also include responses from the managers where relevant.

talked about climate change in everyday interactions. The aim was to provide a detailed analysis of the discourses that were being used and how these were (a) constructing 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour and (b) being reproduced or subverted through language and behaviour. Detailed qualitative data was a necessity.

I decided to use interviews for two reasons. The first reason is based on the intrinsic value of interviews. Interviews provide a detailed insight into the way people think and talk about an issue. Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that, 'qualitative interviewers listen to people as they describe how they understand the worlds in which they live and work' (p.3). Interviews provided a context for the champions to report how they were communicating climate change to other people. They also allowed me to hear first-hand how the champions themselves talked about climate change in our own conversation. The second reason is based on the impracticality of alternatives. The alternative to interviews was a more participative approach where I would immerse myself in the workplace environment and experience the communication of climate change first-hand. This was less feasible given (a) the time restrictions on the project and (b) the access issues I had initially encountered with the businesses. Even the managers who agreed to be involved were very conscious of time constraints and the perceived environmental image of the business. Korezynski (2004) notes that gatekeepers such as managers might be 'concerned about potential costs' of granting access (p.3). In modern society, the environmental image of a business is very important and managers are keen to maintain the status of the company as 'environmentally friendly' (Rhee and Lee 2003). Interviews provided a detailed, but not invasive insight into the everyday communication of climate change[21].

Based on the work of Gillham (2008) I began my research with a very informal investigation into the most useful way to conduct the interviews[22]. Gillham (2008) promotes the use of 'trialling' research questions even before embarking on a pilot study:

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[21] It should be noted that Hargreaves (2008) did manage to obtain this kind of access to Environment Champions. He engaged in participant observation at a construction company over the course of nine months. However, Hargreaves (2008) had previously 'developed strong links with Global Action Plan' (p.81) and thus did not encounter the same access issues as I had in the business context. In addition, by engaging in detailed ethnographic research, Hargreaves was limited to one business as the context for his research.

[22] Please see Appendix C for a full list of preliminary research activities.

Make it clear to the people involved what your area of interest is, that you need guidance on the detail and will be using what they tell you to develop questions for a questionnaire or similar. What are the things they think are important' (p.47)?

I was put in contact with two climate champions through personal connections and I was able to discuss my research in an informal way. I was very clear about my research interests but less clear about the actual information that I wished to gain from my participants. These informal conversations offered an insight into the role of the champion and some perspectives on climate change as an issue. The champions were situated in unrelated areas (a hospital and a school), but this did give me a starting point for the focus of my interviews.

I followed this 'trialling' phase with a pilot study at Newcastle University. Newcastle University has a network of 'environmental co-ordinators' who fulfil a very similar role to the 'climate champions' in my study. I interviewed seven co-ordinators using the broad set of questions that I had developed from my trialling phase. The interview was split into two sections with questions about (a) the role itself and (b) general views on climate change. These interviews were transcribed and analysed on the basis of my research questions and objectives. The pilot study offered a very useful insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the questions I was asking and the extent to which they would elicit the kind of information I was interested in. In these pilot interviews the actual climate discourses came through very clearly. Different discourses were apparent in the way champions talked about their own behaviour and motivations as well as the actions they encouraged in the workplace. The process of reinforcing and/or subverting dominant discourses was less obvious in the data. I used this information to adjust the focus of the interview slightly. For example, in the main study, I specifically asked the champions about the possibility of change and their successes and failures as facilitators of behaviour change. These latter questions were intended to draw out, not only the various climate discourses being used, but also the perception of these discourses as 'normal' or 'true'[23].

The pilot data also helped with the continuing development of my theoretical framework. For example, champions in the pilot study referred to motivations and values that I had, thus far, not considered. Reconciling this data with the literature was a useful process. I incorporated new themes and ideas into the development of

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[23] Please see Appendix D for the final interview questionnaire.

the discourse components and climate discourses. I also became increasingly aware of the need to continually reassess the theoretical material in light of the empirical analysis. This has been an iterative process over the course of the project.

Finally, the pilot study indicated the importance of a semi-structured and flexible approach. I began with a set of topics that I wanted to cover, but participants often moved to a different topic or addressed a later question. Their own thought process was a very important part of communication and this was a useful issue to be aware of as I began the main interviews. It also gave me the chance to practise my interviewing skills and make the most of my time with the participants in the main part of my study.

4.1.3 Conducting the Interviews

Overall, the main project included 44 participants. I interviewed eight environmental managers and met with 36 'climate champions'. The champions were from four different companies and I interviewed between eight and ten champions from each. Two of the interviews were conducted with more than one person. In case study C two of the champions spoke to me together. In case study D the manager had arranged a focus group with eight of the champions. The rest of the interviews were with one person at a time.

Climate champion case studies		
Business	**Sector**	**No. of Champions Interviewed**
A	Energy	10
B	Finance	8
C	Consultancy	10
D	Finance	8
E	Finance	0
F	Retail	0
G	Construction	0
H	Construction	0

Table 4.1

Where possible, I travelled to meet the participant and conducted the interview in person. Where this was not feasible, the interviews were conducted over the phone. 15 of the interviews were conducted over the phone; I met the other 29 people in person. The interviews ranged in length from 25 minutes for the shortest to 1hr 20 minutes for the longest. The majority of the interviews were between 50-60 minutes in length and the shorter interviews tended to be those conducted over the phone.

The manager interviews were conducted between August 2009 and January 2010. The interviews with the champions were conducted between March 2010 and May 2010. With the permission of the participants, all interviews were recorded and the data was transcribed for analysis[24].

4.1.4 Analysing the Data

I began looking for themes in the data as soon as I conducted the trialling phase and pilot study. As stated above, this preliminary analysis helped to develop the focus for the interviews as well as the theoretical material. The majority of the literature on climate discourses indicated the prominence of neoliberalism in approaches to tackling climate change (Mansfield 2004b; Andrew *et al* 2010). As expected, neoliberal themes were also prominent in the preliminary empirical data. However, there were many other climate discourses apparent in the data. I used the initial analysis alongside the literature to develop themes which could be explored in the main project.

All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed and this allowed for a very detailed analysis of the data. Gill (1996) argues that the key to effective discourse analysis is immersion in the data (p.144). The recording of the interviews allowed for this process of immersion. I was able to frequently listen back to the recordings and re-read the transcripts many times. New themes emerged with every reading and this meant that analysis of the data was necessarily an iterative process. This is typically the case with a discursive approach (Taylor 2001). I documented new ideas as they emerged and then revisited earlier transcripts to investigate themes that I had not recognised upon initial analysis.

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[24] Please see Appendix E for detailed information on the main interviews.

The data was coded on the basis of my research questions and preliminary analysis. Initially, I used NVivo 8 to systematise and record my ideas. Towards the latter part of the project, however, I began to develop these themes and ideas into chapters of the thesis. Once I had a clearer idea of the overall structure I used more straightforward techniques to organise the data. References and quotes were frequently filed into word documents rather than coded in NVivo. The analysis of the material began in the summer of 2009 with the pilot data and has continued into the very final months of writing up. Given the time constraints and length of the project, I have been forced to make some difficult decisions about the material and ideas that were included and excluded from the project itself. Many themes and references have been recorded and filed for further study at a later date.

4.2 Research Considerations

In a practical sense, the process of researching companies, making telephone calls and setting up interviews was very labour intensive. I spent many hours trying to gain access to the appropriate individuals for the project. Alongside this process I was conscious of the potential limitations of the research and how I could address these issues. In sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 I will discuss issues of ethics and reliability. These considerations are similar to most other qualitative projects. In section 4.2.3 I will then discuss the issue of validity. I will argue that, in a constructivist project, validity must be considered in a particular way. How can we know that we have measured something correctly if the phenomenon we are measuring is (arguably) subject to interpretation? However, I would contend that some elements of validity can be applied to a constructivist project. These will be discussed in section 4.2.4. Finally, section 4.2.5 will consider the limitations of the project in terms of making generalisations.

4.2.1 Ethics

On the subject of ethics, Kimmel (1988) states: 'Since World War II, ethical issues in the social sciences have become a topic of growing concern as researchers try to ensure that their studies are directed toward worthwhile goals and that the welfare of their subjects and their research colleagues are protected' (p.9). This project does not have significant ethical implications. It does not deal with a particularly 'sensitive' research topic, such as power and sexuality (Gailey and

Prohaska 2011), and it does not engage in risky or covert research methods (Labaree 2002). Nor does it involve 'vulnerable', 'disadvantaged' or 'marginalised groups' (Liamputtong 2007, p.1-2). As with any research project, however, there are still ethical issues to be considered.

The research was conducted with 44 'human subjects' and the project was thus open to ethical scrutiny in relation to their protection and wellbeing. Furthermore, as I was to discover, climate change is a more sensitive issue than may first be assumed. In terms of the participants themselves my two main ethical considerations were informed consent and anonymity of the data. According to Plummer (2001) informed consent is 'one of the most frequently named ethical criteria for research' (p.223). The eight managers in the project were contacted by telephone and agreed to be involved on the basis of my explanation about the research aims. Similarly, the champions were provided with an overview of the project and the aims and objectives of the research. In case study D the manager arranged a focus group with his champions and acquired informed consent on my behalf. In the remaining three case studies, I emailed each champion individually and asked if they would be willing to talk to me for approximately an hour about their role and their own views on climate change. I was clear about the kind of information I was interested in and the purpose of the research. Thirty-six champions agreed to be involved in the project on the basis of the information that was provided. All of the champions were happy for me to provide feedback to their manager based on their own account of the project. Furthermore, all 44 participants consented to the use of recording equipment during the interview.

The second ethical issue was anonymity of the data. For the majority of participants, their consent to be involved was subject to my assurance that the data would be completely anonymous. This was particularly important for several of the managers when it came to granting me access to the business. Throughout the project I have removed any information which could reveal the identity of the individual participants or the businesses in which they were based. This includes any reference to projects or individuals with which they are associated. The only information I have included is the sectors of the eight companies and the gender of the participants. Businesses are identified as case studies A-H. For purposes of referencing, managers are referred to as, for example, 'A-manager' or 'B-manager'. Champions are referred to by a case study and a number: 'A-1' or 'B-2'. Data was anonymised as soon as

each interview was completed. All recorded material, transcripts and personal details or business affiliations were securely stored and password protected.

The final ethical issue was the nature of climate change as a subject of discussion. When I began the project I was aware that climate change was an important issue. I was unaware that it could also be a sensitive issue. This became apparent in the first interview I conducted with a manager. He argued that you have to be careful what you say to people about climate change, 'cos at the end of the day you're potentially challenging people's values' (D-Manager). The status of climate change as a 'taboo' issue was something that had not emerged in the pilot study data. However, over the duration of the interview period, it became increasingly apparent that climate change could be a very sensitive topic. This not only became an interesting theme for the project, but it also had implications for the way I thought about my questions and the responses that I elicited from my participants. In particular, this issue was important in terms of the influence I had as a researcher. Climate change was not only a political issue which could be studied in everyday interactions; it was often a very personal issue, reflecting norms and values that an individual held to be important. I was increasingly aware of the potential sensitivity of the issue and the importance of remaining as unbiased as possible when discussing the issue with my participants. The challenges that I encountered in this respect are discussed at length in section 4.2.4.

4.2.2 *The Reliability of Qualitative Data*

Reliability is 'the capacity to produce consistent results' (Bryman 2001, p.70). If a project is reliable then a replica study, under the same conditions, would produce the same conclusions. This project is not as reliable as a scientific experiment; it is impossible to completely replicate the conditions under which the interviews were conducted and the frame of mind of the researcher and the participant on any given day. However, each interview was approached in exactly the same way and each participant was presented with the same set of questions and topics. The interviews were semi-structured and were, therefore, inevitably flexible. Some participants brought up later themes at the beginning of the interview and others talked at length on one topic. However, all interviews covered the broad range of themes that I intended to address and all participants were given the same information and

feedback. A far as qualitative data is concerned, I believe that the project is reliable and that the study could be replicated with very similar conclusions.

4.2.3 The Validity of Qualitative Data

Given the constructivist nature of the project, the issue of validity is particularly problematic. Bell (1991) explains that validity 'tells us whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe' (p.51). However, a constructivist approach would argue that there is no authoritative account of any social phenomena and therefore we cannot ensure that we have accurately described anything.

Potter and Wetherell (2001) claim that in discourse analysis 'we are not trying to recover events, beliefs and cognitive processes from participants' discourse, or treat language as an indicator or signpost to some other state of affairs but looking at the analytically prior question of how discourses or accounts of things are manufactured' (p.200). A discursive approach adds a whole new dimension to the idea of 'getting at the truth' of an account. If discourses are constructed through language then, presumably, one champion's version of events is not a neutral reflection of reality. Rather, it is constitutive. It constructs the reality of which it speaks (Carabine 2001). We must then question the very idea of 'truth'. Can discursive research ever be valid if there is not an independent reality to measure or describe? Furthermore, the interviews used to collect the data for the project could be criticised as a method which adds to this problem of 'getting at the truth'.

Interviews have been criticised for giving a second hand account of information: 'The shortcomings we attribute to the interview exist when it is used as a source of information about events that have occurred elsewhere and are described to us by informants' (Becker and Greer 1969, p.323). The project is therefore faced with two potential limitations. First, can we rely on interviews to give us an accurate account of the social world and second, if the social world is constructed, is there an accurate account to be obtained?

Becker and Greer (1969) argue that the only way to obtain valid and accurate data is participant observation:

Participant observation can thus provide us with a yardstick against which to measure the completeness of data gathered in other ways, a model which can serve to let us know what orders of information escape us when we use other methods (p.322).

The claim is that this research method is the only way to gain a complete account of any given social phenomenon. This begs the questions: Did I go far enough with my research? Was there more I could have done to address my research questions? Ultimately, there is always more that could have been done. With limitless time and resources, the research could have been extended in a multitude of ways. However, it is important to note several points that support the value of my methodology and the research project more generally.

First, although the main project was based on interviews, during the course of the research I was able to engage in a very limited amount of participant observation. The climate champion scheme is promoted by an organisation called Global Action Plan (GAP) and three out of the four case studies used GAP to help with implementation of the scheme. At the beginning of the project I was keen to incorporate the training process into my research data and I attempted to set up interviews and observation with GAP itself. I was able to attend several GAP training events, but these were not directed towards the business sector and ultimately became superfluous to the research project. However, for the purposes of methodological reflection they did offer some insight into climate change communication from the perspective of a participant observer. I encountered many of the same themes at these events as I had during my interview process. Although very limited, this did add some weight to the data that was being generated by the interviews.

Second, the use of a focus group in case study D offered another perspective on the research data. Devine (2002) claims that focus groups provide 'interaction between participants in a quasi-naturalistic setting – that is not too far removed from everyday conversation' (p.199). The focus group champions spent much of the time talking amongst themselves, rather than directing their responses to me. This provided a much more relaxed environment for discussion and a great deal of debate about the issue of climate change. It did, however, present many of the same themes as the interviews and the observation. This further supported the claim that the interviews were presenting an 'accurate' account of the champion role and their everyday interactions.

Interviews remain a very important research tool in qualitative analysis. In discourse analysis interviews have been 'extensively used because they allow a relatively standard range of themes to be addressed with different participants' (Potter 1996, p.129). Interviews allowed me to explore specific ideas and topics with the champions. They ensured stronger reliability than observation because I was able to replicate the interview setting in each case. Second, although participant observation would have allowed a first-hand perspective of the champion schemes, it would not have overcome the problem of 'truth' as a social construction. A discursive approach is constructivist no matter what kind of research methods we employ. Participant observation would have offered a first-hand account of how the champions constructed climate change in their interactions with colleagues. Interviews offered a first-hand account of how the champions constructed climate change in their interaction with me. Ultimately, both of these processes provided useful data about the communication of climate change. I was able to analyse the construction of climate change in everyday language. The problem of 'truth' as a construction is an essential part of a discursive approach.

4.2.4 Internal Validity

The validity that I discussed in the previous section is often referred to as 'construct validity' (Robson 1993, p.68). Are we using the right tools to generate the conclusions we are looking for? I have argued that this idea is problematic for a constructivist project. However, Robson (1993) also introduces the idea of 'internal validity'. Rather than being concerned with a valid measure (the interview process and the questions I was asking), internal validity is concerned with causal relationships and the claims researchers make about their work (Robson 1993, p.69). Internal validity ensures that the claims that are made about the conclusions of a project are 'true' in the sense that they have not been affected by other factors throughout the research process. Essentially, the researcher must consider factors that may have affected their research results, including their own influence as a researcher. I would argue that this kind of validity is applicable to a constructivist project in much the same way as it would be in any other qualitative project.

There are a number of factors that could affect the internal validity of a project. In relation to my own project the main 'threat to internal validity' was my own influence as a researcher who was investigating the (potentially sensitive) topic

of climate change. Bernstein and Dyer (1979) argue that, 'the presence of the interviewer is likely to inhibit responses of which the person thinks the interviewer will disapprove' (p.63). My research interests indicated that my own attitude and behaviour was likely to be 'climate-protecting'. The role of champions was specifically to promote climate friendly behaviour. There was inevitably a certain level of pressure for the champions to offer a response which they 'perceive[d] to be desirable' (Devine 2002, p.206).

Indeed, there were several instances when the champion clarified a statement or changed their mind about an answer. One champion was asked about the use of public transport and replied: 'I'm happy to say, ok I'll take er, I'll take public transport to go to work or I'll take my bike to work, but I don'* I refu* you know at the weekend I like going in the countryside' (A-1, 858-860)[25]. The champion changed her mind twice about how she would frame her reply, indicating that she was looking for the most 'desirable' way to present her answer. Another champion was embarrassed that there was 'not a lot' that she had done to promote environmental practices in the office (B-7, 82).

This issue of researcher influence was a potential problem for the project. However, I aimed to maintain internal validity by addressing this issue in several ways. First, the issue of climate protecting behaviour as socially desirable was incorporated into the main part of the project. I acknowledged any hesitation or qualification in the accounts as an important part of the construction of climate change as an issue. Second, I was conscious of the way I framed my questions and the feedback I gave to the participants during an interview. I tried to avoid positive or negative reinforcement of their comments and I refrained from offering my own perspective on any of the questions or topics. In hindsight, the pilot study had been a very useful process through which to refine this 'neutrality' in the interview situation.

In addition, I think that the interview sample is an important consideration for the internal validity of the project. Although, admittedly, there was some qualification in the responses of certain champions, it is likely that most of the champions gave 'desirable' responses because they were climate-protecting anyway. The sample consisted of self-professed environmentalists who had volunteered to promote climate protecting behaviour in the workplace. The majority of them expressed climate-

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[25] The use of an asterisk in the data indicates an unfinished word.

protecting values because those were the values they held. Furthermore, although they were generally climate-protecting, many of the champions admitted to some environmental 'failings' or more 'self-interested' reasons for becoming involved in the project. They were often embarrassed about these less 'desirable' traits, indicating that they thought I might disapprove of them, but they did talk about them. For example, the champion who was embarrassed still told me about her inability to implement climate-protecting practices at work. This does support the internal validity of the project. Although, researcher influence was an issue, it was addressed through the attempted neutrality of the interviews and the acknowledgment of the issue in the project itself. To a large extent, the participants appeared to be honest in their responses, despite my potential 'disapproval' of what they said.

The other factor that could affect the internal validity of the project is the institutional influence of the various businesses. It is feasible that the institutional setting of the participants might have affected the information that they were willing to disclose. However, I found that champions talked quite openly about obstacles that they faced, individuals who had caused them problems and, for some, the concern that the champion scheme was an exercise in public relations. This kind of information does indicate a certain degree of honesty from the champions. They felt at ease discussing issues of which the business itself would perhaps not approve. The assurance of anonymity presumably played an important role in this kind of open discussion.

4.2.5 Making Generalisations

When I began the research project I was keen to generate conclusions that could be applied to other businesses and different environmental contexts. As explained, my original intention was to select a sample of businesses in different sectors so that my research conclusions could be more widely generalised. Given the access problems that I faced, the sample of participants did not cover a wide variety of business sectors. The case studies with champions covered three different sectors (consultancy, energy and finance). The extra manager interviews included the construction and retail sectors. The final sample included 24 women and 20 men. They were variously located across the UK and represented many different job descriptions within the relevant companies.

As I have presented papers and chapters from the thesis, the potential for generalisations has been subject to some criticism. There are two main limitations in this respect. First, if the case studies are not a representative sample of different business sectors, how can the conclusions be generalised to the wider business context? Second, since the overall project focuses only on the business sector, how can we apply the conclusions to society more broadly?

In hindsight, these limitations were inevitable with the kind of project I wanted to undertake. Jaworski and Coupland (2006) claim that with qualitative data, it may be 'necessary to scale back our ambitions in some ways... particularly in relation to generalising' (p.31). Qualitative data provides a detailed picture of a particular social phenomenon; it does not offer broad generalisations. However, that does not mean that the research lacks value. A detailed qualitative project such as this one has much to offer academically and to society more generally.

First, the project illustrates that a discursive analysis of everyday interaction is an important and relatively under-researched approach to the problem of inaction on climate change. Although the conclusions of this particular project cannot be simply transposed to another part of society, the approach itself can be. The project demonstrates the value of this type of approach. The research design could be easily replicated to investigate climate champions in other business and other parts of society. To this extent, although the conclusions themselves cannot be generalised, the theoretical framework and methodology can be.

Second, the project indicates some important themes which are potentially relevant in other parts of society. Analysis of the data has supported the widespread assumption that neoliberalism is playing an influential role in approaches to tackling climate change. This has been illustrated in research on policy (Andrew *et al* 2010) and local authorities (Slocum 2004a). My research concurs with scholars such as Kirk (2008) who have identified neoliberalism in the attitudes and actions of individuals in relation to climate change. Given the similarities between my conclusions and the conclusions drawn by other scholars, it can be argued that the dominant influence of neoliberalism and reformist discourses will extend beyond the business sector.

Finally, the project provides a foundation for further research. The research was intended to be a starting point upon which additional research could be based. The project aimed to investigate *how* dominant discourses are constructing

'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' responses to climate change and *how* these discourses are reinforced and maintain their status as 'true'. Once we understand these processes we can potentially use this information to address inaction on climate change.

4.3   Reflections of a Researcher

Social research is a complicated process. Any social research project is rooted in the social world and is, thus, subject to ethical challenges, bias and researcher influence:

Studies have often been written as if they had been executed by machines: not a hint of the ethical, political and personal problems which routinely confront the human researcher and the researched subject can be found (Plummer 2001, p.205).

Over the course of the project I faced many challenges and difficult decisions. However, the most significant challenge remains my role as researcher. I have faced several dilemmas about my own personal perspective on the research problem and the implications this has for the way in which I have executed the project. These are important issues and they should be addressed as part of the research. The final section will provide some reflections on these challenges and the ways in which I sought to overcome them. First, I will consider my own influences and biases as a self-professed environmentalist researching climate change in a neoliberal world. Second, I will address the problems I faced as I tried to reconcile a discursive approach with my desire to 'make a difference'.

4.3.1   A Starting Point from Nowhere?

In the final stages of the research project I presented some of my findings at a climate change workshop. I received a lot of useful feedback and was asked some very interesting questions. I had already thought about many of the questions over the course of the project, but one member of the audience asked a question that I had not considered: If we are all subject to the dominance of a neoliberal discourse, surely your own assumptions are rooted in the same framework. What effect does this have on the way that you ask questions, critique the literature and analyse the data? It was a very good point. Just because I had identified the dominant discourse did that mean I could step outside of it? Carabine (2001) argues that 'it is sometimes difficult to

identify discourses within which we ourselves are immersed, or that we agree with, or which we accept as "taken for granted" or common sense' (p.288). I had identified the dominant or 'taken for granted' discourse, but had I purged myself of its influence and was that something that I could do or wanted to do?

This issue reinforced another problem with which I had been struggling. As a self-professed environmentalist, what kind of bias was I adding to a project about climate change? Essentially, these two questions were part of the same problem. As researchers how much of ourselves do we put into the research? This is a subject of some debate. For Wetherell (2001) researcher bias can affect the value of the research because 'the analysts may never be surprised by the data. The world is already known and is pre-interpreted in light of the analyst's concerns' (p.385). If we allow the research to be interpreted according to our own personal perspective then the whole project is affected by this problem. We cannot consider an issue objectively if we view everything in light of our own personal beliefs and convictions. Antaki *et al* (2003)[26] contend that this is a frequent problem with many discursive projects:

The analyst might wish to align with the sort of position that the speaker is outlining. The analyst's summarising might contain pointed references. It might be said that the speaker 'realises' or 'appreciates' how relationships need hard work... such language might subtly, or not so subtly, indicate that the analyst is aligning himself or herself with the position taken by the respondent.

As discussed earlier, I was conscious about the influence I had on the research participants and I aimed to be as neutral as possible throughout the interviews. However, it was increasingly apparent that the influence of the neoliberal world in which I lived and my own environmental convictions had potentially wider reaching effects on the research I was conducting. I did review the literature I had critiqued and the chapters I had drafted. I considered the way I had presented my data and the conclusions I had drawn. It was difficult to discern if the work was 'neutral'.

However, my continuing exploration of this problem elicited different views. Rubin and Rubin (1995) argue that 'neutrality is probably not a legitimate goal in qualitative research' (p.13). Plummer (1991) claims that, 'to purge research of all these "sources of bias" is to purge research of human life' (p.156). The contention from these scholars is that it is impossible to be a neutral or objective researcher. There is no 'view from nowhere' (Nagel 1986). As social researchers, and human

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[26] This paper was published in an online journal and does not include page numbers

beings, we are rooted in society and therefore inevitably subject to sources of bias. The key to valuable research is to acknowledge and evaluate these biases as part of the project. Burman (2003)[27] argues that 'there is no way of avoiding adopting some kind of position. The question therefore is rather which, and on what grounds, is this evaluated'. In writing up the project I have consistently acknowledged the influence of neoliberalism on my work and my own biases as someone who cares about protecting the climate. I have not attempted to 'nullify these variables', but I have tried to 'be aware of, describe publicly and suggest how these have assembled a specific "truth"' (Plummer 2001, p.157).

4.3.2   A Critical Approach

The second dilemma I faced as a researcher is also rooted in my environmental convictions. In this instance it was not based on the problems associated with bias, it was based on my desire to 'make a difference' in the area of climate change. My research in this area was driven primarily by my aspiration not only to learn about the problems of inaction on climate change but to use that knowledge to implement change. However, this intention to find a 'better' way to do things was not consistent with a discursive approach. In discourse analysis there is no 'right' or 'wrong'; there are only different constructions of reality.

My theoretical framework was rooted in the contention that there was a more complicated process operating than simply individual barriers to behaviour change. Discourse analysis was a relevant way to analyse these processes and understand *how* we were in the current situation with the problem of inaction on climate change. However, it did not offer any solutions that I could incorporate into the project. At the beginning of the project I found this very difficult. I wanted to use discourse analysis because it was drawing out some very important issues but I was concerned about the 'impact' of my research if I could not offer a prescription for change.

The reconciliation of these two concerns emerged as I began to clearly define the aims of my research. Rather than viewing discourse analysis as an obstacle to 'making a difference', I began to understand it as a 'stepping stone' to this end. The project is critical in the sense that it questions the foundations of our knowledge about climate change. Fairclough (1985) argues that, 'for critical discourse analysis... the

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[27] This paper was published in an online journal and does not include page numbers.

question of how discourse cumulatively contributes to the reproduction of macro structures is at the heart of the explanatory endeavour' (p.753). The conclusions of the project tell us *how* climate discourses construct 'truth' in society and the effect this has on (in)action on climate change. This knowledge provides a foundation for further research. We need to understand *how* a process works before we can think about changing it. The value of my research was rooted in this first step.

4.4 Conclusion

The duration of the project was 3 years and 10 months, spanning from October 2008 to July 2012. My research interests and general aims have remained consistent throughout this time. The theoretical framework and empirical analysis have been in a state of constant reassessment and development until the very end. I faced many challenges during the research process, particularly in terms of access and this had implications for any generalisations that could be drawn from the project. There were also important considerations in terms of reliability and validity. As with any qualitative project, there are limitations to some aspects of the research.

However, I believe that the project is valuable as a detailed qualitative analysis of the climate champion scheme and the relationship between discourse and behaviour. I have endeavoured to work through any limitations in the project and overcome these obstacles. I have spent a long time considering my own personal biases and, although it is not possible for the project to be 'neutral', I have acknowledged my own position and any influence this may have had on the research. Finally, I have reconciled my own critical standpoint with a discursive approach. The project is purely explanatory, but my own standpoint is not purely constructivist. It is my personal contention that there are better ways to deal with climate change than those that currently dominate. It is my hope that an explanatory approach can provide a basis for more normative work.

Chapter 5

The Role of the Climate Champion

According to Alexander *et al* (2005)*, '*in the context of climate change, we see the term "champion" as meaning to advocate or promote a cause, particularly a worthy one which deserves more than ordinary attention' (p.25). The initial role of the climate champions was to learn about the science of climate change and think about techniques for changing behaviour. They were then expected to translate this knowledge into action by promoting climate protecting behaviour in the workplace.

The second half of the thesis will provide a detailed analysis of the communication of climate change in the workplace. I will consider the techniques that were used by the champions to promote behaviour change by analysing the language that the participants used in the interviews. Throughout chapters five, six and seven I will draw upon the climate discourses that I discussed in chapter three. Chapters six and seven will concentrate on the reformist and revolutionary climate discourses as ways of *dealing with* climate change (as set out in sections 3.5 and 3.6). The purpose of these chapters is to analyse the motivations that the champions used to change behaviour and the specific actions that they encouraged. I will identify the discourses that they drew upon when they communicated with other people. I will also look at how the champions reinforced or challenged different climate discourses.

In this chapter I will provide a background to the forthcoming analysis. I will consider climate change as a scientific discourse, the construction of climate change as a problem and the role of neoliberalism in constraining what the champions would say and do. I will draw upon the ideas that I set out in sections 3.3 and 3.4. I will argue that these 'preliminary' discourses play an important role in the formation of the champions' knowledge, ideas and the discourses that they drew upon when they promoted behaviour change in the workplace. The general dominance of neoliberalism can also provide some initial insight into the role of champions as passive subjects (reinforcing dominant discourses) or active agents (challenging dominant discourses).

In section 5.1 I will begin by discussing the champions' knowledge about climate change. What did they think and know about climate science and how did they construct this knowledge? I will argue that the majority of champions were generally well informed about the science of climate change. Most of them rejected a discourse of scepticism and drew upon the authority of a scientific discourse to construct their knowledge as 'true'. They were also confident about the efficacy of their efforts and rejected discourses of pessimism. In addition, I will consider the construction of climate change knowledge as objective. Many participants constructed climate science in this way and talked about the 'correct' actions that followed from this.

In section 5.2 I will look at the construction of climate change as a problem, focusing on the distinction between climate change as a fundamental problem or a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system. I will argue that most champions constructed climate change in the latter sense. It was a problem but it could be fixed in the context of the current system and indeed we had already made some important progress in this area. This construction of the problem begins to suggest the dominance of neoliberal ideas and reformist discourses. It is an important precursor to the analysis in chapters six and seven.

Finally, section 5.3 will look at the role of the champion more generally. Chapters six and seven will look specifically at what the champions did and did not say and do. This section will concentrate on how the champions perceived their overall role. How should they translate their knowledge and ideas to other people and what were the limits of their actions? I will argue that this perception of the champions' role was heavily influenced by the neoliberal conception of individual sovereignty and rights. Champions who had claimed that climate science was objective were reluctant to challenge the beliefs of other people. Climate protecting behaviour had to be communicated in a way that did not interfere with the individual's right to choose. This again suggests that the forthcoming analysis will be dominated by reformist discourses and that the champions' capacity for resistance is potentially very limited.

5.1 Learning about Climate Change

The champions' first task was to learn about the issue of climate change. Everyone who volunteered for the project was expected to attend a training course to prepare them for the role. One manager explained what this involved:

It was just around some basic stuff around what is climate change… just the greenhouse effect… what things cause greenhouse gases… and all the stuff and getting people just to think about that and then getting people to associate that with well what do you do at work… that will be having an impact (D-manager, 214-226).

The main role of the champions was to translate this knowledge into action. In this section I will consider how much the champions knew about climate change and how they constructed this knowledge. I will argue that the majority of champions had a good basic knowledge of climate science and that they believed anthropogenic climate change to be 'true', on the basis of an authoritative scientific discourse.

5.1.1 General Knowledge and Scientific Discourse

The majority of the participants had a good general knowledge about the science of climate change. They understood the types of actions that had led to the problem such as 'transport and manufacturing... heating and cooling' (D-manager, 219-222). They could also talk accurately about the consequences of climate change in the UK: 'higher temperatures' (C-5, 436), 'warmer summers, wetter winters, more storms' (F-manager, 599). In addition, several participants demonstrated quite a sophisticated level of knowledge about the subject. One participant explained the difference between the natural and the enhanced greenhouse effect:

It happens anyway, erm, but I think, erm... over the last two hundred years we've made it, made it happen faster. Carbon's in the atmosphere anyway, but, you know, we've tipped the balance, er, incredibly, erm, and so what we've got to be careful of is that we don't pass the tipping point where things can't then regenerate (A-6, 411-418).

Another participant acknowledged the potential for different climate scenarios. He explained that the UK could get warmer or that 'if the ice caps melt then all that cold water pushes the, er, jet stream further south... Britain is in the perfect situation to end up with an ice age' (A-4, 1008-1013). The champions therefore demonstrated

knowledge of different aspects of climate science. They understood actions as causes, the effects of these actions and the mechanisms of the climate system.

Most participants had a good basic grasp of the climate change problem. However, confidence about this knowledge varied from person to person. Some individuals did feel that they had a good understanding of the issues surrounding climate change. One champion said, 'I've read a fair bit about it and I feel my understanding's pretty solid' (C-9, 815-816). Other champions felt that they had a good level of knowledge due to the training they had taken. They said that they had 'absorbed so much information' (B-2, 194-195) and that they had learnt 'about the different aspects of climate change, the influences and the effects and the science behind it' (B-8, 146-147).

Other champions were less confident about their knowledge on the subject. One champion said, 'I don't know a lot about the rest of it, I wouldn't have a clue' (A-10, 443-444). Another said, 'I hear the phrase, I know it's bad, that's probably what I can tell you' (C-10, 813-814). Other champions were very conscious that they were not 'experts' on the subject. One participant said, 'although I've got a general sort of like grasp... erm, on climate change and what it is, erm, I'm no scientist, I wouldn't pretend to try and understand' (C-3, 521-525). Others concurred saying, 'it goes a little bit over your head, you know' (A-2, 879).

In chapter three I argued that the problem of climate change was rooted in a scientific discourse. The problem originated in scientific disciplines and is generally presented in scientific language. This discourse played a role in the way the champions talked about the issue. The champions who felt that they had a good understanding of the climate talked about it in scientific language. A-4 referred to the mechanics of the jet stream, while A-6 talked about 'tipping points' and regeneration of the atmosphere. The champions who were less confident about their knowledge still drew upon scientific discourse. They said that they did not understand it properly because they were not scientists. They did not have the required 'expertise' to engage in this discourse.

However, many of the less confident respondents talked accurately about the science of climate change at other points during the interview. Champion A-10 understood the relationship between saving energy and protecting the climate, while champion C-10 coherently explained the importance of their carbon footprint in

relation to business travel and CO_2 emissions. The knowledge was basic, but it generally corresponded with prevailing scientific discourse. The implication was that *proper* understanding had to be underpinned by scientific expertise.

Participants were also asked where their knowledge of climate change had come from. For some participants, the climate champion training programme had been the main source of information. In Business B, champions had learnt 'so much information on erm the cl*, you know on the sort of, on the actual programme itself…about you know sort of the effects of climate change, erm, and all, all of this' (B-4, 99-101). Similarly, champions in the other businesses acknowledged that, 'it was probably [Business A] cos before that I was like, I'm, I wasn't aware of anything' (A-10, 629-629). Another champion admitted that they had been keen to get involved in the programme so that they could acquire more knowledge about climate change (A-3, 46-47).

For many of the respondents, however, their knowledge about climate change had also come from their education. For some, this stemmed from primary and secondary school where champions remembered doing 'an environmental project' (C-4, 593) or learning about the importance of composting (A-6, 856-859). For others they had studied geography at A-level and had been inspired by the environmental issues (B-5, 31-32; C-7, 1064-1065). Similarly, several respondents had specific qualifications relating to the environment. One manager had 'an M.Sc in Climate Change' (G-manager, 1235), while one of the champions had a 'degree in environmental management... and a masters in disaster management and sustainable development' (A-4, 2-6).

The final channel of information for many of the respondents was from media and television. A number of respondents mentioned 'An Inconvenient Truth' (C-8, 299-300; B-5, 739) while others talked about newspaper articles and television programmes (A-7, 888, B-3, 756-757; B-7, 469-470). The champions had acquired knowledge from a range of different sources.

5.1.2 Belief, Scepticism, Pessimism

The vast majority of the participants did believe in climate change. They referred to it as 'irrefutable' (C-2, 839) and 'completely un-debatable' (B-6, 440). Based on their knowledge of the problem, many participants talked about the

evidence surrounding climate change. One champion said:

I've looked at the evidence I've read, I've read the papers and that kind of thing and it just seems, you know, it seems, the evidence seems so overwhelming that, you know, I think it seems pretty clear to me that if we're not, if we're not causing it, I don't see any evidence to say that we're not (B-6, 448-453).

The reference to 'overwhelming' evidence reiterates the champion's earlier point about the issue being 'completely un-debatable'. There was no question in his mind about whether or not the science of climate change is 'true'. This was a running theme in almost all of the interviews.

However, discourses of scepticism and pessimism were drawn upon by some of the participants. First, there was some scepticism about the issue. One champion said, 'I'm a bit sceptical of the whole... of the whole sort of erm man's impact on climate change' (D-1, 400-402). Another admitted that he was 'not a great believer in climate change' (C-8, 223). In addition, some participants talked about previous scientific predictions about the environment:

I was aware of those issues [of climate change], in my own mind a little bit sceptical because there was something called a, er... Club of Rome report...many years ago which predicted that the world was going to run out of all its resources by year 2000 and we haven't (B-5, 740-745).

Science is not infallible, 'we do make mistakes' (C-5, 452-453). These individuals did not explicitly reject the science of climate change, but they did point out that science was capable of drawing the wrong conclusions because this has been the case in the past.

Ereaut and Segnit (2006) distinguish between several discourses of scepticism, including 'rhetorical scepticism'. 'Rhetorical scepticism' is described as 'a non-expert discourse, but one that attacks the expert discourse as "bad science"' (p.16). Most of the champions who questioned claims about climate change were dubious about the science. This was not strong enough to be an 'attack', but it is most reflective of this discourse. In fact, the two champions who questioned the science of climate change both decided that, on balance, they did subscribe to the consensus view: 'There probably is something going on' (B-5, 763-764). The other champion said, 'ultimately I do believe that there is a change going on at the moment and, erm, that we are... responsible for that change' (C-5, 453-455).

In addition, many of the respondents found the question about belief in climate change rather amusing. The response from one champion was, '(laughter) yes, I do believe in it as it were' (C-9, 815). Another said, 'yeah, yes I do believe it so I'm not a sceptic (laughter)' (A-7, 462). The notion of being a 'sceptic' was considered to be quite funny. In an interview with one champion I mentioned the fact that I had met other champions who did not believe in climate change. The participant was somewhat dubious about my claim: 'what like they don't believe it exists' (B-2, 414)? When I confirmed that this was indeed the case he responded with laughter and asked, 'really' (B-2, 416)? It was difficult for him to imagine that a fellow champion did not believe in climate change.

This bemusement about non-belief was also personally directed at the non-believers. Champion D-1 was part of the focus group and when I asked about belief in climate change the other participants laughed, shook their heads and pointed at this individual. The manager confided to me, 'he's a non-believer' (D-manager, 401). The champion did not appear to take offense and he was prepared to argue his case. However, his views were clearly treated with some disdain by the other people in the group. To the rest of the champions belief in climate change was simply a given. The other champion who was overtly sceptical concurred with this response. He said that his views were a 'running joke' to his colleagues (C-8, 224).

It is not surprising that the participants in the study would believe in the problem of climate change. They had volunteered to take on the role and the vast majority of them had a prior commitment to climate-protecting behaviour. Moreover, the fact that so many of them were 'believers' made it even more difficult for them to comprehend that some champions were not. They accepted that sceptics existed in society, but they were surprised that this should be the case for their fellow champions. The two champions who were sceptical argued that they were concerned about other environmental issues and that climate-protecting behaviour was good for the environment more generally.

In chapter three I also outlined a discourse of pessimism. Hulme (2008) claims that the dominant tone around climate change 'is one of danger and catastrophe' (p.6). This discourse embodies a 'strong sense of "giving up" on measures such as education and a definite degree of pessimism about the possibility of mitigating

climate change' (Hobson and Niemeyer 2011, p.962). Climate change is too a big a problem for us to deal with and therefore action is futile.

This is another discourse that played a minimal role in the interviews. For example, one participant acknowledged that this position was common for many people in society: 'Some people will just, that's too scary… I'm just gona blank that out or that's so scary God I'm really depressed now I'm just going to go have a holiday abroad to cheer myself up' (D-manager, 437-442). However, it was not a common position among the participants in the study. The vast majority of respondents talked about the importance of making an effort to tackle climate change. Action was not futile and individual behaviour change was an important part of addressing the issue. One champion said, 'I appreciate that what I do is, is part of you know a huge, huge issue but if anyb* everybody just changes one thing, you know, surely that's a help' (B-3, 449-451). Another champion expressed similar sentiments: 'it's a big problem and it needs everyone to chip in' (C-9, 856). These champions did not underestimate the 'enormity of the challenge' (Hobson and Niemeyer 2011, p.962), but they rejected the argument that 'the problem is just too big for us to take on' (Ereaut and Segnit 2006, p.14). Something could be done to address the problem of climate change and everyone should be acting now to do something about it.

When I asked about the success of the champion scheme itself, there were several participants who expressed a sense of futility. One manager described the frequent despondency that he perceived in his champions: '"Too hard", it was our catch phrase, "too hard"' (D-manager, 566). Many of the champions expressed similar sentiments. One champion explained that, 'sometimes you feel like you're knocking your head against a brick wall' (A-7, 442-443). Another argued that, 'it is difficult when you keep going on and on about things and you just keep hitting a brick wall all the time' (C-8, 648-649). However, these participants still refused to engage in a discourse of hopelessness. They did not 'exclude the possibility of real action or agency' by themselves or those around them (Ereaut and Segnit 2006, p.14). The manager added, 'but what do you do? You know, you kind of just, you can't just walk away from it all' (D, manager, 566-568). The champions also refused to admit defeat arguing that there was 'no reason to stop' (A-7, 443).

The role of the champions was to encourage action on climate change. It was their job to instil a sense of efficacy in those around them. Often this was a challenge but the champions continued to believe that action was not futile.

5.1.3 Objective Climate Knowledge

The vast majority of participants believed in climate change and felt that something could be done about the problem. In addition, many of them constructed this knowledge as objectively 'true'. This brings us back to some of the issues I considered at the beginning of the thesis:

Is science, in this case the science of climate change, a straightforward activity concerned with discovering impartial truth about the world and then disclosing this truth to politicians so that truth-based policies will follow? Or are there different ways of understanding the abilities and roles of science in society? (Hulme 2009, pp.74-75).

In chapter one I outlined my own epistemological position in terms of critical realism. The physical processes of climate change are real. They occur independently of our interpretation of them. It is the social dimension of climate change that is constructed. In chapter two I returned to these epistemological considerations when I talked about potential criticisms of a constructivist approach. I argued that, in the context of climate change we should adopt 'an ontologically realist yet epistemologically relativist position' (Jones 2002, p. 250). The thesis focuses on climate change as a social phenomenon.

However, the construction of scientific climate knowledge by the champions is still important for two reasons. First, it is a fundamental part of their understanding about climate change and the promotion of behaviour change. For many participants objective knowledge translated into 'correct' actions. Second, when the champions talked about their role as a communicator, many of them rejected the idea of objective knowledge and 'correct' behaviour. The latter point has important implications for the limitations of their role and will be discussed in detail in section 5.3.

The presumed objectivity of climate knowledge was initially evident in the way the participants talked about climate scepticism. One of the managers talked at length about the debates on climate change:

I listened to a sort of debate at the end of yesterday on the radio about climate change and you know it is that same shit all the time, you know, is this real and the climate, the natural cycle and all this kind of crap that no one disagrees with, erm...but whilst there might be this sort of anti-climate change debate still rumbling on there's still the pro-climate change that isn't really questionable now (G-manager, 927-934).

He acknowledges that there are non-believers but he does not accept this as an alternative position on the issue. Climate change is not questionable. Sceptics have not *chosen* to believe one thing over another. They have got their facts wrong. Another champion expressed his frustration about those who did not believe in climate change. He said, 'it's really frustrating when you talk to somebody who, who says "oh it's all, it's a myth", you know, you can prove that it's not' (C-6, 648-640). Again, the champion takes an objective position on climate change. He knows it is 'true' because he has proof. The suggestion that climate change is a myth is incorrect.

In addition, the champions often took an objective position when they considered why people did not believe in climate change. Sceptics were said to 'have their fingers in their ears' (C-9, 1047) or be 'burying their head in the sand' (C-6, 651). These people had not come to a reasoned conclusion about the evidence; they refused to listen to reason or to actually look at the evidence. Furthermore, participants who had been sceptical in the past referred to their belief in climate change as a revelation. They talked about how they had 'woken up' (C-2, 564) and 'seen the light' (C-2, 681). One champion said, 'it's just ignorance ain't it, if you don't, if you don't know anything you become ignorant and then all of a sudden your eyes open' (A-5, 443-445). The champions had not simply changed their minds; they had progressed to an enlightened position.

Consequently, several of them perceived their role to be one of 'enlightening people' (A-3, 78) and helping them to 'realise that we do need to change for the environment' (A-9, 420-422). One champion said:

There's a, there's a lot of kind of, there's a lot of scepticism that isn't nece* isn't based on those individual people actually having a great understanding themselves but more it's almost like... the scepticism is contagious… one person who does think they know what they're talking about says it to another person who says it to another person and, you know, it was important to me to just get the kind of message across and sort of get some of the ideas of where it actually comes from into people's heads (B-6, 157-166).

Scepticism was rooted in a lack of knowledge and understanding. This champion felt it was his role to dispel these myths and help people to understand what is *actually* happening.

The objectivity of climate change knowledge was then reflected in the way participants talked about climate-protecting behaviour. If the knowledge was objectively true then this translated into correct and incorrect actions. For example, champions talked about people putting waste material in the 'wrong' bin. One champion talked about leftover food and said people 'don't necessarily put the food waste in the right place' (C-2, 206-207). Another explained that when recycling facilities were first introduced employees frequently put waste in 'the wrong boxes' (A-2, 280). In these examples the champions are talking about the failure of people to place recyclable waste in a recycling bin. However, there is seldom a mention of 'recycling' and 'landfill' bins. Rather, these are 'right' and 'wrong' bins respectively. One of the managers talked about the failure of the UK to implement widespread recycling. He compared this to the success in Germany where 'everything's done correctly' (B-manager, 798). The system in Germany was not different; it was better. They were addressing climate change in the 'correct' way.

Lahsen (2010) argues that the construction of climate change knowledge as 'objective' is a dominant position in current society. The IPCC is commonly perceived to be 'providing objective knowledge' (p.164). Yearley (2009) supports this position arguing that the IPCC 'legitimated itself in terms of the scientific objectivity and impartiality of its members' (p.396) . The champions drew on this scientific discourse in their explanations of climate change. The objectivity of climate science then informed us about what we 'should' be doing about climate change.

5.2 Constructing the Problem of Climate Change

When the participants talked about the science of climate change and their knowledge of the issue some of them did draw on discourses of scepticism and pessimism. However, the majority of the champions argued that climate change was true and that action could be worthwhile. Given the role of the champions and the fact that they had volunteered for the project, this was to be expected.

We therefore turn to the construction of the problem. Did the participants perceive climate change to be a fundamental flaw in neoliberalism or a small 'glitch'

in the system? This is important because the construction of climate change as a problem will have an effect on how it is dealt with. If the problem is a small 'glitch' in the system this is likely to lead to reformist approaches. If we are dealing with a fundamental problem then this will require a fundamental solution. In section 5.2.1 I will argue that many of the participants did claim that climate change was a 'major issue'. They appeared to be constructing the problem of climate change in quite a revolutionary way. However, although champions used words like 'major' and 'fundamental', this did not necessarily equate to a revolutionary construction of the problem. Many champions felt that we were already dealing with climate change in the context of neoliberalism. In sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 I will look at this construction in the context of society and business respectively.

5.2.1   A Major Issue?

Participants were asked about the problem of climate change towards the beginning of the interviews and initial analysis appeared to reflect quite revolutionary discourses. Champions said that it was a 'major issue' that 'impacts everything really' (A-7, 472-473) and that 'obviously there's, there's a huge issue with climate change' (B-4, 549). Reference to the scale of the problem implies that it is fundamental in nature, it is not a small 'glitch in the system'. On the other hand, many participants said that it was a big problem, but they did not talk about fundamental change or challenging the status quo. In addition, they did not acknowledge any link between the problem of climate change and the neoliberal system. This omission is itself reflective of more reformist discourses. It was implicit that change would occur in the context of our current system.

In addition, it is important to consider what participants actually meant when they talked about a 'major' issue. The reference to climate change as a 'huge' problem does not necessarily reflect a discourse of revolution. Indeed, much of the CSR literature constructs climate change as a 'big' problem. Strannegard (2000) quotes the manager of a manufacturing company in Sweden who argued that 'environmental concern will require the greatest fundamental strategic change in the modern industrial society' (p.163). However, he goes on to say that 'environmental activities have to make business sense' (p.163). Climate change must still be addressed in the context of the current system. A 'major' problem is not necessarily reflective of a revolutionary discourse. In fact, further analysis of motivations and

117

actions indicated that the 'huge issue' of climate change could be addressed through 'small changes' (B-4, 1028). This suggests that champion B-4 was not constructing climate change as a revolutionary problem in the first place. To the contrary, I would argue that the interviews reflected a very strong reformist account of the climate change problem.

5.2.2 Reforming Society

The construction of climate change in modern society also provides some insight into how it is constructed as a problem. In general, climate change was constructed as an issue that was already being addressed. If this was the case then it was being addressed under the current neoliberal system. Participants argued that climate change has become increasingly important in modern society. One manager had been in the same role for the past nine years and reported that he had 'just seen it snowball really in those nine years' (B-manager, 455-456). Another manager expressed a similar sentiment: 'that curve of environmental concern must only be not necessarily, exponentially increasing, but certainly increasing faster and faster as more and more people jump on the bandwagon' (G-manager, 837-840). This change in attitudes was most strongly expressed by the environmental managers because they had often been doing the same role for a number of years. Other managers said that there had 'been a radical change' (E-manager, 98) and that it had been 'very fast paced' (C-manager, 732). This position was also supported by the champions. One champion claimed that climate change had 'suddenly become so much more important' (C-7, 730), while another said that, 'we're making progress since, you know, in the past ten years' (A-1, 738-739).

The prominence of climate change as an issue in modern society is well supported by the literature. International surveys on climate change report 'consistently high and rising public concern across all countries' (Hale 2010, p.262). In a survey of 16 nations an average of 60% of people said that they believed climate change to be 'very serious', while a further 33% believed it to be 'somewhat serious' (World Bank 2010).

For many of the participants, this change in attitudes meant that concern about climate change 'has become mainstream' (C-2, 849). People generally recognised it as a problem that would have to be addressed. One champion argued that it is now

'commonplace if you like' to engage in climate friendly activities (B-3, 256-257). In fact, climate change was now considered to be one of several big societal issues. It had 'come from virtually nowhere a few years ago, in, in polling to, to being at the centre stage at the moment' (F-manager, 315-317). Indeed, McCarthy and Prudham (2004) claim that environmental issues such as climate change are already being 'assimilated' into modern neoliberal society (p.279).

The account set out above does not explicitly construct the problem of climate change in a reformist way. However, if climate change has already been assimilated into society then it is being constructed as a problem that can be dealt with in the context of the current system. When it came to talking about climate change in general, none of the champions expressed concern about this. They were pleased that climate change was being addressed at all and considered this to be progress. This implicit confidence in neoliberalism suggests that climate change was not considered to be a fundamental problem requiring fundamental change.

5.2.3 Reforming Business

Champions were also keen to discuss the place of climate change in a business context. They argued that climate change was increasingly important to large corporations. This concern included being knowledgeable about the issue. One manager talked extensively about business efforts to stay informed:

It's definitely, definitely shifted and I think businesses, certainly the businesses that [Business C] is dealing with, so you know the really biggest global brands, the top businesses think now that it is their responsibility they need to have stru* like a clear position on where they stand...on, on climate change what their role is within climate change you know they need to be part of the debate and part of the dialogue...erm I think that's, that's almost a given really (C-manager, 840-850).

It was important that businesses were committed to tackling climate change and knowledge of the issue was a key part of this. Knowledge about climate change was a prerequisite for any modern business. The manager also argued that CEOs of big businesses 'need to have something vaguely sensible to say about the subject' (C-manager, 862-863). It was not enough to pay lip service to the issue; managers had to understand the problem and be able to defend their position.

Subsequently, climate-protection had become a key part of business aims and objectives. The office buildings were 'obviously, erm, environmentally friendly' because they had 'been built that way' (C-3, 195-197). Another champion claimed that the building she worked in 'could not be anymore, erm, green' (B-1, 132-133). In addition, environmental regulations were in place. One manager said 'it's an official thing now, it's mandatory, you have to do it' (D-manager, 488). Similarly, the facilities for climate-protecting behaviour had already been put in place. According to the champions their workplaces were 'quite sort of keyed into it' (A-7, 110) and that everything environmental was 'pretty much done' (A-10, 43).

If climate change is an important issue in modern society, it is to be expected that it will be an important issue in the business context. Large corporations play a key role in the neoliberal world. However, this further reflects the role of reformist discourses in the construction of climate change as a problem. If climate change is already being addressed by big business then it has already been subsumed into the current system. Indeed, McCarthy and Prudham (2004) argue that the 'incorporations of environmentalism into the heart of neoliberalism's central institutions has done far more to smooth the roll out of neoliberalizations than attempts to dismiss or reject environmental concerns outright' (p.279). The incorporation of climate change concern into business means that the role of business is reinforced as part of the solution rather than challenged as being part of the problem. When they talked about the science of climate change, the participants correctly identified causes such as 'transport and manufacturing...heating and cooling' (D-manager, 219-222). However, they did not translate this into the construction of climate change as a fundamental problem with the current system. Rather, the vast majority of them took the 'dominant position' where the problem is subsumed into the business process (Jamison 2010, p.811). It is a 'glitch' in the system, which can be addressed by the 'tweaking' of the mechanisms that caused it.

5.2.4 Implications for Action

The champions did not specifically refer to climate change as a problem of reform or revolution. However, their construction of the problem could be discerned through the way they talked about climate change as an issue in modern society. It was already on the agenda and it was being addressed in businesses. Indeed, the climate champion project itself was testament to this. The problem was frequently

constructed in the context of the current system. It was referred to as a 'major' issue, but a 'major' issue that required 'small changes' rather than a fundamental challenge to the *status quo*.

We can assume that this construction of the problem had an impact on the 'appropriate' ways to deal with it. The dominance of reformist ideas here suggests that reformist discourses will also be prevalent in chapters six and seven. According to Oels (2005): 'Under the auspices of the IPCC, climate change was framed as an issue of planetary management that required natural science expertise and a technological fix on that basis' (p.198). The framing of climate change as a reformist or 'management' problem leads us to the importance of reformist approaches such as better 'management' of the system.

5.3   Translating Knowledge into Action

All of the champions received training about the science of climate change and were given the opportunity to discuss how they might encourage behaviour change amongst their colleagues. When they had completed this training they were expected to return to work and implement this knowledge. The champions had been given some guidance on useful communication techniques. However, most of them had generated their own ideas about how to change behaviour and how this could be encouraged at work.

These individuals worked on their own initiative and their progress (or lack of progress) was not specifically monitored by the business. If a climate champion chose not to devote time or energy to the role, they were not subject to the kinds of sanctions that they would have faced for not doing their 'job'. It was up to each individual champion to set the boundaries of the role and decide how best to deliver the message of climate change.

In this section I will argue that almost every participant in the study was cautious about the limitations of their role. They were often unwilling to express their own ideas about climate change and they were very reluctant to tell people what they should and should not be doing. In section 5.3.1 I will consider the potential role of the champions as either 'passive subjects' or 'active agents'. I will discuss how this distinction will inform the empirical analysis that follows (in this chapter and chapters six and seven). In section 5.3.2 I will argue that, although many champions

constructed climate knowledge as objective, they were reluctant to communicate this to others. They did not consider it appropriate to talk about 'correct' and 'incorrect' actions when they interacted with their colleagues. Finally, in section 5.3.3 I will look at the delivery of the climate change message. The champions had clear ideas about how to deliver it and were keen to 'raise awareness' by providing information rather than 'lecturing' or 'preaching'. Overall, I will argue that the majority of these reported 'limitations' were constructed by a dominant neoliberal discourse that advocates individual sovereignty and rights.

5.3.1 Passivity versus Agency

The communication of climate change is not a straightforward activity. Every interaction between individuals is the site of power relations. By transferring knowledge about climate change the champions were simultaneously reinforcing a particular way of thinking about the problem and how it should be addressed. By picking out 'what to emphasise and what to present positively or negatively' the champions were 'shap[ing] the world' they were describing (Ransom 1997, p.19). It is therefore important to consider the role of the champions as potential 'change agents'.

'Change agents' in this sense does not refer to the ability to successfully promote particular mitigating actions. Rather, it refers to the potential for champions to challenge the dominant discourses of climate change. Agency exists in the capacity to undermine the 'tyranny of common sense' (Downing 2008, p.10); to resist the status of a dominant discourse as 'true' and 'inevitable'. In the production of discourse, individuals can either be 'passive "subjects" who are the conduits, bearers or sites of discourses' (Caldwell 2007, p.770) or they can be 'active agents' who ensure that 'discourses are themselves in a state of constant reconstitution and contestation' (Carabine 2001, p.279).

The project focuses on four main research questions and the last two are rooted in the role of the champion: How did the champions reinforce dominant discourses in their everyday interactions? Can we identify resistance to dominant discourses and how did resistance operate at sites of interaction? If the champions acted as passive subjects then they were reproducing dominant discourses. If they were 'active agents' then they were resisting these discourses. In the two sections that

follow I will consider how the champions embodied these two opposing positions when they talked generally about their role and the limitations they faced.

5.3.2 Subjective Climate Knowledge

In the majority of the interviews, participants constructed knowledge about climate change as 'true' and 'objective'. The status of this knowledge as objective led to authoritative statements about what we should and should not be doing to tackle climate change. The participants talked about 'right' and 'wrong' bins and 'correct' and 'incorrect' ways to deal with the problem. However, an interesting distinction became apparent when they talked about the beliefs of other people. Champions often claimed that belief in climate change and climate-protecting behaviour was 'people's personal preference' (C-3, 231-232).

In one of the focus groups the champions constructed climate change as 'true' by teasing champion D-1, who was sceptical of the issue. As explained in section 5.1.2, they laughed and shook their heads at him, while the manager stated 'he's a non-believer' (D-manager, 401). Later in the interview I asked about their promotion of climate-protecting behaviour amongst their colleagues. This prompted the following exchange:

615   D-manager: it's, it's almost too hard and it's too personal it's like politics...

616   D(7): and religion

617   M1: and religion and climate change

618   JS: someone else said that

619   (Strong agreement from group)

There was a clear reluctance to challenge people on areas that were 'personal'. These included politics, religion and climate change. The implication was that people had the right to choose what they believed in relation to these subjects. Climate change could be controversial in the same way as politics or religion. This is contrary to the initial contention that climate change is a 'fact'.

A similar idea emerged when I talked to two of the champions in Business C. One of them had constructed climate change as an obvious truth, saying, '(laughter) yes I do believe in it as it were' (C-9, 815). He had also claimed that people who did

not believe 'had their fingers in their ears' (C-9, 1047). The objectivity of this knowledge informed the way he talked about climate-protecting behaviour: 'everyone should be doing [it]' (C-9, 984). However, when we discussed the promotion of climate friendly behaviour he agreed with his colleague's contention that we cannot challenge people's preferences:

1187   C-10: what right do I have to try and persuade them to care everyone's got a different set of

1188   morals and principles so

1189   C-9: yeah

This happened again later in the interview. Champion C-10 said 'no because, no honestly because I know how bad erm like 4x4s are and things and I, it would be a moral choice if, even if they were really nice to drive, but you can't expect other people to share the same views… that's what I think' (C-10, 1197-1200). Her colleague again agreed with this point of view: 'ditto' (C-9, 1204).

These champions argued that everyone has a 'different set of morals and principles'. Despite his earlier claim that climate change was true and we *should* be engaging in climate-protecting behaviour, C-9 does not expect other people to share this view. He agrees with C-10 that people have different and equally valid views on climate science and individual behaviour. He contradicts his own claim that people are just not listening – they have 'their fingers in their ears' (C-9, 1047). Rather, he argues that they simply have a different opinion. Similarly, the champion who had talked about putting waste material in the 'correct bins' (A-7, 280), said 'you know, we're all different, we're not all going to do, do things the same way' (A-7, 634-635).

The subjectivity of climate change knowledge and the freedom to act as we wish is reflective of neoliberal discourse. In modern neoliberal society, it is widely accepted that climate change is occurring and that it is the result of human activity (Yearley 2009; Lahsen 2010). However, individuals are still free to choose their own subjective preferences. Neoliberalism places great importance on the right to non-interference and the freedom of individuals to pursue their own private ends, however disparate these may be (Plant 2010). Champions were reluctant to tell people that their beliefs were 'incorrect' and that they were engaging in the 'wrong' behaviour even though many of them had already established this position with reference to themselves. Kirk (2008) argues that the neoliberal project was intended to 'entrench

individual rights' (p.160). Individuals have the right to choose their own position on climate change despite the 'facts' that the champions believe to be 'correct'.

This position indicates the dominance of neoliberal discourse in constructing the boundaries of the champions' role and how far they felt they should 'interfere' in the lives of other neoliberal subjects. It also suggests that, in general, the champions were likely to be 'passive' rather than 'active'. Regardless of which of the seven discourses was most prevalent in the interviews, we might assume that the champions would be reluctant to challenge dominant beliefs about climate change, whatever these might be.

5.3.3 Delivering the Climate Change Message

The champions were reluctant to interfere with people's rights and freedom to choose, but the essence of their role was to change people's behaviour. In order to reconcile these two things the champions were clear about how to deliver the message of climate change. In this section I will talk about the reluctance of participants to 'preach' to their colleagues and their contention that behaviour change could be achieved by 'raising awareness' and 'providing information'.

The role of the champion was seen as 'raising awareness' (C-4, 34), 'creating that awareness' (A-8, 127) and 'trying to educate people' (C-5, 41-42). The champions believed that by providing information about climate change they might encourage people to 'choose' climate-friendly lifestyles. A small minority of the champions did talk about a more direct approach to behaviour change. For example, one champion said:

Absolutely yeah, yeah if I thought they were just throwing paper in the bin or something I'd be like 'why don't you recycle that instead'. Yeah absolutely I'd be always like, yeah turning off lights or switching thin* appliances off. Yeah definitely I would, yep (C-4, 522-526).

For most of the champions, however, this was not an 'appropriate' way to approach the subject. They would provide information, but they were very reluctant to push it onto other people. One champion stated:

I think this is like kind of the way I like to, er, put it I don't like preaching to people, erm, but I like to give people information so that they are better informed about the, er, the impact of the choices they make (C-5, 383-383).

Climate protecting behaviour was offered as an option but people were not told what they should be doing. Respondents in general would pass 'on the word without actually having to preach' (A-5, 728). They said that they did not want to 'lecture anybody' (A-7, 600-601) or 'preach to other people' (C-6, 1113). One champion claimed that he had 'never tried to preach to other people' (B-5, 879). The role of the champion was 'providing the information, raising awareness but not telling people what they should be doing' (C-2, 861-863). In one case I asked the champion what she thought people should be doing to tackle climate change. Her response was: 'to start with, I'd never say you should be' (C-3, 229).

This reluctance to prescribe (and proscribe) actions further reflected the champions' neoliberal understanding of ethics as subjective – a matter of preference. They believed that people should choose what to believe and how to act and this informed the way they communicated the message of climate change. This provides more evidence of a dominant neoliberal discourse and it also provides further insight into the champions as passive or active. Prima facie, it could be argued that providing information is less active than actually telling people what to do. The champions certainly felt that the latter was more extreme. However, it could be argued that the degree of 'agency' amongst the champions is also subject to the information they were providing. If they were raising awareness about subversive climate discourses then this would indeed make them 'active agents'. In chapters six and seven I will explore these roles in more detail as I consider what the champions were actually saying to their colleagues and the types of messages that they were delivering.

5.4 Conclusion

The role of the climate champions was to promote climate-protecting behaviour in the workplace. They were expected to learn about the science of climate change, think about communication techniques and use their knowledge to implement behaviour change amongst their colleagues. Given the discursive nature of the project, I have argued that this was not a straightforward activity. Every time the champions communicated a piece of information they were constructing a particular version of the world.

In chapters six and seven I will identify the particular discourses that the champions were drawing on when they were talking about climate change. I will analyse the specific ways in which they were constructing 'appropriate' motivations and action. The purpose of this chapter was to provide a background to the forthcoming analysis and consider the role of the champions in terms of knowledge, belief and limitations. I also considered the ways in which climate change was constructed as a problem.

I argued that the majority of the participants had a good general understanding of the science of climate change and that they drew on a scientific discourse when they described the problem. They rejected discourses of scepticism and pessimism: climate change was real and something could and should be done about it. I then argued that the majority of the champions constructed the problem of climate change as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system. It was not a fundamental flaw in the current way we live our lives and we were already making some progress in addressing it. I suggested that this construction of the problem was likely to lead to the dominance of reformist discourses in terms of dealing with climate change.

Finally, I considered the limitations of the climate champion role. I argued that most of the champions were very reluctant to push their own views onto other people and tell them what they should and should not be doing. Many champions had argued that knowledge about climate change was objective and that this led to 'correct' and 'incorrect' actions. However, when they talked about other people, the champions claimed that belief in climate change and climate-protecting behaviour were a matter of personal preference. People should choose what to believe and how to act. Moreover, when they talked to people about climate change, the champions were careful to avoid 'preaching'. They were more comfortable simply providing information for their colleagues. I argued that these limitations were based on a neoliberal conception of rights and the sovereignty of individual choice and that this general dominance of neoliberalism further suggested the dominance of reformist discourses in terms of dealing with climate change. I also argued that, regardless of which discourses were dominant, the reluctance to interfere with people's beliefs and lifestyles, suggested a passive role for the champion in the reproduction of dominant discourses.

Chapter 6

Motivating Behaviour Change

Jackson (2005a) argues that 'behaviour change is fast becoming the "holy grail" of sustainable development policy' (p.xi). How do we encourage behaviour change? How do we motivate people to act on climate change and what are the barriers that we face in this task? The champions were given responsibility for changing behaviour in the workplace based on a limited amount of training and their own initiative. Chapters six and seven will consider how the champions encouraged climate-protecting behaviour. What discourses did the champions draw upon when it came to different ways of actually dealing with climate change? Did they reinforce or challenge dominant discourses when they talked to their colleagues and managers? This chapter will focus on motivations and chapter seven will focus on actions.

In chapter five I provided some background to the role of the champion. I argued that most of the champions believed in climate change and felt that something could be done about the problem. However, most of them also constructed climate change as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system rather than a fundamental problem. I argued that if they constructed the problem in this way then they were likely to draw on reformist discourses when they encouraged behaviour change.

In this chapter I will argue that reformist discourses were indeed very prevalent in the interviews. However, the identification of discourses was not a straight forward task. When the champions talked about motivation they drew on components from both reformist and revolutionary discourses. They mainly used reformist ideas to encourage behaviour change in other people and drew on revolutionary ideas when they talked about their own motivations. Often, however, revolutionary ideas were constrained by reformist or neoliberal notions of 'appropriateness'. For example, when some of the champions talked about revolutionary motivations (e.g., doing the right thing) they dismissed their own views as 'silly' or 'cheesy'. Many champions also combined revolutionary motivations (the non-economic value of the natural world) with some form of self-interest (the enjoyment they gained from walking in the countryside). Self-interest was very marginal in these accounts but it was present. In addition, the champions also talked

about the problems associated with self-interest as a neoliberal value. They challenged the 'naturalness' of reformist ideas when it comes to dealing with an issue like climate change. However, they continued to reinforce these values by using self-interest as a basis for climate-protecting behaviour – highlighting the co-benefits of action, such as saving money. There did appear to be some resistance to dominant reformist discourses but this was very limited.

In section 6.1 I will begin the chapter by analysing the arguments that the champions used to motivate behaviour change amongst their colleagues and managers. I will argue that the vast majority of the champions drew upon the components of reformist discourses for this purpose. They relied upon reformist values (accumulation, pursuit of profit) and self-interested accounts of human nature when interacting with those around them. Some of the champions did refer to more revolutionary ideas but there was limited evidence of this across the interviews.

In section 6.2 I will then consider the motivations of the participants themselves. In contrast to the first section, I will argue that the personal motivations of managers and champions reflected more revolutionary values (justice, responsibility) and drew upon a more altruistic account of human nature. Many participants wanted to protect the climate because it was the 'right thing to do'. However, many of the champions also acknowledged some kind of personal benefit they would gain from acting on climate change. Section 6.3 will then consider the barriers to climate protecting behaviour. What stopped people from acting in a climate-friendly way? I will argue that barriers to action were reflective of neoliberalism more generally. This might suggest that reformist discourses have not addressed the conflict between environment and economy in a satisfactory way.

Finally, in sections 6.4 and 6.5, I will look at the reproduction or subversion of these dominant reformist (or neoliberal) discourses. Having identified different climate discourses in the first half of the chapter, I will analyse the operation of these discourses in everyday communication. I will argue that the champions reproduced the dominant discourses at many different sites of interaction. There was some evidence of subversion but this was very limited.

6.1 Identifying Climate Discourses I: Encouraging Action in Others

In this section, I will identify the climate discourses that the champions used when they encouraged behaviour change in other people. I will argue that reformist discourses played a dominant role in the construction of 'appropriate' motivations. The champions drew upon reformist values and a reformist account of human nature. They talked about the co-benefits of action on climate change and they reported this to be the most effective way to change behaviour. In sections 6.1.1 and section 6.1.2 I will analyse how the champions encouraged behaviour change when they talked to managers as well as their colleagues. In section 6.1.3, I will argue that some of the champions did talk about the use of more revolutionary motivations (protecting the planet). However, these were often secondary to more reformist ideas.

6.1.1 Business Buy-in

Champions were expected to implement behaviour change in the workplace. An important part of this was convincing management that climate-protecting behaviour was a worthwhile pursuit. Champions often required time away from their official role, the authorisation to implement changes in the workplace and funding for environmental projects. In this section I will analyse the motivations that champions used in order to try to change the attitudes of their line managers and those responsible for making decisions within the business. In the majority of cases, champions appealed to notions of self-interest and profit when they suggested the implementation of climate-protecting behaviour.

Specifically, champions appealed to the economic benefits for their company of a green image. One CSR manager talked about the increasing prevalence of environmental questions in tendering contracts:

Certainly stuff like this is massively helpful in winning contracts... we're always updating our kind of…status reports… as regards to where we are in the whole climate change arena. So, we've got kind of a whole band of people that just love this stuff because more and more it's becoming part of tender writing (A-manager, 781-792).

People are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their actions. Companies who portray a green image are more likely to win contracts and therefore

increase their profit. One champion pointed out that 'a lot of the clients have got their own green targets so if [Business C] seem to be like in sync with them then we'll be more attractive as a supplier' (C-10, 92-95). The 'greening' of society in general has necessitated the 'greening' of any successful business. Clapp (2005) argues that 'adhering to CSR principles makes "good business sense"' (p.26).

For some champions, the importance of a 'green' image encouraged a sceptical attitude towards their company's environmental commitments. One champion said, 'a lot of the environment push from the top is from, erm, a, like a PR perspective' (C-10, 85-86). Another agreed that, 'obviously it's, it's sort of PR for climate change isn't it' (A-3, 519). In this sense, the establishment of the climate champion programme itself is, arguably, a means to increase profit (through a green image) rather than being directed towards protection of the climate. Despite these reservations, the champions maintained that appealing to the economic benefits of climate protection was the most effective way to foster behaviour change[28].

For this reason they also highlighted the more general economic benefits of climate protecting behaviour. The champions attempted to gain 'buy-in' from middle management by proposing actions that were 'financially viable' (C-5, 646) and presenting a 'business case' for doing them (D-3, 173). One champion explained the necessity of this approach:

At first the business wasn't really aware of the business benefits that it could bring to it. If you were doing it then fine, but if anything happened where it needed money or anything else or budget in terms of how many people are spending time on it then they had to understand, well, what's in it for us as well as the environment (D-1, 276-281)?

Given this stipulation, it was the job of the champions to work out how a project could be profitable for the business. The reduction of CO_2 emissions alone was not a good enough reason to invest money or time into a project. Young (2000) argues that, 'companies do not develop a broader long-term interpretation of their environmental responsibilities for altruistic reasons. Their concern is economic self-interest' (p.20). This position is supported by evidence of the kinds of projects that were successfully implemented.

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[28] Hargreaves (2008) made similar observations of the champions in his study. They felt that 'the appeal to financial values was seen as likely to work well with "the Board"' (p.145).

An example of one successful project was the campaign by a champion to reduce the number of journeys done by a delivery van. In the past, the van had done several daily trips to and from closely situated depots. The champion suggested that the driver could reduce this to one round trip to all of the depots. He acknowledged that it was 'quite a big impact from a cost saving as well as an environmental saving' (B-8, 207-209). The champion had faced no resistance in implementing this 'cost saving' change. In contrast, a champion who had tried to set up recycling facilities had faced insurmountable difficulties. The business reaction to her proposal was, 'we're not going to be paying for recycling and we're not going to be paying for anything' (A-6, 51-52). The champion could not create a business case for a recycling programme that cost money to establish. Motivations for action had to be directed towards the economic gains of the business. This was the most effective way to gain buy-in from middle management.

The approach taken by the champions to motivate their business reflects a discourse of ecological modernisation (EM). The champions drew upon many of the key components of EM to frame their messages about climate change. The most fundamental component of this discourse is the reconceptualised relationship between the environment and the economy. This relationship is no longer one of conflict. In fact, 'the core message of the theory of EM is that economic development and environmental policy can be reconciled; so-called "win–win" opportunities can be seized upon' (Pataki 2009, p.83). This is the message that the champions tried to make clear to middle management.

Indeed, 'in engaging with the EM agenda, firms achieve financial benefits from reduced waste production and greater business efficiency, as well as through the creation of new markets' (Gibbs 2003, p.4). Business had the opportunity to save money through the implementation of more efficient processes and to make money through their investment in environmental technology or climate-protecting products and services. Champions drew on the reconceptualised relationship of the environment and the economy to present this win-win idea. Often the focus was on saving money rather than making money, but the general message was the same. Managers did not need to prioritise economic concerns over the climate because protection of the climate would inevitably lead to greater profit. Ultimately, it was in their self-interest to pursue environmental objectives. Curran (2009) argues that

'"greening business" becomes good for the economy, good for the environment and good for consumers and governments alike' (p.203).

More fundamentally, EM contends that a 'high level of environmental protection is a precondition for economic development' (Reitan 1998, p.5). A business stands to make extra money from climate-protecting behaviour, but more importantly, it cannot afford to ignore the issue because 'business ultimately depends on the health of the planet and surrounding atmosphere' (Young 2000, p.2). Participants acknowledged that this was an important concern. One manager said, '[Business B] is acutely aware that you know climate change will affect our business completely' (B-manager, 141-142). The issue was not only about increasing profit but also about securing the future of the business.

6.1.2   Selling the Issue to Individuals

Champions drew on similar techniques when they tried to motivate their colleagues, to engage in climate-protecting behaviour. Champions had to provide a reason for individuals to prioritise climate change. Highlighting the co-benefits of action was an effective way to do this. As with their line managers, this had to be additional to the benefits of a future stable climate.

The most effective co-benefit was the prospect of saving money. Champions encouraged their colleagues to change their behaviour by pointing out that 'there may be some saving for them' (A-1,405-406). Another champion told us about her communication techniques with colleagues: 'I'd be saying to them "well do you know how much money you're losing or you're wasting … you know by keeping that appliance on overnight"' (C-4, 533-535)? The interviewees had no doubt that the appeal to economic self-interest could work. As one manager said:

If I can really show people that just by being a little bit smarter you can save £50 a quarter... on your electricity then... who wouldn't jump on the like sustainability, climate change bandwagon… you know (G-manager, 1181-1185).

A champion expressed the same idea but more concisely: 'almost everyone in Western society cares about their pennies' (C-10, 1286-1287).

The champions also drew on the health benefits of climate-protecting behaviour. One champion was very enthusiastic about the co-benefits of cycling. She

said, 'oh it's much more fun to cycle and, you know, it's better for your health' (B-1, 812-814). These messages applied in the workplace and at home. Colleagues could save money on their own electricity bill or that of their company. They could enjoy the health benefits of walking or cycling as part of their daily commute or as a weekend activity.

Of course, when it comes to self-interest, there is less inclination to save money for the company than there is at home. For this reason many of the champions introduced incentives as a motivation for climate-protecting behaviour in the workplace. For example, one champion had suggested incentivising double-sided printing by providing free 'pizza for you at lunch on one Friday of every month' (A-1, 437). In other companies, 'freebies' had included energy drinks as part of cycle to work week (Business B) and chocolates for taking part in an online carbon survey (Business C). Incentives were an important motivation for behaviour change.

When the champions interacted with managers they were effectively trying to promote changes in the business. For example, some of the champions wanted to implement facilities for recycling or change the transport procedures for deliveries. These actions involved small changes to the way that the business operated. In contrast, when the champions interacted with their colleagues they were trying to encourage individual behaviour change. For this reason, when the champions talked about motivating colleagues, friends and family, their accounts reflected a discourse of individualism.

Discourses of ecological modernisation and individualism share some fundamental components. They are both reformist discourses, which focus on self-interest as the basis of human nature. However, they differ in their construction of key agents. In a discourse of EM corporations and industry are the key agents, responsible for pursuing climate friendly business policies and infrastructure. Individualism places the responsibility for action with individual rational consumers. When the champions talked about saving money on heating bills or using incentives to promote behaviour change they were drawing upon the 'individualised, egoistic self-interest' of an individualism discourse (Clarke *et al* 2007, p.232). This is slightly different to the account of human nature in EM, which is directed towards the economic goals of corporations and business more generally.

In addition, the champions drew upon the key values of individualism. Again, this component is similar across all reformist discourses – individualism, EM and privatisation – because they are all rooted in a reformist account of neoliberalism. The key values in all three discourses focus on growth, profit and accumulation. In a discourse of individualism, people are expected to think like businesses and to pursue 'unlimited individual accumulation' (McCarthy and Prudham 2004, p. 277). G-manager argued everyone would jump on the 'sustainability, climate change band wagon' if he could show them how to save money (1181-1185). His argument was based on the assumption that most people would be motivated by the prospect of saving money.

Finally, a discourse of individualism highlights the importance of choice as a key value. Individuals are free to choose whether or not they engage in climate-protecting behaviour based on their knowledge of the available options. The role of the champions was to provide information for their colleagues so that they could choose to act. Most champions did not tell people they *should* act because it would save them money. Rather, they informed them about potential money savings and assumed that their self-interested nature and values would lead them to choose climate-protecting behaviour. For example, one champion explained that he had given out free energy efficient lights bulbs and provided an internal communication document about energy savings and fuel bills. He reflected on his efforts saying, 'I think really you just need to give some people a little bit of information and encouragement and let them make up their own mind' (B-5, 884-886). Similarly, another champion said 'when you actually show someone the amount of consumption or the amount of savings they could have it, it opens their eyes a little bit' (A-5, 435-437). When they tried to encourage behaviour change in those around them, most champions framed the issue in the same way. They drew on the components of individualism.

6.1.3 …and Concern about the Climate

For most of the champions reference to accumulation and self-interest were the only feasible ways to promote climate-protecting behaviour. However, in a small number of cases, the participants did refer to motivations beyond this reformist construction. One manager said that her business pursued environmental objectives because it was the 'right thing to do' (E-manager, 124). If this was the only reason for

action then we might consider the role of more revolutionary discourses in this account. For example, a justice discourse might consider the 'ethical dimensions' of climate change (Gardiner 2004, p.556) and the importance of 'doing the right thing'.

However, this manager did also acknowledge that 'we've still got to provide a quality service; we've still got to make sure that we're priced competitively and all those other features need to be in place' (E-manager, 133-135). Doing the right thing was not the only consideration.

Other participants referred to the importance of preserving the natural world. One champion argued that there was a 'cost saving as well as erm caring for the environment' (C-4, 229). With reference to business incentives, another champion explained that 'the company are saving money and then again we're sticking to our greener opinions' (A-5, 143-144). These accounts were not about preserving the environment because it saves money; they were about saving money *and* preserving the environment. In some ways this construction is similar to an EM discourse. The relationship between the economy and the environment was one of harmony. However, I would argue that this construction goes beyond ecological modernisation. For example, champion C-4 also talked about 'the importance of the environment in our world' (221). There was some indication that the environment had significance beyond its role as a provider of natural resources. There was certainly not enough evidence to suggest a discourse of deep ecology, but there was some resistance to the strict EM conception of environment/economy.

It therefore appears to be the case that a small number of champions were drawing on components from both reformist and revolutionary discourses when they encouraged behaviour change. The components of revolutionary discourses – doing the right thing and promoting the intrinsic importance of the planet – were very marginal but they were present.

6.1.4 Summary

When it came to encouraging behaviour change in others the champions consistently drew upon reformist climate discourses. Businesses were encouraged to pursue environmental objectives because they could save money through more efficient processes and climate-protecting projects. Individuals were encouraged to

engage in climate-friendly actions because they could save money, improve their health and receive incentives or 'freebies' in the workplace.

Other scholars have noted the importance of a win-win approach as a motivation for behaviour change. With reference to the general public, Norton and Leaman (2004) argue that 'the key to engaging people – as with business – is to... show "what's in it for them"' (p.8). Ereaut and Segnit (2006) agree that 'positive climate behaviours need to be approached in the same way as marketers approach acts of buying and consuming... treating climate-friendly behaviour as a brand that can be sold' (p.9). Indeed, previous research on climate champions has arrived at very similar conclusions. For example, Lewis and Juravle (2010) note the importance of a business case for action in the workplace (p.487). This is supported by Andersson and Bateman (2000) who report that the champions in their study 'framed their environmental issues as financial opportunities' (p.565).

My analysis in this section has come to the same conclusions as previous work. Dominant motivations are based on win-win scenarios and co-benefits for individuals. However, I have also argued that these 'appropriate' motivations are constructed by the dominant reformist climate discourses. I have analysed 'appropriate' motivations in the context of my analytical categories and I have argued that champions consistently drew upon reformist values and accounts of human nature. In the final sub-section I noted that some of the champions also referred to more revolutionary motivations. Champions sometimes combined self-interest with more altruistic reasons for protecting the climate, such as 'doing the right thing'. This could perhaps indicate some subversion of the dominant discourse. It will therefore be discussed in more detail in section 6.5.

6.2 Identifying Climate Discourses II: Personal Motivations for Action

The champions were confident about the most effective way of encouraging others to act on climate change. If they could appeal to self-interest and co-benefits, then individuals (and businesses) would be willing to change their behaviour. However, when I enquired about their personal motivations for engaging in climate protecting behaviour I received a different response. Many of the champions talked about future generations, justice, responsibility and the value of the natural world when I asked them why they had become involved in the climate champion scheme

137

or what they thought about climate change more generally. There was still reference to professional and personal benefits but this was marginal to the more revolutionary values and motivations. In this section I will investigate the range of climate discourses that were evident in the champions' personal views on climate change.

6.2.1 Profit and Promotion

Some of the champions did refer to self-interest when they talked about their own motivations for action. Generally, climate-protecting behaviour made sense for many people because there were financial implications for reducing energy or walking instead of driving. They acknowledged the benefits of 'saving money' (A-5, 786-787). As one champion said, 'it's a no brainer' (A-6, 265). In these cases, the champions talked about the same kinds of motivations that they used to encourage behaviour change in others. This reflects the reformist components that have been discussed at length in the preceding sections.

More often, however, where motivations were self-interested, they were based on the professional advantages attached to the role of 'climate champion'. Champions admitted that, 'there was probably a part of me hoping to get, erm, some form of, erm, corporate recognition' (A-4, 1124-1125). Volunteers were aware that commitment to such a role would 'look quite good for how I was trying to progress in the business' (B-2, 303-304). In fact, some managers explicitly used this motivation to attract volunteers for the project. One manager said that if 'you have been a successful climate champion on that project then fundamentally it becomes sort of, part of your business CV' (G-manager, 513-515). Another said that he emphasised the 'transferable skills' that came with being a champion (B-manager, 304).

These motivations reflected a self-interested account of human nature focused on personal accumulation (both directly through saving money and indirectly through promotion and personal success). Thus, the champions drew upon components of individualism when they talked about their own motivations as well as the motivations they used to persuade other people. Moreover, to some extent, the champions were also reinforcing the structure of the business itself. They were keen to get a promotion and move up in the company. They were reinforcing the everyday operations of the company and the focus on growth and accumulation. They did not

talk about challenging the status quo. Rather, for some participants, the champion scheme was a potential way for them to use the current system for their own benefit.

It is important to note that for most of the champions who talked about profit and promotion these were at the bottom of a long list of motivations. However, these things were mentioned as personal motivations.

6.2.2 (My) Future Generations

Concern for future generations was one of the most frequently cited reasons for climate-protecting behaviour. One champion said, 'I try to make a difference for, maybe for future generations' (A-6, 347). Another emphasised 'the morality of having a so* social responsibility for future generations' (C-3, 565-566). In addition, a manager talked about the urgency of action on climate change: 'The longer we drag our feet, erm, maybe not our generation but certainly future generations will, will pay for, for our ineptitude really' (B-manager, 760-762).

This was a far more revolutionary reason to engage in climate-protecting behaviour than saving money or getting promoted. The sentiments expressed here reflect components of a justice discourse. According to Page (2007) 'each generation is required by justice to protect the climate system for their successors' (p.238). Indeed, a justice based account of human nature contends that individuals can be altruistic in their motivations:

It seems plain that people are motivated by a broad range of concerns, including concern for family and friends, and religious, moral, and political ideals. And it seems just as plain that people sometimes sacrifice their own interests for what they regard to be a greater, sometimes impersonal, good (Jamieson 1992, p.144).

The professed motivations of the champions support Jamieson's argument. These individuals had become involved in the project because they felt a responsibility to future generations, which had little to do with any personal benefits they would gain from the experience.

The participants who did talk about future generations often mentioned their own family in the same context. One champion said, 'I thought about my daughter growing up and … if I can't tell her that I knew about these issues and didn't do everything I could to stop it, then I just couldn't live with that' (C-6, 875-880).

Another talked about her efforts to 'make the world a better place you know for my children and, and ultimately you know future generations' (E-manager, 405-407). A frequently cited motivation was 'my kids' (A-3, 52), 'your children or grandchildren' (A-9, 449) or the fact that 'I've got two kids' (A-8, 564).

It might be argued that a concern for our own family is less revolutionary than a concern for future generations in a general sense. If the primary motivation was *my* family and *my* children then this does not reject the reformist concern of 'care for oneself and one's own' (Harvey 2005, p.181). However, the fact that concern for 'my children' was often accompanied by the broader concern for future generations does indicate a more altruistic account of human nature. In addition, concern for other people (family or future persons) is still more revolutionary than a concern with economic prosperity, which would be based on self-interest and personal accumulation.

6.2.3   The Rest of the World

Revolutionary discourses became more clearly evident when the champions talked about climate change and the rest of the world. Many participants had thought about the effects of climate change on people in developing countries and this was often a motivation for action. One champion said, 'climate change does affect the whole world so it'll either make things worse in Africa or South America' (A-7, 561-562). Another champion was very uncomfortable with this prospect:

I don't like the fact that we just seem to forget about people in other parts of the world and I mean climate change is… does look like it's going to impact some of the poorer parts of the world a lot worse than it impacts us, which is really very unfair (B-6, 566-571).

These motivations appear to reflect a discourse of justice. Illsley (2002) explains that 'at the heart of the environmental justice movement is a belief in distributive justice and a fair allocation of environmental goods' (p.71). The champions frequently drew upon the values of fairness, responsibility and basic welfare rights. One champion argued that the living standards in developing countries were 'unacceptably low' (A-4, 584). For this reason poorer countries would be unable to deal with the effects of climate change. One champion said, 'if you live in Bangladesh you know you'll be suffering for everyone else's emissions and not have the money or the whereabouts to do much about it' (F-manager, 589-592). These people were being denied their basic

welfare rights. Participants felt that they had a responsibility to do something about this, to not 'forget about people in other parts of the world' (B-6, 567).

However, it is important to consider the type of responsibility that the participants were recognising. In the context of climate change, Dobson (2007) draws an important distinction between charity and justice:

It is vitally important to see that this is a matter of justice, not of charity. The responsibilities of the environmental citizen are not the same as those that follow from the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean, for example, or from the earthquake a year later in Pakistan/Kashmir. The key difference in my relationship to climate change, and to the tsunami or an earthquake, is that I am partially responsible for the first and not at all responsible for the second. This prompts very different types of moral response. In the case of suffering for which I am not responsible, compassion and charity are appropriate responses. In the case of suffering for which I am responsible, justice is the appropriate response (p.281).

There was one champion who appeared to construct her concern as one of charity and compared climate-related disasters to natural disasters:

Whenever there's a natural disaster you know all countries seem to pull together to sort of give that help don't they... erm and I think you know obviously more of that to continue erm because nobody wants to see somebody else suffer do they? (B-3, 504-510).

This champion recognised that climate change was a bad thing and she was not comfortable with the fact people would be adversely affected by it. However, she did not construct this as an issue of justice.

In contrast to this, the majority of the participants felt that 'justice was the appropriate response'. The West had played a central role in causing these climate related problems and thus exacerbating the plight of the world's poorest people. Dealing with climate change was indeed a justice based responsibility:

There's still thousands of kids that die every day because they can't even put a grain of rice in their mouth so I would hardly put the pin the responsibility of climate change on them...so yes it does swing back more to the Western world' (G-manager, 1266-1271).

Other participants expressed similar sentiments. One champions said, 'you have like the more kind of established countries obviously being responsible for a lot of the, the current damage' (C-5, 474-475). We therefore have a 'moral obligation to take action

because a lot of, a lot of the emissions out there are Western emissions' (F-manager, 585-586). The burden of climate change would fall disproportionately on the world's poorest people. This was not fair because they were less able to deal with the problem and, more fundamentally, they were responsible for a much smaller proportion of the world's CO_2 emissions.

Kamminga (2008) argues that a justice based approach to climate change 'would place the lion's share of the cost of climate change with the world's richest people' (p.676). The champions drew upon this justice based approach. They felt that they had an obligation to address the problem of climate change because the West was responsible for a large proportion of the emissions (polluter pays principle) and they were better equipped to deal with it (ability to pay principle). By recognising this responsibility the champions were demonstrating that they did indeed have a 'capacity for a sense of justice' (Rawls 1999, p.443), reflecting a more revolutionary account of human nature.

6.2.4 Protecting the Planet

The revolutionary capacity of the champions was also evident in their appeals to the importance of nature. In section 6.1.3, I suggested that the protection of the planet did play a very marginal role when the champions encouraged behaviour change in others. Some champions promoted the intrinsic importance of the environment/climate alongside financial or business concerns. This was only a consideration in a small number of accounts.

However, when I asked about their personal motivations, many participants made reference to the importance of the natural world. For some, this was based on the enjoyment that they got from being outside. One champion explained that she had grown up in the countryside and spent a lot of time outdoors. For this reason she felt she had a natural 'empathy with the environment' (C-3, 563). Other participants spent their spare time 'visiting nature reserves or walking with my wife or on my own' (B-5, 548-549). One champion enthused: 'I love to be outside' (B-3, 285-286). These champions were rejecting the reformist construction of the natural world. The climate should not be protected because it was 'society's sustenance base' (as in an EM discourse) (Mol and Sonnenfeld 2000, p.7). Rather, it should be protected because it

brought pleasure to people as something beautiful and innately important. They prioritised the environment over the economy.

Many of the champions constructed nature in this way. When they talked about their motivations for being involved in the project they referred to the 'preservation of the earth' (A-3, 39) and their desire to 'like look after... the, you know the planet' (B-7, 288-289). These individuals did not become climate champions (or try to reduce their personal carbon emissions) because they thought it was the economically rational thing to do. Rather, they implied that nature was intrinsically important in and of itself. Indeed, one manager was particularly emphatic:

It's just part of who I am to be perfectly honest, it's part of my blood, erm...I love, er...I love the natural environment, I love, erm, I think seeing pictures of Earth from space is incredible, erm...like biological diversity is fantastic, you know, looking at how the planet's evolved, erm...like the beauty in nature is incredible, erm, the fragility of nature is, is so well fragile, erm, and like all that sort of stuff really it, it, it is, it's important to me (G-manager, 1191-1198).

The sentiments expressed by these participants appear to suggest a discourse of deep ecology. Deep ecology would construct nature as intrinsically important. This is set up in direct opposition to the construction of nature in both pure neoliberal discourse and discourses of privatisation. We should not value the forest as a source of profit (whether from timber and furniture sales or from schemes such as REDD+). To some extent, the champions' constructions of nature appear to reflect these kinds of ideas. They did not want to protect the natural world because it held some form of economic value.

However, the motivations of these champions were not completely selfless. For many of them, the non-economic construction of the natural world was accompanied by self-interested motivations. They wanted to protect the climate because it would have a negative effect on them personally if they could not walk in the countryside or enjoy the beauty of nature. Kamminga (2008) argues that, for deep ecologists, man should not place himself at the centre of nature (p.684). The climate is important whether or not it brings benefits to us personally. Soper (2000) provides further insight into this position:

Some, moreover, have insisted further that so far from nature's intrinsic value being dependent on human valuing, it is human beings themselves who detract from this value in intruding upon it or interacting with it. The intrinsic value of wilderness, for example, lies precisely in its being uncontaminated by any human intervention (p.87-88).

Most of the champions were not fully engaging with a discourse of deep ecology. Their construction of nature remained anthropocentric even though this was not to do with its economic value. We can therefore identify a more complicated account of the natural world than any one of my seven climate discourses. The champions valued the environment as more than an economic resource and some of them did talk about the intrinsic importance of the natural world. However, most of these champions mentioned some form of pleasure that they would gain from the preservation of nature (e.g., country walks or appreciating the natural beauty of the world). This kind of discourse might be referred to as 'anthropocentric environmentalism' or something resembling Dryzek's environmental discourse of 'green rationalism'[29].

In addition, some champions talked about the importance of protecting wildlife:

For me it's, I think it's watching programmes as I've been growing up about rainforests and about different animals and things like that. Just being really sentimental about animals' welfare and things like that, thinking 'oh they're going to have no-where to live (laughs) if we keep doing this deforestation and all these kind of things and killing the fish by putting chemicals in the water. I think that's where I started. Like from an early age I thought, 'oh no I need to do something' (D-3, 378-386).

Other champions echoed these sentiments. They talked about 'species of animals disappearing' (A-1, 660) and the importance of 'looking after the world, looking after nature, looking after animals' (C-8, 630-631). In some ways this would appear to reflect a justice discourse, where key values include fairness, responsibility and rights. Baxter (2000) argues that 'nonhuman organisms have a claim in justice against moral agents not to deprive them without good moral reason of the environmental basis of their continued existence and ability to reproduce themselves' (p.45). Accordingly, champion D-3 does imply a responsibility towards these animals: 'I need to do something' (386). There were not many champions who

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[29] Dryzek (1997) distinguishes between discourses of Green Romanticism, which includes the ecocentric ideas of deep ecology and Green Rationalism, which is more anthropocentric. Both of these discourses are revolutionary and reject the fundamental structure of modern society.

expressed this kind of concern, but those that did appeared to be drawing on the more revolutionary components of a justice discourse.

6.2.5 A Sense of Responsibility

Many champions referred to a sense of responsibility but were unclear about what this actually meant. In some cases the term 'responsibility' was used in conjunction with another discourse. For example, when drawing on components of deep ecology, champions talked about having 'a responsibility... as temporary tenants of the earth' (B-5, 569-570). Similarly, participants talked about having a 'responsibility for future generations' (C-3, 565-566). In these examples the responsibility was directed towards a specified 'other': the planet or future inhabitants of the planet.

Often, however, there was reference to an unspecified 'feeling' of responsibility that individuals found difficult to describe. For example, many participants talked about 'doing the right thing' (E-manager, 403-404) and having a 'duty to do something' (C-10, 949). One champion said, 'it's about doing the right thing and doing as much of it as possible' (A-2, 662-663). Champions also talked about the guilt that was attached to this responsibility. One said, 'I just feel like I, I should do my bit and I think I'd feel quite guilty if I didn't (A-10, 319-320). Another champion said 'I think that if I didn't do my bit then it I would feel guilty about it' (C-10, 957-958). These champions did not elaborate on what 'doing one's bit' might entail or why they would feel guilty if they did not. Moreover, there was no sense of what the champions were required to do or indeed how much of it would be required to avoid these feelings of guilt.

These sentiments are difficult to analyse because they are not very specific. However, they might suggest a discourse of democratic citizenship. Champions felt an obligation or a 'duty' to do something about the problem of climate change. Wolf *et al* (2009) consider the theoretical arguments surrounding the concept of 'ecological citizenship' and argue that 'acting on climate change can be understood as a civic responsibility' (p.504). They champions felt that they should contribute to the mitigation of climate change by doing their 'bit'. If everyone has a 'bit' to do, then this might suggest a more collective duty towards a problem such as climate change.

We could therefore argue that the role of individuals is to be active citizens working collectively towards the common good.

However, it might be the case that the champions were not fully engaging with a discourse of democratic citizenship. Dobson and Bell (2006) explain that 'the environmental citizen's behaviour will be influenced by an attitude that is – in part, at least – informed by the knowledge that what is good for me as an individual is not necessarily good for me as a member of the social collective' (p.5). This implies a relatively selfless account of human nature. As an environmental (or democratic) citizen I will prioritise the interests of the common good above my own self-interested concerns. The champions did not specifically state that this would be the case. Of course we might assume that a collective 'duty' to tackle climate change would involve sacrifice on the part of an individual but this is not necessarily true.

In these examples, the 'role' of champions as 'key agents' is to 'do their bit', but this might involve individualistic actions that have co-benefits for those who engage in them. If this is the case then the account of human nature is not selfless and the actions are not collective. This might suggest a discourse that combines components of democratic citizenship with components of individualism. Of course, at this point these claims are purely speculative. In order to provide a full analysis it is necessary to also consider 'appropriate' actions. This will be discussed in depth in the following chapter. For the purpose of this chapter it is sufficient to say that this 'sense of responsibility' does, prima facie, suggest a discourse of democratic citizenship.

6.2.6   Summary

The champions drew on many different discourses when they responded to questions about their personal motivations for engaging in climate-protecting behaviour. There was some use of reformist discourses but the majority of the reasons that they provided were revolutionary in nature. Champions talked about future generations, obligations to people in developing countries and the intrinsic value of the planet. Often, if a champion made reference to one revolutionary discourse they would draw on others as well. So, champions were motivated by 'being a parent' (C-6, 8) and having 'a responsibility for looking after this planet' (C-6, 1000-1001) or they would talk about 'my kids' (A-3, 52) and 'developing countries' (A-3, 443). In addition, when champions talked about their 'sense of responsibility' this was often in

relation to the natural world (B-5) or future generations (C-3). Participants did have some self-interested reasons for engaging in climate-protecting behaviour (saving money or getting a promotion) and often revolutionary motivations would be linked to some form of personal benefit (appreciating the beauty of nature). Generally, however, most of the accounts reflected components of revolutionary discourses.

6.3 Identifying Climate Discourses III: Barriers to Action

On the subject of sustainable consumption, Hobson (2003) states the following:

Often, research into 'barriers' to sustainable consumption frame practices in a deterministic fashion, seeming to suggest that by adding together a particular practice and its social context, the nature of the barrier, and therefore what social action needs to be taken, are immediately apparent (p.103).

In chapter two I argued that this was often a problem with positivist approaches to climate change. Research identifies the specific factors that influence people's behaviour and provides a list of measures that can be taken to remedy the problem. In this chapter I have argued that identifying the reasons that people do and do not act on climate change is more complicated than this. 'Appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour is constructed through the dominance of particular climate discourses. Indeed, Hobson (2003) supports the contention that the mediation of barriers by individuals is 'fundamentally discursive' (p.103).

So far, I have identified a contrast in the way the champions constructed motivations. When they encouraged behaviour change in others they mainly drew upon reformist discourses. When they talked about their own motivations their language reflected more revolutionary discourses. In this section I will argue that the reported barriers to climate-protecting behaviour were also constructed by dominant discourses. However, the dominant discourse in this case was not reformist. Rather, it was the more fundamental discourse of pure neoliberalism. This is important because it reaffirms the dominance of neoliberalism: a reformed version of neoliberalism is prevalent in the promotion of climate-protecting behaviour, but a pure version of neoliberalism remains influential in the construction of barriers to climate-protecting behaviour. In this section I will analyse three types of barriers to climate-protecting behaviour that were apparent in the interviews: time and prioritisation; lifestyle and aspirations; and the right to self-rule.

6.3.1 *Time and Prioritisation*

The champions frequently mentioned lack of time as the most important obstacle to climate-protecting behaviour. For the champions themselves, lack of time was an obstacle to carrying out their role effectively because, 'you have to do everything in your own time' (B-1, 1049). Champions also reported time as an obstacle for those whom they were trying to influence. Employees were reluctant to switch their computers off at the end of the day because 'it takes too long to boot up in the morning' (A-10, 530-531). They refused to walk between office buildings because 'it takes too long to get to a meeting, a taxi is quicker' (C-4, 566-567). One champion acknowledged that 'there are so many demands on people's time, people's energies' (A-2, 945-946). Indeed, time was often the principal concern for those who agreed to participate in the study in the first place. How long would the interview last? How much of their time would it take up? The telephone interview with the manager in company E provided a particularly illustrative example of this concern. She asked if I could go away and look at the company's environmental reports and ring back if I had any further questions. Her explanation for this request was: 'I'm conscious that I have, obviously, you know, time's precious' (E-manager, 54-55).

Underlying the problem of 'lack of time' is the relatively low priority attached to promoting and performing climate-friendly actions. People did not have time to recycle or turn their computer off or be a climate champion because they had more important things to do. One CSR manager said, 'if you're branch manager, you know, it's about targets and sales' (D-manager, 166-167). This was echoed by another CSR manager: 'if you're a project manager and ... someone's delivered the wrong thing and it's not going together well and the last thing you're going to be thinking about is doing the climate champion part' (G-manager, 732-737). The primary economic aims of the business had to be prioritised over climate change and other environmental issues. One manager had responded negatively to the climate champion project saying, 'oh we've not got time for that nonsense' (C-6, 573-574). The champion who reported this incident argued that middle management prioritised profit above environmental concerns. They were 'interested in figures and you know... this [the champion project] wasn't something high on their agenda' (C-6, 579-581).

In addition, the champions themselves were often forced to prioritise the responsibilities of their official role over the champion project. In some cases this was due to an unavoidable conflict of commitments. One champion explained that he had been unable to attend recent champion teleconferences 'cos I have a conflicting call when they have theirs... and I, which I can't move, it's a project call' (C-8, 91-94). When it came to prioritising between the two meetings, normal work commitments had to come first.

Moreover, the problem of time was also underpinned by the prioritisation of self-interest. One champion described an incident in which a colleague had refused to provide written feedback on the climate champion project because they did not 'have time to do that' (A-1, 328-329). The champion expressed some frustration when she relayed this experience: 'you're like "hang on you've been talking about your new perfume to your mates for 20 minutes, you have time to fill in the questionnaire that lasts two minutes"' (A-1, 331-333). Lorenzoni and Pidgeon (2006) use survey data to examine how climate change is conceptualised by various 'publics' in Europe and the USA. They argue that 'despite the relatively high concern levels detected in these surveys, the importance of climate change is secondary in relation to other environmental, personal and social issues' (p.77). This was the case for many of the participants and those they were trying to influence.

The prioritisation of other issues above climate change is not specific to a discourse of neoliberalism. However, the reasons for this prioritisation do reflect components of a neoliberal discourse. The managers did not have time for the project because they had to pursue neoliberal values of growth and profit. Neoliberal economics 'demands that profit must be maximized within the shortest possible time' (von Werlhof 2008, p.96). The individual who would not fill in the questionnaire reflected a neoliberal account of human nature. She was not directly pursuing key neoliberal values (although it is arguable that the discussion of perfume reflects materialistic consumerism). Rather, she felt she had more important (rationally self-interested) things to do with her time than engage in behaviour related to the protection of the climate. The 'appropriate' use of time is constructed by a discourse of neoliberalism and therefore has a significant impact on how much time people (including the champions themselves) were prepared to dedicate to climate-protecting behaviour.

6.3.2 Lifestyle and Aspirations

A neoliberal lifestyle promotes specific goals and aspirations. People (and businesses) are self-interested and motivated by the pursuit of economic success and accumulation. This has important implications for the type of life they wish to lead and the kinds of goals they aspire towards. One manager talked about the lifestyle of his employees:

Most of the people who work here are movers and shakers, they're successful and, you know, very motivated people otherwise they wouldn't be working at [Business D]. Well a measure of your success is money and what do you do with your money? You go and spend it. So, we cannot tell people not to spend their money. What's the point of coming to work if you can't spend the money (D-manager, 620-626)?

A champion echoed these sentiments: 'you go to work to earn money so you can buy more stuff *(laughs)* and you know spend more money on getting more stuff' (D-3, 669-671). These participants recognised both the non-negotiable 'materialism' of contemporary UK culture and the role of 'consumption' as a 'status marker' (Hobson 2001, p.99; Slocum 2004b, p.415). People felt a great deal of pressure to work towards these goals. Lorenzoni *et al* (2007) make a similar observation in their study of barriers to climate-protecting behaviour:

Another form of constraint explicitly identified by many participants was social norms and expectations requiring carbon-dependent lifestyles. Socially-acceptable ways of behaving—for example, driving to work, frequent long-haul holidays and weekend breaks, leaving appliances on and the weekly supermarket shop—in turn become ingrained as unconscious habitual behaviours, making them unquestioned and thus more intractable (p.453).

The dominance of neoliberal values and the prioritisation of self-interest leads to a carbon-dependent lifestyle that everyone is expected to pursue.

6.3.3 The Right to Self-Rule

The final barrier that I will discuss is the neoliberal emphasis on the 'rights, freedoms and responsibility of individuals' (Heynon *et al* 2007, p.5). This issue is not one that was specifically constructed as a barrier by the champions. As outlined in chapter five, the champions believed that there were limits to what they could say to

other people and they did not see this as a problem. However, I will argue that it was in fact an important barrier to action because it fundamentally affected how the champions dealt with the other barriers.

People were unwilling to change their priorities and their lifestyle, but more fundamentally, neoliberal discourse constructs this as the right to 'self-rule' (Turner 2008, p.118). Individuals should be allowed to engage in whatever actions they wish as long as this does not interfere with the rights and freedoms of others. This 'right' has significant implications for the problem of climate change. In the focus group, champions discussed the rights of their colleagues to self-rule. One participant said: 'every man's house is his castle so why shouldn't I be able to do whatever I want in my castle' (D-1, 657-658)? Neoliberal discourse proscribes interference in the lives of individuals. This final issue had far-reaching implications for the champions. They were tasked with the implementation of behaviour change, but they were expected to achieve this is in a neoliberal context. Encouraging people to change their behaviour when the dominant discourse proscribes interference in the lives of individuals was a significant barrier for the champions themselves.

6.3.4 Summary

A neoliberal discourse emphasises the rights and freedom of individuals and the pursuit of growth, profit and accumulation. Individuals and businesses are free to prioritise these values and, indeed, are expected to do so. The purpose of reformist discourses is to direct these neoliberal values towards climate-protecting behaviour. Reynolds (2010) argues that many behaviour change programmes (including GAP) 'help individuals change their behaviours by co-developing a package of services, information and support that is relevant to individuals' wants, aspiration and requirements' (p.42). This is what the champions had done. They had tried to motivate individuals by re-directing the components of neoliberalism (e.g. self-interest) towards climate-protecting goals (promoting the co-benefits of particular actions).

In this section I have argued that the reported barriers to action on climate change reflected a discourse of pure neoliberalism. If climate-protecting behaviour was not in the interest of an individual then they did not engage in it. The champions were reluctant to tell people what they should be doing and therefore, if their

151

colleagues chose not to engage in climate-protecting behaviour, there was little that they could do about it. Neoliberalism in its pure form continued to have a significant effect on the actions of individuals and the limitations of the champions' role.

6.4   Reinforcing Dominant Discourses

In the preceding analysis I have discussed the champions' efforts to encourage climate-protecting behaviour amongst colleagues, friends and family. I have identified the various climate discourses that they drew upon during the interviews. Taylor and Carroll (2009) argue that 'normalizing norms encourage subjects to become highly efficient at performing a narrowly defined range of practices' (p.47). The champions were subject to these normalising norms. When they encouraged behaviour change they drew upon a very limited range of strategies. Reformist climate discourses were dominant in most of the interviews.

In the following two sections I will focus on the reproduction or subversion of the identified climate discourses. When the champions interacted with other people, did they reinforce these discourses as 'normal' or did they attempt to challenge the dominance of them? In this section, I will argue that the champions reinforced dominant discourses in three ways. First, they drew upon components of reformist discourses in order to promote climate-protecting behaviour (section 6.4.1). Second, they qualified revolutionary values by constructing them as 'abnormal' or out of the ordinary (section 6.4.2). Finally, they promoted reformist ideas in response to the reported barriers to climate-protecting behaviour (section 6.4.3).

6.4.1   'Appropriate' Motivations for Action

The analysis shows that reformist discourses were the most prevalent throughout the accounts and this in itself is evidence that the champions did reinforce these dominant discourses. At many sites of interaction they drew upon the components of reformist discourses and thus constructed this as the 'normal' or 'appropriate' way to think. In addition, the champions delivered the message of climate change in a way that was consistent with neoliberal values. They provided information about climate-protecting behaviour rather than 'preaching' or 'lecturing'. This was particularly apparent when they interacted with their colleagues. In chapter five, I argued that the provision of information could be subversive if the information

itself was contrary to the dominant discourse. However, the information that the champions provided for their colleagues was about the co-benefits of climate-protecting behaviour. The delivery of the message was constrained by neoliberal discourse and the message itself was based on reformist values.

In fact, the only time that the champions consistently rejected the dominant ideas of reformism was when they discussed their own motivations with me. In their day to day interactions with colleagues they frequently reproduced dominant ideas about why people should act in a climate-protecting way. For example, when I asked one manger about his personal motivations for climate-protecting behaviour he talked about the 'beauty' and 'fragility' in nature (G-manager, 1196). However, when I asked him about encouraging change in others he said that it was important to 'show people that just by being a little bit smarter you can save £50 a quarter' (G-manager, 1181-1182). Similarly, the champion who felt the unequal burden of climate change was 'really very unfair' (B-6, 571) also noted the fact that Business B stood to 'make more money because of their improved image and that kind of thing' (B-6, 722-723). In contrast to their own values, these champions drew upon financial incentives to encourage climate-protecting behaviour in others.

Moreover, when champions did make reference to more revolutionary values this was constructed as a secondary concern. One champion expressed this very explicitly when he said, 'the big motivation with, er, energy efficiency at home is that you save money, you reduce your bills and it's a secondary outcome that you have reduced emissions' (A-4, 411-413). Similarly, one of the managers said that employees 'could save money and also help the environment at the same time' (A-manager, 1313-1314). The concern was self-interest and then protection of the atmosphere or the environment more generally. Motivations that reflected reformist discourses were used as the primary or even the sole reason for action.

The reproduction of discourse is a complicated issue. If reformist discourses are dominant then it is not surprising that the champions drew upon the components of these discourses in their promotion of climate-protecting behaviour. Mills (2003) argues that 'discourse itself structures what statements it is possible to say, the conditions under which certain statements will be considered true and appropriate' (p.66). It could be argued that the champions were not reproducing the dominant discourse but rather that their language was being constrained by it. The dominance

of reformism restricted what the champions could and could not say. However, van Dijk (2001) argues that the discursive reproduction of dominance is a two-way process:

We distinguish between the enactment, expression or legitimation of dominance in the (production of the) various structures of text and talk, on the one hand, and the functions, consequences or results of such structures for the (social) minds of recipients on the other (p.303).

A dominant discourse constructs what statements can be said and the repetition of those statements simultaneously reinforces them as 'true' or 'natural' and maintains the dominance of the discourse.

In chapter two I argued that within all discursive constructions there is the potential for resistance. Carolan (2003) contends that individuals have 'agency' as 'movers who are simultaneously constituted by that which they move and constitute' (p.229). At particular sites of interaction the champions had the potential to either challenge or reproduce the dominant discourses of climate change. In the majority of cases they did the latter. Indeed, the fact that they did express more revolutionary values during the interview suggests that they did have the capacity to resist the normalising effects of dominant discourses. However, for the most part, they did not exercise this capacity for resistance.

6.4.2 'I Know How This Sounds…'

Some champions also reproduced dominant discourses through the construction of their personal motivations. These champions were very careful to qualify their revolutionary values. When I asked participants about their motivations for being involved in the project they often began by acknowledging the unconventional nature of their answers. One champion replied, 'I know this sounds a little bit cheesy, but if I've as much as inspired one more person to be more careful about their environmental, erm, impact, then it's probably worth it' (B-2, 823-826). Another said, 'it sounds silly, but I'm interested in the solar system. I'm interested in the preservation of the Earth' (A-3, 38-39). Many other participants were quick to point out that they knew their sentiments were 'cheesy' (B-manager, 692), 'tree-huggy' (D-3, 378) or 'cliché' (A-8, 202).

These individuals were aware that their statements were out of the ordinary and they addressed this by being explicitly dismissive of the point they were making. Taylor and Carroll (2009) outline the process of 'naturalization' and its role in the reproduction of dominant discourses:

Naturalization effectively promotes acceptance and conformity with prevailing norms on both an individual and societal level. Moreover, the norm provides the grounds not only for distinguishing 'normal' and 'abnormal' individuals and populations, but also for sanctioning intervention into both in order to ensure conformity or bring into conformity, to keep or make normal, and also to effectively eliminate the threat posed by resisting individuals and populations (p.53).

By qualifying 'inappropriate' statements the champions reinforced the normalising effects of the dominant discourse. They distinguished between 'normal' and 'abnormal' motivations for climate-protecting behaviour and in doing so they effectively 'eliminated' any threat that their language may have posed to the 'normal' reasons for acting. The role of the dominant discourse is to keep certain statements in circulation and 'keep those other statements out of circulation' (Mills 2003, p.54). The champions were again constrained by the dominant discourse whilst simultaneously reinforcing it as 'normal' or 'natural'.

6.4.3 Responding to Barriers

In section 6.3., I outlined the various factors that the champions identified as obstacles to climate-protecting behaviour. They talked about lack of time, concern with profit and lifestyle aspirations. Some of these factors were obstacles for the champions themselves as well as those they were trying to influence. I argued that these obstacles reflected a dominant neoliberal discourse.

In this section I will argue that the response to these obstacles is perhaps the most explicit demonstration of the reproduction of dominant reformist discourses. For the purpose of this project, climate discourses have been divided into two 'types': reformist and revolutionary. Thus far, I have argued that reformist discourses were the most prevalent in the interviews and that the champions reproduced these discourses at various sites of interaction. However, the identification of barriers to action is also important because it tells us that the champions had some understanding of the problems associated with encouraging climate protecting behaviour. The

champions acknowledged that the barriers to behaviour change were rooted in a self-interested account of human nature and neoliberal values.

One champion talked about time as a barrier to climate protecting behaviour and I asked why she thought this was the case. She responded: '(sighs)... I suppose the pace of life and the demands on life these days… there's so many demands on people's time people's energies' (A-2, 942-946). However, her response to this barrier was not to slow the pace of modern life or reduce the demands on people's time. Her response was to highlight the individual benefits of climate protecting behaviour:

In most cases you find that if you change something to the benefit of the environment there's usually a saving there… in terms of in somebody's pocket quite often, erm, so the more you can incentivise cos at the end of the day I don't mind why people, what they're... driven by if they make the change because it saves them money well... fine (laughs). I'd rather they did it because it also is the right thing to do and they believed it was the right thing to do but if we can help people make the change by helping save them in their pocket or through other benefits then all the better (A-2, 820-838).

This respondent had identified the problems that can stem from neoliberal values (lack of time, low prioritisation of climate change) and suggested that revolutionary values (doing the 'right thing') would be a better motivation for change. However, she still drew upon neoliberal values (e.g., by promoting co-benefits and economic incentives) to motivate her colleagues.

Similarly, another champion identified time as a barrier to climate-protecting behaviour: 'If we were trying to encourage people to not take a taxi you know to a meeting to either get the bus or to take public transport instead… they would just say "oh it takes too long to get to a meeting a taxi is quicker"' (C-4, 562-567). Again, however, her response to these kinds of problems was not to reduce the 'demandingness' of work. It was to 'show [them] the, the cost savings that they could make… as well as the environmental savings' (C-4, 493-496). Like A-2, this was despite the fact that she had prioritised the environment over cost savings in her discussion with me: 'the importance of the environment in our in our world so the difference that we can make in terms of you know recycling or saving energy erm also the cost erm implications associated with it' (C-4, 221-224).

These champions referred to the problems with reformist motivations and identified what they felt was a 'better' justification for climate-protecting behaviour.

However, they continued to reinforce the dominant climate discourses. They responded to the reported barriers by re-directing neoliberal values (e.g., self-interest) towards climate protecting behaviour (a reformist approach) rather than challenging the underlying problems with the neoliberal system (a revolutionary approach).

6.5 Subverting Dominant Discourses

Many of the champions appeared to reinforce the dominant reformist discourses. However, in this section I will argue that there was some limited evidence of subversion. Caldwell (2007) claims that 'ultimately, all discourses begin to unravel once we begin to question claims of self-certainty, truth, power or knowledge' (p.776). When the champions talked about their own motivations they drew upon the components of revolutionary discourses. They also argued that the self-interested motivations of some champions had led to high attrition levels and internal tensions within the climate champion network. In these ways the champions began to question any 'self-certainty' or 'truth' about the most 'appropriate' motivations for climate-protecting behaviour.

6.5.1 Acknowledging Alternative Motivations

When I asked the champions about their personal motivations for action almost all of them drew upon revolutionary climate discourses. They talked about their responsibility to future generations and the preservation of the planet. Some of them identified the unequal distribution of the impacts of climate change and talked about justice and fairness. In addition, many of the champions felt some sense of duty to tackle climate change. They wanted to 'do the right thing' (E-manager, 403-404; A-2, 662-663). These motivations were contrary to the dominant discourses. By simply acknowledging revolutionary values and accounts of human nature, the champions were challenging the dominance of reformism.

In section 6.4.2., I explained that, for some champions, the appeal to revolutionary values was a source of embarrassment. Participants were concerned that they sounded 'silly' or 'cheesy'. However, many champions did not qualify their motivations. They were proud of their commitment to climate-protecting actions. One champion talked enthusiastically about her involvement in the project: 'I couldn't have, I couldn't have not volunteered for it (laughs), er, because that's me and that's

what I'm about so to have not volunteered I wouldn't have been true to what I believe in' (A-2, 665-668). Other champions claimed that their commitment to preserving the planet had been part of their values from a young age (B-4, 451-452; C-8, 202-203).

In addition, in the context of the champions' own values, these revolutionary ideas were frequently given priority over more self-interested concerns. For most of champions that I interviewed self-interest was either not a consideration or it was at the bottom of a long list of motivations for climate-protecting behaviour. For example, champions who did talk about promotion were keen to construct it as an afterthought to more altruistic reasons. One champion said, 'this was really, really well down the list but a way of maybe raising my own profile' (C-2, 23-25). Another participant offered two reasons for his involvement:

I am passionate about the environment, erm, and my second reason would be because... I knew that there'd be a lot of people on the [project] where if I got my face noticed I might be able to move up in the company' (A-3, 360-363).

These individuals admitted that professional development was a consideration but it was not the principal reason for action.

I would therefore argue that the champions did demonstrate the capacity for subversive agency, but that this was very limited. Taylor and Carroll (2009) argue that, 'refusing to simply accept what is presented as natural, necessary, and normal… presents possibilities for engaging in and expanding the practice of freedom' (p.46). The champions did acknowledge values such as responsibility and present a more altruistic account of human nature. To some extent, they did refuse to accept a completely self-interested account of human nature as 'natural, necessary and normal'; they chose to draw on more revolutionary components when talking about their own motivations. However, these sentiments were limited to the context of the interview. The champions told me that they cared about developing countries and the natural world, but they did not convey these revolutionary values or accounts of human nature to their colleagues, friends or family. The champions therefore demonstrated the capacity for subversion, but engaged in a very limited form of resistance.

6.5.2 *The Problem with Self-Interest*

When the champions encouraged climate-protecting behaviour in others they frequently did this by outlining the co-benefits that were attached to this behaviour. Companies could make a profit through 'green' products. Individuals could improve their health by cycling to work or save money by turning their heating down. The champions mainly drew upon components of reformist discourses to encourage behaviour change and, as I argued in 6.4.1, this suggested that they were reinforcing the dominant discourse. In many ways, the climate champion project had been promoted on the same basis. There were personal benefits to be gained from involvement in the network. Indeed, one manager told me that he had explicitly highlighted the potential for professional development when he initially advertised the role:

The employees, what do they get out of it? How can we, you know, not just make this about climate change and um, you know, really kind of emphasise these, these transferable skills and for us that's also been the selling point and we haven't just banged on about do something for climate change (B-manager, 300-306).

Some of the champions had acknowledged that this was as selling point for them personally but many of them were critical of this kind of motivation. Several participants claimed that selfish motivations amongst the champions had led to high attrition levels and internal tensions.

One champion explained her frustration with colleagues who had signed up for the programme, but then had done nothing:

You think right great I've got these people… you know, involved and they're enthusiastic and then for whatever reason they just don't do anything and that's kind of, you wonder whether they volunteered just to get time off time off the phone (A-2, 538-546).

Champions in the focus group were equally cynical about people who had volunteered to advance their career:

I think some people like D-4 said joined because there was you know personal objectives to try and do something above and beyond your own your normal business as usual role and then when you tried to get them to give up their lunch hour or to actually go a little bit further and commit a bit more it's been like 'oh no I've got to do this' and they don't show up (D-3, 460-469).

The champions felt that motivations based on career advancement or time away from a monotonous day job had led to a lack of commitment from many volunteers.

Similarly, the participants talked about internal tensions amongst champions who were keen to be credited with the success of particular projects. If an individual had implemented climate-protecting practices outside of their assigned remit, they were 'accused of stepping on people's toes' (C-8, 168-169). These internal problems with the network and high attrition levels were explicitly linked to the self-interested motivations of certain volunteers. The fact that the champions made this connection does imply some further subversion of dominant discourses. The champions were questioning the 'naturalness' of co-benefits and career advancement as motivations for climate-protecting behaviour.

The champions drew upon the components of revolutionary discourses to justify their own involvement in the project *and* they highlighted the problems that they felt had stemmed from more reformist justifications for involvement. The champions undermined the 'tyranny of common sense' (Downing 2008, p.10) by stopping to think about the consequences of self-interested motivations. Indeed, Dobson and Saiz (2005) argue that part of what it might mean to be an environmental citizen is to examine the effects of self-interested behaviour on the common good objective of sustainable development (p.158). The participants challenged the dominant discourses by acting as environmental (or democratic) citizens.

Again, however, we have to question whether this was a significant challenge to the dominant discourses. Despite the identified problems with using co-benefits as a motivation, the champions still continued to do this with the people they were trying to influence. This inconsistency was also made explicit in my discussion of how the champions had responded to barriers to climate-protecting behaviour. They had identified problems with self-interest but then used self-interest to encourage change. Thus, the champions were willing to challenge the dominant climate discourses at some sites of interaction but, in other cases, they continued to reinforce them. This might suggest a rather limited capacity for resistance.

6.6 Conclusion

All of the participants in the study were asked questions about motivations: How do you encourage behaviour change in other people? Why do you engage in

climate protecting behaviour? Why did you take on the role of climate champion? In this chapter I began by identifying the climate discourses that the champions drew upon when they talked about motivations. I argued that the champions used reformist values and a reformist account of human nature when they encouraged others to engage in climate-protecting behaviour. They mostly focused on the co-benefits of action, such as saving money.

I then considered the champions' personal motivations for action. I argued that, in this context, the champions drew upon the components of more revolutionary discourses. They talked about justice, responsibility and concern for the natural world. There were some examples where the account of human nature appeared to be completely altruistic, for example when the champions talked about the effect of climate change in developing countries. However, the components of revolutionary discourses were often combined with somewhat self-interested motivations. For example, the champions were concerned for the natural world but they did talk about the pleasure they gained from walking in the countryside. They wanted to preserve the planet for future generations but they often constructed this in terms of 'my family'. Champions therefore introduced more revolutionary discourses when they talked about their own motivations, but this was combined with some reformist components.

In section 6.3, I considered the reported barriers to climate-protecting behaviour. I argued that neoliberalism plays a significant role in constructing barriers to action. For example, the champions talked about problems associated with lack of time and the prioritisation of other concerns above the climate. This indicates the dominance of neoliberalism more generally and suggests that, despite the attempt in reformist discourses to reconcile environment and economy, there was still tension between neoliberal and environmental values.

In the second half of the chapter I considered the role of the champions as 'passive subjects' (reinforcing dominant discourses) or 'active agents' (challenging dominant discourses). I argued that the champions were simultaneously reproducing the discourses by which they were constrained. The project applies a critical approach to the relationship between 'micro' events (including verbal events) and 'macro' structures 'which see the latter as both the conditions for and the products of the former' (Fairclough 1985, p.739). In the first instance the champions reinforced the

dominance of reformism simply by drawing on the components of reformist discourses. They used reformist ideas and therefore constructed them as the 'normal' way to think about climate change. They also presented these ideas in a way that was appropriate to neoliberal values. They provided information rather than 'preaching' to managers and colleagues. In this way the champions acted as 'passive subjects'.

In the final section I argued that there was some limited evidence of subversion. The champions drew on many revolutionary ideas when they talked about the reasons that they personally engaged in climate-protecting behaviour. They also acknowledged some of the problems with self-interest as a motivation. However, it is questionable whether either of these examples counts as genuine resistance. Although the champions talked about revolutionary motivations, they often qualified these sentiments as 'cheesy' or 'silly' and they did not use them to motivate other people. In addition, although they commented on the problems associated with self-interest, the champions continued to use self-interest as a way to encourage behaviour change. They talked about the co-benefits of action on climate change, such as saving money. I would argue that the use of alternative motivations does indicate a limited degree of resistance to dominant discourses. The champions did fulfil the role of 'active agent' to some extent. However, the use of revolutionary discourses appeared to be limited to certain contexts (the interview itself) and revolutionary ideas were consistently constrained by reformist conceptions of 'appropriate' language and behaviour. The capacity for resistance did not appear to be significant and reformist discourses played a very dominant role throughout the interviews.

Chapter 7

Acting on Climate Change

According to Alexander et al (2005) a 'champion' is successful if he can 'persuade others to do particular things (reduce energy consumption) through defined actions (replace high energy light bulbs) usually with measurable outcomes (electricity bill goes down)' (p.27). Chapter six outlined the motivations that were used to foster behaviour change. I looked at the arguments that the champions made to 'persuade' others to act. In this chapter I will investigate the specific actions that were being advocated. I have analysed *how* the champions were encouraging action. I will now focus on *what* actions were being encouraged. Analysis of these actions will offer further insight into the role of dominant and subversive climate discourses.

Carabine (2001) contends that dominant discourses 'convey messages about what is appropriate behaviour' (p.273). All of the participants in the study were clear about the kinds of actions they were willing to promote and those that they were not. I will argue that discourses of reform played the more dominant role in this construction. The most popular actions drew on components of reformist discourses. The champions encouraged easy, individualistic actions such as recycling (drawing on a discourse of individualism) and they talked about the importance of 'green' technology (drawing on a discourse of ecological modernisation). They also talked about offsetting emissions that could not be reduced (drawing on a discourse of privatisation). Most champions rejected the possibility of fundamental social change and claimed that an alternative lifestyle would require going 'backwards' in terms of progress.

However, discourses of revolution were also evident at times in the champions' accounts. These became apparent in response to questions about climate change more generally: What should we do to tackle the problem? Whose responsibility is it to deal with climate change and what is required? The champions talked about a more active role for the state and the importance of collective action. However, these revolutionary components were often combined with reformist ideas.

For example, the state should provide subsidies so that people could participate in the market and purchase 'green' products. In addition, reformist ideas were reinforced through the rejection of traditional (revolutionary) environmentalism and the construction of successful actions. In sum, there was some resistance to dominant reformist discourses but this was very limited.

In section 7.1 I will begin the chapter by looking at 'appropriate' actions. Specifically, I will consider the nature of the climate champion 'project' and the actions that the champions promoted in the workplace. I will argue that champions drew on the components of reformist discourses in this context. There was some reference to revolutionary discourses but these played a marginal role in the accounts. In section 7.2 I will then look at 'inappropriate' actions. There were certain actions that the champions would not engage in themselves nor promote to other people. It was generally revolutionary ideas that were constructed as 'inappropriate'.

Section 7.3 will then consider the wider conditions for action. I will discuss the proposed role for business, the state and 'the people' in facilitating climate-protecting behaviour. I will argue that, in this context, the champions drew on components of both reformist and revolutionary discourses. Often they combined components from different discourses.

Finally, in sections 7.4 and 7.5, I will analyse the reinforcement and subversion of dominant climate discourses. I will argue that the analysis of actions reveals similar patterns to the previous analysis of motivations (in chapter six). Champions both reinforced and challenged dominant discourses at different sites of interaction. However, resistance was often constrained by dominant reformist ideas. For example, the champions talked about changing the way we live, but they drew upon a reformist account of social change. They constructed themselves as environmental, but rejected the revolutionary construction of the 'traditional' environmentalist. So, resistance to dominant discourses was therefore very limited with respect to climate-protecting actions as well as motivations.

7.1 Identifying Climate Discourses IV: 'Appropriate' Action in the Workplace

In this section, I will begin by discussing the nature of the climate champion 'project'. In most cases the project was expected to run for a set amount of time and encourage small changes that did not affect the overall structure of the business. I will

then analyse specific 'appropriate' actions in the following three areas: waste; energy; and transport. I will argue that the majority of the champions shared similar ideas about what could and should be done in these contexts. Most of the accounts reflected reformist climate discourses but the champions did draw on components of revolutionary discourses to a limited extent. Towards the end of the section, I will analyse the connection between motivations and action. I will argue that most of the 'appropriate' actions were a response to the perceived barriers to climate-protecting behaviour.

7.1.1   The Climate Champion 'Project'

In all four companies, the climate champion scheme was seen as a self-contained 'project', which was intended to run for a fixed period and had specific objectives. Global Action Plan (GAP) was used by three out of the four companies. GAP offers a fixed term programme for behaviour change. Champions were expected to take an audit of areas such as waste and energy use and then spend a month promoting good practice in each area. A second audit was taken at the end to determine the success of the various initiatives. The general aim was to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions over a set period of time.

The services of Global Action Plan were not employed by Business B. However, a similar model was used for the project. The champions were sent on a training course where they learned about the science of climate change and the delivery of behaviour change. Upon their return they were expected to implement climate friendly practices in the workplace. They were only asked to retain the role for a year. One champion said, 'they [the company] expect you to be... actually doing it for the, for a twelve month period' (B-8, 410-411). Another reported that, as far as they were aware, 'it only lasted for the one year' (B-2, 39). Champions in the other companies reported similar patterns. One participant said, 'we did loads of stuff, loads of campaigns for six months and then nothing else, you know' (A-1, 286-287). Other champions contended that the project had carried on past the designated 'end' point (the second audit), but admitted that this was not a continuous process. The momentum 'picked up again and then it died off again' (A-5, 207). In another company it started to progressively 'tail off' (C-9, 718).

The climate champion scheme was very clearly defined as a 'project'. It had a beginning, an end and a clear set of objectives. The very nature of the scheme indicates a strong neoliberal influence. Climate change was an issue that must be addressed but it did not necessitate long-term or structural change. According to reformist accounts of social change, environmental problems should be addressed through incremental, short-term measures. Curran (2009) claims that the discourse of ecological modernisation (EM) dismisses 'radical environmentalism's demands for overhaul of the market' (p.203). Rather, EM addresses environmental issues 'without introducing the need for fundamental structural change' (Young 2000, p.20). The establishment of the climate champion scheme fits in well with this account of social change. The champions did encourage climate-protecting behaviour but their actions were not intended to alter any of the established business practices. The structure of the project therefore set a precedent for the kinds of actions that the champions were willing to promote.

7.1.2 Waste

The recycling of waste was the most frequently reported action for the workplace and at home. Many of the champions had introduced recycling facilities at work (A-1, 76-77; B-4, 105-106; C-1, 172) or spent time promoting the correct separation of waste materials (A-2, 306-308; D-1, 454-455). In the majority of cases recycling was promoted in an office environment. However, champions had also implemented this practice in more unusual settings. One company employed engineers who spent most of their day driving between assigned jobs. The champions had therefore introduced the use of 'hippo bags'. These can be used on sites and in cars or vans to store recyclable material which is collected and later sorted.

In addition, recycling was often at the top of the list when I asked participants about the climate-protecting behaviour they engaged in at home. One champion responded by saying 'erm... gosh, er, where do I start, erm, I recycle as much as I can...' (B-7, 269-270). Another explained that 'we've always recycled as a family' (C-8, 203). In fact, recycling was the first climate-protecting action to be mentioned in almost every interview.

Reducing waste was another action that was encouraged in the workplace. Champions talked about saving water (B-5, 516-517; C-2, 114-115), reducing the

amount of paper used (A-2, 245; A-7, 130; B-2, 10) and trying to cut down on packaging (A-1, 1119-1121; C-8, 663-663). Some participants had also encouraged the use of mugs instead of plastic cups in the office (A-10, 221-222; B-6, 126-127; C-5, 37-38). The practice of reducing waste was mentioned less frequently than recycling, but it was considered 'appropriate'.

The promotion of recycling and reducing waste materials is mainly situated in a discourse of individualism. This discourse concentrates on the role of individuals in tackling climate change. A person can undertake actions such as recycling waste or printing on both sides of the paper without the need for collaboration or collective effort. Indeed, Maniates (2001) claims that 'recycling is a prime example of the individualization of responsibility' (p.37).

In addition, these actions are relatively straightforward. One champion talked about the ease of recycling in the office. She said 'if you're standing next to two bins then it's no additional effort to put it in the right bin' (C-10, 599-600). The same was true for the hippo bags scheme. All recyclable waste was placed in the bags and the company who provide them 'basically recycle our waste' (A-5, 111-112). This involved no extra effort for the people who used the bags. The encouragement of small, easy and incremental actions is reflective of an individualistic account of social change: 'individuals and communities might make significant carbon reductions by taking small everyday actions, which add up to make a big difference' (Reynolds 2010, p.41).

This also reflects a reformist account of social change more generally. In discourses of EM, individualism and privatisation the account of social change is based on 'tweaking' (making small changes) to the current system. There was no call for fundamental changes to everyday business practices or the lifestyle of individuals. For example, the employees were encouraged to reduce paper by printing double sided and to recycle the documents that they had printed. However, champions did not challenge the bureaucratic procedures that generated the need for so much paper in the first place. Nor did champions challenge the basis of our 'throwaway' society. Smart (2010) argues that 'in a modern consumer society things are not meant to last, because each tomorrow will deliver new models and new goods' (p.85). Some of the champions did comment on the wasteful nature of modern society. One champion said 'we're just living like now much more wasteful than we did like 50 years ago'

(C-5, 523-525). Another commented: 'I just hate waste. I, I hate walking around and seeing people wasting things all over the place' (B-2, 317-318). However, their response to this problem was to ensure that they recycled. Participants did talk about reducing waste, but this action was a lot less prevalent. In addition, the reduction of waste in the accounts mostly referred to paper or plastic cups in the office. It did not challenge modern consumerist society in general.

7.1.3 Energy

Saving energy in the office was also a top priority for the champions. It was commonplace for the champions themselves to turn off appliances that used energy. They frequently acknowledged the importance of switching off computers and monitors (A2, 132; A4, 94; B4, 1030; C4, 525-526) and turning off lights (A6, 158; B6, 116-117). These practices were extended into the home lives of participants. One manager was proud to report: 'when I'm not home everything's off' (G-manager, 1149-1150). Another said, 'at home I'm forever turning lights off and drawing curtains' (H-manager, 507-508). Champions encouraged their colleagues to engage in the same kinds of behaviour at home. They talked about the benefits of 'loft insulation, cavity wall insulation' (C-1, 200) as well as 'low energy lights bulbs' (B-5, 230-231). In this way, the area of energy reflected similar themes to that of waste. A lot of the focus was on small, individual actions that people could undertake in the workplace and at home. Responsibility for action was placed upon individuals as the key agents. Scerri (2009) considers a discourse of individualism and argues that:

In the place of engaging in a regulating body-politic, individual citizens are called upon to take initiatives and shoulder responsibilities themselves... the ethico-political consequences of personal actions are effectively subsumed by demands that citizens exercise self-interest as green consumers (p.477).

Individualism was also reflected in the way the champions delivered this message. The majority of them provided information about saving energy in the hope that their colleagues would 'choose' to engage in climate-protecting behaviour. Often champions would 'give a fact about energy saving' (A-3, 140-141) or 'comparisons to like energy savings' such as 'how many balloons you could blow up with the amount of energy saved' (A-2, 844-846). One champion had encouraged colleagues to switch off monitors by explaining 'how much energy it wasted over the course of a

week' (C-10, 726). Knowledge is a key value in a discourse of individualism and the champions felt this was the most effective way to encourage behaviour change. The champions believed that by providing information about climate change they might encourage people to 'choose' climate-friendly lifestyles. In addition, the practice of providing information was the most 'appropriate' way to deliver the message. This also indicates a dominant neoliberal discourse.

Other reformist discourses were also evident in the discussion of 'appropriate' actions. Champions talked about energy efficient technology and the possibility of offsetting the emissions that were generated through energy use. The implementation of energy efficient technology might suggest components of ecological modernisation. EM 'identifies modern science and technology as central institutions for ecological reform' (Mol 1996, p.313). Indeed, Curran (2009) contends that technological development sits at the 'heart' of ecological modernisation (p.203). Thus, the key agents in this discourse include technological and managerial experts as well as business and industry (Pepper 1999). The responsibility for action on climate change is directed towards these actors.

Many businesses had implemented energy efficient technology in the workplace and this type of action was particularly popular in Business C. The champions described 'environmentally friendly lighting sensors' (C-3, 32) as well as 'energy efficient lighting and heating and that kind of thing' (C-4, 38-41). Another champion had introduced the use of a "bye bye stand-by" tool. She explained that the champions 'plugged all the monitors into those and then at the end of the day each area can be controlled by the remote. Rather than constantly battling with people to turn off their monitors we just literally switch them off' (C-7, 115-118).

Finally, some participants talked about the potential for 'offsetting' emissions that could not be reduced. One champion described how he had been involved in 'piloting a carbon neutral project' (C-6, 96). The intention was to calculate all of the carbon emissions associated with the project (including energy use) and offset these by paying for trees to be planted in a managed forest. Another champion explained that the business itself was carbon neutral and therefore 'whatever we create carbon wise we offset with something else' (B-2, 23-24). In the latter example, energy use was by far the greatest contributory factor to the overall emissions of the business. This environmental impact was addressed through the

purchase of 'carbon offsets' (CSR Report, Business B). The champions who talked about offsetting introduced a discourse of privatisation. We can 'off-set' our carbon emissions by investing in climate-protecting projects. In this way the market plays a prominent role in the commodification of emissions. The atmosphere is protected because it is valued as a commodity. We can buy carbon 'credits' to off-set the pollution that we have caused. Indeed, 'by 2008 there were about 80 carbon investment funds set up to finance offset projects or buy carbon credits' (Lohmann 2010, p.87-88).

When they promoted climate-protecting behaviour in the context of energy the champions drew upon the components of all three reformist discourses. Individuals were expected to take the majority of responsibility for action but there was some emphasis on the role of business and technology to provide the 'energy-efficient, ''carbon neutral,'' non-toxic products' for them to buy (Charman 2008, p.31). Where energy uses could not be reduced, companies and individuals had purchased carbon credits in an attempt to off-set the impact that they were having on the planet.

7.1.4 Transport

The area of transport also reflected several different climate discourses and some of the champions did draw on revolutionary as well as reformist components. In all four businesses, champions had 'run a few campaigns around travel... particularly about cycling and walking to work rather than driving' (C-4, 48-50). They had also encouraged the use of public transport. On the one hand, these actions are small, individualistic and relatively straightforward. They appear to reflect a climate discourse of individualism where one would choose to 'ride a bike rather than drive a car' (Maniates 2001, p.35). Employees could choose to take part in a cycle to work initiative in their capacity as self-interested rational consumers.

On the other hand, these actions might be seen as incorporating some components of more revolutionary discourses. The common feature of all four revolutionary climate discourses of is a focus on fundamental change. Driving to work is a 'socially acceptable way of behaving' (Lorenzoni *et al* 2007, p.453). By suggesting that people should not drive, the champions were challenging a societal norm. They appeared to be promoting quite a revolutionary account of social change.

Moreover, they seemed to be encouraging their colleagues to act as citizens rather than consumers. Individuals were encouraged to leave their car at home and walk, cycle or take the bus to work. Slocum (2004a) argues that 'citizens can rewrite the passive consumer script by asserting themselves as activist consumers who bike to work rather than buying more gasoline' (p.779). Activist consumers still exercise their freedom of choice through the market but sometimes the decision is to not buy. This construction of the role of key agents might suggest the influence of a democratic citizenship discourse, where individuals play a more active role in tackling climate-related problems. Indeed, the potential role of individuals as consumers-citizens has been widely acknowledged in the literature (Parker 1999; Slocum 2004a; Seyfang 2005).

However, I would contend that the 'appropriate' actions in the context of transport were actually more reflective of reformist climate discourses. The structure of these travel campaigns was very similar to the structure of the climate champion project more generally. The champions had implemented 'cycle to work days' (B-5, 394) or a 'pedometer challenge' (C-4, 65-66). Colleagues were not asked to cycle or walk to work every day; they were not expected to fundamentally change an established behaviour. This was true in the majority of cases. The short-term nature of the campaigns also undermines the role of these individuals as active citizens. Employees that cycled to work did not purchase petrol during that particular week, but this was a temporary measure. When the campaign ended, they resumed both their previous commuting habits and their normal role as passive consumers.

Furthermore, the transport based actions that were encouraged on a daily basis were far less revolutionary in nature. Employees were not asked to give up their cars. Instead, the emphasis was on ways to drive more efficiently. Champions talked about removing excess weight from cars and vans (A-3, 144-145; A-10, 635-637) and checking the pressure of tyres (A-5, 80-81). Colleagues were asked to make small, straightforward alterations to their daily driving habits, but they were not expected to change the 'normal' way they travelled to and from work. Champions also talked about the importance of purchasing the right kind of car. They drove 'a really small diesel' (C-6, 822-823) and they felt that 4x4 vehicles 'just don't need to be in this country' (B-4, 813-814). Several champions had considered the purchase of a more energy efficient or electric car (C-2, 581-582; C-5, 565-566). Again, consumers are 'part of a politics of ethical self-formation that encourages individual responsibility

for choices' (Slocum 2004a, p.767). The champions were concerned that they made the right choice for the climate but the decision was about which product to purchase rather than whether or not to drive at all.

In the context of travel, the majority of 'appropriate' actions were focused on the daily commute. However, some of the champions did talk about the environmental impact of flying. Technological innovation was important in this context because teleconferencing was a frequently cited alternative to flying:

We're also looking at ways we can use technology better. So, erm, for example, we just got tele-presence installed in our office in [Location X]... erm, to try and cut down on the number of people who travel back and forth between [Location X] and [Location Y] or [Location X] and [Location Z] (C-4, 257-264).

Another champion reported that 'video conferencing has become a really big thing and, erm, [Business C] promoted that, erm, er, rather than people travelling they really sort of clamped down' (C-6, 310-313). The focus on technology again suggests the influence of an EM discourse, where technological experts are responsible for providing 'solutions' to environmental problems.

However, the promotion of this particular action also provides further insight into 'appropriate' (and 'inappropriate') accounts of social change. If the problem is excessive flying, one possible response to this might be to reduce the geographical reach of the business. For example, a discourse of sufficiency might promote localised trade and business dealings. This would reduce the need for travel in the first place. In this discourse, progress would not be dependent on growth and globalisation. Rather, 'regional economic integration' would be the basis of a stable society (Barkin 2003, p.8). This was not a consideration for the champions. In large corporations, growth and globalisation are the definition of progress. Teleconferencing was the only viable alternative to flying because meetings had to go ahead. The values of reformism were paramount in any consideration of social change. Overall, the area of transport was heavily influenced by reformist climate discourses.

7.1.5 Summary

In this section, I have argued that 'appropriate' climate-protecting actions are mainly rooted in climate discourses of reform. When the champions encouraged behaviour change in their colleagues, friends and family, they promoted low-cost, quick and straightforward actions. The emphasis for nearly all of the champions was on 'easy things' (A-1, 624), 'straightforward things' (D-manager, 242), 'small differences' (A-5, 455), 'a small change' (B-3, 454), 'small steps' (C-5, 34), 'baby steps' (H-manager, 253), and 'quick wins' (B-6, 784). It is likely that these changes were influenced by the nature of the project itself. I suggested that there was some evidence of revolutionary discourses (e.g., an active consumer-citizen role) but I argued that the construction of the 'consumer-citizen' was mainly situated in a discourse of individualism.

In chapter six I argued that the construction of 'appropriate' motivations was a response to neoliberal barriers to climate-protecting behaviour. If self-interest was a problem then we should use self-interested motivations to promote behaviour change (e.g., by highlighting the co-benefits of action). The same point can be made in the context of 'appropriate' actions. If people do not have time to engage in climate-protecting behaviour (a specific barrier) then we must make climate-protecting behaviour quick and easy to engage in (a reformist approach).

7.2 Identifying Climate Discourses V: Changing the Way We Live?

The champions had encouraged and successfully implemented some climate-protecting actions at work and at home. However, there were many other actions that they had not promoted. Revolutionary changes such as giving up cars or moving away from a carbon intensive lifestyle were not mentioned when I asked about the success of the champions and the types of actions they had encouraged. During the course of the interview, I proceeded to enquire about these more 'fundamental' changes. Many champions confirmed that these were not 'appropriate' suggestions for them to make to other people. However, some individuals were prepared to consider the need for more revolutionary action. In this section I will analyse more revolutionary actions under three sub-headings: fundamental change; going 'backwards'; and doing something a bit different.

7.2.1 Fundamental Change: Challenging the Status Quo

The majority of actions that were considered 'inappropriate' required a fundamental change to lifestyles. One of the most notable examples was the suggestion that we should avoid driving. One champion said, 'we have a love affair with our cars. You ask someone to get out of their car they're going to shake their head' (A-4, 307-309). Another claimed that, 'we are so dependent on cars in this country… you cannot tell people not to use their cars, it's, it's almost impossible' (B-1, 698-700). In addition, many of the participants owned a car and used it on a regular basis. One champion was very emphatic about this: 'I really like my car, I want to keep using my car, I want to keep using a car' (A-1, 850-851). Similar sentiments were expressed in response to the suggestion that we might consider reducing our air miles. One champion said that he would not criticise his friends for flying abroad because 'everyone's going to go on holiday, aren't they' (A-3, 420-421)?

The reluctance to promote and engage in these particular actions was rooted in the fact that driving and flying were considered to be an integral part of modern society. Driving and flying were thought to be 'fundamental things' (C-5, 579) that would 'incur lifestyle change' if we were to stop doing them (C-10, 987-988). The champions did not consider promoting these kinds of actions in the workplace or amongst friends and family. They did suggest that people could cycle or walk to work, but this was time limited; they did not advocate that people stop driving altogether. In some cases, the champions did suggest teleconferencing as a substitute for flying to a meeting. However, in many circumstance, flying was thought to be unavoidable. One champion explained that the company's head office was located at the other side of the country and sometimes they 'do have to fly up there' (A-9, 109).

The problems associated with fundamental change are well documented in the literature. Dietz *et al* (2007) report that willingness to address climate change 'appears to decrease with the difficulty or cost of the proposed action' (p.186). Similarly, Lorenzoni *et al* (2007) argue that 'a significant barrier perceived to taking action on climate change concerned the prospect of having to change one's lifestyle' (p.453). Fundamental change appears to be a significant barrier to climate-protecting behaviour. However, it can also be argued that the construction of fundamental change as 'inappropriate' is rooted in the dominance of reformist climate discourses.

We can and must address climate change within the current neoliberal system:

Other than amongst deep greens, there is a recognition that any future shift in society and the way in which the economy is organised is unlikely to involve radical change, at least in the short- to medium-term. Over this time scale, market mechanisms will remain dominant and perhaps the best that can be expected is a gradual shift towards a more sustainable future (Gibbs 2000, p.11).

Any account of social change should be progressive and based on technological innovation (in a discourse of EM) or 'green' consumerism (in a discourse of individualism).

In many ways, it is not surprising that fundamental change should be constructed as 'inappropriate'. The 'appropriate' actions that were detailed above, involve small, incremental changes. It therefore makes sense that big, systemic changes would be considered 'inappropriate'. In fact, many of the participants specifically noted this distinction. One champion said, 'I have big tellies, I have lots of light bulbs, but if I can put energy saving light bulbs in… maybe that makes a small difference' (A-5, 317-321). Another champion reflected on the relative ease of encouraging different types of actions:

So you could say never flying again that would make a massive impact if loads and loads of people did that but actually having people who are willing to give up their one week in the sunshine a year which is what they work for all year and what they look forward to, I think trying to influence people to change that behaviour is a lot harder than saying… put energy saving light bulbs in (D-3, 562-569).

The champions were willing to engage in small, easy changes such as fitting energy efficient light bulbs and they were happy to promote this action to others. They were less inclined to undertake behaviour change that would affect their current lifestyle. Consequently, they were very reluctant to promote this kind of change to those around them. Indeed, D-3 said 'if I'm not willing to do something myself there's no way I'm going to try and influence anybody else not to' (915-916).

In addition, bigger changes such as not flying or reducing consumption are less likely to entail co-benefits in the same way as the smaller actions. Not flying abroad on holiday may save money for an individual, but they also sacrifice 'their one week in the sunshine a year' (D-3, 566). The person who does not purchase a plasma screen television may benefit financially, but they lose the viewing quality of an expensive television and the 'status' that is attached to products such as electronic

goods (Lorenzoni *et al* 2007, p.453). Systemic change not only challenges the importance of key reformist values (progress, consumption, growth), it also rejects a reformist account of human nature. For example, in a discourse of ecological modernisation the relationship between the environment and the economy is constructed as 'win-win': 'pollution prevention pays' (Hajer 1995, p.3). The protection of the climate does not occur at the expense of business or individual interests. However, fundamental change is less likely to provide this win-win scenario. There are few extra incentives beyond the primary goal of protecting the climate and therefore fundamental actions are often constructed as involving a 'sacrifice'.

Again, it is not surprising that the champions were reluctant to promote these actions to other people. The motivations that they drew upon to encourage behaviour change were rooted in self-interest and a positive sum-relationship between profit and climate protection. Consequently, they were reluctant to encourage actions that were in direct opposition to these messages. What is, perhaps, more surprising is that the champions themselves rejected these fundamental actions. The vast majority of the champions drew upon revolutionary discourses when they talked about their own motivations for action. Therefore, we might expect that the champions themselves would be more willing to engage in actions that did involve some level of 'sacrifice'. This was rarely the case and it might cast some doubt on the sincerity of the champions when they talked about their motivations for action.

7.2.2 Going 'Backwards'

A related set of 'inappropriate' actions were those that were thought to involve going 'backwards' in terms of progress or development. A reformist account of social change is rooted in progress, based on the values of growth, accumulation and profit. Pepper (1999) argues that a neoliberal definition of progress 'primarily consist[s] of indefinitely increasing material consumption' (p.28). People should consume as a means to 'improve' their lifestyle (Redclift 1995, p.11). Discourses of sufficiency, which focus on alternative values (e.g., quality of life, localisation, MDP[30]), were therefore rejected by many of the champions.

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[30] Measure of domestic progress: An indicator which 'redefines "progress" and "wealth" and creates new national accounting mechanisms to reflect well-being' (Seyfang 2005, p.299).

Champions found it difficult to accept any notion of change that could not be reconciled with a reformist definition of progress. One champion said 'we're not going to go back to just living on small little farms growing our own vegetables' (C-5, 557-559). Another champion considered the possibility of reduced packaging:

I just think either you get rid of the packaging totally and you go back to sort of I don't know sort of like well like the 1940s (laughs) I was going to say, erm, you know where brown paper packaging or whatever or, erm, you know you find a way to recycle things (B-4, 749-756).

These champions found it difficult to envisage a society that was not based on mass production and consumption. A more localised approach to living is a challenging idea given the global reach of products and services in the modern world. In a neoliberal society, individuals are encouraged to aspire towards growth and accumulation; an 'appropriate' account of social change should fit with these values. This leads to the suggestion by the second champion that we ensure packaging can be recycled once we have consumed the products it contains. Similar sentiments were expressed by one of the managers who said that he was 'not predicting for one moment that because of climate change we have to all go back to living in caves' (F-manager, 704-705).

The consistent feature in all three of these examples is the rejection of the idea that we 'go back' to practices that were common in the past. All three participants imply that this would be a form of regression. We have reached a particular point in our development and it would be unreasonable to go 'backwards'. Soper (2008) acknowledges that this is a common criticism of sufficiency discourses:

It is also necessary to counter the charges of regression and ascetism that have so regularly been charged against the green and new consumption movements by those who fear their form of 'progress'. For the idea that these 'want to take us back to the Stone Age' not only fails to recognize the avant-garde quality of the green agenda, it also overlooks the more puritan and ugly aspects of a work-driven and materially encumbered existence. (p.578).

Advocates of sufficiency and localisation contend that this is an altogether better way to live. Indeed, Seyfang (2005) points out that 'while GDP has increased rapidly since 1950, MDP has barely grown at all' (p.299). Being richer has not necessarily made us happier.

Most participants in the study rejected the sufficiency discourse. In the context of travel, the idea of going back to the way we used to live was found to be quite amusing. One champion said, 'I think our society could carry on you know in the same way if people didn't fly. Yeah Blackpool would probably get more crowded at this time of year (laughs)' (C-9, 1052-1054). Another said 'erm, you know, you can go on holiday to anywhere in the world. Whereas probably before then it was like Blackpool or wherever it was (laughs), I suppose' (B-4, 984-985). We can now holiday anywhere in the world. Why would we settle for anything less?

However, there were some champions who were willing to consider a 'smaller', more localised lifestyle. One champion said 'So, I would support any sort of more community living in a way, I suppose it's eat local, stay local, travel local... live a smaller life not quite... so orientated towards er, erm, erm, consumerism etc.' (A-7, 510-516). This champion drew on key values of a sufficiency discourse, such as community and rejected reformist values such as growth and consumerism. However, most of the champions rejected this discourse. They could not imagine progress without growth and they were not prepared to live a 'smaller' life.

7.2.3 Doing Something a Bit Different

In the majority of cases, the suggestion that we should change the way we live was not well received by the participants. However, there were some examples of revolutionary actions that were promoted by the champions and accepted by their colleagues. In this section I will consider two actions that were reflective of revolutionary discourses. Both examples are taken from Business A.

In one of the offices, many members of staff bought their lunch from a local cafe where the food was sold in polystyrene boxes. These could not be recycled and the champions therefore tried to introduce the use of Tupperware dishes. Employees were encouraged to take their own container to the cafe instead of bringing back the non-recyclable box and putting it in the general waste. However, as one champion explained, the response to this was not positive:

We thought why don't we try it and maybe, maybe it's not that complicated, but the reaction you have from people is 'that's far too complicated, what are you ask*, what are you, you know, this is too different, this is too much'...'this is, I want, you know, how things have always been'...'I want my lunch in a, in my polystyrene box'. So it's a bit weird (A-1, 1106-1115).

For the champions who worked in the office this seemed like a fairly sensible suggestion. It was an extension of the accepted environmental message to reduce waste. However, for many of the people who were asked to engage in the activity, it was not easy or straightforward and they were not prepared to do it.

The fact that the champions had tried to encourage the action in the first place does indicate the influence of more revolutionary discourses in terms of the behaviour that they were promoting. There was no incentive or co-benefits attached to the use of the boxes and using them required extra effort. People had to remember to bring them in to work and then wash them when they were finished. In this way, individuals were being asked to embrace the role of an active citizen who is 'motivated by an altruistic concern for a larger community' (Berglund and Matti 2006, p.555). There was little benefit to the individual person at the time of the act. They were expected to engage in the behaviour because it was good for environment. Champions that promoted this action drew upon an account of human nature that reflected a discourse of democratic citizenship.

However, most of the time, this account of human nature was rejected by the champions in favour of a more self-interested account of human nature (where actions required little or no effort and involved co-benefits). It is perhaps then not surprising that people were reluctant to engage in this action. Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) argue that 'egoistic orientation can only be a motivator for pro-environmental behaviour as long as the action serves the person's needs and wants... a strong egoistic orientation is counter-productive when the desired behaviour negates a person's needs and desires' (p.245). The champions' consistent use of co-benefits was counter-productive when they tried to introduce a scheme that did not provide any co-benefits for their colleagues.

The second example in Business A was the introduction of a wormery at one of the offices. This system reduced the amount of left-over food being put into the general waste. Food scraps were put into the wormery and this was turned into compost and liquid feed. This action was again based on an accepted climate protecting principle – the importance of recycling waste. However, it involved more effort than placing plastic bottles in a recycling bin and it was a little more out of the ordinary. Initially, this particular action was not well received by members of staff.

Non-champions were asked to store their food waste and from time to time they were also expected to check on the worms and drain the liquid feed. One champion said that the initial reaction was 'almost horror' (A-8, 231). Another champion admitted, 'I was thinking, that's a bit sick' (A-10, 124). However, once the system had been in place for a little while people did become accustomed to it. The first champion explained that 'when they [members of staff] started to do it they realised what it's, what it's for...erm, so it worked, yeah, people, people do buy into it' (A-8, 233-235).

The introduction of a wormery was not a fundamental change in the same way as giving up a car, but it was an action that required more effort than some of the 'appropriate' actions outlined above. Food waste had to be separated and stored and, in some cases, members of staff were asked to get involved in the maintenance of the wormery itself. The promotion of this activity in the first place indicated the willingness of some of the champions to do something a little bit different. The action presented some of the same issues as the Tupperware dish scheme. There were no direct personal benefits for the people who saved their food waste and it required additional effort. However, in contrast to the Tupperware scheme, individuals did begin to accept the use of the wormery and the benefits it could have for the local community and the protection of the climate. This introduces two important points. First, champions did have the capacity to think about and promote more revolutionary actions (i.e., those that rejected some components of reformist discourse). Second, and perhaps more importantly, non-champions could accept these types of actions, even if there were no direct benefits for them personally. This might have implications for the capacity of non-champions themselves to be active agents and subvert dominant discourses. This will be discussed in more detail in section 7.5.

7.2.4 Summary

Overall, 'inappropriate' actions were generally rooted in revolutionary climate discourses. The champions did not encourage these kinds of behaviours in the workplace and many of them did not consider them at all until they were asked. Many of the participants felt that giving up driving and flying or engaging in a less consumer based lifestyle required sacrifice and involved regression. These actions were contrary to a neoliberal account of human nature and a reformist account of social change. There were several participants who were willing to consider the need for fundamental change, but they were in the minority. In section 7.2.3 I discussed the

introduction of actions that were a 'little bit different'. Champions in Business A had tried to introduce the use of Tupperware dishes to replace disposable packaging and they had installed a wormery. The first of these schemes was not well received by employees while the second one was gradually accepted over time. I argued that the introduction of both schemes indicated some revolutionary ideas by the champions. The acceptance of the wormery indicated that revolutionary actions were not always 'inappropriate' and, with a little perseverance, employees might be susceptible to other revolutionary ideas.

7.3   Identifying Climate Discourses VI: The Role of Business, the State and 'the People'

Participants in the study were also asked about responsibility. Whose responsibility is it to deal with climate change and what is required? The responses to this question provided some important insights into the construction of 'appropriate' action. The three main responsible parties were said to be business, government and individuals or 'the people'. Champions talked about who they thought was responsible but simultaneously, what these parties should be doing to tackle the problem. Government and business were said to be responsible for providing the conditions for further action on climate change. In this section I will consider the role of these key agents in facilitating action on climate change. I will argue that the champions drew on both reformist and revolutionary discourses. In addition, they often combined the components from different discourses.

7.3.1   Infrastructure, Subsidies and Product Innovation

One of the most important reported conditions for action on climate change was the provision of suitable facilities and infrastructure. The way the champions talked about this particular issue provides us with further insight into the state/market component of the climate discourses. Many participants felt that the current infrastructure of society was not conducive to climate-protecting behaviour. This was particularly apparent when people talked about transport. For example, champions did encourage their colleagues to take public transport to work. However, they argued that people were reluctant to do this because the transport infrastructure was very poor. One champion said 'people aren't going to give up their cars at the moment because there's no other way to get around this country. It's just not, public transport

is just a mess' (C-7, 883-885). One champion explained that she personally could not avoid driving to work because 'there's no bus route or train route for me to get into this office every single day. The only option is to drive' (A-9, 523-524). Participants argued that people could not be expected to change their behaviour unless the appropriate infrastructure was in place.

The participants who talked about infrastructure felt that the provision of a comprehensive and reliable transport network was the responsibility of national and local government. On the subject of transport, one champion said that behaviour change could be encouraged by 'a government that provi* provided options... so that, erm, people can leave the car at home' (A-6, 537-539). A similar sentiment was expressed by one champion in the context of recycling:

So recycling, kerbside recycling, councils should be doing so much more. I live in an area where our kerbside recycling is quite good, erm, but it's not, it's not as good as it could be, erm, and I know from, from other areas in the country that it's a lot worse than we have here, erm, and that's something that... that the government could do to make it easy for everybody to have an impact (B-1, 666-673).

Recycling facilities were provided in the workplace and the majority of employees did recycle their waste. However, people could only be expected to extend this behaviour into their personal lives if local councils and national government were prepared to put the correct facilities in place. The role of the government was to enable action on climate change. It was the state rather than the market that was responsible for this task. This was interesting given the general emphasis on privatisation in modern society. We have seen a 'shift of activities, resources and the provision of goods and services from the public sector to the *private sector* (variously described as commercial, corporate, for profit)' (Clarke 2004, p.32; emphasis in original). Given the general dominance of reformist discourses and the push for 'economic efficiency, environmental effectiveness and political practicality' (Meadowcroft 2005, p.480), we might have expected participants to suggest the provision of more efficient waste and transport services by the private sector. This was not the case.

In some ways this does indicate the influence of more revolutionary discourses. For example, in a discourse of democratic citizenship the state is responsible for dealing with common goods problems and 'our climate is now a common good because everyone's well-being depends on it' (George 2010, p.14).

However, although the state was thought to be responsible for the facilitation of climate-protecting actions, these actions generally remained rooted in reformist discourses. For example, the government should introduce better kerbside recycling facilities to enable people to engage in this easy, individualistic action. The champions therefore drew upon a revolutionary construction of the state/market relationship, but maintained a focus on individuals as self-interested, utility maximisers, rather than active environmental citizens. They combined components from revolutionary and reformist discourses.

This combination of discourses was also evident when the champions talked about the role of the state in providing subsidies for environmental products. One champion talked about his intention to purchase an electric car. He described a 'government scheme' that would introduce quotas and 'drive… the production' (C-6, 839-842) [31]. Another champion talked about the role of government in the promotion of energy efficient technology for the home: 'I think what will probably happen is that the government will stop giving grants for cavity wall and loft insulation after 2015, erm, and I'm hoping that those grants will move onto renewables' (A-6, 458-461). The state did not fulfil the limited role it would play in reformist discourses because the introduction of subsidies was interference in the 'free and efficient operation of the market' (Cerny 2008, p.1). However, reformism did play an important role in these examples because the point of the subsidies was to promote the purchase of environmental products. Therefore the market still played a dominant role in dealing with environmental problems by developing innovative 'green' products.

7.3.2 Enforced Action on Climate Change

In other areas of discussion the role of the state was more clearly situated in revolutionary discourses. Given the prominence of reformism, I was surprised to find that some of the participants were also proponents of enforced action on climate change. This idea was introduced, without prompt, during the focus group in Business D:

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[31] The Plug-In Car Grant was officially introduced in January 2011. Motorists purchasing a qualifying ultra-low emission car can receive a grant of 25 per cent towards the cost of the vehicle, up to a maximum of £5,000 (Department for Transport 2011).

I think it's alright saying people have got to change, but we know that people will only change if they're forced to change and you almost need a government that, not a fascist government, but that will stand there and say we are going to limit what you do (D-4, 932-936).

Another champion agreed that enforced change 'would actually make a difference to people' (D-3, 980). This idea provoked an interesting set of responses when I put the question to other participants. One manager said 'so yeah I mean if the carrot doesn't work then it's time for the stick... it really is, we really are reaching that point' (B-manager, 804-807). Similarly, one of the champions talked about enforced water charges: 'I think it's the same with everything you know, unless we're charged for it, or unless there is a fine, or unless there's some penalty enforced people are never going to take it seriously' (C-4, 329-332). These champions entertained the idea that the state may have an important role beyond its facilitation of the market.

One champion argued that enforcement was appropriate for some actions, but not for others:

Yeah well our council they, they fine you if they find like cos you've got different bins for your glass and your plastic and that and they fine you if you put... if you put them in different ones. Yeah, so something like that's fair enough cos its just laziness if you don't put it in the right bin but something where they're forcing you to drive your car at different times and that, no' (A-10, 489-496).

Interestingly, the champion identifies one action that was generally said to be 'appropriate' (recycling) and one that was not thought to be 'appropriate' (giving up cars). Enforcement of the former was thought to be acceptable whereas enforcement of the latter was not. It could be argued that enforcement is more acceptable in relation to actions that are deemed 'appropriate'. Indeed, several of the participants who supported enforced action did talk about recycling. However, none of the other participants drew such a clear distinction between the enforcement of different actions. It is therefore difficult to draw any firm conclusions about this particular idea.

Overall, support for enforced action was far from unanimous and some champions were strongly opposed to 'big brother legislation' (A-7, 851), but it was an idea that did come up in the interviews, often without prompt. These individuals rejected the reformist construction of a minimal state. However, it is difficult to identify a specific revolutionary discourse without further information. For example,

in a discourse of democratic citizenship 'social regulation expresses what we believe, what we are, what we stand for, not simply what we wish to buy as individuals' (Sagoff 1988, p.17). In a justice discourse, 'state regulation and even outright controls on environmentally damaging activity are willingly recognized as potentially beneficial' (Bond 2000, p.36). The state would play a similarly active role, but this would be directed towards the redistribution of environmental goods (or bads).In both of these discourses, the construction of the state reflects more revolutionary responses to the problem of climate change.

In addition, the majority of participants agreed that enforced environmental legislation was very important in the business context. One champion said that a business case was useful but that 'ultimately you know it should be law that these things happen' (A-4,366-267). Another champion talked about enforced reporting:

I think that business leaders should be made to feel responsible for the impact that that company's having. I actually think that this social report responsibility reporting thing should, should be mandatory. Businesses should be forced to report on the impact that they're having (C-7, 798-803).

The fact that enforcement was also mentioned in relation to business adds further support to the argument that revolutionary climate discourses are playing a stronger role. Many participants felt that individual action should be enforced by the state rather than directed through market incentives. In addition, they believed that business (the market itself) should be subject to state regulation. Mol and Sonnenfeld (2000) discuss the role of the nation-state in climate discourses of reform, such as ecological modernisation. They claim that the emphasis is on 'less top-down, national command-and-control environmental regulation' (p.6). As discussed in the previous two sections, this was certainly the case in many of the interviews. The role of government was to facilitate the market. For many of the champions, however, when they talked about climate change in a more general way, this was not enough. Command and control environmental regulation was also a necessary condition for behaviour change.

7.3.3 *Collective Individualism*

Revolutionary discourses were also evident when the champions talked about the role of individuals or 'the people'. The role of the champions was to encourage individual behaviour change and, naturally, they emphasised the

importance of individual action. However, when I asked about what we could do to tackle climate change more generally, they responded in a slightly different way. Participants still talked about individualistic actions, but this was constructed as a collective endeavour. One champion said if 'everybody just changes one thing you know surely that's a help' (B-3, 450-451). A manager expressed a similar sentiment:

I like to think well, you know, I'm doing my little bit and hopefully there'll be, you know, many other, you know, thousands of people up and down the country in different countries across the world doing their little bit and collec* collectively we are in our way all making a, you know, making a difference' (E-manager, 416-421).

Participants talked about the importance of having 'a critical mass of people' (C-3, 724-725) and tackling climate change 'as a society and as a community' (A-7, 745-746). These individuals appeared to embrace their role as active citizens who would act alongside other people for the good of the collective.

The importance of collective action is well-documented in the literature. Rootes (2007) argues that 'local campaigns are the most persistent and ubiquitous forms of environmental contention' (p.722). Similarly, Hale (2010) contends that this kind of collective action is imperative if we are to tackle climate change: 'We have too often sought to influence individual action without fostering the networks that will enable a collective shift in attitude or action' (p.263). However, the participants were not referring to direct action campaigns or lobbying the government. Rather, they were referring to the culmination of lots of small actions. These included individualised, 'easy' actions: 'turning off their PCs' (C-3, 168) or 'double sided printing' (117) as well as 'green' consumption choices: 'lighting sensors' (C-3, 32) and 'energy efficient cars' (A-7, 496).

This might suggest another version of the consumer-citizen that I discussed in the section 7.1.4. Individuals are expected to think about the moral implications of the choices they make but they should still express these preferences through individual action and consumption choices. For the consumer-citizen the 'mix of lifestyle, identity, belief and practice is brought to bear through market mechanisms' (Parker 1999, p.69). The champions appeared to be referring to a similar idea when they talked about the importance of collective action. However, I would argue that there is a slight, but potentially important difference here. For the consumer-citizen, consumption is the primary concern. We adapt our everyday consumption practices to

incorporate 'green' or 'ethical' goods (Seyfang 2005, p.290). For the champions in these examples, collective action was the primary concern. Climate change was recognised as a problem that required a collective response. Therefore, I would suggest that these individuals were acting more like citizen-consumers. They recognised the importance of a collective response to climate change first and foremost but they could only express this is in the context of individualised and consumer-based discourses. Indeed, Sanne (2002) argues that individuals are 'locked-in' to the consumer-based structures of modern society (p.286). Therefore, although participants talked about the importance of collectivism, this was constrained by the values of more reformist discourses (e.g., consumption, accumulation and choice). We see a discourse of democratic citizenship limited by a discourse of individualism.

7.3.4 Summary

When they talked about the role of government, business and 'the people', the champions drew upon both revolutionary and reformist discourses. They argued that the state was responsible for facilitating action on climate change (a revolutionary role) but the actions that required facilitation were generally quite reformist in nature (e.g., recycling). The state was also expected to play a relatively active role in the provision of subsidies for 'green' products but the market retained a dominant role in the provision of these products. Many champions talked about the importance of enforced action on climate change, but again the specific nature of the government's role reflected more reformist components. The government should fine people if they do not recycle their waste. The focus was still on economics and financial (dis)incentives. Finally, the champions talked about the importance of collective action. This was a revolutionary idea, which implied that the key actors would be environmental citizens. However, the role of individuals as active citizens was constrained by the individualised actions that they were required to take. Overall, the analysis in this section has provided evidence of reformist and revolutionary discourses. However, in general, the revolutionary aspects of actions were limited by reformist ideas.

7.4 Reinforcing Dominant Discourses

In the second half of chapter six I discussed how the champions had reinforced and subverted dominant ideas about 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate'

motivations. I argued that there was some resistance to dominant discourses but that this was very limited. In section 7.4 and 7.5 I will provide a parallel analysis of climate-protecting actions. I will argue that the evidence of reinforcement and subversion in this context was very similar. In fact, I will argue that there was even less resistance in the context of actions.

In chapter six I argued that the champions reinforced dominant discourses when they reproduced these 'dominant' ideas in everyday communication. Unsurprisingly, they did something very similar when they promoted particular actions. By drawing on the components of reformist discourses they reinforced reformist actions as 'normal' or 'natural'. In addition, they responded to neoliberal barriers (e.g., lack of time) by promoting reformist actions (those that were quick and straightforward). As discussed in the previous chapter, the champions had been 'simultaneously constituted by that which they move and constitute' (Carolan 2003, p.229).

In this section I will argue that, in the context of actions, many of the respondents reinforced dominant reformist discourses in three additional ways. First, they qualified their role as an 'environmentalist'. Second, they identified specific boundaries for their actions and drew upon a very narrow of conception of what it meant to be 'successful' as climate champions. Finally, they rejected the notion of fundamental change

7.4.1 'I'm Environmental, but…'

The first area which indicates reproduction of the dominant discourse was the way in which the champions constructed themselves. In this section I will argue that the champions were committed to the project and their role in encouraging behaviour change. However, at the same time, they constructed this general concern about climate change as being a little out of the ordinary. Many participants were concerned to distance themselves from the image of the traditional environmentalist, who is in many ways contrary to the neoliberal values of modern society. They qualified their role in the same way that they had qualified their revolutionary motivations.

Many of the champions were concerned about being too political in their views and actions. One champion said, 'I've kind of, I've always sort of, had a, had a

strong interest in environmental issues, erm, not to the point of actually, erm, being an activist in any way' (B-6, 5-7). Political activism was constructed as being at the extreme end of environmentalism. This champion was interested in the issues, but he hadn't gone *that* far. Other champions were quite vehement in their comments on environmental activism. One champion stressed that he was 'by no means an activist of any sort' (C-6, 883-884) while another made clear that she was 'definitely not like one of those protester type people' (A-10, 355-356).

According to the literature, an activist may promote collective campaigns on climate change (Rootes 2007, p.725) or encourage the development of '"action networks" that influence individual and community behaviour' (Hale 2010, p.267). In these accounts the role of key agents would be to act as a citizen and collectively work towards change. This construction of key agents therefore reflects the revolutionary discourse of democratic citizenship. It is contrary to the dominant and 'appropriate' role of key agents (as self-interested rational consumers in a discourse of individualism or as technical experts in an ecological modernisation discourse).

Champions were also aware of the altruistic connotations attached to concern for the climate and environment more generally. This construction was again resisted by many of the participants. One champion said, 'I try not to appear too saintly to people (laughs)' (C-2, 510-511). Another claimed that when promoting climate protecting behaviour, 'you do risk that "oh goody two shoes"' (C-10, 1117). These champions recognised that traditional environmentalism reflected a more revolutionary account of human nature where 'self-interested behaviour will not always protect or sustain public goods such as the environment' (Dobson 2007, p.280).   The participants therefore reinforced the dominant reformist discourses by challenging the components of revolutionary discourses and constructing themselves as a new (reformist) kind of environmentalist:

Yes, I care about the environment, yes I'm understanding of climate change, yes I'm understanding of sustainability. I'm trying to buck the trend of being that muesli eating, sandal wearing, vegetarian, hippy green... I'm trying to represent a new green face to a business (G-manager, 1119-1128).

This manager identified 'abnormal' actions that he rejected and constructed his new kind of environmentalism in opposition to them. Similarly, one champion stated:

Personally, I am proud of what we've done within the Climate Champions and I am proud of what I do

personally...cos it's more than what I did before. It doesn't mean that I'm going to go all green and grow dreadlocks and... stop using electric and showering (laughs) (A-5, 377-383).

The champions were keen to promote action on climate change, but they were not comfortable doing it in a way that challenged the boundaries of 'normal' behaviour. It was much more common for the champions to qualify or limit their role and aspirations as champions in this way than it was for them to offer reformist accounts of their motives for becoming involved in the champions scheme or caring about climate change.

According to many of the participants, concern about climate change had become more 'mainstream' (C-2, 849). However, the reconciliation of the environment and the economy and the mainstreaming of concern about climate change had required a transformation of traditional environmentalism. Thus, the role of the champions had to reflect more reformist climate discourses. By 'present[ing] a new green face' they were reinforcing reformist climate discourses as the 'most credible way of talking green' (Hajer 1995, p.30).

7.4.2 Successful ('Acceptable') Actions

Towards the end of the interview participants were asked about the success of their work. How successful did they feel they had been in the climate champion role? This question elicited a variety of responses but it is the construction of success itself that is of interest here. First, many of the champions felt that they had been successful because there was nothing more to be done in their workplace. Several participants talked about the Environmental Management System that was in place in their business and the progress that had been made in this area[32]. The majority of these individuals referred to the green credentials of the actual buildings they worked in. One champion said, 'the building itself is, erm, you know, obviously, erm, environmentally friendly, erm, it's been built that way' (C-3, 195-197). Another claimed that the building she worked in 'could not be anymore, erm, green' (B-1, 132-133). These businesses were as good as they could possibly be; there was little more for the champions to do in this respect. Some champions also made this kind of

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[32] An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a systematised programme detailing the ways in which a company deals with environmental issues. In September 1996 ISO 14001 was introduced as the Environmental Management System standard. In modern society most large corporations are ISO 14001 certified, including all eight businesses in the current study.

argument about the facilities in the workplace. One participant explained that when she moved offices there was little for her to do as a champion because everything environmental was 'pretty much done like with the recycling bins and stuff' (A-10, 43). Another champion claimed that, everyone in the building was 'quite sort of keyed into it anyway' (A-7, 110). For example, they had 'things like all the photocopiers where possible were all set to double sided printing' (A-7, 116-117).

Other champions talked about successful initiatives that they had been responsible for. They had implemented 'improvements in the recycling' (C-2, 92) or they had been involved in 'a tree-planting day' (B-1, 1064-1065). As discussed in section 7.1, these actions were all 'appropriate' to the dominant discourses. For example, in a discourse of individualism the role of key agents is to engage in small, incremental actions. Many champions had been successful because they had achieved this kind of behaviour change in their colleagues. By talking about success in this way the champions reinforced the 'normalness' of reformism as an approach to climate protecting behaviour. The champions were successful if they had encouraged behaviour change within 'the boundaries of what is acceptable and appropriate' (Carabine 2001, p.275).

Similarly, champions who felt like they were 'fighting a losing battle' (A-3, 111) had struggled to implement small, individual actions such as 'checking tyres' or 'taking excess things out of the cars' (A-3, 144). Champion B-7 was not convinced that the project had made 'that great a difference' (135). She explained the efforts she had made to encourage environmentally friendly procurement in the workplace: 'I was trying to get, erm... them to do sort of like change their cleaning products for the whole of... you know the, the, the business' (56-58). This champion was striving towards the use of 'green' cleaning products. She felt she had failed because this had not been implemented.

The important point here is not the perceived success or failure of particular champions. Instead, it is that the actions they were striving towards reflected reformist accounts of social change. Instead of exploring 'multiple paths to sustainability' (by challenging reformist values) they were 'obsessing over the cobblestones of but one path' (Maniates 2001, p.38). The champions did not mention any failure to bring about systemic change because systemic change was not a consideration. As far as they were concerned there were no other 'paths' to climate

protecting behaviour and by consistently advocating the same 'path' they were reinforcing this as the only possible goal to strive towards.

7.4.3 Rejecting Fundamental Change

After we discussed the success of the initiative, participants were specifically introduced to the notion of fundamental change. If the only way to deal with climate change was to fundamentally change the way we live, did they think this was possible? Many of the participants offered a negative response to this question. One champion thought that is was not 'realistic to expect large, the large majority of people to make a fundamental shift in the way they live' (B-5, 819-821). Another claimed that people were not 'prepared to make personal sacrifices' (C-6, 1044).

For some champions this was a matter of regret. One champion said she was 'worried' about our inability to change: 'I'm very worried, the idea of changing people's, changing completely the way they live, that would be very hard' (A-1, 975-977). Other champions were equally pessimistic. One replied '(sighs) probably not, the sad reality is probably not, I don't believe that there are enough people in this world prepared at this point in time to pull in the righ*, same direction' (C-8, 493-495). Another said that if fundamental change was required, 'I think we're pretty doomed' (C-9, 1019). Many participants had not considered the possibility of an alternative way to live and, when I introduced the notion, they dismissed it. May (2006) argues that the normalising effects of a dominant discourse can be very difficult to resist:

The historical grip of our practices is a tight one... it is precisely the fact that our historical grip holds us so tightly that makes it seem to us that we cannot live otherwise than the way we do now, that we cannot be something other than what we are (p.21).

Indeed, for some champions, it was difficult to seriously consider the idea of fundamental change. One replied: 'No (laughs), no I don't, I, I just don't, I don't believe... you know, I, I don't believe that we're anyway near that... and, and will it ever happen? My own personal views, no' (B-3, 677-680). Another said:

Erm... change is a difficult thing and some people say (laughs) that a leopard can't change its spots, erm, but... you know civilisations have changed (laughs) but I don't kno* I don't know I, you know, erm... I really don't know (C-3, 730-733).

The champions explicitly rejected a radical account of social change. Their ability to conceptualise the world was 'radically limited by the pre-existing field of the "thinkable"' (Downing 2008, p.39). By responding in this way they simultaneously reinforced these boundaries. With her contention that 'a leopard can't change its spots', champion C-3 implies that we cannot change because our current situation is based on our inherent nature.

Foucault (1984a) argues that in all power relations there is 'necessarily the possibility of resistance' (p.34). Power is successful precisely because it controls the behaviour of a free person. If the controlled person is not free we do not refer to power; we refer to domination. However, Foucault (1984a) also admits that 'in a great many cases, power relations are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and allow an extremely limited margin of freedom' (p.35). To a large extent the champions appeared to be very limited in their capacity for resistance. At many different sites of interaction participants reinforced the dominant reformist discourses as 'normal', 'desirable' and 'unavoidable'.

7.5 Subverting Dominant Discourse

In chapter five I argued that, although reformist discourses did play a dominant role, there was some evidence of subversion. This was also the case when the champions talked about action and responsibility for climate change. In this section I will discuss how some champions subverted the dominant discourses. They did believe in the possibility of fundamental change and they talked about challenging mind-sets. Both of these things indicate resistance to reformist ideas. However, I will argue that this capacity for resistance was very limited. The notion of 'change' was often constrained by reformist definitions and the process of challenging mind-sets was limited by the necessarily 'appropriate' delivery of the climate change message.

7.5.1 Change is Possible

When I asked the champions about fundamental change many of them rejected this idea. They could not contemplate a different way of living. However, several of the champions did acknowledge the importance and the possibility of

fundamental change. I asked one champion: 'Do you think we can fundamentally change the way we live?' Her response was: 'yes... absolutely' (A-2, 780). One champion argued that change 'is not easy, but it's not impossible' (C-5, 557). Another champion expressed similar sentiments: 'it could be done erm, it would take a huge shift in attitudes' (C-7, 878-879). These champions challenged the dominant discourses by simply acknowledging that things could be different.

For these champions, change was about challenging everything: 'it's got to be intrinsic to people's everyday thinking… it's got to be part of what they wake up in the morning and it's part of their thought process in terms of everything they do' (A-2, 597-600). C-5 acknowledged that this kind of change might require giving up your car and buying local produce. C-7 said that if we implemented fundamental change we would have to 'actually stop people travelling with work' (888) and 'there would have to be another way to conduct business' (890-891). The champions did not underestimate the enormity of the challenge, but they did entertain the possibility of fundamental change.

There were other champions who talked about the possibility of change but this was not the same fundamental change as the examples in the previous paragraph. When I asked one champion about changing the way we live he said, 'I think we are, aren't we' (A-3, 513)? He then talked about the importance of being carbon-neutral: 'Obviously now if you look at any company worth its salt it's a carbon neutral company or it's… or it lends itself to the, to the green issue' (A-3, 515-518). As far as this champion was concerned, the fact that companies were now dealing with environmental issues was very different to the way things used to be. This champion was talking about a reformist construction of social change. Many companies had incorporated the environment into their everyday operations but this was a move from pure neoliberalism to ecological modernisation. It was not a fundamental challenge to the current neoliberal system. Other champions interpreted change in the same way. One champion said, 'I think you know things will change' (B-3, 475). However, she talked about small changes such as recycling. Indeed, when I specifically asked this champion about fundamental change she replied, 'I don't believe that we're anyway near that' (B-3, 678). Resistance was evident in a very small number of cases but generally the champions either rejected fundamental change or constructed change in a reformist way.

7.5.2 Challenging Mind-Sets

In addition, participants talked about challenging the mind-sets of those around them. One champion told me about a project she had established to promote walking to work. She said, 'there was great awareness and a great sense of, you know, it is ok, you know, I can get to work other ways... instead of, you know, just driving so I think that was a good one from that point of view' (C-4, 79-84). Other champions talked about the importance of 'showing people that you can change your bad habits' (A-1, 409-410) and making people understand that 'this can work if you do it this way' (A-7, 582). Maniates (2001) argues that change requires 'undermining the dominant frameworks of thinking and talking that make the [individualization of responsibility] appear so natural and "common sense"' (p.44). These champions felt that they were promoting an alternative way of acting. They were challenging dominant ways of thinking. As one manager said 'You've got to challenge to change' (A-manager, 1148).

Many of the champions talked about giving people the 'opportunity' to act on climate change (B-3,147; A-10, 212; C-8, 276). They were introducing the issue and encouraging people to think more about what they were doing. One champion said that his role was about, 'getting that change started and just getting people to talk about it and make changes like I say even if they're only little changes' (A-5, 802-804). Many champions felt that this kind of approach would lead to cumulative action. One manager said he was 'saving the world one meeting at a time' (G-manager, 170-171). Another manager said it was about 'starting to challenge their way of thinking, erm little by little, person by person' (C-manager, 1232). Champions talked about a 'catalyst effect' (C-5, 35), a 'chain reaction' (A-5, 712) and the 'butterfly effect' (C-9, 1364). The sentiments that were expressed by these champions did appear to be a challenge to dominant reformist discourses. They were about getting people to think differently and making them consider climate change in their daily lives. This kind of approach would gradually change each individual person and slowly build a critical mass of individuals.

However, I would argue that this resistance in constrained by two factors. First, although the champions talked about challenging mind-sets, they did not actually promote many revolutionary actions. The analysis in sections 7.1 and 7.2 indicated that reformist discourses played an influential role in the construction of

'appropriate' actions. Most of the champions rejected fundamental change and revolutionary ideas. When many champions talked about 'challenging mind-sets' they appeared to be talking about a move from pure neoliberal ideas to a reformist account of social change. They were asking people to incorporate reformist climate-protecting behaviour into their (previously non-environmental) daily lives. This might be resistance to pure neoliberal ideas, but it is not resistance of the dominant climate discourses, which are already reformist. There were some examples where the 'challenges' were slightly more revolutionary. For example, the introduction of the wormery and the Tupperware scheme had been a little out of the ordinary. The walk to work scheme mentioned by champion C-4 did challenge 'normal' daily habits (e.g., driving). However, these revolutionary actions played a very small role in the accounts.

Second, the process of 'challenging mind-sets' was constrained by the way in which the message had to be (appropriately) delivered. The role of the champion was to *demonstrate* the possibilities of action on climate change. Many of them said they would 'lead by example' (A-3; B-3; B-5). Indeed, one manager argued that 'what you do makes them think as much as what you say' (C-manager, 1207-1208). Leading by example may, of course, be an effective way to encourage behaviour change. However, it is also based on a neoliberal conception of how the champion should interact with other people. Most of the champions felt that it was inappropriate to preach to people and therefore their role was about providing information or, in this case, leading by example. The potentially revolutionary notion of 'challenging-mind-sets' was limited by the reformist way in which they delivered the message.

Overall, the champions certainly used language that implied resistance. They talked about challenging ideas and introducing new considerations into people's lives. They wanted to change the way people thought about climate change. However, most of the champions who used these sentiments were talking about reformist change. There were several champions who talked about challenging everything – a revolutionary change – but these individuals were in the minority. In addition, almost all of the champions delivered the message in a reformist way. Even those who were promoting revolutionary actions were reluctant to 'preach' about it. Overall, there was evidence of resistance but it was very limited.

196

7.6   Conclusion

The promotion of particular climate-protecting actions is perhaps the most fundamental part of the champions' role. The champions were expected to encourage behaviour change in the workplace. In this chapter I have argued that the majority of 'appropriate' actions were rooted in reformist discourses. There was some evidence of revolutionary ideas but these were often constrained by reformist notions of 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' language and behaviour.

In section 7.1 I argued that the champions mainly encouraged small, straightforward actions. They talked about recycling in the office and the reduction of waste from plastic cups and paper. Some champions did promote the use of public transport or cycling to work but often this was a 'cycle to work week'. The champions did not promote fundamental or long-term changes to people's lives. In fact, in section 7.2 I argued that the champions were very dismissive of fundamental change more generally. They were not happy to give up driving or flying and they did not expect other people to engage in these behaviours. In addition, they were unwilling to engage in actions that involved going 'backwards' to more traditional lifestyles.

In section 7.3 I argued that the champions did draw on some revolutionary discourses when they talked about the role of government, business and 'the people'. However, this was often limited by reformist ideas. For example, the champions allowed a more active role for the state (enforcing actions), but the specific actions of the state were still very reformist (imposing fines and economic disincentives).

In the second half of the chapter I argued that the champions both reinforced and resisted dominant climate discourses. They reinforced dominant reformist discourses by claiming to be 'environmental', but then distinguishing between traditional (revolutionary) environmentalism and a 'new green face' (reformist). Most champions constructed themselves in the latter sense. I discussed the same kind of process in chapter six. Some of the champions talked about revolutionary motivations but then qualified these as 'silly' or 'cliché' (inappropriate). They limited their own capacity for resistance by diluting revolutionary sentiments with reformist ideas. There was limited evidence of resistance in some of the accounts. In section 7.5 I argued that several champions talked about the possibility of fundamental change and the importance of challenging (reformist) mind-sets. However, these individuals

made-up a very small minority of the interview sample. The overall potential for resistance among the champions appeared to be very limited.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Reforming the Workplace, Changing the World?

Dryzek (1997) argues that, 'environmentalism is composed of a variety of discourses, sometimes complementing one another, but often competing' (p.22). Hajer (1995) makes a similar claim: 'if examined closely, environmental discourse is fragmented and contradictory' (p.1). Over the course of the thesis, I have argued that the same can be said for climate discourse. In my theoretical framework I identified five discursive constructions of the (non-) problem of climate change: the scientific account of climate change as a problem; the sceptical denial that climate change is a problem; the pessimistic account of climate change as an insoluble problem; the reformist construction of climate change as a 'glitch' in the neoliberal system; and the revolutionary construction of climate change as a fundamental problem of the neoliberal system. The main focus of the thesis was ways of dealing with climate change. I argued that neoliberalism, as an economic and political project, has a significant influence on modern approaches to climate change. I identified seven discourses that either conform to the principles of neoliberalism (reformist discourses) or reject neoliberal ideas (revolutionary discourses). The reformist discourses were ecological modernisation, individualism, and privatisation. The revolutionary discourses were sufficiency, justice, deep ecology, and democratic citizenship.

My empirical analysis focused on the communication of climate change in large corporations. I interviewed eight environmental/CSR managers and 36 climate champions and used my theoretical framework to analyse how they were talking about climate change in their daily lives. I argued that climate discourse was indeed 'fragmented and contradictory'. The champions (and managers) drew on many different discourses when they interacted with the people around them. Overall, reformist (or neoliberal) discourses were most dominant throughout the interviews. However, the reproduction of discourse was a complicated process and the analysis generated many interesting findings. In this final chapter I will provide a summary of my main arguments and reflect on the project more generally.

The project was organised around four main research questions. In sections 8.1 and 8.2 I will consider the first two questions. What discourses did the champions draw upon in the course of their everyday communication? How did dominant discourses construct 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' language and behaviour? In section 8.1 I will discuss the role of neoliberalism as the dominant discourse at the beginning of the twenty-first century and the effect this had on the champions and the project. In section 8.2 I will then consider the seven discourses that I set out in chapter three. I will discuss how they were used by the champions when they talked about 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' motivations and actions as well as the delivery of the climate change message.

In sections 8.3 and 8.4 I will consider the remaining research questions: How did the champions reinforce dominant discourses in their everyday interactions? Can we identify resistance to dominant discourses and how did resistance operate at sites of interaction? Section 8.3 will consider the role of the champions as 'passive subjects' (reinforcing dominant discourses) and section 8.4 will consider the potential for the champions to be 'active agents' (challenging dominant discourses).

Finally, section 8.5 will provide some concluding thoughts about the project itself. I will discuss the strengths of a discursive approach and the methodological limitations of the project. I will argue that the scope of the project could have been extended and that the sample of large corporations could have been more representative of the business sector. This may have strengthened the analysis and final conclusions. I will end with some further research questions and a brief discussion of the normative implication of the project.

8.1 The Pervasive Effects of Neoliberalism

One of the most important conclusions of the project is that neoliberalism is indeed 'hegemonic as a mode of discourse' (Harvey 2007, p.23). In many ways this is not a surprising conclusion. My initial research interests were based on the dominance of neoliberal approaches to environmental problems. I expected neoliberalism and/or reformist discourses to play a dominant role in the communication of climate change. However, what I did not expect was the reach and pervasiveness of this dominant discourse. Neoliberalism has played an important role in almost every aspect of the project, both in the guise of reformist discourses and in

its pure form. The influence of neoliberalism has frequently diluted the role of more revolutionary discourses and it has even had a (surprising) influence on some of my actions over the course of the project.

There have been several places in the analysis where I have identified features of a neoliberal discourse rather than a specific discourse of reformism. Despite the prevalence of reformist approaches to climate change, a pure (unreformed) version of neoliberalism still plays an important role in the communication of climate change and the construction of 'appropriate' ideas and behaviour. One of the most notable examples of a pure neoliberal discourse was the discussion of barriers to climate protecting behaviour. The champions talked about the problems associated with time and prioritisation and the pursuit of economic success and accumulation. Often people did not have time to engage in climate-protecting behaviour because they had more important (rationally self-interested) things to do. They were unwilling to 'sacrifice' their carbon dependent lifestyle for the protection of the climate.

Of course, the purpose of reformist discourses is to re-direct neoliberal values towards climate-protecting behaviour – to reform neoliberalism. The champions encouraged actions that would be of benefit to people, such as saving money. Behaviour change initiatives consisted of small, straightforward actions or time-limited projects that did not challenge people's lifestyles. The champions did report some success with these initiatives, but many colleagues were still unwilling to engage in climate-protecting behaviour. Neoliberalism in its pure form remained dominant and posed a significant challenge for the champions.

Neoliberalism also had an influence on the way the champions perceived their own role. Regardless of the type of climate discourses that the champions were using they were often constrained by neoliberal ideas about what they could say to other people and how they should deliver the message of climate change. This was evident when they discussed their own beliefs about climate change. Many champions constructed the science of climate change as 'objective'. We understood the facts about climate change and we therefore knew the 'truth'. Consequently, we knew what *should* be done about the problem. Champions talked about 'correct' and 'incorrect' responses. Different champions offered different 'correct' responses, both reformist and revolutionary. However, almost every champion argued that there was a boundary between what they thought and what they could say to other people. It was

not appropriate to tell people what they should believe and how they should act. The champions would provide information about climate change and lead by example but they would not 'preach' to other people. I argued that the champions' role was constrained by a pure neoliberal discourse. Neoliberalism places great emphasis on the right to non-interference and the freedom of individuals to choose their own subjective preferences. Champions were very reluctant to challenge the 'rights' and 'freedom' of other people, despite what they themselves believed about climate change. Neoliberalism was very influential in constraining the actions of the champions.

Indeed, as my analysis developed, I realised that this constraining feature of neoliberalism had also played a role in my own actions. In chapter four I explained that I had supplied three of the participating businesses with reports about the project. The provision of the report was important because it helped me to gain access to the champions and I felt that it added to the 'impact' of my research. The champions reported obstacles that they had faced and suggested ways that the project could be improved. I was able to compile a report and pass these ideas onto the managers who were responsible for the project.

However, when I began writing up my analysis (after the completion of the reports) I noted similarities between my own actions and those of the champions. I had presented an accurate account of their ideas (which were mainly reformist), but I had omitted my own evaluation of the project and my analysis of 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviour. This was partly due to professional considerations. The purpose of the report was not to provide a personal review on behaviour change and the managers were not interested in the theoretical implications of my thesis. However, upon reflection, I was also conscious of how I framed my ideas. I had not challenged the dominant construction of 'appropriate' behaviour. I did not offer any alternatives to the structure or content of the climate champion project and I did not 'preach' about climate-protecting behaviour. I simply provided information for the managers and allowed them choose what to do with it. As a researcher, my role in the project was very complicated and it is difficult to draw clear comparisons between myself and the champions. However, I would argue that we were all subject to the constraining effects of neoliberalism in the general delivery of the climate change message.

It could, of course, be argued that the pervasiveness of neoliberalism is simply a result of the institutional context in which the champions were operating. A critic might suggest that it is this institutional context which leads to dominant neoliberal discourses rather than any wider discursive processes. This is an important consideration for the project. As I suggested in chapter one, business is the institution at the heart of neoliberalism and, thus, neoliberalism is likely to play a dominant role in the context of large corporations. However, two points should be considered here. First, I would argue that neoliberalism is dominant in the business context, in part, because it is dominant in society more generally. Although we would expect a neoliberal institution to be neoliberal, research indicates that neoliberalism is dominant in many other parts of society (Kirk 2008; Andrew *et al* 2010). Second, analysis of the interviews did indicate that the champions used other climate discourses when they communicated with their colleagues. This suggests that the institutional context was not the only influence on the champions. Neoliberalism was pervasive but the champions did draw on other climate discourses and discourse components in their discussions about climate change and climate-protecting behaviour.

8.2 Identifying Climate Discourses and 'Appropriate' Behaviour

The main focus of the analysis was the identification of different climate discourses. Neoliberalism had a significant effect on the champions and the way they talked about climate change. Most notably, the champions either accepted or rejected neoliberal principles when they talked about ways of dealing with climate change. In this section I will return to my seven climate discourses and discuss how they were used in the interviews. I will consider how each climate discourse was drawn upon by the champions when they talked about 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' motivations and actions. I will also discuss the ways in which the champions imposed limits on more revolutionary discourses.

8.2.1 Discourses of Reform

Reformist discourses played a dominant role in almost every interview. Most of the champions constructed the problem of climate change as a small 'glitch' in the neoliberal system. We could deal with the problem of climate change within the

current system and indeed we had already made some progress in this area. Consequently, the champions consistently drew on reformist discourses when they talked about dealing with the problem of climate change.

Ecological Modernisation

The discourse of ecological modernisation (EM) played an important role in the interviews. The champions used this discourse in the context of motivations and actions. Many champions specifically drew on EM when they tried to motivate managers in the business. I argued that champions used the reconceptualised relationship between the environment and the economy to gain 'buy-in' for climate-protecting initiatives. A healthy environment was a precondition for a successful business and companies could protect the climate without sacrificing profit and growth. The champions also appealed to the key values of EM. Environmental initiatives would save money for the business and potentially lead to further profit. EM was most apparent when the champions talked about their managers and their business because in a discourse of EM business plays an important role as a key agent.

In addition, EM also played a role in the construction of 'appropriate' actions. Champions talked about the role of technology in climate-protecting initiatives. We could install energy saving light bulbs and use tele-conferencing to reduce our air miles. This indicated an EM construction of the state/market relationship (the market will lead on 'green' innovation) and the role of key agents as technological experts. Finally, a discourse of ecological modernisation was also evident in the structure of the project itself. Ecological modernisation advocates a very gradual account of social change because we can address environmental problems without the need for structural change. The climate champion 'project' was time-limited with clear boundaries. The role of the champions was to introduce small changes (e.g., printing double sided) rather than challenging the organisational structure of the business.

Individualism

A discourse of individualism was probably the dominant discourse in the interviews. Individualism also promotes a self-interested account of human nature and the key values of growth and accumulation. However, in this discourse it is

individuals who are the key agents. The champions tried to motivate individual behaviour change through explaining the co-benefits of climate-protecting behaviour (better health, reduced energy bills) and providing incentives such as free tyre pressure gauges.

They also encouraged their colleagues to engage in straightforward, individualistic actions such as recycling, turning off monitors and driving in a more energy efficient way. They promoted 'green' consumerism through the purchase of low energy light bulbs and cavity wall insulation. The market was again more important than the state but it was the responsibility of individuals to signal their climate-protecting preferences by purchasing 'green' products.

This discourse was also important in the mode of delivery of the climate change message. In a discourse of individualism, two of the key values are knowledge and choice. The champions provided their colleagues with information about energy savings in the hope that they would choose to engage in climate-protecting behaviour. In section 8.1 I argued that a discourse of neoliberalism constrained the delivery of the climate change message because individuals have a right to non-interference. Individualism, as a reformist discourse, does promote climate-protecting behaviour, but this must be consistent with neoliberal principles. Individuals have the right to engage in whatever behaviour they want to undertake. We must encourage climate-protecting behaviour by providing information and leading by example. The champions consistently used these techniques when they promoted behaviour change.

Privatisation

A discourse of privatisation played a much more minimal role in the accounts. Privatisation does share several components with other reformist discourses. For example, it is based on a self-interested account of human nature and the key values of growth and profit. It also incorporates the same construction of the environment/economy relationship. We should calculate the economic value of the natural world because the correct valuation of natural resources will ensure their protection. Therefore, when the champions appealed to self-interested ideas and reformist values this could have indicated a privatisation discourse.

However, there were very few actions that were consistent with the components of privatisation. When the champions appealed to self-interest they were talking about saving money through energy efficient technology or individualised actions. They drew on discourses of EM and individualism rather than privatisation. The market generally played a more important role than the state but most champions did not talk about the commodification of the atmosphere. They did not encourage their colleagues to 'buy a tree' or invest money in the protection of a forest. The only time the champions specifically drew on privatisation was when they discussed the importance of offsetting emissions. For example, some champions had implemented projects to offset emissions that the company could not reduce. In this example, the role of the market was to privatise emissions and charge for the protection of the atmosphere. In general, however, most of the champions did not draw on the main ideas and components of a privatisation discourse.

8.2.2 *Discourses of Revolution*

When the champions talked about the problem of climate change most of them did not construct it as a fundamental problem. This indicated that the champions would probably not draw on revolutionary discourses when they talked about dealing with climate change. However, revolutionary discourses did play some role in many of the accounts. In particular, most champions drew upon revolutionary accounts of human nature and revolutionary values when they discussed their own motivations for engaging in climate-protecting behaviour. Often, however, these revolutionary motivations were constrained by the dominance of reformist discourses, which constructed 'appropriate' actions and limited the influence of revolutionary ideas. In addition, most champions only discussed revolutionary motivations in the interview situation. They very rarely drew on these climate discourses when they communicated with other people.

Sufficiency

When the champions talked about motivations many of them drew on a revolutionary account of human nature that is consistent with a sufficiency discourse. They argued that individuals can look beyond their own self-interest and contribute to the common good of society. However, in general, this was the only component of a sufficiency discourse that was drawn upon by the champions. The other components

of a sufficiency discourse were often (explicitly or implicitly) rejected by the champions.

When I enquired about the actions that the champions promoted, I specifically asked about a fundamental change in lifestyle. The account of social change in a sufficiency discourse is based on a complete re-evaluation of our goals and lifestyle. It introduces different definitions of progress and development, focusing on quality rather than quantity. The champions were reluctant to embrace this account of social change, which was contrary to dominant neoliberal and reformist values. Many of them claimed that this kind of lifestyle would mean going 'backwards'. There was often some amusement with the idea of going back to living in caves, growing our own food and using a horse and cart. Indeed, several champions laughed about the prospect of a holiday in Blackpool when you can go anywhere in the world.

A few champions did consider the possibility of a smaller, more localised lifestyle, but this was not a frequent theme in the interviews. A discourse of sufficiency was therefore limited by neoliberal constructions of 'appropriate' social change and the importance of growth as the measurement of 'progress'.

Justice

A discourse of justice played an interesting role in the accounts. Champions mainly drew on the values of justice and a justice based account of human nature when they talked about their own motivations for engaging in climate protecting behaviour. They talked about responsibility and fairness in relation to future generations and the rest of the world. Many champions acknowledged the unequal distribution of the burdens of climate change and the fact that the West was responsible for a large proportion of global emissions. Some champions also talked about the importance of animals and the effect that climate change would have on the non-human world. In this way the champions drew on a more altruistic account of human nature and key revolutionary values. They also constructed individuals as citizens who had the capacity for moral reasoning.

However, a discourse of justice was also constrained by the reformist construction of 'appropriate' actions. Individuals who talked about fairness and responsibility still advocated small, easy and time-limited actions. In a justice discourse we might expect a more prominent role for the state and a more radical

account of social change. The champions did not talk about fundamental change and they continued to emphasise the importance of the market in the facilitation of climate protecting behaviour.

In addition, the champions who talked about future generations often linked this to a concern for 'my family'. This motivation is revolutionary compared with a concern for economic prosperity, but it might suggest a more self-interested account of human nature alongside revolutionary motivations.

Deep Ecology

A discourse of deep ecology also played a less prominent role in the interviews. Some of the champions did talk about the importance of looking after the natural world when they promoted behaviour change to others. However, it is difficult to discern if this sentiment was about protecting the world because it is intrinsically important (deep ecology) or if it was about protecting the world as an economic resource (as would be the case with ecological modernisation). This idea was not used by many of the champions when they communicated with other people so it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

The champions drew on a discourse of deep ecology more often when they discussed their own motivations. Participants talked about the importance of protecting the natural world and having a responsibility as temporary tenants of the Earth. In this case the construction of the environment/economy relationship was more consistent with deep ecology than EM. The climate was important beyond its value as an economic resource.

However, champions did not tend to draw on a deep ecology account of human nature or social change. The account of social change in this discourse would focus on completely reconceptualising our relationship with the natural world and challenging the key values of neoliberalism. The champions rejected these components of deep ecology. They were reluctant to challenge neoliberal values and they very rarely drew on a selfless account of human nature. Often, participants would talk about the importance of the natural world alongside some kind of personal benefit such as enjoying country walks or appreciating the beauty of the nature. As with the champions' use of a discourse of justice, self-interest often played a role alongside a revolutionary account of human nature.

Democratic Citizenship

Finally, the champions often drew on a discourse of democratic citizenship when they talked about motivations and actions. When they discussed their own motivations many participants referred to a sense of responsibility and the importance of 'doing the right thing' or 'doing your bit'. They drew on the key values of democratic citizenship (responsibility, collectivism) and a more altruistic account of human nature. Champions also introduced some actions that drew on a more radical account of social change. They challenged the 'normal' lifestyle of their colleagues by promoting cycling to work and the use of public transport.

In addition, some champions drew on a more revolutionary account of the state/market relationship. They proposed a more active role for the state in the facilitation of behaviour change and the provision of subsidies for environmental products. They also entertained the notion of enforced action on climate change. This account of the state/market relationship is most reflective of democratic citizenship because it constructs the state as the embodiment of our collective goals and interests. Consequently, the key agents are individuals as citizens who have a civic duty to act towards the common good. The champions made reference to this role when they talked about the importance of collective action and the role of 'the people'.

However, this discourse was also limited in several ways. Although the champions talked about a more active role for the state, they limited this to specific actions which were reformist in nature. The state should facilitate individual action or provide subsidies so that people can participate in the market. It should enforce action on climate change but it should do this through the use of economic disincentives. In addition, when the champions talked about the need for a collective response from 'the people' they were often referring to the cumulative effect of individualistic actions rather than campaigning as a collective force. As with the other three revolutionary discourses, the overall account of social change was constrained by neoliberal conceptions of 'appropriate' actions.

8.2.3 Summary

Overall, the champions drew on all seven climate discourses when they talked about their communication with other people and their own beliefs and actions.

However, in general, reformist discourses played a much more dominant role in the accounts. The initial construction of the climate change problem was very reformist in nature (a small issue rather than a fundamental flaw) and this suggested that reformist discourses would play a dominant role in dealing with climate change.

When the champions encouraged behaviour change in others they drew on reformist accounts of human nature and reformist accounts of social change. 'Appropriate' motivations drew on neoliberal values such as progress, profit and accumulation. The champions did draw on revolutionary discourses when they talked about their own motivations but these were often combined with self-interest and limited to the interview situation. Similarly, champions who did draw on a more altruistic account of human nature and revolutionary values (fairness, responsibility) often still drew upon a reformist account of social change. Actions should be small and straightforward. They should not challenge the current neoliberal system. Reformist discourses were dominant and revolutionary sentiments were frequently 'diluted' by the components of more reformist discourses.

In chapter three I noted that there would inevitably be some overlap between discourses and that each discourse was subject to further distinctions. The analysis demonstrates that this was certainly the case when the champions talked about climate change. They drew on the components of many different discourses and combined them in a variety of ways. However, as I discussed in section 8.1, what I had not expected was the pervasiveness of neoliberalism more generally. Reformist and neoliberal discourses appeared to play a role in every aspect of climate change communication, including the process of the communication itself. This had significant implications for the role of the champions as 'passive subjects' or 'active agents'. I will discuss these roles in sections 8.3 and 8.4.

8.3 The Climate Champion as a 'Passive Subject'

Throughout the analysis I have argued that the champions mainly played the role of 'passive subject'. Neoliberal and reformist discourses were dominant and, in the second half of the thesis, I outlined five main ways in which the champions reinforced these dominant discourses. First, they reproduced these ideas in their everyday communication. The champions were constrained by dominant discourses but every time they drew on a reformist discourse they were simultaneously

constructing this as the 'normal' way to think and act. Second, many champions qualified their revolutionary sentiments. They talked about 'doing the right thing' but acknowledged that it was 'silly' or 'cliché'. They claimed to be environmental but they rejected the revolutionary construction of a traditional environmentalist. They constructed their role as a reformist and 'appropriate' version of environmentalism. The qualification or rejection of revolutionary discourses depicted reformist discourses as 'normal' and revolutionary discourses as 'abnormal'.

Third, the champions talked about 'success' in terms of small reformist actions. They were successful if they had implemented reformist actions. They measured their success against the neoliberal definition of 'appropriate' social change and reinforced this as the only possible goal to strive towards. In addition, many champions explicitly rejected fundamental change. They did not consider this at all when they evaluated the success of their efforts. Fourth, many of the champions identified problems with self-interested motivations for climate-protecting behaviour. However, they continued to draw on self-interested motivations (e.g., co-benefits) to encourage action in others. Finally, the champions delivered the message of climate change in a way that was consistent with neoliberal values. They did not challenge other people's beliefs about climate change and they did not tell them what they should be doing. As I pointed out in section 8.1, I did the same thing when it came to the delivery of the reports. We all acted as passive subjects in the delivery of the climate change message.

It is important to note that the language used by the champions did vary according to context. During the interview many of the champions did talk about what *should* be done to tackle the problem of climate change. They mainly drew on revolutionary discourses when they discussed their personal motivations for engaging in climate protecting behaviour or becoming involved in the project. In contrast, when they communicated with their colleagues and managers, they did not 'preach' about what should be done and they mainly used reformist motivations as opposed to their own revolutionary beliefs. However, most of the champions reinforced reformist and neoliberal discourses in all contexts in one way or another. There were no champions who encouraged behaviour change in others purely on the basis of revolutionary motivations and no one talked about the promotion of purely revolutionary actions. Very few champions talked about their revolutionary

motivations in the interview without any qualification and most champions rejected the notion of fundamental change.

We should not be surprised that the champions acted as 'passive subjects'. They were promoting behaviour change in an institution at the very 'heart' of neoliberalism: the large corporation. The climate champion project itself was based on a neoliberal account of social change and the champions were responsible for promoting individual behaviour change in the workplace. They were constrained by dominant neoliberal and reformist discourses. In the reproduction of discourse there is always the possibility of resistance. However 'in a great many cases, power relations are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and allow an extremely limited margin of freedom' (Foucault 1984a, p.35). The champions certainly appeared to have a very limited capacity for resistance.

8.4 The Climate Champion as an 'Active Agent'

Given the dominance of neoliberal and reformist discourses and the general 'passivity' of the champions, it was unlikely that there would be a significant challenge to dominant discourses. Throughout the analysis I have argued that resistance was evident but that it was very limited. Specifically, throughout the interviews, I identified four types of resistance. First, champions did draw on revolutionary discourses when they talked about their own motivations. I have acknowledged that these motivations were not communicated to colleagues and that they were often diluted with self-interested concerns. However, the champions did challenge dominant discourses at one site of interaction (their conversation with me) and some champions talked about revolutionary values and accounts of human nature without qualification. Second, the champions did acknowledge the problems associated with self-interest and climate-protecting behaviour. For example, they argued that some of their colleagues had joined the climate champion project for self-interested reasons, such as improving their career prospects. In many case this had led to high attrition levels and a sense of territoriality within the network. Therefore some champions did question the 'naturalness' of self-interest as a motivation for climate-protecting behaviour. However, this critique of neoliberal or reformist discourse was again limited to the interview situation. They continued to appeal to self-interest when they encouraged behaviour change in others.

Third, some champions did accept the need for fundamental change. They did not promote revolutionary accounts of social change to other people but they did consider the implications and feasibility of long term structural change. For example, some participants talked about the potential necessity of reducing air miles and the use of cars. Finally, some champions did talk about challenging mind-sets with reference to revolutionary ideas and actions. For example, champions in Business A introduced the use of a wormery. In both of these examples, however, the resistance was only evident in a small number of interviews.

We must therefore consider the significance of these very limited examples of resistance. It could be argued that the constant reinforcement of reformist discourses does indeed 'eliminate the threat' of resistance (Taylor and Carroll 2009, p.53). Revolutionary discourses played a much less significant role in the interviews than neoliberal or reformist discourses and they were seldom used without some form of qualification.

However, it could also be argued that the champions were introducing the (very slight) beginnings of more fundamental change. Some champions did talk about revolutionary motivations without qualification. Others entertained the possibility of fundamental change. These individuals were not promoting a reformist version of environmentalism; they were challenging the dominant neoliberal and reformist discourses. This kind of resistance was not evident in all of the interviews and revolutionary sentiments were often limited to the interview situation but resistance was there. Caldwell (2007) argues that even localised resistance contributes to the subversion of dominant discourses:

Discursive resistance appears to be everywhere: it traverses all power relations, it flows through its networks and it assumes a multiplicity of localised and distributed forms. This allows the possibility of multiple subject positions to emerge within discourses and so discourses can be subverted by alternative subject discourses (p.776).

Discursive resistance was not 'everywhere' in the interviews, it was very limited. However, it may be that the localised forms of resistance that I have identified are enough to trigger the beginnings of change and to pose a challenge to the dominant discourses. The champions were part of a network that was gradually spreading the message of climate change, including the examples of resistance. They were not changing the world, but they were operating in a very 'limited margin of freedom'

(Foucault 1984a, p.35). Given the dominance of neoliberalism, any form of resistance might be an important first step towards change.

8.5 Final Considerations

Overall, the project generated many interesting conclusions about the role of climate discourse in everyday communication. I took an empirical approach to the problem of climate change and used discourse analysis to address my research questions. In this final section I will reflect on the project more generally. In section 8.5.1, I will evaluate the usefulness of a discursive approach in the context of the project. I will also consider the different discourses and components that I set out at the beginning and how these could be developed for future projects. In section 8.5.2, I will evaluate the methodology of the project. I will argue that the project was subject to some methodological limitations in terms of generalisations. In addition, I will discuss how the scope of the project could have been extended to strengthen the analysis. Finally, section 8.5.3 will consider some further research questions that have come out of the analysis and the normative implications of the project.

8.5.1 A Discursive Approach

A discursive approach to climate change proved to be a very useful way to analyse the issue. Drawing on the work of Dryzek (1997) I identified climate discourses through an analysis of their fundamental components. The components were the relationship between the state and the market, the relationship between the environment and the economy, the account of human nature, the role of key agents, key values and the account of social change. These components allowed me to carry out a systematic analysis of climate discourses in the interview data. In general, some components were used more than others and some components were particularly relevant to a specific aspect of the analysis. For example, the components 'account of human nature' and 'key values' were used frequently throughout the analysis and were drawn on in many different contexts. In contrast, the component 'account of social change' was more relevant to a specific context: the analysis of 'appropriate' actions. However, I did draw on all six components over the course of the analysis and this proved to be a useful way to investigate the everyday communication of climate change.

214

In section 8.2, I talked about the different combinations of discourse components. As predicted at the beginning of the thesis, there was overlap between the components of particular discourses and the seven discourses that I used were subject to further distinctions. There were two particular combinations that occurred several times. First, many champions drew on revolutionary components when they talked about their own motivations. They would draw on key values such as responsibility for the planet and the importance of the environment over the economy. However, they would also introduce a self-interested account of human nature (e.g., they enjoyed walking in the countryside). Self-interest in this case was not based on economic gain but it was still a reformist construction of human nature. I labelled this discourse 'anthropocentric environmentalism'. In addition, many champions talked about the importance of collective action (where the key agent would be an active citizen) but then combined this with individualistic actions (where the key agent would act more like a passive consumer). I argued that this hybrid role of the citizen-consumer indicated a 'new' discourse of 'collective individualism'. There was, of course, further overlap of different discourses, but these were two prominent examples. If I was to carry out this kind of research in the future I would consider adding these two variations to my seven climate discourses.

Overall, this discursive approach has made an important contribution to the theoretical literature on climate change. I have provided a systematic analysis of climate discourses in the same way that Dryzek (1997) categorised environmental discourses. For the purpose of the thesis, I used this analysis to investigate the role of 'climate champions' in large corporations. However, the theoretical framework could be applied to a variety of other environmental contexts (e.g., analysis of environmental policy). In addition, the theoretical framework contributes to the current approaches to studying climate change and individual behaviour change. It allows us to analyse the operation of discourse in everyday communication and understand how discourse contributes to 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' climate-protecting behaviour.

8.5.2   Methodological Limitations

One of the main problems with the methodology was that the potential for generalisations was very limited. I discussed this issue in detail in chapter four. My

initial intention had been to interview champions in a wide range of business sectors. I had hoped to generate conclusions that could be applied to corporate climate champion schemes more generally. However, without prior contacts in the business sector, I found it difficult to gain access to the champions. My final sample of eight businesses only covered five different sectors (consultancy, energy, finance, construction and retail). Of course, the main purpose of a qualitative project is to produce a detailed picture of a particular social phenomenon. Qualitative work does not necessarily aim to offer broad generalisations. However, it would be useful to be able to apply the conclusions of this project to the wider business context. Ideally, the project would have included businesses across a wider range of sectors.

The analysis might also have benefited from a wider range of perspectives. In hindsight, I could have extended the 'scope' of the project in two ways. First, if I had used interviews and participant observation this might have provided further insight into some important aspects of climate change communication. I discussed the role of participant observation in chapter four. Some researchers argue that the only way to obtain 'valid and accurate data' is to engage in participant observation (Becker and Greer 1969, p.323). I acknowledged that participant observation would provide a first-hand account of how the champions communicated with their colleagues. However, I argued that interviews would provide a first-hand account of how the champions communicated with me and, either way, I would have a first-hand account of the communication of climate change. In light of some of my findings, however, participant observation may indeed have been useful. When the champions talked to me about their motivations they generally drew on revolutionary ideas. They told me that when they promoted behaviour change in the workplace they talked about the co-benefits of action (a reformist theme). Context appeared to play an important role in the construction of 'appropriate' language and behaviour. It would have been interesting to have directly analysed communication in the workplace as well as in the interview situation.

In addition, it would have been useful to have interviewed the champions' (non-champion) colleagues. The champions had very clear ideas about the messages that people would listen to and the behaviours that they would engage in. However, it might have been the case that non-champions had the same beliefs and motivations as the champions themselves. This kind of perspective would also have strengthened the analysis. Of course, any extension to the project would have required more time and

resources. Participant observation and non-champion interviews would have generated more data and required further transcription and analysis. This was beyond the scope of this project. However, it does introduce some potential issues for further research. I will discuss this in more detail in section 8.5.3.

The methodology did have some limitations. However, it also had some important strengths. Most importantly, the project illustrates that discourse analysis is a useful approach for the study of climate change communication. The same approach could be usefully applied to research on climate champions in other contexts.

8.5.3 *Further Research and Normative Implications*

The conclusions of the project suggested many further questions. In this section I will consider three areas of further research including the potential normative implications of the project.

The first area that would benefit from further investigation is the views of the non-champions. There were many points in the interviews where it would have been useful to hear the 'other side of the story'. For example, the champions promoted reformist actions by appealing to reformist motivations. They argued that this was the most effective way to encourage behaviour change. If we were to ask non-champions about their motivations would they draw on reformist ideas or would they too talk about concern for future generations and the natural world? How would they have reacted to the champions' personal motivations? The analysis showed that, in a few cases, the champions did promote actions that were a little out of the ordinary. The introduction of the wormery was gradually accepted by champions and non-champions in Business A. Would non-champions have accepted other revolutionary actions and motivations if the champions had introduced them? In the previous section, I acknowledged that this kind of investigation was beyond the scope of the current project. However, it would be an interesting piece of research that would build on the conclusions of the thesis.

It would also be interesting to apply this discursive perspective to climate champions in other businesses and sectors of society. Do all champions have the same ideas about 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' language and behaviour? It might be the case that champions in different business sectors promote different actions or that champions outside of the business context have a wider capacity for resistance. I

would argue that neoliberalism has a significant influence on the whole of society and therefore we would expect reformist discourses to be dominant in many different areas. It would be interesting to find out if this was actually the case.

Finally, throughout the thesis I have argued that the conclusions of this empirical project could be used as the basis for more normative work. There are three main points to draw out here, which might provide suggestions of best practice for businesses as well as policy makers and NGOs. First, neoliberalism played an important role in the construction of barriers to climate-protecting behaviour. Empirically, this simply tells us that neoliberal discourse was having an important effect on the beliefs and actions of the champions and their colleagues. Normatively, it implies that the reformist version of neoliberalism is not dealing effectively with climate change. For example, despite the champions' attempts to re-direct self-interest towards climate-protecting behaviour, this neoliberal value still led to the prioritisation of other concerns above the climate. This conclusion provides the basis for one particular critique of neoliberal environmental governance. The use of self-interest as a motivation does not necessarily lead to climate-protecting behaviour. In many cases it has proved to be an obstacle to behaviour change. Therefore, we might want to look for 'better' ways to motivate climate-protecting behaviour.

Businesses, NGOs and policy makers may need to engage with concepts such as 'environmental citizenship' (Bell 2005) or 'ecological citizenship' (Dobson 2003), which I introduced as part of the discourse of 'democratic citizenship' in chapter three. Rather than focusing on self-interest, 'the environmental citizen's behaviour will be influenced by an attitude that is – in part, at least – informed by the knowledge that what is good for me as an individual is not necessarily good for me as a member of a social collectivity' (Dobson and Bell 2006, p.5). Businesses and NGOs that wish to promote climate-protecting behaviour might consider introducing individuals to the moral arguments surrounding climate change. Similarly, government programmes for behaviour change might focus on environmental citizenship as part of the education of young people[33].

Second, the champions did demonstrate the capacity for resistance in the interview situation. They talked about revolutionary motivations and, as I discussed in the previous paragraph, they challenged some aspects of neoliberalism. The fact

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[33] Hayward (2012) provides an interesting discussion of this in her recent book, 'Children, Citizenship Environment'.

that resistance was limited to one site of interaction (their conversation with me) does limit the potential of the champions to be 'active agents'. However, this resistance does have some normative implications. If the champions had the capacity to consider revolutionary ideas then we might assume that other people have the same capacity. Therefore, we might speculate that a more deliberative approach to behaviour change would have some merits. Getting people to talk about climate change and to engage with different climate discourses might be a 'better' way to deal with the problem[34]. This is another example of potential 'best practice' for organisations and policy makers. Climate champions in businesses and NGOs might consider the use of focus groups to allow staff to talk about their motivations for (not) acting to protect the climate. Similarly, new institutions such as citizen's juries or deliberative forums might prove useful in the formulation of climate policy and the promotion of pro-environmental behaviour more generally[35].

Finally, although resistance was very limited, neoliberal climate discourses are not without challenge. For critical commentators on neoliberal environmentalism, resistance is not futile. Resistance was limited to specific contexts and it was often constrained by neoliberal and reformist ideas, but it was still there. It may be that these 'sites of resistance' are the (very slight) beginnings of change and that cumulative action by these networks of individuals are an invaluable tool in tackling climate change. As suggested in my reports to the businesses (Appendix A), the networks of champions may be usefully expanded to further promote successful and long-term behaviour change. The climate champion 'network' model may be usefully applied to any organisation that does not currently employ this kind of approach.

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[34] I have explored some of these deliberative issues in a collaborative paper (Swaffield and Bell 2012). Please see Appendix F.
[35] For further discussion of some of these approaches see Baber and Bartlett 2005 and Backstrand *et al* 2010.

Appendix A
Summary of Analytical Categories and Climate Discourses

Analytical Category / Climate Discourse	Environment/ Economy	State/Market	Role of Key Agents	Account of Human Nature	Key Values	Account of Social Change
Ecological Modernisation	Harmonious, 'win-win' relationship. Environment treated as society's substance base. Environmental problems taken seriously	Co-operative but market is dominant. Increased power of the market. Command/control → Economic Instruments	Government, business and scientists as technical and managerial 'experts'. Business providing 'green' innovation and products	Individuals constructed as self-interested	Growth Profit Progress	Gradual Incremental
Individualism	Harmonious relationship. Environment protected through the promotion and purchase of 'green' products and services	Co-operative but market is dominant. Focus on consumer 'choice' rather than state regulation	Individual consumers acting as neoliberal subjects. Business structuring the choice of products and services	Individuals constructed as self-interested	Growth Consumption Freedom/Choice Knowledge	Gradual Incremental
Privatisation	Harmonious relationship. Environment is protected through its valuation as an economic commodity	Co-operative but market is dominant. Problem of climate change is transferred to the private sector	Individuals and corporations who are involved in a system of property rigths	Individuals constructed as self-interested	Property Rights Profit	Gradual Incremental
Sufficiency	Harmonious relationship. Local economy leads to fewer emissions and less environmental impact	Market still dominant but focus is on a local market supported by and supporting the community	Individuals working towards the overall well-being of the community	Beyond self-interest. Considering good of the whole community	Limits Well-being Quality of Life	Redefining 'progress' and 'development'
Justice	Harmonious relationship where the protection of the planet and a stable, just economy go 'hand in hand'	State is dominant. State should ensure that the market is just and impose regulation	Focus on individuals (incl. gender, race, socio-economic situation). Non-human nature, future generations	Individuals are capable of acting justly	Fairness Responsibility Human Rights	Redefining goals and addressing climate change as 'ethical' issue
Deep Ecology	Environment must be separated from the economy. Environment is intrinsically important and not a resource	State is dominant. State should take responsibility for the protection of the natural world	Focus on eco-systems, non-human nature and the natural world	Individuals are capable of taking an eco-centric perspective on nature	Intrinsic value of the natural world	Fundamental reconceptualization of our relationship with nature
Democratic Citizenship	Protection of the environment is a political issue. There is no real relationship between the environment and the economy	State is dominant. Need for a collective response to climate change as represented by the state	Focus on individuals as change agent or an active citizen	Individuals are capable of being altruistic and thinking about the good of society	Collectivism Responsibility Deliberation Common Good	Fundamental challenge to neoliberal values

Appendix B
Example Climate Champion Report

Business/Case Study A (April 2010)

Introduction/Overview

This report summarises some preliminary findings of a Ph.D. project at Newcastle University. The overall purpose of the project is to investigate the communication of climate change in large corporations. As part of this, research questions have focused on the role of 'climate champions' (individuals who have been given responsibility for communicating these issues in the workplace). Interviews have been conducted with 'climate champions' in three large corporations, including Business A. At Business A, ten champions took part in hour-long interviews which focused on the role itself and their own thoughts/ideas on how best to tackle climate change. These individuals included both office and field based staff. The sample also included representatives from the [Location X] offices and around the country. This report focuses mainly on the role itself, including successes, best practice in communication, obstacles and suggestions for future projects.

Getting Involved

The interviews began with a question about why the champions initially got involved in the project. The majority of respondents said that they had seen an email advertising the project. Their desire to be involved was either rooted in a pre-existing/personal commitment to tackling environmental problems or simply an 'interest' or 'curiosity' in what the project may involve. One champion stated that, 'learning more about what you could do appealed to me'. Other champions said that they felt it made sense to be involved in this type of project given the type of work they were doing at Business A on a daily basis.

Main Successes

When asked about the main successes of the project, most champions referred to initiatives which are outlined in [Business A publication]. These included the 'Food for Thought' campaign, printing double sided and recycling. Field based champions also

mentioned the effort of drivers to check tyre pressure and remove unnecessary weight from vans. When talking about success, the majority of champions referred to an improvement in general awareness. One respondent said that they had 'opened people's eyes a little bit'. Staff who had not been directly involved in the project had been interested in both the initiatives and the outcomes. One champions reported 'pleasant surprise' when colleagues asked to see a copy of the audit. Several respondents also said that non-champion colleagues were quite proud of their own efforts and were eager to point out that they had recycled or remembered to turn monitors off.

Another point made by one or two of the champions was that their involvement in the program had improved their personal climate-protecting behaviour. They reported being more aware of their actions at home as well as at work. This acknowledgement of an improvement in personal behaviour came mainly from those who had joined the program out of general interest rather than prior environmental concern. One such respondent suggested that perhaps it would be beneficial to give this role to people without prior environmental concern. Once they had 'converted', the role could be passed on.

Keys to Success

Given the many successes that came out of the project, respondents were then asked about the 'keys to success'.

'Buy-in'

An important factor with most respondents was 'buy-in' from management. Several champions said that top management were very positive about the project but that middle management had not been as engaged. Therefore, when staff 'on the ground' wanted to implement a behaviour change initiative their line manager was not always co-operative. This problem was not mentioned by everyone and some champions reported very supportive line managers. However, for those who did have a problem in this area it was quite a significant challenge. Other champions reported that buy-in from areas such as facilities was also very important in the process of implementing change.

Communication

Good communication was another area reported to be important for success. Being able to communicate effectively with both other champions and non-champion staff was imperative to making a change. A few of the respondents also mentioned the importance of getting feedback from non-champion staff, referring to a 'two-way process'. They felt that it was important to not only provide guidance but also listen to what people thought and involve them in the process of change by taking their ideas and comments on board.

'Being Visible'

Many champions stated that their presence in an office was usually enough to remind people about their environmental behaviour. As mentioned above, many non-champion employees were proud to show champions that they were engaging in climate-protecting behaviour. However, some respondents reported the same response from people who thought they were being monitored. So, for example, at a printer they would get people who would say 'look at me, I'm printing double sided (i.e. aren't I good!)' and also those who would say 'you can check if you like, I am doing it (i.e. don't tell me off!)'. The visibility of champions seemed to produce both of these responses and the result in both cases was more climate-protecting behaviour.

Some respondents also suggested that their presence was important as a source of information. Staff would, for example, ask about material for recycling if they were unsure which bin to put it in. Finally, many respondents also stated that their presence in an office was important as an example to others. They would make sure they had recycled correctly and avoided unnecessary waste. They cited various reasons for the importance of this example. These included demonstrating that it was the 'right thing to do' and showing people that it was 'not difficult to do'.

The idea of visibility is not so straightforward in the case of field based champions. However, a few of the respondents who were field based reported that their involvement in helping with van audits made a difference to staff behaviour.

Targets

The importance of targets was an idea which elicited varied responses. For many people having targets to work towards was a very important part of the climate champion process. They said that it was 'motivating to have something to aim towards' and that the audits gave 'focus to the project'. A few people said that they had got involved primarily because the targets seemed achievable. One person also suggested that having targets was the key to the champion program, backed by company policy.

However, for some champions, targets signalled an end to the project. Given that the focus of the project was the environment they did not feel that it should 'end' once the targets had been achieved. It was suggested that the targets should be re-set every year so that the process was on-going.

Monitoring

A few of the respondents referred to the importance of monitoring to ensure success. They said that they closely monitored staff performance in terms of turning off equipment, for example. They felt that this ensured staff compliance. This could possibly be linked to the idea of visibility where employees were conscious that their behaviour was being checked. However, those who did carry out close monitoring acknowledged that they worked in smaller offices where this was easier to do.

'Something Tangible'

Another point made by a few champions was the importance of having something to show people. So, one champion claimed that the presentation of facts was important. If staff were given facts about the environment and climate change then they had 'something to grasp onto'; something they could see. Another champion referred to the wormery at the head office. They said that this was important because 'you could see the end product...you could see the benefit to a community centre'.

A few respondents also referred to posters that had been put up in offices. The poster would explain that, 'lighting an office overnight wastes enough energy to heat water for 1000 cups of tea'. The champions felt that this message was also tangible for people; they could see the potential effect of their efforts.

Getting the Message Across

Given the overall focus of the Ph.D., champions were specifically asked about how they communicated with colleagues. A number of different ideas came out of this question. For many champions the key to success in this area was 'not being too preachy'. Respondents said that they were not keen to pester people. This was especially true of respondents who expressed a personal commitment towards climate-protecting behaviour. One champion said that they did not want too 'get high and mighty' because people simply stop listening. Instead, most respondents reported that they tried to make the message 'light-hearted' and 'fun'. Those who used this approach said that they had made a lot of progress with staff who were previously disengaged.

A frequently cited example of best practice in this area was the 'Food for Thought' campaign. This campaign 'got people's attention' and therefore made that initial contact with staff who then came across to see what the champions were doing.

The Climate Champion 'Network'

Respondents were also asked about their views on the advantages of a 'networked' approach. Feedback on this was generally very positive. Respondents said that it was a good way to have different things happening in different places. They also reported that it was helpful to share ideas and to 'know you had that support from other champions'. Simply knowing that there were other people, 'fighting the same cause' with the same level of enthusiasm was very important for many respondents.

The network was referred to as a 'chain reaction' since the 'message spreads very quickly' through it. It was also said to be 'infectious' and that it 'makes you feel included' which is important for change. Some of the newer champions said that it was good for them to be able to connect with others and see what had been done and what had and had not worked well.

Improving the Network

There were also suggestions about how the network might work better in the future.

More Champions

One of the main suggestions that came out of the interviews was the need for more champions. Many respondents felt that, given more support from a wider network, they could have been more successful. In relation to this one respondent suggested having different levels of engagement. So, for example having main climate champions who did most of the work, but then having other members of staff who had committed to a certain level of engagement and could help out with events or audits when further resources were required.

Location of Champions

There were also some suggestions about the importance of where champions are in relation to staff. A few respondents suggested that it would be beneficial to locate champions according to the numbers of staff in each office. For example, to have one champion per 100 members of staff. One respondent also suggested it would useful to have the champions spread out around the country more to ensure that the network represented everyone. A final suggestion was based on the observation by one champion that it is difficult for a field based champion to look after field based staff. Although they have the advantage of knowing what field based staff are dealing with, the communication is difficult because they all have to take time after work to check emails etc. The suggestion was that an office based champion should be responsible for field based staff so that the communication was easier.

Types of Champions

Another suggestion was that it would be beneficial to have champions who represented different sectors and levels in the business. The network could then represent all levels of management and staff as well as the different parts of the company. The respondent who suggested this thought that it would help in three ways. First, it would provide the champion network with information about the needs of every sector and level. Second, it would allow effective communication to everyone. Finally, the respondent pointed out that different levels of staff have different capabilities. For example, junior staff may have 'more

time on their hands', whereas senior management have more power in terms of decision making.

One respondent suggested that it may be important in the future to tailor messages to specific areas, for example the field or the office. They felt that many of the messages were aimed at office staff and therefore were not relevant to people in the field. It may be that ensuring wide representation in the network could overcome this problem.

Attrition Levels

Many respondents also pointed out that there have been champions who had joined and then left the network. Particularly in contact centres, one respondent said that attrition levels were as high as 20%. Most respondents felt that it was important to ensure that these champions are replaced.

A few people suggested the importance of introducing the climate champion project as part of the induction process when new people joined the business. This would potentially bring in 'new recruits' for the project. One respondent also thought that it was important to have new champions every once in a while to generate 'fresh ideas'. Introducing the climate champion programme to new starters would potentially produce this.

Climate Champion Leads

There were also suggestions about having a lead environment person in each office/part of the field. Different reasons for this were put forward by different people. Some champions felt that, although they were dedicated to the role, it would be helpful to have someone checking up on them and giving them a gentle nudge every now and again. One person stated that 'if you don't lead people they get complacent, even when they're willing'. Others felt this would just give the project more structure. One respondent suggested that perhaps the environment lead in each office could be a full time position which every champion took on for a while.

Sharing Best Practice

The idea of sharing best practice was an issue with varied responses. Some champions felt that this was done very well and that they knew what was going on throughout

the network. Others, however, felt that this could have been done a lot better. There were suggestions about sharing the things that people were good at. For example, some champions had worked in marketing and had been able to create impressive posters and stickers. A few of the respondents felt that it would be good to have champions in marketing sharing the resources that they had created while other champions contributed things that they had access to or could do well.

Meetings and Communication

Many of the champions felt that increased communication would have been helpful. This was cited as important both within the network and with non-champion staff. Within the network many respondents felt there could have been more meetings. Particularly with champions based outside of [Location X] or in the field there was a sense that this would have been helpful.

Regular communication in the form of newsletters or a web forum was also suggested as a way to improve the network. One champion thought that it was important to make communication as 'human as possible'. They felt it was important for champions to use these mediums to demonstrate what they had done and how it had been successful both at work and at home.

Obstacles

Aside from improvements that could be made to the network, champions were also asked about general obstacles they had faced.

People Problems

Although attitudes in general were said to be quite positive, where there was an obstacle it was people's attitudes that were given as the main example. People claimed they did not have time to recycle or that it was too complicated to print double-sided. Cynicism towards climate change was also reported to be a problem by some respondents. When asked about possible ways to overcome these problems, most respondents referred back to effective communication. They said that they tried to maintain a positive approach and persevere with people. Many respondents tried to lead by example and show people that it was easy to do these things.

Momentum

A major obstacle for many of the respondents was keeping the momentum going with the project. Many respondents stated that since the launch of the initial project there has been some slippage back to old habits. One respondent suggested that it would be useful to have an audit before the launch of another project. This would show how patterns have changed since the success of the previous campaign. The main thought from most respondents was that there was the need for events every once in a while to 'breathe life back into the project'.

Financial Support

For some respondents the issue of financial support was a very big obstacle. In one office, for example, there was no recycling at all due to lack of funds. Another champion talked about an idea to switch to china mugs instead of plastic cups in a vending machine. This was not followed through due to lack of finance. The majority of the respondents acknowledged that a business could not possibly invest in everything. However, many felt that there were small investments that could have been made and that these would have had a big impact on the project. One respondent also thought that small incentives were a good way to get 'buy-in' from a lot of the staff.

The 'Climate Champion' Title

For many people having designated climate champions was very important for tackling behaviour change. People knew who to go to when they had problems, they had someone monitoring their progress and encouraging them. However, a few respondents did point out a problem with the idea of specifically designating the role. One respondent felt that it was important that like-minded people had been brought together, but that this excluded those who had not volunteered and were therefore potentially not as committed in the first place. Also, if the role was specifically given to someone, others became complacent about what they had to do. For example, non-champions would suggest that a poster was made to encourage energy saving, but they would not make it themselves. They felt this was not their 'role' and therefore did not do it. This does seem an important point but the benefits expressed in favour of having the designated role outnumbered the obstacles expressed against it.

Individual Time

The respondents were asked how much time they felt they needed to commit to the role of climate champion. This question generated many different responses. The majority of respondents said that it was difficult to put a time stamp on it and that it depended on what they were engaged in at any given time. Many reported that they needed more time when it came to doing audits or setting up a new system or project. The majority of these respondents said that they would need less time if there was a wider network of champions supporting them. Those that did give an idea of the time needed suggested anywhere between 15 hours a month and one day every three months.

For all respondents, however, having enough time was cited as an obstacle in itself. Given that they were mostly doing full time roles alongside the project, the majority felt they could not commit to the project 100%. A few respondents said it would be helpful if there was allocated time for the role. One person suggested that allocating specific time for the role would indicate 'authentic buy in' from the business.

Project Length

In terms of time, respondents were also asked about the timescale of the project itself. Some respondents felt that it had been a sensible length. One person said that 'it didn't drag and we didn't feel rushed to hit deadlines'. Other respondents, however, felt it should have gone on for longer. One champion thought that a year was a more feasible length in terms of implementing change. However, for many of the champions, their role was something that did not end. It was said to be 'on-going' and that it 'never stops'. One respondent claimed that it 'must become intrinsic to everyday thinking'. For some respondents therefore the very idea of a 'project' was the wrong way to approach it because projects have to come to an end.

Conclusion

Overall, the climate champions at Business A appear to have been involved in a very successful project (programme, initiative, concept...). The ideas that were rolled out by the champions generated some real success in terms of changing behaviour and created a network where they could all turn for support and advice. There were many ideas put forward

for improvements to this network and the project in general. These ideas have come out of experience and more lessons will be learned as the project develops further. This can only strengthen the process. The majority of the individuals that were involved said that they did feel they had made a positive difference in the workplace. For many of them this had extended into their personal lives with more climate-protecting behaviour, engagement in other environmental projects and further learning.

Appendix C

Preliminary Research: Interviews and Observation

Trialling Phase

Informal interview with climate champion 1
- 5th May, 2009: 11.00

Informal interview with climate champion 2
- 28th May, 2009: 09.30

Pilot Study

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 1
29th June, 2009: 15.00

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 2
30th June, 2009: 11.00

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 3
30th June, 2009: 14.00

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 4
1st July, 2009: 14.30

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 5
6th July, 2009: 09.30

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 6
10th July, 2009: 10.30

Interview with environmental co-ordinator 7
16th July, 2009: 15.00

Observation

Global Action Plan: Eco teams facilitator training event
- 23rd September, 2009: 13.00-17.00

NUSSL: Student Footprints/Carbon Audit training event
- 14th October, 2009: 10.00-16.00

Global Action Plan: Eco teams participant training event
- 7th November, 2009: 9.00-15.00

Appendix D
Interview Questionnaire

Part 1

- How did you get involved in the champion role?
- What are the main functions of the role?
- How do you encourage behaviour change in the workplace?
- What do you think are the main barriers to behaviour change?
- What are your main successes to date?
- What do you think are the advantages of a networked/champion approach?
- How could the network be improved?
- What kinds of obstacles have you faced in your role?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these could be tackled?
- How much time do you think needs to be committed to the role?
- Would you take on the role again?

Part 2

- Do you consider yourself to be environmental?
- If so, what do you think influenced this?
- What were your personal motivations for taking on the role in the first place?
- What did it mean to you to be a climate champion?
- How did other people respond to you?
- What are your views on climate change?
- What do you think should be done about climate change?
- Who do you think is responsible for climate change?
- Do you feel as if you understand climate change as an issue?
- Do you talk to other people about climate change?
- If so, how do you talk to other people about climate change?
- Do you think we have to change the way we live?
- Do you think we can change the way we live?
- How successful do you feel you have been?
- Are you making a difference?

Appendix E:

Detailed Information on Interviews

Managers

Manager	Business Sector	Date	Time	Type	Length
A-manager	Energy	2nd December, 2009	10.00	In person	1.01.59
B-manager	Finance	13th November, 2009	11.00	In person	52.06
C-manager	Consultancy	23rd September, 2009	10.30	In person	57.46
D-manager	Finance	10th August, 2009	13.00	In person	24.20
E-manager	Finance	23rd October 2009	11.00	Telephone	33.51
F-manager	Retail	26th October, 2009	14.00	Telephone	45.25
G-manager	Construction	6th November, 2009	09.00	In person	1.22.46
H-manager	Construction	26th January, 2010	10.30	In person	42.28

Case Study A

Champion	Business Sector	Date	Time	Type	Length
A-1	Energy	9th March, 2010	14.00	In person	56.12
A-2	Energy	16th March, 2010	11.00	In person	1.01.54
A-3	Energy	16th March, 2010	14.00	In person	51.49
A-4	Energy	17th March, 2010	14.00	In person	1.13.40
A-5	Energy	19th March, 2010	12.00	Telephone	48.04
A-6	Energy	22nd March, 2010	11.30	In person	1.06.43
A-7	Energy	25th March, 2010	10.00	In person	50.18
A-8	Energy	25th March, 2010	11.15	In person	32.30
A-9	Energy	14th April, 2010	15.00	Telephone	54.10
A-10	Energy	16th April, 2010	14.00	In person	41.55

Case Study B

Champion	Business Sector	Date	Time	Type	Length
B-1	Finance	7th April, 2010	11.00	Telephone	1.05.20
B-2	Finance	14th April, 2010	17.30	Telephone	51.00
B-3	Finance	21st April, 2010	09.30	Telephone	47.51
B-4	Finance	23rd April, 2010	09.30	Telephone	1.00.50
B-5	Finance	23rd April, 2010	15.30	Telephone	58.49
B-6	Finance	28th April, 2010	15.00	Telephone	46.46
B-7	Finance	30th April, 2010	16.00	Telephone	31.16
B-8	Finance	12th May, 2010	09.00	Telephone	57.24

Case Study C

Champion	Business Sector	Date	Time	Type	Length
C-1	Consultancy	20th April, 2010	09.00	In person	1.05.32
C-2	Consultancy	20th April, 2010	10.00	In person	53.45
C-3	Consultancy	21st April, 2010	17.30	Telephone	55.10
C-4	Consultancy	22nd April, 2010	11.00	Telephone	37.45
C-5	Consultancy	1st May, 2010	11.00	Telephone	49.04
C-6	Consultancy	4th May, 2010	11.30	In person	1.08.15
C-7	Consultancy	17th May, 2010	10.30	In person	59.58
C-8	Consultancy	20th May, 2010	15.00	In person	49.18
C-9	Consultancy	10th May, 2010	9.00	In person	57.44
C-10	Consultancy	10th May, 2010	10.00	In person	1.02.31

Case Study D[36]

Champions	Business Sector	Date	Time	Type	Length
D1-8	Finance	10th August, 2009	13.30	In person	52.21

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[36] This case study consisted of a one hour focus group.

Can 'climate champions' save the planet?

A critical reflection on neoliberal social change

Joanne Swaffield and Derek Bell

Can 'climate champions' save the planet? A critical reflection on neoliberal social change

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Many organisations in both public and private sectors have recognised the challenge posed by climate change and have developed 'Climate Champion', 'Green Team' or 'Environmental Coordinator' schemes. On the basis of interviews with 36 champions in large organisations and analysis of their role as 'environmental citizens' in the workplace, it is argued that, overall, the champions are thoroughly embedded in a neoliberal understanding of social change. They conceived of their colleagues (and their employers) as neoliberal agents and accepted that a neoliberal ethic should govern their relations with others. However, when asked about their own motivations for action, champions used a much wider range of discourses. They often appealed to ideas of 'justice', 'responsibility to future generations' and 'doing the right thing'. Encouraging climate champions to engage in 'ordinary moral reasoning' about climate change with their colleagues might be an important first step to prompting critical reflection on the limits of a neoliberal approach to social change.

Keywords: climate champion; climate change; discourse; environmental citizenship; neoliberalism

International surveys on climate change report 'consistently high and rising public concern across all countries' (Hale 2010, p. 262). In a survey of 16 nations an average of 60% of people said that they believed climate change to be 'very serious', while a further 33% believed it to be 'somewhat serious' (World Bank 2010). There is widespread recognition of the threat posed by climate change. However, public concern about climate change (in surveys) has not been accompanied by significant social change to reduce energy consumption or even to adapt to the likely effects of climate change. As a result, there is considerable interest among academics and policymakers in attempts to explain our failure to achieve social change (so far) and in

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developing proposals to stimulate climate-protecting social change in the future.

We aim to contribute to the study of climate-protecting social change by critically examining one way of promoting climate-protecting behaviour that has become popular in large organisations. Many organisations in both public and private sectors have developed 'Climate Champion', 'Green Team' or 'Environmental Co-ordinator' schemes. These schemes are designed to 'establish a network of individuals to lead on environmental initiatives throughout the business', as stated in an anonymous business's corporate social responsibility (CSR) report. Ideally, these designated individuals are strategically located across the company and it is expected that their collective effort will help to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions of the organisation and promote climate-friendly behaviour among employees. As we understand them, climate champion schemes aim to facilitate a 'bottom-up' approach to stimulating climate-protecting change by mobilising 'environmental citizens' inside organisations. Despite its increasing popularity, this type of scheme has received very little attention from researchers.

We focus on climate champion schemes in multinational companies. Many large companies, including Aviva, Coca Cola, EDF Energy, Tesco and Virgin, have introduced climate champion schemes to promote pro-environmental change from the 'bottom-up' but there have been very few academic studies of these schemes. This is an important gap in the literature given the environmental impact of large corporations. Multinational corporations are among the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (Sæverud and Skjærseth 2007). Large companies have therefore come under pressure to 'do their bit' toward mitigating climate change by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions (Weinhofer and Hoffmann 2010). They have responded to this pressure in a number of ways. For example, some companies are voluntarily improving their operations by 'utilizing green materials and processes' (Hoffman 2005, p. 24) and some are 'going "carbon-neutral" by "offsetting" carbon emissions that they themselves cannot reduce' (Llewellyn 2007, p. 55). There is, of course, considerable disagreement about the significance of these changes, with many commentators concerned about 'greenwashing' (Tokar 1997, Beder 2000).

We seek to understand how climate champions in large corporations understand their own role and how they attempt to promote change within their organisations. In particular, we are interested in their discursive construction of the process of social change. How is language used to construct 'appropriate' behavioural change? How do champions think about changing the practices of their organisation or the behaviour of their colleagues? What does that tell us about how they conceive of their own values and motives and the values and motives of their colleagues and managers?

Overall, we found that climate champions and their managers consistently constructed the process of social change in neoliberal terms. They conceived of

their colleagues (and their employers) as neoliberal agents and accepted a neoliberal ethic in their relations with others. We should not be surprised by the dominance of neoliberalism, especially in multinational corporations, which are the institutions at the very 'heart' of the neoliberal project. However, the dominance of neoliberal thinking among our climate champions suggests that their potential as 'environmental citizens' is quite limited. They do not challenge the limits that neoliberalism imposes on how we can tackle the problem of climate change. However, we also found that climate champions used a wider range of discourses when we asked them about their own reasons for involvement in the scheme. For example, many champions appealed to ideas of 'justice', 'responsibility to future generations' and 'doing the right thing'. They did not conceive of *themselves* as neoliberal agents. We argue that this disjuncture between how climate champions conceive of themselves and how they conceive of others is important. We suggest that encouraging climate champions to engage in 'ordinary moral reasoning' about climate change with their colleagues might be an important first step to prompting critical reflection on the limits of a neoliberal approach to social change. More speculatively, we suggest that a more deliberative model for climate champion schemes, which aims to treat other employees as co-deliberators or co-investigators into the problem of tackling climate change, might be more successful than current schemes.

Our discussion is divided into five sections. In section one, we locate our study in the existing literature on climate champions. In section two, we describe our methods of data collection and analysis. In sections three and four, we present our analysis. In section three, we argue that most of the climate champions in our study had a neoliberal understanding of how climate-protecting social change could and should be promoted. In particular, we identify four recurrent themes in our data: business as usual and the pursuit of profit; the sovereignty of individual choice; *homo economicus* and the appeal to economic rationality; and ethical consumerism and the subjectivity of ethics. We suggest that 'neoliberal environmental citizens' have a very limited repertoire of strategies for promoting social change. In section four, we argue that climate champions discursively construct their own values and motives in quite different terms. They do not think about climate change as if they were neoliberal agents but rather engage in 'ordinary moral reasoning'. We consider the implications of this disjuncture for the future development of climate champion schemes and we propose an alternative model of environmental citizenship.

Research context

The role of individuals in promoting change has been the subject of much research. There has been considerable discussion of 'change agents' in organisational studies and social psychologists, among others, have identified various roles that individuals can play in the process of social and behaviour

change (Caldwell 2003). The importance of change agents has been recognised in an environmental context. For example, studies have considered the importance of grassroots environmental activists (Horton 2006), environmental citizens (Dobson and Bell 2006) and, more recently, celebrity role models in climate campaigns (Boykoff *et al.* 2010).

A small number of studies have specifically examined the role of designated climate or environmental champions in large organisations. In 2005, Alexander, Ballard and Associates outlined the importance of key individuals in promoting climate-protecting change in local authorities. They identified both formal (or designated) and informal climate champions in Hampshire County Council and interviewed 20 champions.[1] Their research focused mainly on the attributes of the champions and provided some useful conclusions about the characteristics of climate champions who were successful in promoting some change in the organisation. More recently, there have been two studies of environmental champions in the private sector (Lewis and Juravle 2010, Gliedt *et al.* 2010). Lewis and Juravle (2010) studied 'sustainable investment champions', while Gliedt *et al.* (2010) studied 'environment champions'. Both studies conducted in-depth interviews and considered the influence that champions can have on specific business decisions. Lewis and Juravle focused on the promotion of sustainable investment, while Gliedt *et al.* investigated the corporate decision to voluntarily purchase premium-priced green electricity. Both of these studies conclude that champions can play an important role in encouraging pro-environmental decisions in a business context. In addition, other studies have focused on the techniques of 'championing' (Andersson and Bateman 2000).

Our study differs from these previous studies in three important respects. First, we focus exclusively on designated climate champions involved in official schemes set up by their companies. Each company advertised for individuals who were interested in promoting climate-protecting behaviour in the workplace. Employees volunteered for the role and were designated as 'climate champions'. The proliferation of climate champion schemes means that there are an increasing number of designated climate champions in the corporate sector. We believe that this group of potential 'environmental citizens' may be sufficiently different to justify independent study. Second, our aim is to study how designated climate champions think about their role and how they approach the problem of stimulating climate-protecting change in their company and among their colleagues. Our intention is to try to understand their conception of social change. Third, we aim to relate our discussion of the discourses used by climate champions to the wider discursive politics of climate change. We are interested in climate champions as potential 'environmental citizens' working to promote climate-protecting social change inside multinational corporations.

Studying climate champions

We began by using web-based research to identify multinational corporations that had climate champion schemes. We developed a list of 25 companies based

on published league tables of 'green' companies, evidence of environmental concern in annual reports and corporate social responsibility reports, and links to environmental organisations (e.g. The Climate Group, WWF, together. com). This provided a sample of companies operating in various sectors of the economy, including construction, finance, retail, energy, consultancy, media and transport.

We attempted to arrange interviews with the relevant senior manager, typically, the CSR manager or a manager specifically responsible for the environmental performance of the company. We explained the nature of the project and our desire to interview climate champions in each company. Due to the time constraints of the project, we were not able to pursue managers who were unresponsive to three interview requests. Similarly, if a manager was clearly unwilling to allow access to champions, we did not arrange an interview. In total, we conducted eight interviews with managers who had expressed a willingness to facilitate access to climate champions in their company. The sample of companies was limited to five sectors (construction, consultancy, energy, finance and retail). Each interview lasted between 30 and 90 minutes.

Four managers provided us with a list of climate champions and we were able to select a sample of willing champions from each company. The four companies that we studied were in the consultancy, energy and finance sectors. In three companies, we conducted individual interviews (in person or by telephone) with between eight and 10 champions. Each interview lasted between 50 and 90 minutes. We conducted 28 individual interviews with climate champions. In the fourth company, the manager preferred that we conduct a single focus group with eight champions. In total, 36 climate champions talked to us about their experience.

The final sample of champions included 21 women and 15 men. They were variously located across the UK and represented many different job descriptions within the relevant companies. They also occupied different levels of seniority, although the majority identified themselves as being 'on the ground'.

Table 1. Interview sample.

Business	Sector	Number of champions interviewed
A	Energy	10
B	Finance	8
C	Consultancy	10
D	Finance	8
E	Finance	0
F	Retail	0
G	Construction	0
H	Construction	0

All of the interviews were carried out by Swaffield and were semi-structured. Each interview was split into two sections with questions about the role itself (daily tasks, successes, obstacles) and general views on climate change (What should be done? Who is responsible? Do we need to change the way we live?). The interviewer adopted a flexible approach where necessary, but every interview covered the same set of topics and questions. The manager interviews were conducted between August 2009 and January 2010. The interviews with the champions were conducted between March 2010 and May 2010. With the permission of the participants, all interviews were recorded and the data was transcribed for analysis.

Both authors examined the discursive construction of the role of the climate champion and the process of climate-protecting social change in each of the interviews. We also examined how each of the climate champions discursively constructed their own involvement in the scheme. Our analysis was informed by previous research on environmental and climate change discourses (Dryzek 1997, Feindt and Oels 2005, Backstrand and Lovbrand 2006, Pettenger 2007). We identified climate discourses and themes in the literature and used these to code the transcripts. However, we tried to remain open to the possibility that we would find new discourses or, at least, new variations on old discourses.

New themes emerged with each reading so analysis of the data was necessarily an iterative process. We documented new ideas as they emerged and revisited earlier transcripts to investigate themes that we had not recognised upon initial analysis. In the next two sections, we present the results of our analysis.

A neoliberal conception of social change

In this section, we highlight four themes that were repeated in our interviews with climate champions and their managers. We believe that these themes reflect important aspects of a neoliberal discourse. Neoliberalism is, of course, a contested term. McCarthy and Prudham (2004, p. 276) claim that, 'the notion of a consistent set of defining material practices and outcomes that comprise neoliberalism is problematic'. However, there are fundamental components that appear in almost all accounts of neoliberalism. Turner (2008, p. 6) argues that, 'in many respects its various schools meet on common ground in terms of their aims, arguments and assumptions, which makes them constitute a coherent and distinctive ideology'.

Our discussion highlights four recurrent themes that we believe are common to most accounts of neoliberalism: business as usual and the pursuit of profit; the sovereignty of individual choice; *homo economicus* and the appeal to economic rationality; and ethical consumerism and the subjectivity of ethics. The key values of neoliberalism centre on growth, profit and efficiency. The focus on 'continual growth in both capacity (stock) and income (flow) is a central part of the neoclassical growth paradigm' (Daly 1996, p. 15). Indeed, 'profit maximisation' lies 'at the centre of both the old and the new economic

liberalism' (von Werlhof 2008, p. 95). Businesses are therefore directed towards growth, accumulation and profit. A neoliberal account of social change maintains the importance of these key values. Hence, it addresses environmental issues 'without introducing the need for fundamental structural change' (Young 2000, p. 20).

Neoliberalism also emphasises the importance of the freedom and rights of individuals (Harvey 2005). Individuals should have sovereignty over their own lives and choices. In a similar way to businesses, individuals should be 'free to pursue their interests in the market place' (Humphreys 2009, p. 320). For neoliberals, self-interest is a central human motive (Larner 2003). Moreover, neoliberalism extends the domain of individual choice to ethics (Turner 2008, von Werlhof 2008). Neoliberal freedom includes the freedom to choose our own ethical doctrines. On a neoliberal account, ethical commitments are subjective preferences.

Business as usual and the pursuit of profit

The neoliberal (and, more generally, capitalist) conception of economic corporations is that their main objective should always be the pursuit of profit (Friedman 1962). They should avoid adopting other aims that will hinder this objective and should adopt secondary aims (such as climate protecting aims) only when they will contribute positively to the corporation's profits.

The companies in this study have all adopted environment-related aims. This is evident in their annual reports, their CSR reports, and on their corporate webpages. For example, all of the websites include a section on climate change and what the companies are doing to tackle it. In addition, they have all developed a version of the climate champion scheme. There is little association of the champions with profit. Where the focus is not on climate change itself, reference is to staff engagement and collegial spirit.

However, several managers in our study recognised the economic benefits for their company of a green image. One manager talked about the increasing prevalence of environmental questions in tendering contracts:

> certainly stuff like this is massively helpful in winning contracts ... we're always updating our kind ... status reports ... as regards to where we are in the whole climate change arena. So, we've got kind of a whole band of people that just love this stuff because more and more it's becoming part of tender writing. (A-m)[2]

The climate champions were also aware of the economic imperatives behind corporate environmental responsibility. As one champion pointed out, 'a lot of the clients have got their own green targets so if [we] seem to be like in sync with them then we'll be more attractive as a supplier' (C-10).[3] For some champions, this encouraged a sceptical attitude to their company's environmental commitments. The same champion said, 'a lot of the environment push from the top is from erm a, like a PR perspective' (C-10) and a champion in

another company expressed the same thought, 'a lot of it can be PR' (A-4). From a neoliberal perspective, the most successful corporate environmental responsibility strategy is the one that maximises profit. The choice between 'greenwash' and (real) pro-environmental action is a purely instrumental one. Therefore, we should not be surprised that climate champions, with an 'insider' view, might have doubts about the motives of their senior management.

Similarly, we should not expect climate champion schemes to produce fundamental changes in the daily operations of companies. In most companies, the climate champion scheme was seen as a self-contained 'project', which was intended to run for a fixed period and had specific objectives. Global Action Plan (GAP) was used by three out of the four companies. GAP offers a fixed term programme for behavioural change. Champions are expected to take an audit of areas such as waste and energy use and then spend a month promoting good practice in each area. A second audit is taken at the end to determine the success of the various initiatives. The general aim is to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions through individual behavioural change.[4] In the three companies that used GAP, the champions reported that they had achieved improvements in environmental performance between the two audits. However, the time limited character of the schemes was not conducive to fundamental or long-term changes in behaviour.[5] One champion said that they had successfully encouraged the use of mugs instead of plastic cups only to find 'they're still using loads of plastic cups' a few weeks later (B-6). Another champion said that once the project had finished 'people just forget' (A-1).

The sovereignty of individual choice

The climate champion schemes also reflected the neoliberal commitment to the sovereignty of individual choice (Larner 2003, Turner 2008). In a neoliberal framework, choice is important because 'markets are supposed to work through the dynamics of individual decision making in competitive settings' (Mansfield 2004, p. 566). This commitment to individual choice was evident in both the design of the schemes and the way that climate champions talked about their approach to promoting change.

The involvement of climate champions was voluntary. One champion had seen an advertisement for the scheme on an internal communication document. He said, 'it was all sort of my ... sort of something that I did off my own back really cos I thought well I'll, I'll give that a go, it sounds really, really good' (B-8). The role of climate champion was not part of the 'normal' management structure of the company. Instead, climate champions were individuals working on their own initiative and collaborating with other individual climate champions from other parts of their company. The success of the champions was not measured by progress reports or any specified targets. Champions were not paid extra for their efforts and if an individual chose not to devote time or energy to the role, they were not subject to the kinds of sanctions that they would have faced for not doing their 'job'.

Climate champions approached the promotion of change in the same kind of individualist and voluntarist way. They sought to encourage their colleagues to perform environmentally-friendly acts, which did not require collective action, such as recycling, switching their monitors off, turning off lights and using hand driers instead of paper towels. Moreover, they regarded it as important that their colleagues made their own choices. As one champion said, 'it's a choice isn't it ... it's up to the individual' (B-3). Another champion explained that he had given out free energy efficient lights bulbs and provided an internal communication document about energy savings and fuel bills. He reflected on his efforts saying, 'I think really you just need to give some people a little bit of information and encouragement and let them make up their own mind' (B-5).

In part, the design of the climate champion scheme defined how the champions understood their role. As individuals with no organisational authority, the champions could not require changes in company practices or infrastructure. Instead, they could only seek to encourage their colleagues to voluntarily choose to act differently. Therefore, they focused mainly on promoting small changes in the everyday behaviours of their colleagues. However, the champions' commitments to individualist and voluntarist conceptions of change also reflected their more general understanding of how change *could* and *should* be achieved. Consistently with neoliberalism, they identified two main ways of promoting change: changing the actual or perceived balance of costs and benefits; and encouraging 'ethical' preferences.

Homo economicus and the appeal to economic rationality

Neoliberalism expects individuals to think like businesses and to pursue 'unlimited individual accumulation' (McCarthy and Prudham 2004, p. 277). As one manager said:

> A measure of your success is money. And what do you do with your money? You go and spend it. So, we cannot tell people not to spend their money, what's the point of coming to work if you can't spend the money? (D-m)

A similar view was expressed by one of the champions:

> You go to work to earn money so you can buy more stuff ... [*laughs*] and you know spend more money on getting more stuff. (D-3)

The interviewees recognised both the non-negotiable 'materialism' of contemporary UK culture and the role of 'consumption' as a 'status marker' (Hobson 2002, p. 99, Slocum 2004, p. 415). Consequently, champions emphasised the economic co-benefits of pro-environmental behaviour.[6] One champion said, 'you try and give people the benefits, like when we do the environment day, if you have your tyres pumped up you can save petrol' (A-7). Another champion told us

about her communication techniques with colleagues, 'I'd be saying to them "well do you know how much money you're losing or you're wasting ... you know by keeping that appliance on overnight?"' (C-4). The interviewees had no doubt that the appeal to economic self-interest could work. As one manager said:

> If I can really show people that just by being a little bit smarter you can save £50 a quarter ... on your electricity then ... who wouldn't jump on the like sustainability, climate change bandwagon ... you know. (G-m)

A champion expressed the same idea but more concisely: 'almost everyone in Western society cares about their pennies you know' (C-10). The best way of changing the behaviour of '*homo economicus*' is by 'showing' him or her that pro-environmental behaviours are more economically rational than his or her current behaviours (McCarthy and Prudham 2004, p. 276). For some champions, this was a matter of regret but for most it was merely a 'fact of life'.

Ethical consumerism and the subjectivity of ethics

In a neoliberal context, individual choice is sovereign. Therefore, the only alternative to persuading *homo economicus* that pro-environmental action is economically rational is to encourage pro-environmental preferences and lifestyles. Neoliberalism allows for the possibility that individuals are capable of transcending the narrow economic rationality of *homo economicus* and the single-minded pursuit of 'unlimited accumulation'. However, neoliberalism insists that 'all individuals possess a utility function, which incorporates their tastes and preferences' and that each individual's goal is to satisfy her preferences and maximise her utility (Hobson 2002, p. 102). If we can promote the 'incorporation of environmental concern into [each individual's] preferences', those individuals might maximise their utility by performing pro-environmental actions that satisfy their pro-environmental preferences (Hobson 2002, p. 102). The 'ethical' consumer, who adopts (some aspects of) a climate-friendly lifestyle, may not be the lead character in neoliberal narratives. But she does play an important supporting role because she allows the state to place responsibility for climate change and other environmental problems on individuals. The 'individualisation of responsibility' for climate change is only plausible if individuals are capable of making pro-environmental choices but are currently failing to do so (Maniates 2001, Kent 2009).

Many of the champions that we interviewed said that their work was all about 'raising awareness' (C-4), 'creating that awareness' (A-8) and 'trying to educate people' (C-5). When asked about successes in terms of behavioural change, one of the champions said:

> The main purpose of everything we do is really to raise awareness. I mean, yes, we want results ... but the more you can raise people's awareness you gradually bring their habits up. (C-2)

For many of the champions, raising awareness was a natural way to facilitate behavioural change. The champions believed that by providing information about climate change they might encourage people to 'choose' climate-friendly lifestyles. In one case, we asked a champion what she thought people should be doing to tackle climate change. Her response was: 'to start with I'd never say you *should* be' (C-3). The role of the champion was 'providing the information, raising awareness but not telling people what they should be doing' (C-2). This reluctance to prescribe (and proscribe) actions reflected the champions' neoliberal understanding of ethics as subjective – a matter of preference. In the focus group with champions, a form of subjectivism about 'morals and principles' was explicitly set out by one member of the group and endorsed by others:

> D8: What right do I have to try and persuade them to care? Everyone's got a different set of morals and principles so
>
> D5: yeah
>
> D8: no, because ... no, honestly, because I know how bad like 4x 4s are and things and ... it would be a moral choice if, even if they were really nice to drive, but you can't expect other people to share the same views.

This over-states the position taken by many champions because many of them were willing to try to persuade others to adopt some climate-friendly actions. However, most of the champions shared the view that there were strict limits on the approach that they should take because people had the right to choose their own ethical 'preferences'.

Neoliberal environmental citizens

In sum, we have argued that the champions in our study tended to adopt a neoliberal conception of social change. In general, they did not challenge – and were not encouraged to challenge – 'business as usual' in their companies. They assumed that their colleagues were typical neoliberal agents motivated by economic self-interest (just like the companies that employed them). They adopted a neoliberal ethical framework, which attributed an absolute priority to the right to individual choice while adopting a subjectivist conception of other moral beliefs and principles. In our view, most of the climate champions in our study are best understood as *neoliberal* environmental citizens: they wanted to – and tried to – promote pro-environmental behaviour but only in ways that were consistent with a neoliberal account of how social or behavioural change *can be* and *should be* achieved.[7] As a result, the range of strategies for promoting pro-environmental behaviour that they considered to be legitimate or appropriate was very limited.

A critic might object that the champions were constrained by the context of the workplace.[8] On this account, the champions may not have viewed

their colleagues as typical neoliberal agents but simply adopted an approach to promoting behavioural change that was appropriate in the business environment. However, our interview data suggests that the champions adopted a similar view of how behaviour change could and should be promoted in other contexts beyond the workplace. Moreover, we would argue that appealing to neoliberal values, such as self-interest and profit, is seen as the 'easiest' or most effective way of changing behaviour in the workplace precisely because neoliberalism is at its most pervasive in the business environment.

Resisting neoliberalism

So far, our research with climate champions is consistent with the claim that a neoliberal understanding of human motivations and the processes of social change appears to many people to be the 'inevitable and natural state' of the world (Heynen and Robbins 2005, p. 6). In this section, we will argue that when the climate champions talk about their own motives and values and their own reasons for involvement in the climate champion scheme, they provide evidence that the dominance of neoliberalism is incomplete. We argue that the disjuncture between how they conceive of their own values and motives and the values and motives of others suggests that they may be capable of more radical forms of environmental citizenship.

The dominance of neoliberalism and the inevitability of resistance

Elizabeth Shove has recently argued that a neoliberal understanding of social change dominates climate policymaking and has a significant influence on social science research on climate change. As Shove (2010, p. 1280) suggests:

> This interpretation both of the problem (one of consumer behaviour and choice) and of potential policy responses (influencing choice) structures the meaning and the *method* of useful social science.

Neoliberalism understands people as 'autonomous agents of choice and change' (Shove 2010, p. 1279). Therefore, the study of social change is the study of individual choice – and 'methodological individualism' is a prerequisite for 'useful' social science (Lukes 2006, p. 6) Moreover, the neoliberal conceptions of the autonomous agent (as an instrumentally rational utility-maximiser) and of ethics (as a matter of subjective preference) further restricts the sources of 'useful' social science – to particular branches of psychology and economics, which share these assumptions about the nature of the person. Neoliberalism is not just 'the only economics in town' but also 'the only social science in town' (Slocum 2004, p. 416).[9]

Shove (2010, p. 1283) claims that this narrow psychological or 'behaviour change' approach to tackling climate change has 'significant political advantages':

> [In] this context, to probe further, to ask how options are structured or to inquire into the ways in which governments maintain infrastructures and economic institutions, is perhaps too challenging to be useful.

A neoliberal approach to social change protects the interests of those who benefit from the material-discursive practices of neoliberalism by ensuring that questions about the economic, political and social practices and structures of neoliberalism are silenced. However, the dominance of any discourse is never likely to be complete. As Downing (2008, p. ix) suggests, 'the history of any cultural phenomenon always involves, alongside the commonsensical or authorized version of events, ulterior narratives, an unspoken set of truths'. As a result, discourses are 'in a state of constant reconstitution and contestation' (Carabine 2001, p. 279). We should always expect to find evidence of resistance to a dominant discourse if we look hard enough. We might anticipate that evidence of resistance is most likely in the 'margins' of societies – in grassroots movements and local initiatives. However, we want to suggest that even in our interviews with individuals, who were thoroughly embedded in neoliberal material-discursive practices, there was an important challenge to the dominance of neoliberalism.

Alternative discourses: the self-conception of the champions

We have argued that the champions certainly conceived of *other* people in neoliberal terms: other people were, typically, economically rational but, more fundamentally, they were autonomous utility-maximisers with the right to choose their own (subjective) ethical commitments. However, the champions frequently did not conceive of themselves in the same way. In the interviews, many of the champions talked about future generations, justice, responsibility and the value of the natural world when we asked them why *they* had become involved in the climate champion scheme or when we asked more generally about what *they* thought about climate change. One champion talked about the unjust distribution of the impacts of climate change:

> I don't like the fact that we just seem to forget about people in other parts of the world and I mean climate change is ... does look like it's going to impact some of the poorer parts of the world a lot worse than it impacts us, which is really very unfair. (B-6)

Other champions referred to a 'duty to do something' (C-10), and 'the morality of having a social responsibility' (C-3). This sense of responsibility was often

felt in relation to future generations, particularly the champion's own family. One champion explained his own motivations for action:

> I thought about my daughter growing up and ... if I can't tell her that I knew about these issues and didn't do everything I could to stop it, then I just couldn't live with that you know. (C-6)

Other champions identified motivations beyond humanity, referring to the 'preservation of the earth' (A-3) and the importance of 'looking after the world, looking after nature, looking after animals' (C-8). These individuals did not become climate champions (or try to reduce their personal carbon emissions) *because* they thought it was the economically rational thing to do.

Instead, their understanding of their commitment to climate-friendly action reflected an underlying ethical objectivism. For them, the threat of climate change provided (objective) reasons that justified climate-friendly actions. One champion said:

> I find [it] ... really hard to believe that we're not having an impact when you look at what's going on and the kind of, you know, the industry and the cars and the technology and everything that we've got now. I can't believe that when you look back a few hundred years we've not added to that ... erm so I definitely feel that we're responsible and I think that we're responsible for reducing it as well. (C-7)

Similarly, another champion said, 'I think it's just now I know the effects of everything I just feel like I should do my bit and I think I'd feel quite guilty if I didn't' (A-10). One champion talked about her own 'realisation' that 'we do need to change for the environment' (A-9). For many champions it was important to 'do the right thing' (e.g. A-2, A-4, D-3). Implicitly, the champions understood themselves as autonomously choosing what to do but they understood their choice as the outcome of a process of ethical or moral reasoning informed by the facts. They understood their own choice to do something about climate change as reason-directed – the 'autonomous' choice of a moral agent, in the Kantian sense, rather than the subjective choice of a neoliberal agent. In their practice of ethical reasoning, they rejected the ethical subjectivism that both informed their conception of other people and limited how they approached the promotion of climate-friendly action.

Beyond neoliberal environmental citizenship

We believe that the difference between the way that climate champions conceive of other people's motivations and their own motivations is potentially important. In a recent paper, Walker *et al.* (2010) have argued that 'imaginaries of the public' can influence policy- and decision-making in the renewable energy sector. Their research indicates that decisions (e.g. about technology, siting and public engagement) are influenced by the ways in which 'actors in technical-industrial and policy networks' construct and imagine the

motivations and (re)actions of the public (Walker *et al.* 2010, p. 943). They suggest that it might even be possible for the 'imagined public' to be more significant than 'real' publics:

> Indeed, depending on how the subjectivity and agency of the public is anticipated and internalised into organisational strategies and working practices of different actors within and across sectoral networks, this imagined public might be of greater long-term significance than the 'real' version of specific publics encountered in meeting rooms and community halls. (Walker *et al.* 2010, p. 943)

Our research suggests that something similar may be occurring with the climate champions in our study. Their 'imagined public' has a significant influence on how they think the problem of climate change might be tackled and the strategies that they employ as climate champions. Their approach is shaped by their expectations of the 'neoliberal person' (the economically rational, autonomous chooser who has the right to choose his ethical commitments) that they imagine their colleagues and other people in the wider society to be. Of course, Walker *et al.* (2010, p. 943) recognise that '[the] real and the imagined are clearly not disconnected here, but neither are they necessarily the same'. The champions' imaginary neoliberal person is based, in part, on their experience of their 'real' colleagues and other people that they have encountered. However, it is also an imagined character – and perhaps, a caricature – produced and reproduced through neoliberal narratives, and their associated material-discursive practices, including (among many others) the (neoliberal) practices that the champions use to promote climate-friendly behaviour. If we treat other people as archetypal 'neoliberal' persons, we should not be too surprised if they react in the way that we have anticipated. In other words, the imagined 'neoliberal' person becomes 'real' partly as a consequence of our acting as if it existed.

However, if we 'scratch beneath the surface' of a 'neoliberal' person, as we did with our climate champions, we may find that their 'inner life' is much richer and more complex than the neoliberal conception of the person allows. Our research supports the claims of Barnett *et al.* (2008, p. 643) that the neoliberal conception of the person does not take seriously the fact that 'people are *argumentative subjects* through and through'. In our interviews, the champions displayed a 'capacity for ordinary moral reasoning' in response to the moral 'dilemmas and conundrums' posed by climate change (Barnett *et al.* 2008, p. 649). In other words, they were able to recognise and reflect on the moral issues raised by climate change, identify alternative moral responses, and offer reasons to justify some responses or to reject other responses. Similar observations have been made by other researchers who have examined the discursive practices of people involved in climate-protection programmes informed by a neoliberal understanding of social change (Hobson 2002, Slocum 2004). If they are encouraged to reflect on climate change (or other moral issues), most people do not think like the archetypal 'neoliberal' person.

We believe that this suggests that it may be worth exploring an alternative 'deliberative' or 'co-inquiry' model for programmes aimed at mobilising action on climate change. The neoliberal model of social change, used by Global Action Plan and some other providers of training and resources for climate action programmes, reproduces neoliberal social relations. More 'deliberative' models, which would train and encourage champions to facilitate 'ordinary moral reasoning' about the 'dilemmas and conundrums' of climate change in the workplace and elsewhere, might challenge neoliberal social relations. If we imagine other people as moral agents, it is more likely that they will realise their potential to think and act as if they are moral agents. It may also be more likely that they will recognise the limitations of a neoliberal approach to tackling the problem of climate change. In our view, the development of climate champion schemes that encourage and train climate champions to become *deliberative* environmental citizens, rather than neoliberal environmental citizens, might promote more imaginative engagement with the challenge of climate change.[10] A neoliberal environmental citizen does not question the limitations that a neoliberal understanding of social change imposes on how we can address the problem of climate change. A deliberative environmental citizen starts from the assumption that we can only understand and respond effectively to the problem of climate change through collective deliberation. If climate champions are encouraged to overcome their (neoliberal) reluctance to engage their colleagues in serious discussions about the moral (and the political, social, cultural, economic and technological) issues raised by climate change, they might find that their colleagues are moral agents too.

Conclusion

There is an increasing number of designated climate champions in organisations in both the public and private sectors. We conducted in-depth interviews with a small number of climate champions in four large corporations and found that most of our climate champions were neoliberal environmental citizens: they sought to promote pro-environmental behaviour without violating the constraints imposed by a neoliberal conception of how social change *could* and *should* be promoted. They accepted the sovereignty of individual choice. They assumed that their colleagues (like their companies) were motivated primarily (or wholly) by economic self-interest. They refused to engage in challenging moral discussions with their colleagues about climate change because they believed that the sovereignty of individual choice extends to subjectively choosing one's ethical principles.

However, we also found that the moral reasoning of most of our climate champions was not consistent with neoliberalism. Their involvement in the climate champion scheme and their own pro-environmental behaviour was hardly ever motivated only, or even primarily, by economic self-interest. They believed that climate change posed a threat to people in developing countries,

future generations, and the natural world – and they believed that it would be wrong to ignore that threat. They engaged in 'ordinary moral reasoning' about climate change – and it was through moral reasoning that they had come to believe in the importance of promoting climate-protecting social change. We have suggested that this disjuncture between how climate champions understand their own values and motives and how they understand the motives and values of others may be important. Climate champions may imagine that other people are neoliberal agents – and their neoliberal approach to promoting social change may even encourage neoliberal motives among their colleagues – but it is possible that other people are also capable of 'ordinary moral reasoning'. Therefore, we have proposed that climate champion schemes might be re-designed so that climate champions are strongly encouraged to start from the assumption that their colleagues are moral agents too. The aim of such schemes should be to promote both the capacity for deliberative environmental citizenship and the willingness to act as deliberative environmental citizens among climate champions so that they can promote 'ordinary moral reasoning' about climate change among their colleagues.

Ours is one of the first studies of designated climate champions. We do not know whether the champions we interviewed were representative of champions in their companies, in other companies in the same sectors of the economy, or in multinational corporations more generally. Similarly, we do not know whether climate champions in the public sector are very different from climate champions in the private sector. If we want climate champions to play a key leadership role in promoting climate-protecting social change, we need to develop a better understanding of their possibilities and limits as environmental citizens. Therefore, we believe that more research on climate champions in various contexts could make a valuable contribution to the development of new and better climate champion schemes. We would also be keen to see more experimental action research that seeks to promote alternative models of environmental citizenship, including the kind of deliberative model that we have suggested, among climate champions. High quality action research should begin to tell us whether climate champion schemes can be designed to challenge the dominance of neoliberalism and to promote more radical forms of environmental citizenship. We do not know whether some form of deliberative environmental citizenship is a genuine possibility for climate champions – or how effective it might be in promoting climate-protecting social change – but we believe that it is worth trying to find out.

Notes

1. 'Formal' (or designated) champions were appointed as 'champions' by their organisation. 'Informal' champions worked to promote environmental issues, but they did this independently without being appointed. Our study focuses exclusively on designated champions.
2. 'A' refers to the company and 'm' indicates the interviewee was the manager responsible for the climate champion programme. We refer to champions by number.

3. Lewis and Juravle (2010) also note the importance of a 'business case' for environmental action.
4. For further information on Global Action Plan see Hobson (2002).
5. Hobson (2002) notes that this is an unfortunate outcome of the GAP initiatives.
6. Lewis and Juravle (2010) also suggest the importance of a 'business case' for action.
7. '*Neo*liberal environmental citizenship' should not be confused with other forms of 'liberal environmental citizenship' (Bell 2005).
8. Our thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.
9. On economics, see also Massey (2000).
10. 'Deliberative' environmental citizenship might be consistent with various forms of environmental citizenship, including both 'ecological citizenship' (Dobson 2003) and 'liberal environmental citizenship' (Bell 2005). However, it might have a particular affinity with Barry's emphasis on 'resistance' in his account of 'sustainability citizenship' (Barry 2006). Further development of the idea of deliberative environmental citizenship would need to draw on work linking deliberative democracy and the environment to identify the particular characteristics of this form of citizenship and to respond to common criticisms of deliberative theories (Baber and Bartlett 2005, Backstrand *et al.* 2010). For us, the central idea is minimal: it is simply that the deliberative environmental citizen actively seeks to engage others in serious discussions about the whole range of issues raised by climate change.

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