Identity, Politics, and the Beach: Environmental Activism in Surfers Against Sewage

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ABSTRACT   *Academic accounts of leisure activities like surfing tend to emphasise their individual-istic, hedonistic and commercialised qualities, seeing this as characteristic of leisure consumption in late capitalism; that culture is increasingly dominated by the market and attention is diverted from collective and political issues. Yet empirical research in such lifestyle sport cultures reveals a more complex and contradictory picture of leisure consumption. This paper examines the pressure group Surfers Against Sewage (SAS), founded by surfers in Cornwall, England. It draws on subcultural media discourses about SAS and interviews with SAS members and personnel. Whilst acknowledging the limitations in the political significance and impact of SAS's activism, the paper argues that through their sport consumption, participants from a range of minority water sports cultures have formed a politicised trans-local collectivity based around a concern with their own localised environ-ment, one which has become articulated into broader trans-national political issues. It is argued further that SAS is part of a broader wave of new social movements and direct action protest groups that gathered momentum in Britain in the mid to late 1990s. In such groups the politics of identity take centre stage. The paper therefore challenges us to rethink the meaning of political activism, and the capacity of leisure and sport to contribute to the politics of identity.*

KEYWORDS: *consumption, lifestyle sport, surfing, identity politics, environmentalism, new social movements, political protest*

Introduction: Leisure Consumption in Late Capitalism

Over the past decades consumption has become one of the key metaphors for understanding change in western societies. As Jameson discusses, in demarking what he calls late capitalism, 'new types of consumption' (Jameson, 1986: p. 124) and the penetration of capital into previously un-commodified areas of culture characterise western capitalist societies. A sociology of consumption has been developed that, while critical of the ascendancy of the increasingly global market and the intensification of individualism in late capitalism, has recognised that in

western societies, our identities are not determined solely by our relationship to work or the means of production. This broad body of work has sought to illustrate the complex, dynamic and contradictory nature of consumption practices in different contexts, from shopping and watching television (see, for example, McRobbie, 1994; Morley, 1995) to participation in music and dance cultures (Redhead, 1993; Miles, 2000; Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004).

This consumption literature has received critical scrutiny and debate across different disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields in the humanities and social sciences. Concerns have been raised about the tendency to exaggerate consumer creativity and autonomy (see, for example, critiques in McGuigan, 1992; Miller & Philio, 2001)[1] and to ignore – or underplay – the continued relevance of structural constraints such as social class and gender (Nava, 1992; Scraton & Watson, 1998). Nevertheless, these studies have illustrated the active and creative use and meaning of commodities in these consumption practices, and their importance as an arena through which identities and lifestyles are constructed. In some circles within leisure studies, however, consumption is still met with suspicion, perceived to be shorthand for a defence of consumer sovereignty, the proliferation of market driven consumerist practices, and an uncritical drift to the theoretical extremes of postmodernism. It is often assumed that by privileging consumption, the 'real' issues that underpin our leisure practices – namely, inequality, social difference and citizenship – will be subsumed. As Coalter (2000) writes, in an extensive polemic about leisure studies' failure to develop a systematic sociological under-standing of consumption:

> There has been a tendency for leisure studies to concentrate on production and access – the exploitation in capitalist production and the inegalitarian effects of market relations – while ignoring the nature of delivery and the enjoyment involved in consumption. (Coalter, 2000: p. 176)

He argues further that 'public provision is deemed to be morally superior to commercial provision', and since consumption is associated with the passive non-productive consumer, consumption and citizenship appear to be incompatible (Coalter, 2000: p. 170).

Common perceptions of lifestyle sports reflect these fears about the commercial annexation of leisure that Coalter (2000) discusses. Public discourses about lifestyle sports – activities such as surfing and windsurfing – focus on youth and hedonism. Their lifestyles and identities are portrayed as consumer-orientated, individualistic, narcissistic and irresponsible, reflecting wider clichés about contemporary youth as 'dispossessed' and 'alienated' (Huq, 1999: p. 15), reflected in labels such as 'slackers' (Huq, 1999) and 'Generation X' (Coupland, 1991). In such an individu-alised and consumerist culture, it is claimed that attention is diverted from collective and political issues (cf. Baudrillard, 1983, 1985); as Chaney discusses, the 'spec-tacle of consumerism' and concurrent 'trivialisation of political discourse', particularly in the mass media, are seen to underpin this political disillusionment, and consequent lack of critical engagement by citizens (2002: p. 125).

Yet in-depth research on lifestyle sport cultures suggests that it is a mistake *only* to equate these activities, and their consumption and identities, with the commodification of leisure, sport and the body (see, for example, chapters in

Rinehart & Sydor, 2003; Wheaton, 2004b): they are *also* cultural spaces in which the potential for more transformatory relationships and identities exist (Midol & Broyer, 1995; Rinehart & Sydor, 2003; Wheaton, 2004b).[2] In surfing, Lewis suggests this 'potential' exists in surfers' strategic consumption, soul surfing ethos, bodily pleasure, and direct political activism as expressed through environmental lobbying (Lewis, 1998: p. 65).

In this paper I consider Lewis's (1998) last proposition: the relationship between lifestyle sport consumption and political activism through environmentalism. My focus is Surfers Against Sewage (SAS), a pressure group founded by a group of surfers in Cornwall, England, to campaign for clean seas. I examine the practices and politics of identity in SAS, and as represented in, and through, the subcultural media of lifestyle sports. The examination of SAS brings to the fore important questions about changing notions of politics, and forms of citizenship, and their relationship to the consumption of leisure. It is argued that SAS is part of a broader wave of new social movements and direct action groups that gathered momentum in Britain in the mid to late 1990s, that represents a form of lifestyle politics. The paper explores how the identities constructed in the SAS 'collectivity' feed into this broader wave of protest movements that emerged at this time. In revealing the complex and contradictory nature of consumption practices in these lifestyle sport cultures, and their relationship to political culture and the politics of identity, this case study provides an apposite case for developing the theoretically informed and empirically grounded understanding of leisure consumption that Coalter (2000) and others (cf. Tomlinson, 1990; Crouch & Tomlinson, 1994; Rojek, 1995; Tomlinson, 2001) have called for.

In the first section of the paper I examine changing notions of politics, exploring the emergence of new social movements such as environmentalism and focusing on the 'party and protest movements' of the 1990s in the UK (McKay, 1998b). I then introduce Surfers Against Sewage, exploring their protest practices and their membership. Third, I examine the central role played by the subcultural media in framing a trans-local 'symbolic' community. Lastly, I consider some of the implications of globalisation for such environmental protest movements and their consumption practices, particularly claims to ethical global citizenship.

The empirical research that I draw on is multifaceted. First, British windsurfing magazines published between 1995 and 1997 were analysed to examine: their coverage of environmental issues generally; Surfers Against Sewage advertising, and editorial content. The mid to late 1990s was a time when SAS featured prominently in this subcultural media and, as I will illustrate, was a particularly significant time for British 'youth' protest groups, and environmental protests more widely. Subsequently environmental issues were examined in a range of water sports board magazines (windsurfing, surfing and kite surfing) published from 2001 to 2004. Second, a visit to the SAS offices in Cornwall (August 2000) involved informal interviews with staff (there were eight part-time and full-time employees), and access to and scrutiny of their membership survey based on 1,000 responses conducted in the spring and summer of 2000. I used SAS data trends, and also analysed around 150 questionnaires. The questionnaire data need to be treated with some caution as this was a non-confidential, self-selecting sample. Respondents stated their names and addresses/membership number, and were enticed to reply

through the incentive of a prize draw. Furthermore, as Macnaghten and Urry (1998) outline at some length, survey research tends to give an incomplete, oversimplistic picture of environmental issues and politics. Nevertheless, the questions the SAS survey asked were well constructed, and highly relevant for this research project. Taped in-depth interviews were conducted with two key SAS personnel, co-founder Chris Hines and finance manager Susie Moore. Lastly, participant observation took place at an SAS-sponsored surf contest (Cornish Open, Porthtowan, 2000), and in their 'local' surfing and windsurfing communities in Cornwall during August 2000. I also draw on SAS documents and publicity – such as their web pages and news-letter *Pipeline* – and articles about SAS in the mass media.

Political Protest and the Politics of Identity in 1990s Britain

'Political culture is undergoing a profound transformation in many western indus-trialised societies' (Anderson, 2007: p. 206). As outlined above, many commenta-tors maintain that postmodern processes are leading to a shallow individualistic 'depthless' culture characterised not just by narcissistic consumption, but the 'death' of the social and of the political (Baudrillard, 1983, 1985; Jameson, 1984). Yet conversely, others observe postmodern processes leading to the emergence or intensification of new kinds of collectivities and of new political arrangements, such as those based around 'alternative' lifestyle interests and their identity poli-tics (Urry & Lash, 1987; Maffesoli, 1996). Examples of these collectivities include the neo-tribal associations described by Maffesoli, and so-called New Social Movements (NSMs).

NSMs are increasingly strident political and social collectivities based outside of the workplace, or mainstream political institutions, in which interests are mobi-lised around a particular goal (cf. Melucci, 1980; Touraine, 1981). They are seen to have emerged in modern western societies during the 1960s, when they were associated with the student movement, civil rights and anti-Vietnam War protests; however, environmentalism is often taken as archetypal (Anderson, 1997: p. 77). While commentators differ in their characterisation of NSMs, their emergence, meaning and significance, it is widely contended that instead of 'being focused on the removal of structures of inequality and exclusion' these new forms of politics are more concerned with 'facilitating meaningful lifestyles' (Chaney, 2002: p. 138) focusing on questions of identity, self-actualisation and 'post-materialistic' values (Barker, 2000: p. 126).

Theories about, and investigations of, NSMs, as I will illustrate in this paper, are useful for understanding the lifestyle politics in SAS, and the cultural politics of such subcultures more widely (cf. Martin, 2002). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that some commentators are critical of the term NSM and the ways it has been adopted in theorising ecological movements (see discussion in Sutton, 2004; Yearley, 1994; Hetherington, 1998a,b). Anderson (1997: p. 78), for exam-ple, suggests that the contemporary environmental movement in Britain possesses some attributes of both 'old' and 'new' social movements (see also Doherty *et al.*, 2000); and Yearley argues that the 'array of different environmental SMOs (social movement organisations) in Britain' makes it difficult to talk 'of *a* movement' (1994: p. 156).

Furthermore, there are other terms and theoretical approaches that address these issues of individualisation, collective identity and lifestyle in this 'new politics' (Jordan, 1999). Particularly influential in the context of environmentalism are Gidden's (1994) notion of 'life politics' and Beck's (1992) of 'subpolitics', although for these two theorists this 'unbinding of traditional forms of identity and politics' is taken to be characteristic of a 'reflexively *modern s*ociety' (Hetherington, 1998a: p. 8, my emphasis) rather than of a shift to postmodernity. Both Giddens and Beck make a case for the significance of 'ecological calamity' in their respective theorisation of the ubiquity of global risks in late modernity, and thus have made important contributions to the sociological understanding of environmental issues and politics more widely (see, for example, debate in Sutton, 2004). Beck (1992), for example, claims that increased *reflexivity* about the environment is characteristic of wider transformations in the shift from an industrial to a 'risk society'. Shifting attitudes to nature, such as seeing it as something to be protected rather than tamed, he argues, is symptomatic of this increased *reflexivity* (Urry, 1995: p. 224). This is an attitude that, as this paper will illustrate, is prevalent in surfing discourse.

In the UK the expansion of the conservation movement began in the early 1960s. However, since the 1980s, contestation over the environment has become more prevalent, reflected in the concurrent increase in the formation of countryside environmental groups (Urry, 1995). The early 1990s was around the peak of Green consumerism and environmentalism in the UK (Allan *et al*., 2000; Macnaghten and Urry, 1998). The multifaceted, and often conflicting, association between sport and environmentalism has received relatively little research attention (Allison, 1993; Harvey & Houle, 1994; Rowe & Patton, 1995; Vanreusel & Weiss, 1998). However, as Humberstone suggests, nature-based sports may 'sow the seeds of environmental awareness', citing specifically the 'exemplary case' of the windsurfer and surfers who instigated Surfers Against Sewage (1998: p. 388).

SAS's emergence and impact at this socio-historical juncture – the mid 1990s – is highly significant. At this time a 'wave of non violent and direct action groups emerged' in the UK on a scale that surpassed that seen in the UK for some time (Huq, 1999: p. 15). Examples include the right-to-rave, anti-globalisation movements, and various road protests also rooted in concerns about environmental degradation (see, for example, McKay, 1998a; Jordan & Lent, 1999; Doherty *et al*., 2000). In these protests 'social criticism is combined with cultural creativity in what's both a utopian gesture and a practical display of resistance' (McKay, 1998b: p. 27). Their tendency was to be focused on single issues (McKay, 1998b; Jordan, 1999) but they shared techniques, sometimes membership, and often united as in the protests mobilised around the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (McKay, 1998a; Huq, 1999). This legislation, and the protest events following its deployment, are widely cited as an important landmark in this era (Parker, 1999a; Redhead, 1995). Significantly for this paper, the act targeted – and was opposed by – environmental protest groups (Parker, 1999a, 1999b). As Huq (1999) suggests, these events raise important questions about changing notions of (youth) culture, new alliances and politics in the 1990s and, as Chaney argues, their relationship to *leisure*:

> The prominence of everyday life as the terrain on which a new architecture of social order is being constructed means, almost paradoxically, that culture – how we come to represent ourselves, our experiences and our values – has become central to political life. (Chaney, 2002: p. 127)

Surfers Against Sewage: 'Greenpeace with Balls'[3]

> There are 3 letters the polluters fear the most: S.A.S. (Billy Bragg performing at Springloaded, a benefit gig for SAS cited in *Pipeline*, Hardy, 2005: p. 16)

The pressure group SAS was founded by a group of surfers in Cornwall in 1990. They were concerned about the raw sewage being discharged on their local surf beach near St Agnes. As Chris Hines, co-founder of SAS, explained, they were angry and their initial reaction was to spray graffiti on the water authority building. However, instead they 'got together and got organised':

> We were so naive we thought that if we charged £2 for membership and maybe we'll be able to buy sewage treatment with it. [...] we didn't know that it was a political debate. (Interview with Hines)

According to Hines, the name SAS was picked because it evoked military metaphors (SAS is the acronym of the British Army's special forces). However despite this combative and exclusive image, and its roots in the 'hard core' Cornish surfing community, SAS now campaigns on behalf of all water users, including users of lakes and rivers. The membership is nevertheless small: 7,300 in 1993, rising to 12,500 in 1994, but down to 7,700 by 2004 (personal communication with SAS, September 2004).[4]

Space precludes a detailed evaluation of SAS's activities; however the scope of its actions (in the late 1990s) ranged from lobbying the British and EU governments and the privatised water companies, to being called as 'experts' in policy consultation. It also became part of education initiatives: SAS personnel visit schools and SAS has been used in the GCSE citizenship curriculum to illustrate issues around citizenship, pressure groups and the impact of the media. The SAS web pages (www.sas.org.uk) and newsletter (*Pipeline*) outline the water pollution initiatives that the pressure group has been involved in. It is, however, hard to evaluate SAS's impact. As Parker (1999b: p. 73) notes, the effectiveness of such protest groups in terms of policy and public perception tends to be 'moulded by the media' (see also Rootes, 2000). The rhetoric used in SAS publicity is powerful, and it is likely that it exaggerates the scale of SAS's success, particularly in the context of wider, more complex policy influences on UK water legislation and beach management issues (see Nelson *et al*., 2000).

However my interest in SAS in this paper is not with its 'real' impact in policy terms, but in its emergence from, and relationship to, subcultural communities, and with the forms of protest in which it engages. Nevertheless, SAS clearly holds some status among institutions and policy makers affected by, or involved with, water pollution issues, evidenced by 'traditional' institutions such as the Royal Yachting Association and the Environment Agency choosing to make alliances with SAS. For example, a joint initiative between SAS and the Environment Agency informs the public about 'toxic algae', and manages a database of algae bloom incidents (Environment Agency leaflet, undated).

From the Pavement to the Beach

I will illustrate that SAS is, in many ways, typical of other NSMs and direct action protest groups that gathered momentum in the mid to late 1990s: that the politics

of identity and choice rather than traditional forms of politics or confrontation take centre stage (Chaney, 2002: p. 138). Giddens (1994) describes this as a shift from 'emancipatory politics' to 'life politics' involving (for those who have a degree of material stability) a self-reflexive 'project of the self' which is concerned with self-actualisation, lifestyle and choice.

NSMs tend to have anti-authoritarian, anti-bureaucratic and at times an anti-industrial stance; their organisation is loose, activist-orientated, with fluid membership and networks that often extend beyond the nation state (Barker, 2000: p. 125). The direct action they engage with tends to target a range of institutions and groups in civil society, not just government. Unlike traditional 'demonstrations' characterised by marchers with banners (Huq, 1999), these new political movements engaged with the political process using spectacle and other techniques reminiscent of the Situationalist street theatre where attitudes to play and pleasure were seen as potentially revolutionary (Klein, 2000).[5] Despite many environmental protests activists having a deeply 'ambivalent attitude' to the mainstream media (Anderson, 2000), the creation of staged media campaigns around 'pseudo events' with 'highly morally charged symbolic messages' has been an increasingly important and successful strategy for many prominent environmental NGOs, and particularly Greenpeace (Anderson, 1997: p. 207). Likewise, the success of SAS as a pressure group stems from its emphasis on dramatic imagery (see Figures 1–3), and its ability to gain mass media attention via staged spectacular 'eco dramas' (Sutton, 2004: p. 32). SAS pursues government, politicians and the privatised water companies. Its protests are organised around 'media hits' in which the SAS Tour bus transports a small group of protesters, usually wearing wetsuits and gas masks and carrying surfing or water sport related equipment. As Hines argued:

> We sussed out very quickly that surfing was media sense at that time. […] And we played to that. […] I would do virtually anything in front of a camera as long as it wasn't illegal. (Interview with Hines)

SAS quickly became skilful at packaging powerful images for the media, reflexive to its 'requirements for novelty, human interest and drama' (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998: p. 58). As well as playing on the omnipresence of surfing imagery in the mid 1990s, SAS adopted potent symbols of environmental damage such as gas masks (Figures 1–3) and a large dark brown inflatable turd, signifying untreated raw sewage in the sea. As Ross (1994, cited in Macnaghten & Urry, 1998: p. 98) notes, such images became part of a 'new genre' of clichéd images which the media use to frame environmental issues.

> [Media attention] – That drives it up the political agenda. […] [A] temporary inflatable, and 3 or 4 surfers or windsurfers or whatever with gas masks, that's a great picture, you know. It has a very very strong message. A stronger message actually than a huge great crowd with lots and lots of little banners. (Interview with Hines)

Its fundraising activities that financed these campaigns tapped into the 'cool' image associated with the surfing lifestyle. SAS organised surfing competitions and festivals, a range of merchandising from t-shirts to watch straps and the extremely lucrative, and highly sought-after annual ball, a music festival that has become a very popular live music event in the Cornwall social calendar. Protesters

Figure 1.   SAS advert in subcultural media.

in many new political movements became accomplished in the use of new technology such as desktop publishing, camcorders, and most recently the internet, as campaigning tools and for quickly mobilising protesters (McKay, 1998a). As Hines explained:

> Don't put yourself in a situation where someone can say, well there are not many people signed up to this. You can change a camera lens to make something look like a lot of people. (Interview with Hines)

These media savvy and flexible campaigning techniques suited the nature of the organisation, based on a very small number of key activists, with limited funds. As Hines explained, 'old style politics just wouldn't work':

> A lot of campaigns may be just writing letters […] well you know there were three of us, and how many people in the water industry? There were 10 water companies, Department of the

Figure 2.   SAS advert in subcultural media.

> Environment, all of the tourist industry also telling us to shut up, that there wasn't a problem.
> They will just swamp you. Whereas if you do a media whack and tell a million people to phone,
> they have to answer to a lot (of people). (Interview with Hines)

Despite its focus on spectacle, media events are also used as a means to get SAS into the dialogue with powerful organisations, such as Water Boards, to demand what Parker calls 'good corporate citizenship' (1999b: p. 75). Like other well publicised environmental protests in the UK at that time such as the Newbury Bypass Protest, although media spectacle gave the debate focus ('The battle for the trees at Newbury') (Parker, 1999b, p. 76), Friends of the Earth urged supporters to 'engage the companies on their own ground', for example, buying shares in the companies on the tender list for the road-building project, writing to the companies, and attending their annual general meetings (Parker, 1999b: p. 77).

Figure 3.   Pipeline News.

> Although we are a campaigning group, […] they know – the powers that be – that if something goes wrong we're going to be the first ones to point it out. […] Which is perfect for us because it means we get to go into the meetings instead of being locked outside with placards. It is more effective to be in there talking to them. (Interview with Moore)

Science, as Harvey (1998) notes, has provided 'crucial support' for many environmental pressure groups, a somewhat paradoxical situation given that environmental movements often have their philosophy rooted in the 'romantic and aesthetic tradition', that often views science 'with scepticism and distrust' (1998: p. 338). SAS's rhetoric draws heavily on scientific discourse, claiming to use the 'latest scientific 'evidence' (Moore) to substantiate its case both to the media and in consultations. Scientific 'facts' and figures feature prominently in SAS literature. For example, an advertisement (2000) states, 'the current minimum standard for a bathing beach is anything less than 2000 faecal coliforms per 100 ml – a standard that is woefully

inadequate'. Understanding the science underpinning pollution was seen to be a central role for the SAS campaign manager, recognising as Anderson (1997: p. 206) surmises, 'they are very much tied to science in terms of their credibility'.

NSMs tend not to align themselves with traditional class or party politics. Likewise, Hines claimed, 'We are not of any politics. We're a-political'. Initially this claim to be 'a-political' – a declaration that was commonplace among the SAS personnel – surprised me given SAS's clearly political objectives. However, I realised that this claim was a form of dissociation from 'traditional' forms and understandings of politics:

> We are the politics of our campaign – we are the politics of clean seas. […] it is very strongly political but we are not politically aligned to anybody. […] We will align with any party whose policy on sewage treatment is good. (Interview with Hines)

Like other environmental movements, conventional political lobbying takes place alongside these more 'creative' actions 'for which they are known' (Sutton, 2004: p. 32). It is the 'sheer diversity of their action repertoire' that marks new environmental movements as 'unique and different' from previous social movements (Sutton, 2004: p. 33).

'Hedonistic Consumers' or 'Reflexive Environmentalists'?

A criticism that is widely cited about this new political movement is the focus on single issue politics, often seen to be minority issues. They tend to be ineffective at challenging broader social issues, and associated asymmetries of capital and power; they don't challenge the capitalist system itself (Jordan, 1999: p. 10). Therefore it is important to consider *how* and *why* individuals become involved with SAS activities, *who* those individuals are, and the *meanings* they give to their membership. Is it about a concern for social change, or NIMBYism, that is just about protecting the localised environment for participants own pleasure?[6] As Butterfield and Long (1998) suggest, we need to understand whether members of sporting subcultures who use the countryside are 'hedonistic consumers' or 'reflexive environmentalists'. These are however complex questions, questions that the SAS membership survey data can only give partial answers to (see also Macnaghten & Urry, 1998).

The membership survey suggested members were quite varied in background, different sports participation, geographical location, and attitudes. It is often claimed that environmentalists – and alternative lifestyles more widely – are prevalent among or even confined to the white 'new' middle classes, reflecting the viewpoint that environmentalism stems from 'post-materialist values' (see Harvey, 1998; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998; Martinez-Alier, 1998; Sutton, 2004). Yet it is increasingly evident that within western industrialised countries, concern for the environment is more widespread than previously recognised, and that some research suggests that among local groups activists tend to be quite diverse in class and background (see Doherty *et al.*, 2000). Surfing, like most lifestyle sports, tends to be associated with middle-class white male participants. While it was not possible to assess the class background of SAS members from the available data, backgrounds did seem quite diverse, including students, unemployed, and 17% who

were earning more than £30,000 per annum. The majority fell within the 19–45 age range. Research also suggests that 'environmental activists' are more likely to be women (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998). Only one-third of SAS members were female, perhaps reflecting the male domination of water sports like surfing.[7]

UK survey research has indicated that people are more likely to show environmental awareness when they conceive of issues in concrete and local ways (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998). SAS membership did seem to be related to those who experienced the sea 'first hand'; inner-city members were less prevalent than those who lived in coastal locations.[8] The West Country was a particularly well represented region (12.7% of members), but members from around the British Isles were represented, including Scotland and Wales.

Members engaged in a range of water sports including windsurfing, sailing, swimming, diving, body boarding, water skiing, and wake boarding. Surfing was the most commonly stated sport or hobby, yet only 23% of respondents claimed to surf. As Hines recalled, even at that initial public meeting in St. Agnes, a variety of local people came along, not just surfers.

Furthermore, the survey suggested that SAS members' inspirations were complex, from those motivated by NIMBY to dedicated eco lobbyists. As has been documented in other environmental protest movements, activists often range from those only concerned with one issue, often in one locale, to individuals committed to a broader anti-capitalist cause, establishing alternative communities and lifestyles (Jordan & Lent, 1999; Eguiarte, 2000; Seel & Plows, 2000). Some members of SAS were avid environmentalists, and 'anti-capitalists', evidenced by being members of a range of environmental organisations (Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Ocean Conservation Society, anti-hunt groups and Amnesty were cited); and by their 'green' ethical consumption practices. For example, 92.8% of members claimed to recycle; 41% claimed to 'buy ethically', such as, 'I won't buy at the Body Shop, Nestle or eat at McDonalds' (male, 21, unwaged, surfer). As Parker (1999b) explores, the market is increasingly being seen as a mechanism through which to register protest; 'political action is increasingly being taken through consumption practices' (1999b: p. 70). Following Urry (1995) Parker (1999b: p. 70) uses the term 'consumer-citizenship' to represent this merging of 'citizenship as political status' and of 'consumer as economic agent' which he sees as manifest in environmental protest movements. One common way in which consumer-citizenship is expressed by environmentalists is through boycotting shops or companies like Nestle perceived to have poor 'corporate citizenship' (Parker, 1999b: p. 71).

The questionnaire also asked respondents why they joined; these were categorised into 'idealistic' (62.3%), 'personally affected' (29%) and 'health' (3%). The first category included people generally concerned about the ocean and environment; 'personally affected' included those who had got ill from being in coastal water, seen pollution at beaches, or because friends or relatives had been affected. Nevertheless, the vignettes that respondents wrote reveal a more complex picture of multiple and at times seemingly contradictory motivations. For example:

> I joined to help in a small way towards a good cause; to show support for a very worthwhile organisation. To party with everyone else of like minds. (Male, 21, body boarder, student)

Some members admitted that buying into the 'cool factor' was an important motivation, corroborated by my conversations with members who claimed that they had joined to be able to buy tickets for the annual ball. While the SAS staff I spoke with were cognisant of this practice, rather than trying to 'get apathetic people involved with campaigns' (Moore), they capitalised on the 'cool factor', using the money earned from consumption to fund their campaigns. There are also the large number of water sport enthusiasts who are not members, but support SAS by buying their merchandise, conspicuously displaying their affiliation such as by the use of car stickers and wearing t-shirts:

> You go out on the streets of Cornwall and so many people are wearing SAS merchandise, and that's a really useful marketing tool for us. Some people view it as a negative thing 'we're really cool – about selling merchandise', they don't see the real picture of what the campaign is about. (Moore in interview)

This diversity in members' commitment, with a relatively small number of 'regularly active environmental campaigners', is typical of environmental organisations (Sutton, 2004). Even in large organisations like Green Peace and Friends of the Earth, despite the odd demonstration attracting large numbers, it is a few committed campaigners who attract the media attention (Sutton, 2004). SAS's members' eclectic range of motivations and backgrounds is a characteristic shared with other contemporary environmental movements and groups (see Seel & Plows, 2000), which tend to attract a 'heterogeneous support base that crosses over traditional political allegiances' (Anderson, 1997: p. 87). Nevertheless, while it has been claimed that environmentalism in Britain has been increasingly institutionalised (Rootes, 2000: p. 53), SAS seems to be one of those strands resisting this tendency. Members tended not to join 'traditional' organisations – sporting or other – and valued the 'alternative' image the organisation tapped into; as one member put it, 'Radical, underground, and feisty; on a mission'.

In summary, SAS like other political movements of this era, is marked by heterogeneity and fluidity in membership, in networks that are often quite disparate and invisible, and that 'defy simplistic analysis' (Anderson, 1997, p. 97). Although the survey data give a limited picture of SAS membership and their rationale, characterising members of SAS as *either* 'hedonism consumers' *or* 'reflective environmentalists,' denies the array of roles, identities and motivations that co-exist. People engage with 'environmental issues and behaviours in complex, multi-faceted and deeply ambivalent ways' (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998, p. 75). In such collectivities, issues of politics cannot be separated from those of identity and lifestyle (Hetherington, 1988a, p. 4).

Collective Identity in the Simulated Surfing Community

The global media clearly plays a vital role in determining how people understand and make sense of environmental issues (Allan *et al*., 2000). Research has illustrated the media's centrality in actively constructing the environmental agenda via the creation, circulation and consumption of environmental meanings (see Anderson, 1997; Allan *et al*., 2000). While the *mass* media did play a pivotal role in exposing and communicating SAS's message, for committed water sport enthusiasts such as

surfers and windsurfers, the greatest exposure to SAS and its activities was via their *subcultural* media.

The specialist subcultural media, and especially magazines, have a significant place in the construction of collective identity in the subcultures of windsurfing and surfing (Stedman, 1997; Stranger, 1999; Wheaton, 2005). Surf magazines have become the most important and readily available sites for the 'simulations of community' (Stedman, 1997: p. 76) and the 'maintenance of a collective identity' among surfers (p. 78).[9] Thus in the next section I will explore SAS advertising and broader representation in British windsurfing magazines, discussing the notion of an 'imagined' simulated trans-national community of surfers and other beach-based water sports participants that these SAS advertisements hail.

A Symbolic Community

Windsurfing magazines depict their sporting culture and lifestyle as a utopic space that is, in the main, separate from the 'real' world. The exception to this – where broader social and political issues are reported – is environmentalism. Environmental issues, especially water pollution, were a regular and prominent part of the editorial content of British windsurfing magazines in the mid to late 1990s, becoming less prevalent after 2000 (a decline that reflects wider trends discussed earlier).

Boards magazine, one of two British windsurfing magazines, ran a series of features titled 'Eco update', which investigated 'green' issues, and specifically highlighted the work of SAS. Most British windsurfing magazines during the mid to late 1990s had adverts for SAS. The adverts were all based on a similar format (Figures 1 and 2), mostly black and white, the upper part featuring a photographic image, the bottom section consisting of a membership form for joining the organisation, and information about their merchandise. The photographs depict bleak or shocking imagery to represent the polluted state of beaches, such as dead birds and animals, sewage outfall pipes, and people surfing or windsurfing wearing gas masks. The language is declamatory: 'Is This Our Future?' is written in bold at the top of the image. Underneath the image, 'Not If We Can Help It'(see Figure 1). The reader is thus drawn into the advert's frame of reference. The language is often confrontational, emphasising a community based around a particular space: 'our' beaches. As noted earlier, the adverts draw on 'scientific evidence' to give creditability to their claims.

Magazine editorials tended to be supportive of SAS, highlighting their cause and latest campaigns. In an article titled 'Lies, damn lies and government cover-ups' (Dawes, 1994) from the 'Eco update' series in *Boards* magazine in 1994 and 1995, the commentary criticises the British government's attempts to disregard implementation of the European Commission (EC) directive concerning bathing and drinking water standards. The context is an SAS venture to lobby the European parliament, and present a petition. This article raises two more general themes in the media representation of SAS and environmentalism.

First, the text takes an overtly political stance, making specific reference to the wider political process, which as noted earlier is a conspicuous divergence from the typical magazine content: 'Unfortunately the whole issue for clean seas has come

down to Politics' (Dawes, 1994: p. 82). The choice of the word 'unfortunately' suggests that windsurfers would usually not be interested in formal institutionalised politics, yet throughout the text the windsurfers are encouraged to comprehend these personalised issues as part of the wider political sphere. The writer criticises the non-concerned 'authorities', and particularly the (then Conservative) British cabinet ministers who oppose the concerns of SAS and water users' interests. The allies in this conflict are framed as the EC who set the 'standards for bathing and drinking water' (Dawes, 1994: p. 82), as well as Labour Party members. In an unusual call to the traditional political process, Dawes encourages the reader not only to empathise with this conflict but to 'make your voice heard' by 'voting against the Conservative party at the forthcoming European parliamentary election' (Dawes, 1994: p. 82).

   SAS is framed as a legitimate, serious and active political group, working on behalf of not just windsurfers, but the public generally. Dawes acknowledges that the imagery such as 'a plethora of top-ranked surfers all striding down the corridors of the European Headquarters clad in wetsuits and gas-masks' depicts their work as frivolous, 'a large publicity circus' (1994: p. 82). But he reminds the reader this is a way of gaining media attention; despite this publicity stunt the 'real' issues were achieved, that is, delivering the petition and meeting with the EC commissioner for the environment.

   Second, the article suggests the existence of a trans-national association of different water users, with some unusual affiliations such as the inclusion of EU MEPs. The photographs show participants from different water sports with MPs (often sporting symbolic items of clothing such as a bandanna to signify their 'surfing' affiliations), reinforcing the notion of the 'extended community'. Seemingly, the only credential for being a part of this community is being a concerned water user; even those MPs and EU MEPs who support SAS can be part of the SAS tribe. Yet, as the next section discusses, this notion of a mediated collectivity of windsurfers, surfers and other water users that SAS advertisements and 'eco' features more broadly hail is paradoxical given the individualism denoted in the images of windsurfing in the subcultural media and public discourses more widely, and does not fit the lived relations between participants in these sporting subcultures.

The Imagined Community

   Everyone needs protecting. (Cover of *Pipeline*, July 2000)

Barker suggests that a common characteristic of NSMs is the use of 'symbolic event and evocative language which lend themselves coherent form as an "imagined community"'(Barker, 2000: p. 128). The language of SAS adverts, leaflets and the magazine editorial repeatedly emphasise a community based around a particular space: 'our' beaches. Yet the 'community' evoked here includes sporting subcultures that have historically defined themselves in opposition to each other (as well as to 'mainstream' sport cultures). Boundary maintenance, or the marking of insider/outsider statuses between these subcultures, takes place via language and also as contestation over the meaning and use of space (Beal & Wilson, 2004; Wheaton, 2004a). For example, in surfing argot and magazines, windsurfers are often referred to as 'wind wankers', and body boarders in a range of derogatory

terms including 'shark biscuits' and 'meat trays'. Surfers see their activity as having more status – in subcultural terms being more 'hard core' – than other surf-based activities such as windsurfing and surf kayaking. Competition for space in the surf is a form of subcultural boundary maintenance, and at times these performances of subcultural identity and territory are hostile and aggressive. The term 'localism' derives from territorialisation processes in the surfing community, explaining the way participants from one beach 'defend their patch', excluding and competing with surfers from other locales (beaches, geographical areas or even nationalities and cultures). However, these turf wars also exist *between* the subcultures of windsurfing, surfing, and other water users, particularly in settings where space in the surf is limited.

So the very name 'Surfers' Against Sewage is contradictory in its implied inclusiveness, that is, in allowing non-surfers to be labelled as *surfers*. Instead of emphasising the animosity that exists between windsurfers and surfers, the two groups are pitted together against a new 'other', the non-concerned authorities, and non-water user:

> The attitude of *others*. (SAS advert)

Hines recognised, but underplayed, the significance of these issues of identity and difference couched in 'localism', emphasising how fostering inclusively was an intentional strategy to give their cause more gravitas:[10]

> [my] view is that everybody has the right to surf […] we also saw that there was a power in numbers. We did have these common denominators. You know, actually that if a surfer were one step further away from regular society then we were also in a collective boat with everyone else as well so…you know 20 million people use the British coastline, so it adds clout. […] At the beginning the water companies people would say, well why should we put in this high level of treatment just for a small minority sport, at which point we'd say well actually there are 20 million people. (Hines in interview)

'Act Local, Think Global'

Many environmental problems experienced at the local or regional level, including water pollution, have trans-national origins and solutions. As the mantra 'Act local, think global' implies, environmental processes are increasingly conceived of as global in nature, 'assisted by the development of a global media which has generated an imagined community of all societies that appear to inhabit "one earth"' (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998: p. 28). As Harvey and Houle suggest, such new social movements encourage the 'development of a sense of belonging that approximates a sense of citizenship that transcends national borders' (1994: p. 344).[11]

Nevertheless, despite being a global discourse that appeals to 'global environmental citizenship' (Macnaghten & Urry, 1998: p. 28) – the demand for people 'to act differently for the sake of the environment' (Bell, 2005: p. 180) – environmentalism tends to be played out in *local* contexts, in this case around particular beaches and beach communities. I questioned Hines about the paradox of environmentalism in general and sewage in particular being a global problem, and something that has very different, often much more devastating consequences, for those

outside the West (see Harvey, 1998; Martinez-Alier, 1998). Despite their 'local' focus this was an avenue that has been explored by the organisation, as evidenced in the survey I analysed which asked members about whether the organisation should be more global in its approach. Hines demonstrated an understanding of these debates, but argued that ultimately funds determined the scale of what could be done. He also suggested that their activities *were* contributing to the wider problem via public policy and the judicial system. He claimed that case law became a powerful tool for those in the developing world to use:

> We've been in front of the House of Commons Select Committee that concluded that all sewage should be fully treated at all times and in all places […] So then it is hard for the government of Panama or wherever to say, we know better.

SAS's approach *has* subsequently become more global. Since the late 1990s their agenda has become more expansive including toxic and radioactive waste, also advocating research and developing a vocal stance on other issues affecting water users such as offshore wind farms and dredging. Promotional material (membership leaflet, 2004) outlines their commitment to 'take what has been learnt through campaigning in the UK' to Europe and beyond.

While SAS's main focus has been the UK, the boundaries of this environmental movement extend beyond its borders. Surfers in many Western industrialised nations have formed similar types of organisations such as the Surfer's Environmental Alliance and The Surfrider Foundation's National Campaign for Clean Water based in the USA. For the Surfer's Environmental Alliance the issues addressed are broader than water pollution, including destruction and protection of wetlands and forests, coastal protection legislation, and the protection of endangered species such as dolphins (Wu, undated). The Surfrider Foundation was founded in Malibu in 1984, and like SAS was inspired by pollution at their local surf beach. It has since expanded in scale and scope, claiming to be 'dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's waves, oceans and beaches' with 'chapters' in Europe, Australia, Brazil and Asia (Wu, undated). Like SAS it organises local action groups, lobbies government, and has an educational section. Their membership nationally claims to be 25,000, a larger number than SAS, although reflecting the bigger general population of the USA, and – at times – more widespread engagement with environmentalism in the USA than in the UK (Dunlap and Scarce 1991, p. 670 cited in Macnaghten & Urry, 1998, p. 81; see also Rootes, 2000). Surfrider literature suggests 'Though not every surfer is an environmentalist, the two roles seem to go hand in hand. [..] To be a surfer is to be environmentally aware' (Wu, undated). North American surfing magazines reflect and promote eco concerns using similar linguistic and representational techniques to the British subcultural magazines analysed. The language accentuates 'us' versus 'them', who are framed as politicians and corporations; 'the anti-surfing congressmen [..] who contaminate our beaches and destroy our health' (reader's letter in *Surfer*, 1996, p.20).

'Ethical Globalism': Green Consumerism and the Paradox of Surf Clothing

As discussed earlier, new social movements like those in environmentalism can provide potential sources of resistance to consumerism, a view supported by the

surfing subcultural media: 'consumers have it in their power to make a change – environmentally and socially' (Barilotti, 1996: p. 34). In a series of articles in *Surfer* magazine titled 'Our mother ocean' this dynamic is explored. One feature highlights that surf wear is not very 'green' (Barilotti, 1996: p. 32). A reader's letter condemns the multinational surf style giant Quicksilver for putting commercial incentives above environmental and humanitarian ones. The specific incident highlighted is of Quicksilver's alliance with the Indonesian government in sponsoring one of the professional surfing competitions held in Indonesia, causing 'socially irresponsible environmental degradation' at the coral reefs (*Surfer*, 1996: p. 20). As Parker (1999b: p. 73) suggests, consumers increasingly exercise rights and demand responsibilities from corporations, and 'shopping as the quintessential expression of consumer choice now carries social anxieties over eco-politics' (Mort, 1989: p. 170).

Companies like Quicksilver have been quick to respond to such criticisms, getting involved with a range of eco initiatives to demonstrate their 'authentic' insider status in the surfing culture. Bob McKnight, President and CEO of Quiksilver Inc., claims:

> As surfers, we are stakeholders in wanting to help preserve the ocean environment and we are committing our resources, our connection to the youth culture and the passion that has driven the company's success. (Press release, 5 August 2002)

Quicksilver promotional material (Press release, 2002) discusses the company's commitment to the coral reef ecosystem, publicising an initiative titled *The Quicksilver Crossing*, involving a floating research station to enable scientists to access previously unreachable remote reefs around the world. While such projects do provide opportunities for important environmental work, they also produce a range of lucrative marketing opportunities. The *Crossing* is in partnership with IMAX Theatres, providing an opportunity to feature and promote Quicksilver's sponsored surfers as 'campaign ambassadors'. The promotional language emphasises Quicksilver's insider status and thus eco credentials:

> Quicksilver's commitment to give back to the ocean and the global communities that have been host to the surf culture and lifestyle from which the company evolved. (Press release, 5 August 2002)

Of concern in such initiatives is the way western scientists – and surfers – are seen to become guardians of the coral reefs that support non-western communities.

Further evidence of Quicksilver's paradoxical involvement in eco initiatives is in its teaming up with organisations like SAS. The 'SAS – Quicksilver Eco Tour' has been running since 2000 (*Pipeline*, issue 57, August 2004, pp. 10–11). It (in 2004) consisted of a road tour targeting children who surf, and educating them about 'cleaner seas'. The children get involved with a clean up of their local beaches under the guidance of Quicksilver's sponsored pro surfers. While young surfers undoubtedly become more environmentally aware, and gain incentives to continue to be (such as their Beach Eco Guardian certificate), they also received 'goodie bags' filled with the latest Quicksilver merchandise, sending contradictory messages to these young consumers.

Given the centrality of merchandise to SAS's fundraising, I was surprised that SAS hadn't exploited ethical consumption more fully. Hines, in interview, said

they had experimented with eco-friendly unbleached products for their merchandise, in part in response to requests from members. But it was claimed that at that time the products weren't good enough, affecting profits which funded their campaigns. Since then (the late 1990s) there seems to have been an increased awareness of the more exploitative aspects of surf wear production, as well as a commitment to an 'eco'-friendly lifestyle. SAS has incorporated an 'organic' range of merchandise which exists alongside the non-eco-friendly clothing. Members are still being consulted about their preferences via the web pages (2004). Member packs (2004) include 'SAS top 10 tips for a brighter, clearer planet' advocating a range of lifestyle practices such as buying eco-friendly products, recycling, avoiding solvent-based paints, and taking showers rather than baths.[12]

Macnaghten and Urry claim that this increased reflexivity about the environment in contemporary western societies has led to a shift in 'the basis of citizenship from political rights to consumer rights, especially those that are linked to conceptions of nature' (1998: p. 25): for example, the right to consume a high-quality environment like clean water. As Parker's work explores in some depth, the types of 'protest actions' discussed in this paper can be seen as 'being constitutive of a wider more pluralistic definition of "active" citizenship, including different forms of consumption practice' (Parker, 1999b: p. 68). He outlines how these environmental protest groups of the 1990s used 'consumer power to alter the use, or misuse, of space, place and power' (Parker, 1999b: p. 74). Such a 'conflation of citizenship and the market' is a highly complex and contradictory process (Ravenscroft, 1998: p. 40).

Parker's work (Parker, 1999a,b; Parker & Ravenscroft, 2001) raises important questions about what (post) citizenship *is*, how it is shifting, fluid and contested (Urry, 1995), and the role that politicised consumption practices, identity and life-style might play in its reconfiguration. Furthermore, environmentalism's inherent trans-nationalism leads to questions about the need for new (cosmopolitan) global conceptions of democracy and citizenship such as the ideas of 'ecological' or 'environmental citizenship' (see, for example, Valencia Saiz, 2005). While these important debates are beyond the scope of this paper, the case study of SAS illustrates some of the ways citizenship is implicated in and linked to politicised leisure consumption (see also Ravenscroft, 1998; Parker & Ravenscroft, 2001).

Conclusions

This paper has exemplified how, through their leisure consumption, surfers and participants from other hedonistic, individualistic, minority sports cultures have become exposed to and involved with environmentalism, ranging from ethical consumption and the adoption of an alternative lifestyle to forms of political protest.

It is argued further that SAS is part of a broader wave of new social movements and direct action protest groups that gathered momentum in Britain in the mid to late 1990s. Such environmental protest groups use a range of tactics to 'resist dominating power' including 'market-based consumer-citizenship measures' (Parker, 1999b: p. 75). In these 'party and protests' movements of the so-called '1990s counter culture' (McKay, 1998b: p. 2), the politics of identity

take centre stage, and *leisure* has come to prominence as a central site in which 'social order is either being instituted or resisted' (Chaney, 2002: p. 127, my emphasis).

Mass media attention and polysemic imagery are trademarks of SAS campaigns and success. As Anderson has illustrated, the mass media, and forms of global communication more broadly, have 'transformed the way in which politics is conducted' (1997: p. 210). As has been documented in more prominent environmental protests (such as the Brent Spar disaster), the mainstream media has been SAS's main 'messengers' (Parker, 1999b: p. 79). However, it is the subcultural media's role that is central in framing this trans-local community, and acts as a 'communication network' for the movement and its activities.

The political significance of SAS should not be overstated. As I have indicated SAS has had *some* notable successes, particularly in drawing media attention to the issue of water pollution, yet evidence of its impact on water legislation is lacking. As in other prominent environmental consumer-based protests, it is unlikely that politicised consumption will in itself achieve systematic change (Parker, 1999b). Furthermore, its membership represents a small percentage of regular water users in the UK, and (reflecting other environmental groups) by no means all members of the organisation are actually involved with grassroots activism rather than social and consumption activities.

Nevertheless, to characterise these surfers as solely individualistic, hedonistic, disengaged consumers is also misleading. These lifestyle sport participants are individualistic *and* part of a collectivity: they are hedonistic *and* reflexive consumers, often politically disengaged yet environmentally aware and/or active. As Mort suggests:

> These are the localised points where consuming meshes with social demands and aspirations in new ways. What they underline is that consumption is not ultimately about individualism versus collectivism, but about articulating the two in a new relation. (Mort, 1989: pp. 170–171)

Consumption, as this paper has illustrated, needs to be conceptualised in ways that recognise the active, diverse, self-generated (Crouch & Tomlinson, 1994) and politicised practices that exist in and around commercialised leisure. As Tomlinson (2001: p. 411) contends, 'sport and leisure have become a source, often rooted in a new consumerism, for the articulation of new cultural identities'.

The role sport and leisure play in the politics of identity is increasingly complex. Further research is required to explore the relationship between leisure, consumption and new social movements such as environmentalism (see also Harvey & Houle, 1994) and the forms of (global) citizenship, identity and reflexive lifestyles that such processes may offer consumers. As Parker suggests,

> The discourses and practices of the market within capitalist consumer democracies are playing an enhanced part in the politics of protest in the 1990s; 'consumer-citizenship' is expressed in increasingly varied ways, and forms a important part of the shift towards 'lifestyle politics'. (1999b: p. 71)

As Chris Hines, founder of SAS reveals, it was through his involvement in SAS – which came about because he surfed – that he came to realise the *meaning* of politics; how things that he initially perceived to be personal were in fact profoundly political. He described how he had been asked to give a paper at the Political

Reform Society in Cornwall, a group aimed at helping disenfranchised people to engage with the political process, and encouraging them to vote. He told them:

> At some point in your life there is something that's going to hack you off and just think if we could manage this, from a bunch of surfers who had no idea what we were doing and we take it right up to the highest point and meet the President of the European Parliament, and you could do that as well, then it's just a matter of belief. (Hines in interview)

New ways of *being* political that previously seemed of little significance, whether 'climbing a tree, surfing, going for a ride on your bike, having a street party' (Field, 1999: p. 79) – hold important insights for understanding this developing field of 'new politics' (Jordan, 1999: p. 11). In the beginning of the 21st century, an era in Britain marked by youth apathy with traditional politics (Jordan & Lent, 1999), such new social movements and the alternative lifestyles from which they have emerged are important politically and culturally, and have an important, but under-explored relationship with leisure.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. John Fiske (1989) is widely – but somewhat unjustly – cited as the main protagonist of this romanticisation of consumer creativity, specifically for being overly preoccupied with 'empowering' the audience of the text, and overstating their resistive capacities (see, for example, Curran, 1990; McGuigan, 1992).
2. Though beyond the scope of this article research also demonstrates the enduring nature of traditional structures of social and cultural power, particularly how patterns of gendered, class and racial inequality are reproduced within them (see, for example, part 2 of Wheaton, 2004b).
3. Description of SAS on membership survey (interview with Moore).
4. Field (1999) states that Surfers Against Sewage were claiming a UK membership of 23,000 in the summer of 1996; however, there is no source given.
5. As Naomi Klein (2000) has suggested, contemporary practices like culture jamming and adbusting are rooted in, and borrow from a range of philosophies and avant-garde art movements, and particularly Guy Debord and the Situationalists.
6. See however debate in Seel and Plough (2000), who examine how in environmental protests around Earth First! NIMBY attitudes and events lead to wider engagement with the movement.
7. The SAS survey did not ask about the members' gender or ethnicity; however, an analysis of a small random sample of 'names' ($n = 147$) revealed that 65% of those who responded were men and 29% women (in the remaining 6% the gender was unclear from the name given).
8. The exception being the London area. It was suggested that this was due to the large number of visitors to the West Country from around London.
9. Stedman, in her analysis of surfing in Australia, goes so far as to argue that 'surfing as it is simulated in magazines *is* the surfing subculture' (Stedman, 1997: p. 78, my emphasis). She contends that postmodern processes have resulted in the demise of the subculture as an 'observable entity' which now exists only through representation in the surf media (1997: p. 76).
10. Certainly the survey data discussed earlier pointed to a surprisingly small percentage of members of SAS defining themselves as active 'surfers'. However, this is likely to also reflect the type of member that responded to the survey.

11. Debates about environmentalism and trans-national citizenship – such as expressed in the notion of 'ecological' or 'environmental citizenship' – are widespread in the literature on environmentalism. See, for example, Valencia Saiz (2005) and Bell (2005) in the journal *Environmental Politics*.
12. SAS have also conducted a survey of people's buying habits in relation to eco-friendly products. The research was sponsored by the Co-op Bank (*Pipeline*, issue 57, p. 9).

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