

PARALLELS IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:
AN ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE AND THE
ENVIRONMENT IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AND
SOUTHERN ITALY

by

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Literature's ability to represent real-world environmental and social issues plays an important role in addressing these issues. In some cases, literature can provide answers that other sources of information cannot. This thesis analyzes literary and filmic arts in order to understand the complexities of cases of environmental injustice. By analyzing pieces of literature from two geographic regions, this project outlines similar patterns within different contexts. My research shows that linking the issues of environmental injustice with their representations in the arts can provide compelling insights into the common elements of violations of social, economic, and environmental landscapes.

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From Senior and Mazza



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Tim Verlaan

Introduction

In a political climate in which politicians ignore or intentionally misrepresent climate findings to gain power or promote capitalist interests, activists within the growing Environmental Justice movement offer opposition, advocating for the protection of the environment. These provoked citizens, who see that safeguarding the health of the land also ensures the health of the people who live off it, are part of a movement with notable contemporary examples in the crises in Flint, Michigan, and the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline in the Dakotas. In simple terms, Environmental Justice (or EJ) is known as the intersection between social justice and issues regarding the protection and welfare of the environment.¹ This concept serves as the main lens through which I analyze my primary texts² and provides the foundation to my analysis of literary expressions of EJ issues.

My research investigates literary and filmic representations of environmental and social injustices in literature from two geographic locations: the Pacific Northwest of the United States and Southern Italy. These areas are geographically and culturally distinct, but share analogous challenges. In the Klamath Basin of Southern Oregon and Northern California, Indigenous People have faced the painful consequences of European and US expansion. I begin my research with a brief chronicle of native peoples in the Klamath area and the violent disruption caused by settlers. This tumultuous history of violence, territorial conflict, national politics, as well as a series

¹ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines EJ as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. For more information, see “Environmental Justice.” *EPA*, 7 Sept. 2017, www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice

² Primarily I am referring to the main and essential texts of this project, not necessarily indicating that these texts that are first-hand accounts.

of shifting legislative frameworks, acts as a backdrop to a present-day conflict between the indigenous tribespeople and agricultural farmers over the region's scarce amount of water. These competing interests led to a calamitous fish kill in 2002, an event which is the focus of part of this thesis.

The other large section of my thesis analyzes environmental science and literature from the area surrounding Naples, Italy. Here, a crime syndicate, the Camorra, has rooted itself within society and used its power to skirt environmental regulations and safeguards. My thesis research looks at these issues as case studies.³ By looking at how literature provides compelling insights into these human and scientific challenges, my aim is not to construe these case studies as equivalent—that would be impossible. Rather, I am investigating comparable relationships between environmental conditions and their representations in the literary and filmic arts.

My aim is to link environmental justice and the arts and to show that this relationship can be productive and indeed helps to paint a more complete picture of specific situations. My hope is that these disciplines can be made to work together in synergy, and that the final comparative environmental regional analysis as a whole will be greater than the sum of its parts.

³ In this context, a case study refers to the study of a person, group, or situation as the subject through which the research can be viewed and interpreted. The Oxford Living Dictionaries offer two definitions, one of which is relevant to my research, “(b) a particular instance or case that may be analysed [analyzed] or used as an example to illustrate a thesis or principle.” “*case study*.” English Oxford Living Dictionaries, en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/case_study. Accessed 16 October 2017.

Chapter 1: Environmental Injustices Near the Camorra's Operations

*Activists are not asking for financial compensation within an economic valuation framework. They are arguing in terms of landscape, health ecology and democracy. In this sense, the escalation of the conflict is linked to new voices expressing different values from those of decision makers, voices which have found themselves unacknowledged in decision-making processes so far. Campania's social unrest can easily be understood as a manifestation of an environmental justice movement. Actors are concerned not only with waste management efficiency, but also with the increasing amount of waste in Campania coming from elsewhere, the presence of illegal toxic dumps, abuses of political power, anomalous increases in disease rates, dangers posed to future agricultural production, and the right to be heard.*⁴— Giacomo D'Alisa

In the Southern Italian region of Campania, an international crime syndicate is facing resistance from EJ activists, both local and international. The Camorra is centered in the Province of Naples, which is in the Campania region of Southern Italy. The province includes the city of Naples, and the Triangle of Death⁵ to the northeast. One of several mafia organizations in Italy, the Camorra is deeply rooted⁶ in the economic, political, and social life of the region, and its activities include drug trafficking, buying and disposing of toxic industrial, and producing and exporting apparel and other high-end and highly-profitable commodities. Dissimilar from most contemporary business operations, which are regulated by federal governments or other comparable entities, the Camorra, commonly referred to just as, "The System," profits within its own governance; the Neapolitan mob writes its own rules within the scope of laissez faire capitalism. Rather than being controlled by a series of checks and balances

⁴ D'Alisa, Giacomo et al. "Conflict in Campania: Waste Emergency or Crisis of Democracy." *Ecological Economics* (2010): pp. 239–249.

⁵ See Figure 1 in List of Figures.

⁶ Roberto Saviano compares the stranglehold that the Camorra has on the region's residents, government, and economy to the constricting, writhing nature of an octopus, p. 54.

by an outside entity— for reasons like protecting the rights of workers, or ensuring environmental protections—the System commands the people and manipulates the area in its reach. The Camorra asserts its dominance over the community in a number of ways, including drive-by-shootings, where casualties and property damage serve to remind that the mafia is always in control. Further, the widely-accepted code of silence known as *omertá* impedes residents from alerting the police or testifying against them.⁷

Abuses of political or societal power through the mafia structure—including the associated presence of illegal toxic dumps and the corresponding rise in rates of cancer, disease, and agricultural deterioration—are being met with resistance in Southern Italy. This resistance comes in several forms: pressure from activists, government entities, scientists, and even international groups in some cases.⁸ That is to say, the role of the Camorra is unjustly affecting both the *environmental* landscape, and the *social* landscape of Southern Italy. Thus, people who care about and advocate for the protection of the land, or speak up for stronger social protections or policies, often oppose the mafia. The research in this chapter aims to build a bridge towards action, by first investigating what work has been done in the scientific community and whether or not evidence of a case of environmental justice can be found from environmental science journal articles.

⁷ The southern Italian mafia groups that control local communities' politics rely on this code of silence, as a way to maintain their power, and breed opposition to the Italian government and police. There are many mafia groups in Southern Italy, and another major group, the 'Ndrangheta has international influence like the Camorra does. An ABC Australia documentary series details how the code of silence is used in Calabria, the southern Italian region in which the 'Ndrangheta is headquartered. "Calabria Mafia." (1994). Accessed 01 June 2017, web.

⁸ Although political drivers, national and international governmental drivers, and activists all apply pressure to the Camorra, this chapter focuses on environmental scientists' role. The complexities of this case of environmental injustice is complex and has many layers, so the ways in which governmental bodies and activists press against the mafia are areas for further research. European Union policies, and the effectiveness of the country's anti-mafia organization will be touched upon in the fourth, and final, chapter.

Investigating Injustice through Environmental Science

Scientists have a significant role in the opposition against the mafia, producing evidence of environmental transgressions and misuse. There may not be a one-to-one equivalency between a scientific report condemning a mafia group and that group being held accountable, but when combined with anti-mafia forces, these reports may help to curb environmental contamination. In Naples, aquifers and soil have been contaminated by chemical industrial waste. A bladder cancer carcinogen, arsenic, has been found in the bloodstream of citizens at high levels, and general rates of cancer mortality are higher in the Triangle of Death than in neighboring areas.

Kathryn Senior and Alfredo Mazza contend that there is a link between the deterioration of environmental cleanliness and illegal toxic dumping. In their 2004 article, "Italian 'Triangle of Death' Linked to Waste Crisis," the authors show a correlation between the increasing rates of cancer and the presence of legal and illegal landfill sites. This finding was corroborated by a 2008 World Health Organization study. The Triangle of Death refers to the eastern region of Campania, District 73, which holds one of the worst records of illegal environmental activity, largely due to the Camorra. The towns of Nola, Marigliano, and Acerra serve as the three points of the Triangle of Death.⁹ Perhaps most importantly, Senior and Mazza assert that there is a connection between "the level of pollution caused by inadequate waste-control methods and illegal dumping and the high level of cancer mortality in the region."¹⁰ As the Camorra is heavily involved in the dumping of industrial waste, we can begin to see the

⁹ see Figure 1 in List of Figures

¹⁰ Senior, Kathryn and Mazza, Alfredo. "Italian 'Triangle of death' linked to waste crisis" (The Lancet Oncology, 2004).

seams where the fabric of the syndicate and the sickness of the environment intertwine. Senior and Mazza also include a quotation from Paolo Vineis, an environmental epidemiologist in London, who says, “In Italy, specific landfill sites have been investigated [...] but research is only partially published or unpublished.”¹¹ This lack of published information is just one reason that there has been little progress made in Naples’ waste crisis: Italians are waiting on action against the mafia, too. And without scientific support for mafia opposition, more people can maintain their course, without being outraged by these environmental injuries. This article brings to light that there is connection between the presence of illegally dumped toxins, yet fails to illuminate the link between the System and the pernicious dumping.

There are a few more academic and scientific articles published in English¹² that trace a line between mafia operations and the dumping of toxic materials. A handful of studies conducted within the ‘Triangle of Death’ analyze the relationship between the health of the land in relation to illicit refuse dumping. For example, geochemist Luciano Ferrara made a scientific inquiry of Roccarainola, a municipality near the Triangle of Death, in his study, “Geochemical Survey of an Illegal Waste Disposal Site under a Waste Emergency Scenario (Northwest Naples, Italy). In Roccarainola, a cave was banned from public access by a local civil officer in 2001 because of foul odors likely caused by illegal waste disposal. The aim of this project was to determine if the cave was fit to be the site of a controlled landfill in the future. To study this, Ferrara and the other researchers carried out a detailed geochemical survey of the site, including

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² My research focuses on sources published in English. There could certainly be a more robust and clear link found in the scientific articles published in Italian between Camorra operations and environmental injustice.

analyses of the geology, hydrogeology, morphology, depth of the water table, and soil quality. Their data suggested that an aquifer was highly contaminated by the presence of extraordinary levels of ammonia and heavy metal pollutants, such as lead and copper. They found soil samples from the copper at eight times greater than the residential healthy limit and analyses indicated the presence of organic compounds, with high toxicological risk to humans. The study concluded that, for these, and other reasons, the site is not compatible with the implementation of a controlled landfill. Furthermore, the author called for proper adoption of waste management policies, and the elimination of illegally trafficked waste in Campania (Ferrara, 2012). In addition to the damage to the land in this case, we will see in Chapter 2 that the circumvention of environmental policies can lead to ruinous effects for the people, plants, and animals. This article proves that the cave has been improperly managed, and that the environmental health is substandard. As with Senior and Mazza's article, it does not link the cause to mafia toxic dumping. These articles provide a lack-luster account of System activity: the two groups of scientists make clear that illegal dumping is happening—and is why people are being killed—but they do not take the risk to argue that the cause of this problem is the mafia. Earlier, my research touched on the dangers involved within the System. Again, the members of the mob periodically drive through neighborhood, marking their territory with bullets. It is not a stretch to see that these same people have the capability to hunt down and murder others who oppose them, like environmental scientists.

The inability to link environmental degradation to mafia operation appears often in Italian studies and is a roadblock to research. "Conflict in Campania: Waste Emergency or Crisis of Democracy," by Giacomo D'Alisa details the Campania's waste

crisis by highlighting the political, economic, social, and environmental actors. Near the conclusion of the article, the authors argue that the Camorra's role in the waste crisis is not completely clear, and its involvement complicates the research. After all, corporate entities may be dumping illegally too. The mafia's illicit activity has yet to be disambiguated from that of corporations in general, giving another advantage to the Camorra: it is not clear who is to blame and who should be punished. The rapid saturation of landfills should also be seen as a result of the import of external urban and toxic waste by the Camorra over the last twenty years. Even if the authors acknowledge the relevance of the mafia in Campania's conflict, the complexity and magnitude of the subject deserve a specific study beyond the reach of this paper (D'Alisa et al, 2012). D'Alisa concludes that it is widely known that the Camorra has had some part in the waste crisis around Naples, but the specifics of their involvement has yet to be determined. In other words, it is easier to see a link between toxic dumping and the decline of the health of the environment than it is to link the toxic dumping to the mafia. The evidence that links the mafia to the dumping does not appear to be found through environmental science articles published in English.

Furthermore, there is proof that many Italian waste sites are illegally produced, without clear ties to criminal organizations. Giuseppe di Lorenzo's article, "Increased Risk of Bladder Cancer in Critical Areas at High Pressure of Pollution of the Campania region in Italy: A Systematic Review" further highlights the toxic dumping issues around Naples with a focus on how citizens of Naples are becoming sicker. Lorenzo states that in 2013 "approximately 6,000 dumping sites have been officially reported in the provinces of Naples and Caserta, with 60% of them being illegal. In order to remove

the evidence of illegal waste disposal, waste is commonly set to fire under uncontrolled conditions, which causes a release of a number of toxins in the environment” (Lorenzo et al, 2015). Among these toxins, Lorenzo concluded that arsenic, a known carcinogen for bladder cancer, was found in the blood at higher rates than the surrounding regions of Italy. Without being explicit in investigating the Camorra’s role of illegal dumping, there exists a void of knowledge that definitively shows the extent of the role of the mafia in the creation of the thousands of dumping in Southern Italy. Lorenzo also calls for more research to be done on this topic, as he believes larger population-based studies are needed to better estimate the arsenic exposure in the investigated area. Perhaps more telling than the specific findings of these studies are the gaps of knowledge in the Camorra’s involvement in environmental degradation.

From the limits of these scientific journal articles, the need for another strategy to understand the causes of environmental injustices emerges. Elena Past, in her article “‘Trash is Gold’: Documenting the Ecomafia and Campania’s Waste Crisis,” traces one of the storylines of the film *Gomorra* in which a businessman carries out a morally-bankrupt deal, dumping waste into the agricultural countryside. Her analysis of the strategies of businessmen, criminals and politicians in Naples shows their distorted gaze as they look at heaps of garbage and see opportunities for incomparable profits. She tells that the clan is winning bids in every step of the multi-step process of waste disposal in Campania. Then, Past details the myriad ways the clan illegally processes toxic waste. She analyzes four visual sources addressing the toxic crisis in Naples, including *Gomorra*. This source utilizes sound academic methodology, but has few facts and figures to illustrate its findings. Despite these shortcomings, it is rather useful

in order to show how media can both promote social and political action, and helps shape a collective understanding of the waste crisis.

When read together, these articles combine to tell us that although some progress has been made since Mazza's call for an urgent investigation, none of the contemporary scientific and academic articles have been able to fully elucidate how the Camorra is harming citizens and the environment, or to what extent. Therefore, we see that there is a need to fill in the holes of understanding through other avenues. As we shall see in the following chapter, artistic representations often reflect real-life issues and the struggles of real people. Without clear evidence of the mafia's role in environmental degradation from scientific and academic reports, investigative journalism and film sources provide different routes to arrive at the center of this topic.

Chapter 2: Waters of Life

*“I was struck by the potency of the storytelling and the potential for this medium to address a complex community crisis. This very first audience became what Diana Taylor calls ‘co-owners’: ‘Bearing witness is a live process, a doing, an event that takes place in real time, in the presence of a listener who comes to be a participant and a co-owner of the traumatic event.’ [...] What I learned in this process and later through the rehearsals and performances was **how integral and interwoven the salmon are in every facet of life for the Hupa, Karuk, and Yurok people**” (125). [emphasis added] – Jean O’Hara¹³*

In the Pacific Northwest of the United States the sudden death of tens of thousands of fish on a prominent river brought to the surface a violent history between Indigenous and Caucasian settler communities. The Klamath Basin is a geographic region located near the border between Oregon and California, home to many Native American groups, including the Klamath, Karuk, Modoc, Yurok, and Yahooskin tribes, as well as numerous agricultural farmers, many of whom are of European descent. This chapter begins with a brief history of the Oregon and the federal government’s series of abuses of the Klamath Basin’s native peoples, and then discusses *Salmon is Everything*, a play that recounts the disastrous fish kill of the early 2000s on the Klamath River.

Blocked at the Confluence of Indigenous and Western Cultures

The arrival of European Americans exploring and settling in the area sharply tested the Klamath tribespeople’s delicate set of relationships with the land and ignored the ways in which their historic lands were anchored to the ritual geography of the landscape. The closely-related tribal populations of the Modoc and Klamath had centers of subsistence and settlement in the Klamath Basin’s rich wealth of natural resources.

¹³ afterword to *Salmon is Everything*, May, p. 125.

According to Douglas Duer, in his chapter, “The Klamath Tribes: Restoring Peoples, Restoring Ties to the Land,” in *The First Oregonians*, a compilation of histories of Indigenous Peoples in Oregon, the ancestors of the Klamath and Modoc relied, relative to the changes in seasons and accompanying seasonal patterns of resource use, on areas consisting of vast lakes, thickly-forested mountains, high-altitude deserts, and fish-bearing rivers¹⁴. Year after year the spring snow-melt signaled to the beginning of the fish runs,¹⁵ which lasted up to couple months. Duer notes that these patterns of subsistence occurred consistently, and that these people have lived in the aforementioned territories for much of the Holocene.¹⁶

The relationship between Klamath tribespeople and their environment is based on a level of interconnectedness not found in the contemporary U.S. society. To the tribes, individual plants and animals of their environment were seen to possess a spirit. Relationships with these communities of flora and fauna called for ethical and reciprocal relations. Major resource harvests, such as those of fish—predominantly species of mullet and salmon—and roots crops such as camas were initiated by ceremonies tied to specific procurement sites. These ceremonies, viewed as a necessity so that the species would return each year, honored the landscape which, via the communities of plants and animals, offered tribespeople sustenance.¹⁷ The settlers invading this region lacked an understanding of this nuanced relationship with nature,

¹⁴ Duer, Douglas. “The Klamath Tribes: Restoring Peoples, Restoring Ties to the Land,” in Berg, Laura’s *The First Oregonians*, (Oregon Council for the Humanities, Portland, Oregon, 2007. pp. 150-151).

¹⁵ The English Oxford Living Dictionaries define a run as “[a]n annual mass migration of fish up or down a river. “run.” English Oxford Living Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/run>. Accessed 16 October 2017.

¹⁶ “The Holocene (or Recent) is the current geological epoch which started some 11,500 years ago when the glaciers began to retreat. This retreat marked the end of the glacial phase of the most recent ice age.” “Holocene epoch.” BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/history_of_the_earth/Holocene. Accessed 21 October 2017.

¹⁷ Duer p.150.

as many such settlers subscribed to the notion of private land and were settling in the Western part of the United States to claim land promised by the federal government. Most settlers failed to appreciate the cultural practices intrinsic and intimately tied to the nature of the Klamath peoples, in just one of the many disturbing, far-reaching missteps of the United States' relationship with the people native to the land.

Another way in which the Klamath people had a significant connection to their natural environment can be seen in the seasonal tribal patterns of gathering sustenance from the land. During the late spring and early summer months, the runs dwindled, and tribespeople (women especially) would fan out to root-digging grounds to gather subsistence roots, edible and medicinal plants and to marshy areas to collect birds' eggs. In the middle months of summer, the harvest of seedpods were "gathered by families in canoes; on the shore, the seeds were parched, hulled, winnowed, and stored for later use."¹⁸ At this time, Klamath and Modoc men would hunt game and bighorn sheep, while women picked numerous varieties of berries. In a similar manner to spiritual ceremonies, Klamath Basin families would set brush fires, which promoted the regrowth of berry patches and meadows in which game would graze.¹⁹ Autumn fishing and hunting supplemented any insufficiencies in stored staples of edible roots, seedpods. By October, families met in large winter villages, where food was stockpiled, and people would have social and spiritual gatherings and feasts. In the winter, groups of men wearing snowshoes would fish in the area's frozen-over lakes and conduct game

¹⁸ Duer, p. 150

¹⁹ Duer, p. 151

hunts to complement cached provisions.²⁰ Each season Klamath tribespeople would find different ways to thrive off, and respect, the area's natural abundance of resources.

The ways in which Indigenous People in the Klamath Basin have regained leverage in the decision-making process regarding public land policy will be discussed in this thesis' concluding chapter. Douglas Duer lists some modern policies that can be a sign of hope for the reinvigoration of Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin peoples' complex relationship with their traditional landscapes.

A River Turned Barren

In the summer of 2001, the present-day farmers whose ancestors settled the upper Klamath Basin found that their agricultural soils that had consistently produced potatoes and other foods, turned to arid powder. Federal biologists were set on redirecting water away from these farms, to stay in the Upper Klamath Lake, or to head downstream to protect endangered fish.²¹ Fishing in the Pacific Northwest brings in sizable funds for states, so federal agencies may have been motivated to protect river ecosystems and habitats for economic, and not purely environmental reasons. In response to how this decision harmed the livelihoods of farmers, and seeing how this was the first time that farmers lost out to fish since the Klamath Irrigation Project of 1906,²² farmers coordinated a series of protests and charged the gates that control the

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ It appears that the Chinook salmon in the Klamath area was listed as a threatened species in 1999, which is a less severe protection rating than being listed as endangered. See "Endangered and Threatened Marine Species under NMFS' Jurisdiction" from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries. www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/esa/listed.htm#fish. Accessed 3 June 2017.

²² Levy, Sharon. "Turbulence in the Klamath River Basin." *BioScience* 53.4 (2003): p. 315. Web. 22 Jan. 2017.

flow of water to the river. From an economic perspective, this paradigm shift from prioritizing the needs of the environment over the needs of the dominant demographic population, bared a stiff economic cost. The reported hit to the (largely Caucasian) agricultural industry in the Klamath basin exceeded \$200 million.²³

After a controversial summer, the conservative-leaning Bush administration reversed course, deciding to not protect environmental conditions after all. The federal decision-makers went against warnings from biologists, and from admonition from members of the Karuk and Yurok Tribes. These indigenous peoples rely on the river's salmon runs. In a dry season, and despite warnings and knowledge that native peoples derive sustenance from the river, the decision to divert water to farmers led to the downstream flow levels to drop.

In the early fall of 2002, environmental calamity hit the lower Klamath. In one of the worst fish kills of the western United States, more than 30,000 salmon died. They were trapped in warm, shallow water on their journey to migrate upstream to spawn.²⁴

This water dispute is not cut-and-dry; the fish kill did not stem from a simple oversight. Rather, this conflict went back and forth as public and private perceptions of the issue changed and developed and the priority for water use alternated among stakeholders over two decades. The conflict between the farmers and the advocates of the fish began in the early 1990s. The conflicts in the ten years before the fish kill reflect the divisiveness over water rights. However, these conflicts pale in comparison to the disaster of Fall 2002.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. The fish kill occurred in late September 2002, according to Levy.

The environmental activists in the early '90s feared that if too much water was taken from the Klamath River and diverted elsewhere, the animals living in it might be harmed. It turns out they were right—the population of fish in the river was massively disrupted. Although about 97% of the fish that were killed in the 2002 fish kill were Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), numerous other fish species were affected. Many environmental conflicts begin when a governmental organization takes measures to protect an endangered or threatened species, and opposing groups then fight back or respond. This situation is no different—the first conflict began in 1992 over concern for one of these fish, the Klamath Smallscale sucker (*Catostomus rimiculus*). This year was one of the driest years since 1906, and, as a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a biological report in response to the environmental conditions. This detailed plan proposed to safeguard the longevity of the species by advocating for an increased minimum water elevation for Clear Lake and Gerber Reservoir, the sucker's primary habitats. This increase in water levels for the lake and reservoir meant less water for agricultural irrigation. When the Bureau of Reclamation, the government agency in charge of enforcing this policy, announced its adoption of the FWS alternatives, agricultural stakeholders sued. They took the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and were triumphant. In 1992 and in 1994, another drought year, the Bureau of Reclamation gave agricultural demands for water priority over fish. Conflicts like these continued for most of the 1990s and into the 2000s until the Bureau of Reclamation's ability to balance stakeholders' desires broke down. Among other operational failures, disagreements among high-up officials slowed down the annual operation plan for the agency. This led to the failures of completing drafts on

time, and in some circumstances, all together. A large fish-advocating group, the Pacific Coast Fishermen's Federation filed suit, claiming violation of an Endangered Species Act (ESA) policy. The Supreme Court found that the Bureau of Reclamation was in fact in violation of the policy and was jeopardizing ESA-listed species and affecting their critical habitats. In early 2001, the court itself prescribed a course of action that benefitted the water levels of the rivers more so than the amount of water allowed to be taken for irrigation purposes.²⁵ These cases demonstrate how stakeholders and environmental groups clashed in the years preceding the 2002 fish kill.

In February 2004, the Yurok Tribal Fisheries program created a report detailing scientific findings on the causes of the fish kill titled, *The Klamath River Fish Kill of 2002; Analysis of Contributing Factors*. This report demonstrates that Native Americans are challenging the status quo, playing a role in scientific inquiry, and are politically active, ensuring that their voices are being heard. The scientific report is effective because it “takes a general approach of: 1) analyzing available facts and data, 2) looking for empirical data correlations and relationships, and 3) reaching data-supported conclusions regarding the cause of the fish kill based on data and known relationships.”²⁶ These procedures are congruent with leading research institutions and

²⁵ Dan Tarlock. “Chicago-Kent College of Law Scholarly Commons @ IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law Fish, Farms, and the Clash of Cultures in the Klamath Basin, (with H. Doremus).” Web. 22 Jan. 2017.

²⁶ Michael Belchik, Dave Hillemeier, and Ronnie M Pierce. “The Klamath River Fish Kill of 2002; Analysis of Contributing Factors Yurok Tribal Fisheries Program.” (2004): Print.

bolster the importance and relevance of this project's findings²⁷. In addition, the scientific analyses within this report includes graphs detailing the difference in dissolved oxygen (which fish need for respiration, or 'breathing') in the Klamath River from 2001 to 2002, photographs of symptoms of fish disease, and a location map detailing where on the river the fish kill occurred.

This report concludes that the lower than average water from the principle dam on the Klamath River was a major cause of the fish kill. The authors write, "In this instance, low flows from Iron Gate Dam were a substantial causative factor in the fish kill of 2002. It is the only factor that is controllable by human action. Had the flows from Iron Gate Dam in August and September been at or above 1000 cfs [cubic feet per second], as they were in all other years of above average escapements, it is likely that the fish kill would not have occurred."²⁸ In other words, had the water been diverted to the river instead of to the irrigation channels for agriculture, the fish kill of monstrous proportion would not have happened. This report clearly puts the blame for this event on the management of water, and also conveys the gravity of the situation in cultural history.

As noted by the elders of the Yurok Culture Committee on October 3, 2002; "Never in our time have we, the elders of the Yurok Culture Committee, seen such a

²⁷ Indigenous peoples have many stereotypes in popular culture that demonize and diminish their culture. This stretches from Native Americans holding closer relationships with animals, being a savage and inherently more violent, and being more closely connected to the environment than white Americans. Aside from 'othering' Indigenous Peoples from the rest of U.S. culture, these stereotypes are harmful in several ways. By being labeled as closer to nature, Native Americans are seen to not follow scientific practices, or are somehow invalidated and discredited. For more information regarding the representations of Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples in popular culture, see Noël Sturgeon. "Frontiers of nature: the ecological Indian in U.S. film" in *Environmentalism in popular culture: gender, race, sexuality, and the politics of the natural*. (2009): Print.

²⁸ Belchik, Hillemeir, and Pierce, p. 42.

mass destruction of our salmon resource.”²⁹ Despite repeated inquiries, the Yurok Tribal Fisheries Program could find no evidence of such an event recorded in Yurok myth, legend, and stories that have been passed along from generation to generation, even though salmon have formed a central pillar of Yurok spirituality, culture, and society. No fisheries management agencies are aware of any historical accounts of large-scale adult Chinook salmon fish kills on the Klamath.

The Yurok Tribal Fisheries report underlines the unprecedented, unique nature of the fish kill. Furthermore, it highlights how destructive this event was to the Yurok peoples. That said, it is critical to understand that this seemingly simple cause-effect situation must be read within the socio-political contexts of the time. As stated before, in the Klamath region the preceding summer had been a harsh drought, which resulted in losses of more than \$200 million in the Klamath Basin. So this choice to divert water to the rural agricultural areas was done to help support an economically strapped, primarily white population. This fits in with the larger political climate in the U.S. at the time. In this case, the federal decision-makers of the Bush Administration put the needs of the irrigators first, endangering the environment and further subjugating traditionally suppressed minority groups. The right-leaning Bush era was marred with several cases where the economic development and corporate benefit was prioritized over the protecting the environment, a trademark stance of the modern U.S. Republican party. With this in mind, we can see that the ideologies and motivations of the dominant political party can dramatically shape specific regional social and environmental

²⁹ Ibid, p. 4.

landscapes.³⁰ Indeed, the fish kill of 2002 is a prime example of environmental injustice in the Pacific Northwest that must be considered in broader political, economic, and social terms.

EJ Representation on Stage

One way to better understand the complexities of wrongdoings of this nature is through representations such as literature, political theater, and art. The calamity on the Klamath in 2002 sets the stage for a biting community theater piece, *Salmon is Everything* (2014) written by Theresa May. May received a PhD in Theater History and Criticism from the University of Washington, and currently teaches in the theater department at the University of Oregon, including courses on Environmental Theatre, Ecodramas and Ecocriticism, and Native theatre. She also is the co-founder and executive director of *Earth Matters on Stage*, (EMOS) which is an ecodrama festival that supports playwrights' efforts to engage in local and international cross-cultural ecological issues. Thus, much of her work and projects integrate themes of environmental stewardship. Her piece *Salmon is Everything* depicts cultures in crisis when a means of sustenance is threatened. Further, this public theater work is a window into the culture of Indigenous Peoples of Klamath Falls, and the main characters are members of the Klamath, Yurok, Karuk, and Hupa tribes. The spectators see the pains of several Native and non-Native characters as they attempt to live together, and try to understand why the salmon kill of 2002 occurred. In addition, the play demonstrates

³⁰ To see Bush's track record regarding the environment, see Suzanne Goldenberg. "The Worst of Times: Bush's Environmental Legacy Examined." *The Guardian* 2009. Web.

what can be done to ensure the future livelihood of the salmon, the peoples that depend upon the species, and the stakeholders who need to provide for themselves and their families in other manners, such as farming and large-scale agriculture. In many ways, *Salmon in Everything* is a primary source of a contemporary environmental issue. But it is much more than that; as a play it recreates ‘live’ the point of views of different stakeholders. It humanizes the conflict and creates a compelling and memorable story.

Feminist Theater and Reshaping History

It appears that the conflict in the Klamath region in the early 2000s lends itself well to an on-stage adaptation perhaps because as an art form, theater is able to mimic, imitate, or reproduce reality. In her book, *Unmaking Mimesis*, Elin Diamond examines feminist theater’s mimetic qualities that allow the genre to expose history in a new light. In other words, theater’s ability to critique culture offers an audience a way to reimagine the present. Diamond writes that by using “mimetically constructed ‘dialectical images’ performers temporalize perception, producing new means of imbricating [or arranging so that they overlap] the physical and the historical.”³¹ Theater allows an audience to experience and read history contrary to their natural inclination. According to Diamond, theater can even be a way of re-envisioning experience itself.

Mimesis can amplify the voices of indigenous peoples when deployed in theater, in a similar manner that feminist theater promotes the standpoint of women. May uses storytelling to tell history and to make space for Indigenous Peoples experience, similar

³¹ Diamond, Elin. *Unmaking Mimesis*, (Routledge, 1997). p. 143.

to how Diamond argues that writers from the 1970s and 80s make space for women's experience. She lists historic examples of plays that are mimetic productions which help the audience to read history against the grain, and to read the body against the grain. Diamond discusses that feminist theater curates the female body, which helps combat patriarchal society's influence that often makes it hard for women to be visible and to appear as the focal point in day-to-day life. In a parallel sense, and especially since Indigenous Peoples have been forcibly removed from native lands, hunted down, raped and murdered, *Salmon is Everything* makes space for native experiences, and curates their standpoints. Amplifying the voices of those who feel that they are unheard or do not have a voice is one of the great strengths of the arts, and May's work certainly magnifies the voices and hardships of Indigenous People.

There is considerable power in storytelling for many cultures, and the knowledge, histories, and perspectives gained from listening to stories should not be overlooked. Knowing that many Indigenous cultures in the Pacific Northwest also use storytelling as a component in oral histories, and in education, readers or spectators should be cognizant of the added importance and larger role that storytelling plays in these cultures when compared with Western cultures.³² Jeanette Armstrong, an Indigenous artist and activist writes that storytelling has the power to impact the future, and can lead to meaningful change,³³

Speaking is a sacred art in that words contain spirit, a power waiting to become activated and become physical. Words do so upon being spoken and create cause and effect in human interaction. What we speak determines our interactions. Realization of the power of speaking is in

³² The efficacy of storytelling, in context of theater, and in context of literature and film is elaborated upon in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

³³ Afterword to *Salmon is Everything*, May, pp. 147-48.

the realization that words can change the future and in the realization that we have that power.

The fictionalized depictions and characters in this piece of theater allow the audience to grapple with the conflicts between real-life groups of residents, organizations, and people who have an interest in the Klamath area. In the current state of environmental affairs, there exist a myriad of stakeholders, and although many of them may appear to be inclined to work together, upon a deeper look, many of these alliances are hollow. The conflict between the scientist character and a Yurok-Karuk character in *Salmon is Everything* highlights how racial or cultural backgrounds can influence the perception of issues. In Scene 6 Julie (the Yurok-Karuk character) and Kate (the fish researcher and biology student) are working by a holding pen of salmon, and putting tracking devices on the fish. As the scene progresses, the audience gets a glimpse into each individual's valuation of the salmon, and their motivations for working. Do similar actions, even if producing a positive result, make allies of stakeholders? The following excerpt examines this position.

JULIE: I'm sorry, I just wish you wouldn't tell me what I need, or what I should do. You don't have the kind of stake in this issue that Native people do and you shouldn't be telling us what to do.

KATE: Excuse me, I care about the river and the fish. It's what I've chosen to do with my life.

JULIE: It's different for my people. For us, Salmon is everything—subsistence, culture, history, identity. It's who we are!

KATE: Ordinary citizens can't have the same investment in caring for the planet?

JULIE: All I'm saying is that for you it's about being right; it's about winning; about "saving the environment" as if that's something other than yourself. For us it's about being whole, staying alive.

KATE: It's about being alive for all of us. Everything we do in our culture has an impact, every choice, what we drive, what we buy or buy into.

JULIE: But for us the threat of extermination is immediate, just like it is for the fish. You come here doing your research that will eventually get you some good agency job. You care, sure, but if the Salmon go extinct, you'll find some other species to save. For my family, if the Salmon don't survive my grandmother will die of a broken spirit. You called that fish "Brother"...

KATE: When?

JULIE: A couple minutes ago—but it's a metaphor for you. It's *not a metaphor* for us! My people have lived here for ten thousand years or more. (*increasingly angry as if something unstoppable is welling up from within her*) My people live here. They die here! They are the trees, the water, the fish. That the Salmon are brothers is not some kind of myth; the Salmon are not symbols of life, they are life. We have maintained a healthy balance with the River and the Salmon and everything else because it's all one body, one family. If the Salmon die, we break apart; make life make sense! (p. 44)

We can see that, ultimately, motivations influence the way in which stakeholders interact and disagree or disagree with one another. What one says often means less than how one says it; what one does may mean less than *why* he or she does it. For Kate, saving the salmon is something she is passionate about, a way to save the environment, do a good deed. However, for Julie, saving the salmon is about something far greater. Perhaps the way in which Yurok and Karuk people view the salmon is something that many readers will not be fully able to understand.³⁴ These types of spiritual connections that Indigenous groups have with the more-than-human world reflect a closer interaction with the living elements in their surroundings. In the case of the Klamath peoples, this is derived from a mutual respect between the people and their surroundings. Although general environmental awareness may be improving among today's young people, many Americans still lack a substantial contact with the natural

³⁴ I think that standpoint has serious limitations, especially given how effective this text is in showing the emotions and rationale of the Indigenous Klamath peoples. The audience is pushed to better understand the issues of the fish kill through the indigenous peoples point of view. Even by reading this text or attending a performance of it, one ought to come away with much more understanding of the hardships that this group has faced and continues to face.

world—some may even scoff at the idea that a group of people may derive subsistence, but also culture, history, and identity from fish. This paradigmatic difference in the valuation of nature may be one underlying reason why Julie and Kate’s argument is so impassioned, as their standpoints on this topic may be rooted in vastly differing backgrounds—the relationship between Indigenous Peoples, and those whose ancestors have subjugated and violated them, may take much more time and energy to mend if a true, strong alliance can develop.

Salmon is Everything, while giving credence to both of the primary groups of people affected most by the fish kill, amplifies indigenous peoples’ voices. One of the strengths of this text is its ability to open up a dialogue on a complex issue, showing exchanges of people from different backgrounds and standpoints. In Scene 12, a town hall meeting takes place, where Indigenous community members from the mid-river and Lower Klamath areas, ranchers and farmers from the Upper Klamath Basin meet to discuss the shared future after the fish kill. Here, Will, a Yurok-Karuk fisherman butts heads with Tim, an Upper Klamath rancher. Their dialogue readdresses the decision to divert water away from the river, and underlines the magnitude of the situation for both agricultural farmers, and Indigenous Peoples.

WILL: All along the Klamath River we need to have the federal government recognize that tribes have a senior water right. That was in our treaties. We have court cases and court decisions that have substantiated this right. “How much water does it take to protect fish?” For crying out loud, enough so that they don’t die. This is an allocation issue plain and simple. More water must flow downriver.

TIM: Look, I’m not anti-fish, I’m just anti-bullshit. I don’t accept that the water is overallocated. My family has been cattle ranching in Upper Klamath for a hundred and fifty years. A lot of folks like me love this land as much as our Indian neighbors do. We’re trying to preserve a way of life that has been handed down, and fight off the carnivorous southern

California developers. We want to preserve our traditional rural values. We want our children to have a reason to stay and work the land. And that means economic incentives (pp. 61-62).

This excerpt highlights that ranchers have had a long history of living in this land too, for not as long as Indigenous Peoples, but nonetheless their histories also deserve to be heard and respected. Both characters represent standpoints that want to protect cultural heritage and fight for the future of families and communities. This specific situation is particularly tense, as there is conflict over a finite resource: there is not enough water to satisfy both groups, and the access to water for one directly impacts the livelihood of the other. Will mentions that the tribes have senior water rights, but what exactly does that mean? In the laws regarding water, water rights refer to the privilege of a user to use water from a particular water source. Water conflicts can be some of the most contentious among natural resource struggles. In the Western part of the United States, prior appropriation rights are common, meaning that older, or senior, water rights override the newer, junior water rights. That is to say that the user that first used the water, or a successful application to the state was submitted holds the priority to use the water among competing users. The phrase, “first in time, first in right³⁵” is used colloquially in regards to how this process works. Recall Duer writes that the ancestors of the Klamath and Modoc people have lived in the Klamath Basin territories for thousands of years. The federal government has had a long history of not following the treaties with Native peoples, from renegeing peace agreements, to moving Indigenous

³⁵ This concept is also known as prior appropriation water rights, which developed in the Western United States in the 1850s. This is the legal doctrine that says that the first person or group to take a quantity of water from a water source for ‘beneficial use’—meaning for agricultural, industrial or household uses—has the right to continue to use that quantity of water for that purpose. "Prior-appropriation Water Rights." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 07 July 2017. Web. 15 July 2017. For a more robust discussion of natural resource management particular to the Western United States, see the book written by former United States Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, *Cities in the Wilderness: A New Vision of Land Use in America* (Island Press: Washington, D.C).

Peoples off their land for white settlers. Again, a character (Johnny, another tribal fisherman) in the play makes explicit the detrimental effects of colonialism that came to be through the subjugation and subversion of Indigenous People.

JOHNNY: [...] We've seen evidence of your people's values over the years. Like when our reservation was "terminated" without our participation or consent. We were participating in your "economic incentives" back then in 1930, 1940, fair and square. Then in the 1950s your government just terminated our land—no democratic process, just took it. [...] We not only lost our land, we lost our whole social fabric (p. 62).

The failing of a governmental organization is one of the leading causes of the fish kill, if not *the* leading cause. When the senior water rights of the Klamath tribes were ignored, and instead went to more junior users, river temperatures rose, and viruses in the water were able to attack salmon. While showing the qualms and desires of the farmers, this section highlights that when Indigenous Peoples are continually ignored or neglected, Indigenous communities (in terms of both social and environmental aspects) are torn apart, and calamity for entire regions can ensue.³⁶ While providing space for

³⁶ Following the text of the script of *Salmon is Everything* is a published compilation of works from other people who helped shape the project. In her reflective essay, *The Education of an Artist* following the script of the play, Theresa May details her creative journey as a non-Native artist, and the challenges and confusions that were part of her educational path as an 'outsider.' In one subsection of that piece, "Weaving the Play," she talked with those involved in the production of the play, and asked them questions to ultimately "reflect the sensibilities and priorities" of her collaborators (131-32). Although many voices had been woven together already in the play, May still needed the group's direction on what they think the play should look and feel like, and what they most wanted to be communicated. One collaborator responded, "How people relate to the salmon. How it's part of our family, that it's what we feed our babies;" another added, "Yes, and that the salmon are spiritual to us. It's not like food from McDonald's, like some kid said to me in class the other day. *That* needs to be in the play!" (132). According to May, comments like these, and the rest of the "cacophony of voices [calling] out what should be at the heart of the play" were "exactly what [she] needed to know" (132). The value of the salmon for the Klamath people and the subsequent anguish from their death is complex, and affects many aspects of life. May's repetition of this key concept over multiple sections suggests that the inability to grasp this facet of the Klamath way of life creates clashing confines between cultures, but the understanding of it may be a vehicle for change. This section following the script of the play highlights how May thinks about community, includes other community members in her creative process, amplifies and develops others' voices, and values collaboration. These are crucial components of moving forward in the aftermath of a crisis like the Klamath's. The final chapter will discuss additional ideas on how communities cope, heal, and recover after dealing with environmental injustices.

Caucasian agricultural farmers perspectives, within this selection of passages one can see that ultimately, *Salmon is Everything* showcases the underdog point of view of indigenous peoples.

An outburst between two characters, Will and Tim, captures the sense of calamity that inundates the human senses. Will is a Yurok-Karuk fisherman, and becomes heated when talking with Tim who is an upper Klamath rancher about the fish kill:

The carnage I've seen over the weeks is so utterly disgusting that I can't sleep. I close my eyes and the images of dead, rotting fish—maybe you've seen photographs... but you cannot begin to imagine the smell. The smell of death and decay messes with my mind. [...] You can't escape the smell. This is a real-life situation. It's not a book; it's not pretend. It's not something you read about that happened a hundred years ago. It's happening right now, today. To people in my life (74-75).

The massive number of fish killed in 2002 also created a rift among the social landscape in the Klamath region. Although on first glance it may appear that Will snaps at Tim, and is projecting his frustrations on someone, this scene really displays how different groups react differently to dilemmas. Divisiveness seems to be a common component in areas and groups dealing with EJ issues.

Chapter 3: Broken Systems

In Southern Italy, a place on the other side of the globe from the Pacific Northwest, there have been similar environmental injustices taking place. The Camorra crime syndicate, while providing jobs and monthly allowances to the families, or widows, of mafia members, earns most of its profits from illegal avenues, including dumping toxic waste into the countryside of Naples. This scene is the setting of journalist Roberto Saviano's 2006 international bestseller, *Gomorrah*, as well as its film 2008 adaptation, directed by Matteo Garrone, which will be the two works on which I focus in the following chapters. One could call Saviano's work a "journalistic novel," since it is largely based on his investigation of the workings of the mafia. The novel was an instant bestseller, was quickly translated, and sold nearly four million copies internationally within two years of its release. Although this notoriety may have helped to shine a spotlight³⁷ on the social, environmental, and economic ramifications of the Camorra's dealings, it also put Saviano in personal danger. The author received death threats after his book was published and has been under police protection ever since.

On the surface, Saviano's book and *Salmon is Everything* as pieces of literature may appear unconnected: while they both focus on the degradation of communities and landscapes, they do vary significantly in style, scope, genre and plot. *Gomorrah* (in both novel and film versions) is a popular culture text and Roberto Saviano's narrative style

³⁷ Carola Mamberto. "Italy: Taking on The Mafia | Interview with Roberto Saviano | PBS." *Frontline World*. N.p., 2011. Web. 25 Apr. 2017. Mamberto interviewed Saviano prior to the U.S. release of the film version of *Gomorrah*, and relates how scared the syndicate was upon the international acclaim Saviano's book received, "When [the Camorra] saw that we had sold more than 100,000 copies, it really hit them. They were terrified [...] Copies of my book started circulating among Camorra circles. They would actually give copies of my book to each other as gifts, with pride." Only after the media gave more attention to the crime syndicate did the Camorra become distressed.

is distinct from Theresa May's in that themes of violence, drugs, and crime are written with such attentive detail that they are risk falling into sensationalism. Saviano spends a few pages writing of popular movies such as *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver*, *GoodFellas*, and *Pulp Fiction*. The talk of these films comes in the chapter titled, "Hollywood." The actors who play in these revered action films become cultural icons, and the participants in the Camorra clans want the same type of recognition as these stars, even if it means a violent downfall. Perhaps since violence is so pervasive in the Camorra-run society, young kids want to learn how to shoot a gun or correctly wear a bulletproof vest so that they can be like the Hollywood actors and Cinecittà movie stars. According to Saviano, the youth that he came across had a fascination with the Camorra's leaders, bosses, and murders—there are even some local papers that solely cover the Camorra stories and give updates on their wars.³⁸ Saviano uses this style of writing as a strategy, marking the contrast between fiction and the horrific, bleak, unglamorous reality of life under the Camorra.

In addition to the near-sensationalist aspect of his writing style, Saviano also blends together literary devices with informational exposition. Saviano brings to light the complexities of organizational operation of the Camorra, discussing examples of wiretapped conversations of alleged murderers filed in injunctions; the revelation of toxic dumping done by mafia members; and reports of Camorra-watch organizations (p. 96, p. 64). His sense of literary creativity in the form of metaphors where he equates an atmosphere of pressure with barriers, "The tension creates a kind of screen between people. [...] I would ride my Vespa through this pall of tension" or linking a

³⁸ Mamberto, 2011.

neighborhood counter-protest to a mafia boss being arrested: “The revolt is an elaborate rite of apology, a metaphysical chapel of atonement that the neighborhood people build from burned-out carabinieri cars” (pp. 90-92, p. 111). While exposing the mafia in a way distinct from scientific reports, his nearly textbook level of disclosing events (his book is packed full with historic and modern information that is often presented in a very formal style) and operations build a body of evidence that damns the Camorra. Coupled with use of metaphors and similes, the style of the Camorra brings forward real events in a manner where a reader is glued to the page, wanting to hear more complexities of the story.

Representing the Camorra in Fiction

The various chapters of the novel give glimpses into the mafia from a variety of perspectives. The manner in which Saviano introduces setting, establishes and develops characters (even if these characters are adapted from people he met) and accentuates actions using strong verbs, makes it read as a screenplay. These writing techniques induce a high amount of visualization and imagination, transporting the reader into the spaces. Although certainly politically motivated, Saviano’s narration does not often account for his personal emotions. This helps to bring forward the devastating realities, the excessive amounts of violence, the altered landscapes, and the political harshness of Camorra activities. When Saviano writes of dreadful occurrences and tells of painful realities, his pathos approach convinces the audience of the importance of the subject, making an appeal to the emotion of his readers.

In the ways that the conflict between stakeholders in the Klamath basin were a focal point of *Salmon is Everything*, stakeholders in the Southern Italian context play a pivotal role in Saviano's analysis of Camorra operations. In Saviano's eleventh and final chapter, titled "Land of Fires," the author defines the term stakeholder in the context of the operations of the Camorra as "the real criminal geniuses of illegal toxic-waste management" (288). But who are these people, and what are their motivations? They are the people who want to add to their salary; they are the people who help to drain a multitude of scraps from the rich, industrialized north to the south, they are the public officials and employees fundamental to Clan operations by turning a blind eye to the circumvention of environmental regulation policies, or the people who allow those clearly involved with the crimes of the Clan to manage quarries or landfills; they are the people who conduct all of this business underhandedly and with "extreme flexibility and quiet discretion" (288). Here, the audience can see that Saviano shows that the 'stakeholders' are pivotal to the Camorra operations regarding the degradation of the environment. Stakeholders carry the weight of environmental degradation and injustice. Many people who feel that they have a stake in the wellbeing of the environment advocate for its protection, or fight the structural ways that these harms to the environment coalesce or fight the organizations responsible.

Also in this chapter, Saviano clearly writes how the Camorra has marred the environmental landscape in Campania. It should be no surprise that investigating the Camorra's role in toxic dumping is extremely dangerous due to the likeliness that one could be killed by the Camorra for publishing damning findings, or the likeliness of encountering dangerous chemicals that would cause permanent damage to one's health.

To drive home the devastation of the landscape, Saviano departs from his screenplay-style. Rather the audience sees into his perspective, and the ways in which he has observed the environmental descent. Saviano claims what none of the scientists or researchers mentioned in Chapter One could say regarding the amount of toxic dumping within the area around Naples:

The fact is that the trash, accumulated over decades, has reconfigured the horizons, created previously nonexistent hills, invented new odors, and suddenly restored lost mass to mountains devoured by quarries. Walking in the Campania hinterlands, one absorbs the odors of everything that industry produces. [I see] the earth mixed with the arterial, poisonous blood from an entire region of factories (285).

Here Saviano writes that the trash industry's growth has distorted the economic and environmental landscape of the region. This distortion has not happened on a small scale. Rather the opposite—the reshaping of mountains and skylines seems to take a nearly biblical amount of force. Here Saviano invokes visual images of dread through the monstrous changes done to the landscape. The Camorra bosses and *camorristi* peons may profit from this environmental degradation, but at what cost does it come? Does the degradation of the landscape to the point of poisoning community members, plants and animals, outweigh a bit more pocket change?

Filmic EJ Representations

Through a different approach than *Salmon is Everything*, representations of the Camorra in the film adaptation of *Gomorrah* help to color in the picture of environmental injustice. Film's ability to show images and produce sounds often can create more emotional weight than in literature, where a reader must imagine images

and sounds. Perhaps audiences can understand the realities of Camorra-run society and culture through film and books relative to the specific media, or better grasp the complexities and ramifications of Camorra operations through these mediums rather than newspaper articles and news reports. The film that director Matteo Garrone, and Saviano created in 2008 has received international distribution and accolades. In addition to showing environmental abuse and human-caused degradation, Garrone and Saviano's film is linked to *Salmon is Everything* since the real-world subject matters that appear in, or are alluded to, in the texts are both in many ways unresolved. In other words, the Camorra is still operating and degrading the environment despite the additional national and global attention they have been receiving, and there is no sign that the mafia will dissolve anytime soon. The differences between the two texts are notable as well. Morally, these two cases are dissimilar: Northwest farmers attempting to ensure their livelihoods have much more moral high-ground than Italian mafia members eliminating anyone or anything (like environmental and health protections) that stands in their path of holding complete power. From the surface, it appears that the ways in which communities recover from these injustices are drastically different as well. Changes in U.S. policy and natural regeneration help the Klamath river recover from environmental crisis, but it appears that the Camorra's hold over society will not soon be relinquished. The different ways in which groups move past injustice (or attempt to) will be discussed in this thesis's final chapter. Ultimately, the images of injustice in both regional contexts take influence from a similar origin, and are painted with the same palette, although the style of artwork may appear different.

Location plays a large part in Garrone's adaptation of Saviano's groundbreaking investigation of the Camorra. In the novel version of *Gomorra*, Saviano often mentions Scampia, one of the most poverty-stricken, working class suburbs of Naples. The people here who struggle to get by, and the landscape "where weeds grow" is vulnerable to the drug-trafficking arm of the Camorra. Saviano writes that in 1989 this area "had one of the highest ratios of drug pushers to inhabitants in all of Italy. The ratio now [as of 2007] is now the highest in Europe and one of the top five in the world" (p. 64). The gap between deplorable reality and filmic adaptation is narrow, as Garrone and Saviano filmed many scenes in the *Vele*, or sails, of Scampia. Indeed, numerous scenes are shot at the infamous and "monstrous public housing project, sprouted in the 1960s. The rotten symbol of architectural delirium, or perhaps merely a cement utopia powerless to oppose the narcotraffic machine that feeds off this part of the world" (p. 63).³⁹ Within the first ten minutes, the sails of the drug-trafficking armada are the backdrop of a scene: young Totò delivers groceries for his mother and witnesses drug pushers distribute drugs at an incessant pace. The dilapidated apartment structures parallel the social conditions of the Camorra-led zone, indicated through the high rates of drug activity. The use of real locations is one of the key foundations of Italian neorealist films, and the inclusion of this practice grounds the film in reality, underlining the economic manipulation and social deterioration of the mafia. In this social climate where it is commonly accepted to pump drugs into neighbors' bodies to turn a profit, it may be easy to understand how the land is filled with toxic chemicals in order to fulfill a business contract.

³⁹ See Figure 2.

In *Gomorra*'s first scene in which the audience meets Franco, the older, astute and morally grungy businessman and Roberto, his apprentice, the film's cinematography foreshadows the importance of landscape. About twenty minutes into the movie, the characters involved with the brokering and dumping of toxic waste are introduced. The movie is structured with several character arcs, with the characters in each largely staying separate from the other journeys. These scenes do not start and end in order, but rather, the storylines tend to begin roughly one after another, and scenes cut between these arcs over the course of the film. In this format, one can discern overall themes of the film, but each package of scenes deals with individual aspects of mafia operations. These characters, Franco and Roberto, are the last group of characters to be introduced in the film, and even in their first scene, the audience gets to know the landscape before the characters. The two are first seen in a static establishing shot that points out their setting—they are in an abandoned gas station, literally hidden and underground in empty subterranean gasoline, methane, and diesel tanks. The characters are not visible to the audience for a while, as Franco's head slowly begins to inch out only after several seconds from the time the shot begins. This focus on setting leaves time for the spectators to move their eyes around the frame, seeing the scattered shrubs that seem to be struggling to survive in the arid terrain. Other plants are near the horizon, contrasting with the bright sky that has a trifling amount of clouds. The dilapidated remnants of the gas station stand out from these natural elements. The slow visual pacing is mirrored by two other effects: the sense of size or scale of the frame, and a slower buildup of sound in the scene. In the first case, Garrone shoots this scene in a long shot, which makes it appear that the characters are small, and the setting is

large. With this long shot, the characters take up less space in the frame in relation to the landscape, and the vestiges of destructive industry. In other words, Franco and Roberto are puny in relation to their environment, which signals to the audience that the environment is important, or even more important than the characters. Further, the remnants of the fossil fuel industry serve as a backdrop to their story.

In addition, the slowly building composition of sounds in this scene signal the setting's importance to the audience. The first few seconds that Franco is hidden have no dialogue, with birds and cicadas on the soundtrack. The effect is the same as using a long shot and the static establishing shot: the spectators focus on the nuances of the landscape as if they were physically there, through the visual and auditory stimuli. Yet, at this point the audience knows nothing of the characters. Furthermore, the first bit of dialogue prompts the spectators to look around the frame: hearing the voices but not knowing their origins can be confusing, so one is naturally inclined to search the frame for the characters. Franco calls out to Roberto three times, with long pauses in between each call. Since Roberto is still yet to be revealed, the audience begins to search around the frame for his location. Hearing the non-diegetic sound of an additional voice creates confusion for spectators, and a natural reaction is to try to find where the source of this sound is coming from. Perhaps he is underground, as Roberto was, and the audiences may look for places where he could crawl out, but the other contrasting elements of the frame are areas where the eye looks to. Garrone's slow visual pacing induces a large amount of eye movement across the frame which causes the environment to be scanned and scoured. This is possibly intended to create a parallel with the characters, who are also skimming through the countryside for a suitable location. At this point to what

extent, or what landscape the characters are looking for, is not yet known. Regardless, from the opening shot, Garrone shows to the film spectators that the landscape is a central component of the episode.

In the second, following, scene, through the camera movements and the emphasis of dialogue the audience is introduced to Franco and Roberto's dubious intentions. The first shot of the second scene is also a long shot, but even *longer* than the shot of the first scene. It begins with a tilting camera movement which shows the immense height of a quarry—perhaps four or five stories tall. The shot begins with seeing the very top of the quarry, and its grass and soil, down to the ground, and all the intricate cracks, seams, and folds of the rock—a nearly skyscraper amount of earth. The sense of scale is shown through this tilt. Roberto gives one of the dimensions of the quarry, the length as 85 meters, but the audience can ascertain the volume of it through the previously observed height, and the width which is at least as long as the length, if not longer. Although the tilting camera movement is accompanied by environmental sounds of birds similar to the first scene, nearly all of the remaining scene is filled with louder dialogue, and there are no major pauses between lines. These lines of dialogue however, constantly refer to the environment: “quel punto lasciano la terra e coprano l'acqua [...] Mi raccomando tutto pulito, il terrazzamento, topa solida...”^{*40} [20:33, 21:46]. By recommending to protect the soil and to not to include anything dirty, it is evident that Franco intends to use this site for something unpalatable. Dante, a mafioso who sets up a meeting to sell them the quarry, tells them that they need to line the ground with layers of solid earth so that nothing seeps into the soil. From the huge

^{*40} At this point, break up the ground (solid part of the waste) and cover the water (liquid). I recommend it be completely clean—the terracing, the top covering. My Translation.

volume of the quarry the viewers can see that Franco and Roberto are looking for a large space in which they will pack it full of *something*. Franco tells Dante, the land broker, “Don’t worry, you emptied it, and I’ll fill it” [21:56]. The audience is still in the dark on what exactly Franco and Roberto will put in this quarry, but they do now know at this point that the two are working with a suspicious partner who just was bombed for not paying for another piece of land on-time, as comes up later in the film. From this, a spectator likely picks up on their dubious intentions for this newly acquired quarry. Dante’s recommendation to do everything cleanly is indeed foreshadowing for the eventual mishaps of the dirty disposal that will harm workers and the ground.

In the next set of Roberto and Franco scenes, the audience begins to see how the Camorra replaces or augments some Neapolitan social structures such as the family unit. The first scene is set in an airport and begins with a pan from left to right, showing Roberto’s father and then Roberto. The shot is staged so that Carmine Paternoster, the actor who plays Roberto, is standing at least a couple feet away from his dad, and is looking off-screen [36:34]. This standing arrangement builds tension in the father-son pairing, and the audience can tell that Roberto is waiting and looking for someone else, likely Franco. The tension is further palpable as the two are not speaking: the camera pans back (from right to left) still in silence and the first line of dialogue comes from Franco when he arrives late, and Roberto introduces him to his father. This tension is key, because it shows the audience that there is a rift in this particular family structure: something is not quite right. Why are the father and son not speaking? Even if Roberto is nervous about the upcoming flight and trip, the narrative decision to have a complete lack of dialogue clearly shows a disconnect between father and son, if not a hint to a

larger, more serious issue. The Camorra corrupts social structures, and in this case Franco is a stand-in father figure that might be acting as a bandage for a familial lesion that needs attention: covering it up could cause further damage than addressing and treating the wound. Other narrative arcs in the film put the family system at more of a focal point. For example, the storyline of Totò the young teen boy, who is first introduced running groceries, comes to an end when he facilitates a Camorra trap of a close family friend, someone who is close enough in age to be his mother. He knocks on the outside gate of her home, she then comes down as he is leaving, and a couple mafia members blindside her, killing her in cold blood. By ending his story as an accomplice to the murder of a character who is effectively his family, Saviano and Garrone show that the Camorra teaches its initiated members to prioritize and value the social structure of the mafia, which replace the hereditary familial bonds. In other words, this narrative denouement demonstrates that the mafia is more important than bloodlines.

Garrone continues to show how the Camorra subverts societal structures—in this case the ways in which the mafia changes the way in which people secure work.⁴¹ When Roberto's father mentions that he wanted to find work for his son, but he could not because he had no connections, Franco responds that he is now all set [37:27]. It is very challenging for people to find employment without some sort of mafia connection, as the father alluded. Also important here is the idea that once someone is 'in' the mafia

⁴¹ A difference between this text and *Salmon is Everything* is how economic systems and quotidian livelihoods are connected. There is a similarity with the Caucasian farmers and many of the characters in *Gomorrah*, as both sets of people operate in a largely traditional capitalist society, securing food, shelter, and other subsistence from funds from lines of work. Yet, there is less dialogue in the script regarding Klamath tribespeople's economies, aside from the void created by the fish kill. The *mafiosi* who rely fully on the mafia for money, protection, and other forms of security also live in an altered economic system, but the ties to the resource management of the Indigenous Peoples in this thesis are not strong. It may be hard for people today to remember a time before capitalism, but note that the Western pursuit of profit has not been a driving force in Indigenous Peoples communities.

system, they are 'all set,' meaning there should be no further worry about finding work in the future. This luxury perhaps is not available to many other Neapolitans who have lines of work secured without the mafia's help: it seems that although Roberto's father is currently working in the intensive care unit of a hospital (a bad division as he admits) he did not always have occupational stability, as he moved around often, working in Trieste, Udine, and Venezia (Venice). In this scene Saviano and Garrone highlight that the mafia offers a more secure and long-term sense of economic stability through the securing of under-the-table contracts and immoral practices. Connecting to the deep-rootedness of the Camorra, this scene demonstrates downsides from a mafia-based sense of security: one gives up moral and ethical ground when receiving financial support, as the funds often come from illegal activities, or ways in which people and landscapes are harmed, like toxic refuse dumping.

Chapter 4: Parallels and Divergences in Moving Forward

Recognition and Understanding

Recognition of environmental issues is a pragmatic place to start on the path to addressing environmental injustices. In some contexts, recognition refers to the identification of someone or something or person from previous encounters or knowledge,⁴² while recognition may also refer to processes of state governments as well.⁴³ Within the scope of this thesis, it is also important to note that the Western concept of recognition varies from other cultural contexts. E. Richard Atleo (Umeek) is an associate adjunct professor at the University of Victoria, a hereditary chief of a group of Indigenous Peoples whose traditional home is on Vancouver Island, and author. His 2011 book, *Principles of Tsawalk: An Indigenous Approach to Global Crisis* discusses the philosophies and origin stories of his culture, pointing towards a pathway that can “lead to greater understanding, greater empathy, and stronger connections with each other and with all the other life forms with who we share this planet.”⁴⁴

In the book, Atleo argues that contemporary environmental and political crises and the continued plight of indigenous peoples reflect a world out of balance. Along with the principles of consent and continuity, the Nuu-chah-nulth principle of recognition offers the promise of greater harmony in which all life forms are treated

⁴² The first definition of recognition, taken from the Oxford English Dictionary. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/recognition> Accessed 19 October 2017.

⁴³ For more information, Umeek recommends Charles I. Bevans, comp., *Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949*, vol. 3, *Multilateral, 1931-1945* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1969), art. 1.

⁴⁴ Turner, Nancy. Review of *Principles of Tsawalk: An Indigenous Approach to Global Crisis*, by E. Richard Atleo, *UBC Press* (2011), Vancouver, BC. Back cover.

with respect.⁴⁵ Atleo's book addresses many similar topics related to this thesis project, and his discussion of the principle of recognition offers, from an indigenous point of view, a theoretical framework to move forward from cases of environmental injustices.

According to a foundational Nuu-chah-nulth theory, Atleo asserts that we must recognize the shared nature of responsibility and experience in the scope of global crisis. Atleo introduces recognition as foundational principle in his chapter, "The Nuu-chah-nulth Principle of Recognition," with a story that he recalls from spending time with his grandmother, whose vision was in decline. When his grandmother, Nan, noticed her daughter coming from a distance, she could tell it was her from the way she walked. Used as a metaphor for the way in which people move through life, Atleo writes that the "way a person walks is critical, [and w]hether that walk is creative or destructive, helpful or disruptive, kind or unkind."⁴⁶

Whenever she arrived, Trudy was welcomed into her mother's home, then she would then announce why she had come to visit. After clarifying questions by Nan, and pending Trudy being satisfied with her mother's response, mutual understanding was achieved. Atleo uses the story to show how recognition is a foundational concept within his culture: in this case recognition fostered the maintenance and strengthening of good relations. In the wider scope, this principle of Nuu-chah-nulth way of life is tied to mutual respect and understanding. If recognition could be extended to relationships between people and peoples' relationship to the environment like Atleo calls for, then perhaps the instances of environmental injustice that are commonplace today would

⁴⁵ Atleo, E. Richard. Review of *Principles of Tsawalk: An Indigenous Approach to Global Crisis*, by E. Richard Atleo, *UBC Press*, Vancouver, BC. pp. 12-16.

⁴⁶ Atleo, p. 79

diminish in frequency, as people would realize that harming environments is akin to harming themselves. Since the issues experienced in global crises are shared, so too should there be a shared responsibility to address them.

Grounds for Hope and Signs of Despair

For the tribespeople in the Klamath Basin, it appears progress has been made on restoring some role in the decision-making process in regards to the management of land use. Douglas Duer lists some modern policies that can be a sign of hope for the reinvigoration of Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin peoples' complex relationship with their traditional landscapes,

The Klamath tribal efforts to regain a say in the management of their former lands, particularly sites of cultural significance, have been aided by a number of federal laws developed in recent decades, including but not limited to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as well as Executive Orders 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites) and 12898 (Environmental Justice).⁴⁷

These policies and laws have provided the tribes with opportunities to support research on places that have cultural significance. In addition, National Park Service (NPS) Historic Preservation grants have helped to garner formal federal recognition to historic cultural sites. Today is a time of considerable optimism. It appears that the restoration of Klamath sites now seems likely. Duer argues, "In time, with diligence and patience, the Klamath Tribes may once again be able to live, as their ancestors did, in respectful

⁴⁷ Duer, p. 158.

proximity to the land.”⁴⁸ It appears that the recognition of environmental issues has served as a foundation on which political change has been built.

In the Southern Italian context, there are drawbacks to literature’s power to raise awareness of a problem with the goal of social change. In the past, Italian Neorealist films received criticism from Italian politicians who argued that exposing domestic problems to international audiences brought shame to the country.

Similarly, several Neapolitan commentators and politicians have rejected the political value of films such as *Gomorra*, claiming that they do not lead to change, but rather reinforce negative stereotypes about Naples, and aggrandize the problems of the city.⁴⁹ These critics ultimately show that shining a light onto the issues of the Camorra might perhaps be offset by bringing shame to the whole community through the sensationalizing of the mafia’s operations.

Action Outside of Outlook

Ultimately, the continued fight of those in the EJ movement lie outside this polarized list of reasons to be pessimistic and optimistic. The worldwide activists understand the extent to which the deck is stacked against them, and against the planet, but are still resisting, whether or not individuals have a positive or negative outlook. Even though there is much to be gained from discussing the benefits and drawbacks of the issues raised within the selected literature, environmental activists are fighting back

⁴⁸ Duer, p. 159.

⁴⁹ Capezzuto, Arnaldo. “Gomorra, sindaci negano riprese della fiction.” <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2015/09/23/gomorra-sindaci-negano-riprese-della-fiction-offensiva-pronti-cause-saviano-camorra-non-scompare-cosi/2056187/> Accessed 18 October 2017.

within or outside the systems of power that suppress them. Some even put their lives on the line in some cases, witnessed by national news outlets when Dakota Access Pipeline protestors were being sprayed with hoses from fire engines, risking hypothermia.

Amidst these struggles, one can occasionally find beauty expressed through art. In most civilizations artists have been capturing contemporary issues, and using creativity to bring hope and courage out of a deep, wide, pit of gloom, depression and wretchedness. *Salmon is Everything* and *Gomorra* are pieces of art as much as pieces of literature, and within their lines, frames, and real-time performances we as the audience simultaneously are shown grounds for hope and signs of despair. We have seen the ways in which different media can drive home issues more emotionally: in the case of *Gomorra*, the cinematic techniques that Saviano and Garrone implement lead to a feeling of urgency and dread; for the Pacific Northwest text, we as an audience see calamity and how communities quiver after environmental disasters.

Each medium analyzed in this thesis produce different emotional and mental effects on the readers, watchers, and listeners. Each reader and member of the audience may be left with different feelings and takeaways; each person might be stirred into action, or observe these cases of environmental injustices and then forget them and carry on with their individual day-to-day lives. Perhaps some will concede to the powers that corrupt and damage landscapes and repress groups of people, focusing on making it through quotidian struggles.

By giving up, an opportunity is created to focus energy to pick another fight—there are many other problems that people challenge and attempt to make better. For myself, this battle is the one to which I raise my banner. In my perspective, there is no

time to waste in responding to issues of the environment. In the words of Canadian environmental writer and activist, Naomi Klein, “The stakes are simply too high. Now is not the time for small steps. Now is the time for boldness. Now is the time to leap.”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Campus lecture, 3 February, 2016.

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