Nature, Power and Participation: an exploration of ecology and equity in Kingston, Jamaica

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Abstract

Kingston is a city facing serious environmental challenges. In common with other Third World cities, these have usually been documented from the perspective of affluent and powerful urban residents. Very little research has explored the spatial and social distribution of environmental problems in the city, or has examined the ways that individual citizens from a variety of backgrounds understand the urban environment. These problems have often been packaged as discrete issues, when in fact they cannot be understood or alleviated without knowledge of their economic, political, and cultural aspects. Urban environmental problems require political solutions that address uneven power relations and ineffective structures of urban governance.

In this thesis, I address these issues in Kingston through an application of the themes of nature, power and participation. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to explore the ways in which urban residents from different age, gender and class backgrounds construct the city and its environmental problems. The knowledge of marginalised individuals and groups is placed in the foreground and is used to provide an alternative analysis of Kingston's ecology. These understandings are then used to assess critically the structures of urban governance, and to suggest possible changes that could be made to these.

The research confirms that there are significant environmental problems in Kingston, and that these have serious negative impacts on many urban residents. It shows that these problems are understood differently by the various social groups within the city, and that the burdens of environmental problems vary socio-spatially across the Kingston Metropolitan Area. Despite this, there is a general consensus that environmental improvement is desirable. However, for this to be achieved there need to be fundamental alterations in the social structures and political organisation of the city.

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In the streets of every city
Where the bruised and lonely dwell,
Let us show the Saviour's pity,
Let us of his mercy tell.
In all lands and with all races
Let us serve and seek to bring
All the world to render praises,
Christ to thee, Redeemer, King.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

Kingston is a city facing serious social and environmental challenges. In common with other Third World[1] cities, these have usually been documented from the perspective of the state, international organisations, academic institutions, and influential urban residents. Very little research has explored the spatial and social distribution of environmental problems in the city, or has examined the ways that individual citizens from a variety of backgrounds understand the urban environment. Environmental problems have often been packaged as discrete issues, when in fact they cannot be understood or alleviated without knowledge of their economic, political and cultural dimensions. These problems require political solutions that address uneven power relations and ineffective structures of urban governance.

This thesis is therefore about lay conceptions of ecological problems in Kingston, with the aim of incorporating these insights into a more equitable system of urban governance. Whereas much political ecology research has addressed the effects of unequal power relations on environmental processes, in this research I intend to use the frequently marginalised environmental understandings of urban residents as a tool with which to propose more general political and social improvements.

[1] Although now, more than ever, there are no separate 'worlds'; and although the majority of the world's population live in low-income countries; I will use the term 'Third World' as shorthand throughout this thesis, primarily because this is the preferred term used within Jamaica itself to refer to 'countries like us'.

This is based on the premise that “ecological arguments are never socially neutral any more than socio-political arguments are ecologically neutral” (Harvey 1996: 182). It is, therefore, not only about describing how the environmental problems faced by the residents of Kingston vary socio-spatially, but also about understanding the power relationships that influence them, and proposing systems of governance with the potential to alleviate them.

The location of this study is Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, and the largest English-speaking city in the Caribbean. With a population of almost 600,000 people, the Kingston Metropolitan Area faces a variety of environmental challenges. Whilst still having to deal with the public health and sanitation issues that plagued western cities in the nineteenth century, the city also has to cope with more recent problems such as those created by industrialisation, heavy automobile traffic, large quantities of solid waste, and informal sector activities. Although Kingston has been widely studied by social researchers, I believe it is important to link the political and ecological processes occurring within the city. The fact that some of these issues are now beginning to be addressed from a policy perspective by both national and international actors only serves to make research of this kind timely.

In the rest of this introduction I address the ways in which the ‘environment’ is used as a key concept through which to study urban processes in Kingston. I then introduce the main research aims and questions, and provide an outline of the argumentation of the thesis. These arguments are made through drawing upon the experiences of a variety of social groups, and the rationale for this and for the methodologies employed is described. The relevance of this research to contemporary academic debates is then assessed and the key insights identified.

The Use of 'The Environment'

In broad terms, this thesis is about environmental problems in the city of Kingston. In recent years, 'the environment' has become an important focus of attention in a variety of settings. Since its popularisation in the wake of the Brundltand Report (1987), the desirability of 'sustainable development' has been almost universally accepted. Yet both 'the environment' and 'sustainable development' are used and understood in different ways by different actors (Redclift 1987, Adams 2001), such that their value as a motivation for action is unclear.

Attempts at applying the concept in urban settings have not succeeded in making it any clearer. In Kingston, although there is an ever-growing awareness of what most urban residents term 'environmental issues', the precise meaning of this term to the different actors operating in the city is seldom discussed. For businesses operating in the city centre, it may mean aesthetically pleasing streets; for environmental non-government organisations, it may mean protecting species diversity in adjacent water bodies; and for poor urban residents, it may mean the provision of basic water and sanitary facilities. Although these various objectives may not be mutually incompatible, an under-resourced Third World state is obviously unable to address all of these concerns adequately and simultaneously. The challenge for local and national government in this setting is to mediate between these groups, yet the state frequently lacks both the organisational and the financial ability to do so.

When urban elites – whether from the private sector, public sector, or better-funded NGOs – refer to improving the urban environment, other urban residents may therefore be hearing an entirely different message from the one intended. The inherent danger in this system is that marginalised groups in society may be co-opted to work on a project that

means something very different from what they expect. It is therefore of paramount importance to understand what these different actors mean when referring to 'the environment', if this broad suite of urban problems is to be dealt with appropriately. In the context of this thesis, therefore, the term 'environment' is used loosely to incorporate the physical surroundings of the city, and 'environmental problems' are conceived as physical problems that reduce the ability of urban residents to live productive and meaningful lives.

The 'environment' is therefore not more precisely defined, as this would prejudge what different groups in the city understand when they refer to this. Although problematic, this is the term used by residents of Kingston to refer to a broad range of problems, yet one that is frequently taken for granted. In order to understand the ways in which environmental discourses are mobilised to achieve social results, it is first necessary to understand what these mean to different social groups in the city. It is precisely the lack of clarity of the term that makes its exploration necessary. The 'environment' is seen to be important by a wide variety of urban residents; it is used as a rallying call for the development of social movements and citizen action; and it is a focal point around which much local and international funding is organised. Although the basic definition outlined above was identified and accepted by all the groups involved in the study, the research shows important differences between them in the precise components involved and their relative importance.

These meanings need to be excavated through empirical research in order to understand the ways in which environmental discourses are used to justify particular decisions by both dominant and subordinate social groups in the city. Rather than a naïve acceptance that all urban actors are working towards the same objectives, the exploration of the variety of understandings of the 'environment' that exist helps not only to reveal the power-laden

nature of these discourses and their potential for facilitating subtle means of social control, but also to identify similar motivations and complementary objectives with the potential for broad-based urban support and far-reaching improvements in the quality of life across the city.

Yet despite the imprecision in its definition, the term 'environment' remains a useful concept through which to view urban processes. Indeed, as David Harvey suggests, most people accept that "there exists a class of problems which might reasonably be dubbed 'environmental'" (Harvey 1996: 372). However, as will become clear, these are intricately bound up with political, economic, and social processes. Although the 'environment' is the dominant concept utilised in the empirical aspects of the research, the more formal analysis (Chapter 3) adopts the term 'nature' as a more rigorous theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between humans and their surroundings, and 'power' as the key concept required to understand the relationships between different social groups. These terms are seen to come together in the dominant development discourse of 'participation', in which individuals are seen to be partners in their own social development and the environmental improvement of the city.

Research Aims and Questions

The main aim of this research is best expressed in the sub-title: "an exploration of ecology and equity in Kingston, Jamaica". It is a contribution to the field of urban geography, and adds to the literature on this remarkable city. However, it is not merely a descriptive exercise, and there are several clear aims that will be tackled through the process of answering the research questions outlined below. These aims are:

- To gain an understanding of environmental processes in Kingston from the perspective of urban residents;
- To identify the extent to which these problems and processes are an outcome of class-based power struggles;
- To assess the role of other social factors, such as age and gender, on power relations in the city;
- To explore the ways in which environmental problems are constructed and managed at a variety of scales; and
- To suggest possible ways in which environmental projects can be better devised and the urban environment better managed for the good of the citizens of Kingston.

As intimated previously, much of this thesis is involved in exploration. Some of my reasons for choosing to 'explore' rather than to 'test' a set of hypotheses are made clear in Chapter 3. However, this exploration is best achieved through addressing specific research questions:

1. How do different social (class, gender, age) groups in the same urban area vary in their constructions of the urban environment?
2. What impact do these constructions have on urban power relations?
3. How are systems of urban environmental management changing?
4. How can the insights gained from a cross-section of urban residents be incorporated into a system of urban governance that better incorporates concerns of ecology and equity in the city?

The answers to these questions are framed in the context of three contemporary debates. The first of these relates to constructions of nature and understandings of the environment. This is epitomised by David Harvey's suggestion that the "distinction between built environments of cities and the humanly modified environments of rural and even remote regions… appears arbitrary except as a particular manifestation of a rather long-standing ideological distinction between the country and the city" (1996: 119). While many authors have theoretically developed this view of 'nature', I intend to relate the particular ways in which nature and the city are linked in the situation of Kingston.

The second debate concerns the 'development' process in Third World nations, particularly as encouraged by international institutions. At present, this is most evident in the rhetoric of 'sustainable development' and 'good governance', into which international agencies, national governments, and local actors alike have been co-opted. In this study, I examine the ways in which these discourses are used by the more powerful actors, and expose some of their inherent contradictions.

The research also sheds light on the nature of Jamaican and Caribbean societies. M.G. Smith (1965) assessed West Indian societies as plural societies governed by a dominant demographic minority set apart through peculiar social structures and political conditions. According to this model, Kingston is made up of a colour-class hierarchy, in which socio-economic status, cultural preferences, and skin colour coincide to produce culturally distinct social strata, each of which possesses a different system of institutional values. An alternative description, favoured by more recent researchers, is of the Caribbean as a Creole society in which all members are part of a distinctively Caribbean culture produced out of the relationship between disparate African and European influences (Shepherd and Richards 2002). This study contributes to an understanding of the divisions and cohesions

within Jamaican society through examining the human-environment interactions that take place within different social groups. The urban environmental agenda is therefore used as a lens through which to appreciate social stratification.

As well as being a *de*scriptive study of urban environmental problems in Kingston, this research is also meant to be *pre*scriptive. An improved understanding of the precise nature of these challenges will enable them to be more appropriately addressed. Simultaneously, better knowledge of urban power relations can be used to develop more appropriate and effective structures of urban governance through which to address the issues of ecology and equity in the city.

Argumentation, Conceptual Framework and Methodology

After an introduction to the context of the research and the concepts informing the study, the first section of empirical research outlines some of the main environmental problems facing Kingston and elucidates the ways in which these are understood by a variety of urban residents. The views of these same residents with regards to the main actors involved in causing or addressing these problems are then explored. These lay or local knowledges form an essential component of a critique of current structures of urban governance and models of urban environmental management, and are used to suggest ways in which these can be improved.

In order to understand the ways in which social groups in Kingston interact and their discourses and opinions differ, it is first necessary to describe the historical and geographical context (Chapter 2). Jamaica's colonial history has resulted in deep social divisions, many of which have been accentuated by the workings of peripheral capitalism in recent years. Some of these cleavages have been imprinted on the urban fabric, with the

result that extremes of wealth and poverty are concentrated within a small spatial area.

The analysis of urban problems identified as ‘environmental’ is framed by the keywords of nature, power, and participation. These contested terms, and the debates in which they figure, are examined in Chapter 3. This chapter also provides the theoretical background for the practical participatory methodology outlined at its close, which involves the use of a variety of instruments to suit the precise questions and contexts being investigated.

As has previously been suggested, it is necessary to discover the ways in which different social groups use the term ‘environment’ in order to determine whether this encompasses a single coherent motivation for action, or whether there are disparate understandings which may be contradictory or incompatible. The main argument of this thesis, therefore, begins with an exploration of the ways in which different groups discursively construct the city and its ‘environmental problems’ (Chapters 4 and 5). These chapters aim to identify the main material problems faced by the citizens of Kingston, and to determine which of these they feel to be particularly important in their own communities. Chapter 4 reports the results of a study in which young people from across Kingston took photographs to document their interaction with their surroundings. These pictures yield richly textured data about the ways in which adolescents construct, consume, and experience the city, and about how this differs according to gender and socio-economic background. These issues were expanded upon through the use of a questionnaire, which was given to a sample of teenage high school pupils. Chapter 5 discusses the results obtained from this survey, and includes data from focus group discussions held in a variety of communities across the city. Together, these chapters provide a picture of the range of environmental challenges faced by individuals and city managers in Kingston, as well as the relative importance of these problems to urban residents.

These environmental issues are influenced, and have the potential to be altered by, human activity, though different actors have varying power to effect change. Lay understandings of these abilities and power relations are explored in Chapter 6, using data from the questionnaires and focus groups. The relative power and efficacy of these actors in fulfilling their obligations is assessed, as are understandings of how broader participation in both planning and implementing urban environmental problems can be achieved.

The central point of the argument of this thesis, however, involves integrating these informal knowledges with the formal structures of urban governance and management. Forsyth (2003) identifies a critical political ecological nexus between a cultural approach to the interactions between actors and their environmental discourses, and a structural approach to urban management. In the case of this study, this is achieved in Chapter 7 through an analysis of the official channels through which Kingston's environment is managed, the influence of urban social movements on these, and how these interact with the life experiences and power positions of individual citizens as outlined in the previous chapters. These processes do not occur in isolation, but are affected by a variety of changes in local, national and international ideology and trends. The concluding part of the argument (Chapter 8) integrates environmental concerns with broader social debates, and assesses the research findings in the light of contemporary changes in political systems in the city.

Within the logic of this dissertation, the aim of which is to integrate lay and official discourses of the urban environment, it is essential to discover the variety of specific local knowledges that exist within the city. Indeed, one of the main challenges involved in this research involved the acquisition of empirical data from a broad range of social actors in Kingston. The city has a reputation for violence and hostility, and there are many

communities in West Kingston and elsewhere that are thought to be effectively inaccessible to outsiders. Even in more affluent areas, security fences and gated communities present problems of access for the researcher.

The social groups chosen to be a part of this research included those involved specifically in urban management and governance, those involved in environmental or conservation activities, and citizens who were not formally included in these lobbying or management organisations. This reflects a recognition that a straightforward division between 'lay' and 'expert' knowledges is inaccurate in the light of the growing numbers of citizen groups, grassroots organisations and NGOs. Although there is a strong history of civic organisations in Jamaica, these have tended to be middle class in their orientation, as poorer groups lack both the financial and the social capital to organise in this way. A focus solely on groups specifically engaged in environmental action would therefore have contributed to the marginalisation of the masses of Kingston's urban population. Indeed, the problems engaged with in this thesis affect urban residents whether or not they are specifically engaged in activities to tackle them. Formal organisations often limit their focus to particular issues rather than engaging with the complex and synergistic impacts of a variety of social and environmental problems on the lived experience of urban residents. For this reason, the children, young people, and adults who provided information about their understandings of the urban environment were (with some exceptions) not specifically active in environmental groups or activities. However, interviews were held with representatives of NGOs, international organisations, and government officials in order to elucidate the structural aspects of environmental management in the city.

The actual groups worked with were chosen according to both academic and pragmatic criteria, and reflect an awareness that public understandings of environmental issues are no

longer seen as representing an absence of knowledge, but rather as a distinct form of knowledge in themselves (Irwin *et al* 1999, Tsouvalis *et al* 2000). The schools and communities from which the research participants were drawn were chosen to provide a representative socio-spatial sample of the residents of Kingston. The involvement of children and young people in the study facilitated a much greater coverage of the spatial area and socio-economic variations in Kingston than would have been possible with adults, as well as privileging the voices of this frequently marginalised group. Focus groups provided a mechanism by which the experiences of urban residents from a variety of backgrounds could be drawn on, and also enabled an exploration of the power relations operating within communities. The participants in these focus groups were interested citizens from communities with which the researcher had personal contacts, though very few of these individuals were personally known to the researcher. Despite their lack of formal engagement with specifically environmental groups, it must be stressed that the participants' willingness to participate in the research indicates that they were generally comprised of individuals with a degree of civil awareness.

The selection of these focus groups was an important influence in the choice of research methods utilised. A study that promotes broader participation in urban decision-making must also incorporate this ideal in its methodology. A common thread of privileging the visual over the textual was adopted throughout the project as an appropriate means of involving these citizens, out of a recognition that "local people, whether they can read or not, can map, diagram, list, estimate, rank, construct and score matrices, and in other visual ways present and analyze their complex realities" (Chambers 1998: 108). The methodologies employed and their appropriateness to this research are assessed in greater detail in Chapter 3 (pp82-87). This prioritising of the visual can be seen in the autophotographic methodology employed with high school students (Chapter 4), and with

the diagrammatic techniques utilised in focus groups (Chapters 5 and 6).

The Relevance of the Study

As well as fitting within the debates mentioned above, the research presented in this thesis is of wider relevance to the study of Kingston and other urban areas in the Third World; to the development and implementation of sustainable urban development policies in similar cities; and to the research area of political ecology.

Urban geography and social life in Kingston have been widely studied, especially in the post-Independence period (Clarke 1967, 1975; Mensah 1974; Brodber 1975; Norton 1978; Austin 1984; Gordon *et al* 1997; Chevannes 2001; as well as myriad government and NGO documents). However, more recent publications summarising geographical research in the Caribbean (e.g. Barker and McGregor 1995, 2003) have barely addressed urbanisation in the region, and whereas much interesting and relevant work has focussed on issues of land use and planning in Caribbean cities, this has tended not to address the conditions of everyday urban life. Research on environmental problems in Third World cities more generally has often concentrated on huge megalopolises such as Rio de Janeiro, Manila and Shanghai, although less than 3 per cent of the Third World's population live in cities such as these with ten million or more inhabitants (Hardoy *et al* 1992). However, there is no clear relationship between urban size, prosperity and environmental problems (Drakakis-Smith 1995), and in fact most of the Third World's urban population live in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants (Hardoy *et al* 1992). Kingston is within this neglected group: the traditional definition of the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA) contains just over half a million inhabitants, while the metropolis in its broadest sense contains just under one million.

Although urban areas in Jamaica outside of Kingston have recently received some research attention (Thomas 2002, Thraves 2003), this has failed to address cultural aspects of urbanisation in these towns and cities. There has been very little work which explicitly addresses issues of the urban environment in conjunction with social processes, or which links concerns of ecology and equity. In this respect, this thesis provides a unique viewpoint on urban environmental problems from the perspective of the people who are most profoundly affected by them.

This research is also of relevance to the policy agenda in Kingston and other cities. Kingston is currently embarking on the process of producing a Sustainable Development Plan, with the aim of guiding the redevelopment and management of the city over the next twenty years. The development and implementation of this plan is being informed by a wide variety of actors, including people in communities, the business sector, the local authority and state agencies. The plan includes provision for the preparation of between 12 and 15 research papers on strategic priority areas including "economic development, environmental quality, quality of life, and good management and governance" (KSAPDC 2001: 4). This academic study is likely to complement this research, as well as providing an independent alternative view of local sustainable development in the city.

One of the research perspectives adopted in this thesis is that of political ecology. Political ecology combines a sense of 'political economy' with a broad concern for 'environmental issues'. Much of the work done in this field in the past has focussed on issues of access to land, and has had a predominantly rural focus. In recent years there have been more calls for research into urban political ecology and the ways in which social and political processes affect, and are affected by, urban environmental issues (Bryant 1998). The application of a political ecology approach to urban studies can greatly aid our

understanding of Third World cities, and can help us to identify the new relationships between social and environmental issues that are currently developing. A few authors have recently begun to address this issue with methodological and intellectual clarity (e.g. Forsyth 2003; Gandy 1996, 1999; Pelling 1999; Swyngedouw 1997a; Swyngedouw *et al* 2002), and I hope that this study can play a part in demonstrating the validity and usefulness of this form of research as a means of increasing understanding of urban processes in the Third World.

Key Insights

The approach taken in this study is to examine the concepts of nature, power, and participation in Kingston, in order to propose ways of improving the urban environment and creating a more equitable society in the city. The use of multi-method research serves to emphasise the differences in the way these concepts are understood, yet there are important insights which can be drawn from a comparison of these various descriptions.

Urban residents in Kingston have a complex and finely nuanced understanding of nature and the environment. The autophotographic study (Chapter 4) shows that these understandings vary distinctly according to social class, with less affluent individuals placing greater priority on the built environment and more affluent participants choosing to emphasise more aesthetic aspects of their surroundings. Neither of these is a reflection of purely untouched nature, as both require transformation through human activity, yet this was explicitly emphasised only by the less affluent participants. The environmental problems identified by focus groups also varied socio-spatially. In some respects these reflected localised circumstances, with inner-city groups prioritising small-scale problems that affected individuals and households. However, these inner-city groups also showed a greater awareness of the structural inequalities that prevented them from organising to

effect improvements to their surroundings, and stressed the importance of education and employment in facilitating this. The clearest spatial patterns in the relationships between individuals and their surroundings was elucidated in the questionnaire survey of high school pupils (Chapter 5), which showed that urban residents living in more pleasant parts of the city nonetheless see it in a more negative light.

The research also provides important insights into the power relations operating within the city. The autophotographic study shows the different levels of power over space enjoyed by young urban residents, and although the most affluent participants enjoyed the greatest mobility when accompanied by adults, they also had the least individual independence. In the environmental arena, it was shown that one important source of power was that over the social prioritisation of environmental projects, and that the most immediate problems faced by poor urban residents were often excluded from formal discourses. A wide range of actors were identified as having power in addressing urban environmental problems in the city, though the consensus among most of the groups was that more powerful actors were less effective in dealing with them.

Environmental problems and uneven power relations can only be addressed through facilitating greater participation in urban decision-making. However, existing attempts to develop new models of urban governance are being implemented in a top-down manner that seeks to ‘manufacture’ rather than ‘facilitate’ participation. Decades of marginalisation and political clientelism have worked against the formation of autonomous urban social movements, and the neo-liberal rhetoric of good governance does not appear to be sufficient to redress this problem. As well as assessing participation in urban management, however, this research also sought to allow broader participation in academic research than has often previously been the case, through privileging the voices

of urban residents in preference to those of urban managers.

The research has evolved out of a long period of personal engagement and fascination with the city of Kingston and the way it operates, with a profound interest in the ways in which academic and geographic thought can be applied in this context, and with a commitment to a better and more just city. The objective is not to suggest ways of homogenising the city, but rather to move towards a city in which diversity is valued alongside issues of social and environmental justice.

Chapter 2

Situating the Study: an historical socio-ecology of Kingston

The National Context: a brief history and geography of Jamaica

Any study of Kingston can only be understood within the context of the nation of which it is the capital. The physical surroundings and their impact on land use have important implications for the flows of goods and people around the island and overseas. The history of the nation is also a necessary background to understanding the current economic and political situation, and provides important background information with regards to many of the structures and processes that I identify in later chapters. Clarke (1974) and the National Atlas of Jamaica (1989) provide excellent overviews of the key geographical characteristics of Jamaica, whereas the Statistical Institute of Jamaica and the Planning Institute of Jamaica provide a variety of up-to-date publications of a consistently high standard.

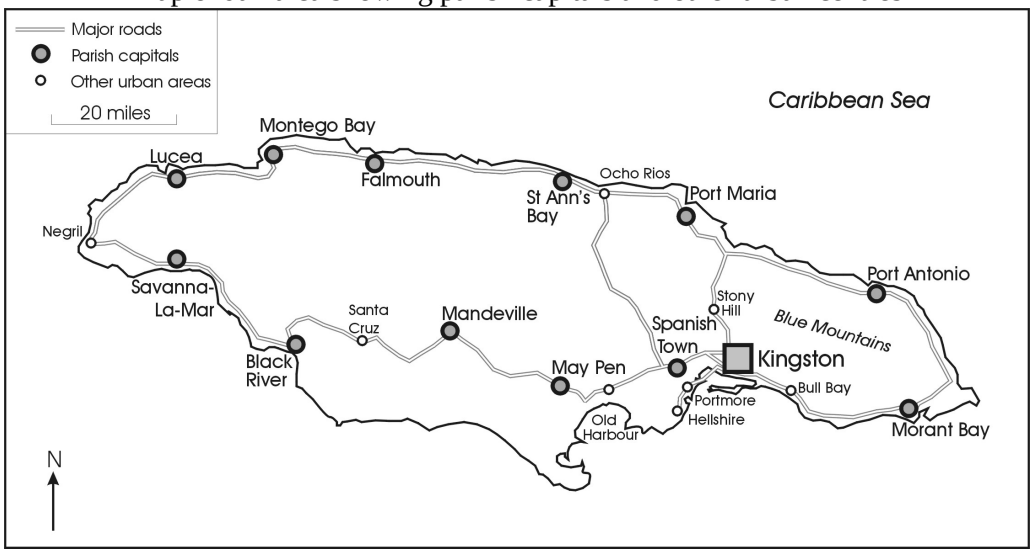
Although surrounded by the Caribbean Sea, the island of Jamaica has long been intimately connected with the rest of the world. Initially inhabited by Taino Indians[1] who had migrated through the Caribbean archipelago, then with a long history of European colonisation, the nation has been an independent state within the Commonwealth since 1962. Cultural and linguistic barriers are far more important in separating Jamaica from its nearest neighbours of Cuba and Haiti than the relatively short reaches (less than 100

[1] Members of the Arawak group, who also inhabited parts of South America, Taino is now the preferred term to use for Jamaica's original inhabitants.

miles) of water. Although historical ties link the country with the rest of the English-speaking Caribbean, perhaps the most important external reference points are Miami (approximately 550 miles to the north), New York and London. There are substantial Jamaican communities in all of these cities, and they are linked by many direct flights from the country's two international airports in Montego Bay and Kingston.

Jamaica's maximum east-west length is 146 miles, with a maximum north-south breadth of 51 miles, and its shape has been described as that of a "turtle swimming west" (Figure 2.1). The island is mountainous: half of the land area (of 4,411 square miles) is above 1,000 feet, Blue Mountain Peak rises to 7,402 feet in the east, and Columbus is alleged to have demonstrated the rugged terrain by crumpling a sheet of paper. There are also extensive plains, almost all of which were developed for sugar cane plantations during the period of British colonisation. The eastern third of the island is composed principally of igneous and metamorphic rocks, while the remainder is formed of limestones. There are many geological faults, some of which are unstable, leading to occasional earthquakes and tremors – although a catastrophic seismological event has not occurred since the 1907 earthquake which devastated Kingston. The climate is tropical maritime, although rainfall varies greatly primarily as a consequence of the rain shadow effect of the Blue Mountains. Although the climate is generally equable, the country is vulnerable to hurricanes, with particular damage caused by such storms in 1951 and 1988. A dominant characteristic of Jamaica's landscape is its extensive cover of vegetation, with the very name supposedly derived from the Arawak word *Xaymaca* meaning 'land of wood and water'. Agriculture is now the dominant land use, with almost half of the total land area being utilised for agricultural cultivation of some sort.

Figure 2.1
Map of Jamaica showing parish capitals and other urban centres



Before addressing other aspects of Jamaica's history or geography, it is useful to outline the importance of one crop, sugar, in influencing this. Sugar was introduced into the island by the Spaniards, and developed to the maximum extent by the British, although more than 50,000 acres of land (30% of the total agricultural crop land) remained under sugar cultivation in 1996 (NEPA 2001). The sugar plantation is not only the most important location for explaining much of Jamaica's social and economic history, but also is central to the "birth of the Atlantic World as an integrated economy" (Shepherd and Beckles 2000: 1). The transformation of sugar from a rare luxury to a household necessity in much of Europe during the course of the 17th century was a major factor driving the development of sugar estates. In order to meet (and possibly fuel) demand a cheap source of labour was required for these plantations, leading to the development of the world-changing and monumentally cruel Atlantic slave trade. To the present day, Jamaica's economic situation is fundamentally built on the development of the island as one huge sugar factory. Even more important, however, is the absolute replacement of the

indigenous population, to the extent that at the 1991 Census[2], 98 percent of the population identified themselves as belonging to 'Negro / Black' or 'Mixed' (at least part 'Black') ethnic groups.

Of less absolute importance, but perhaps of greater direct relevance to this study, the development of sugar estates left a strong legacy on patterns of urbanisation and urban life in Jamaica. The island's transport and communication networks were developed by a colonising power interested in extracting the maximum value from the land they had claimed. In many respects, it is also relevant to assess the role of the sugar plantation not as an agricultural process, but as an industrial process. Mintz (1985), for example, suggests that these estates were fore-runners of the industrial revolution in England itself, and that the estates worked as a single 'factory' entity. The reaping and processing of sugar cane were so mutually independent as to be effectively stages in the same production line – perhaps one reason why Kingston continues to exhibit characteristics of "urbanisation without industrialisation" (Clarke 1989: 21).

During the colonial period, much of the Liguanea Plain was used for sugar cultivation, including the areas of Constant Spring, Mona, Hope, and the University (Higman 1988). Yet by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the desire to escape these plantations had led runaway slaves and free blacks to create informal settlements around the formal grid of Kingston. In an attempt to control this unwanted population, regulations about the design and grouping of huts were created and enforced, which led to the creation of compounds (Clarke 1975), the forerunner of the tenement system of habitation. Although slavery was abolished in 1834, this did not result in an immediate rapid increase in population,

[2] Although a Census was taken in 2001, only the preliminary results were available at the time of writing. Where these are available, the more recent figures are used.

although in the century following this event vast slums and shanty-towns developed, particularly in West Kingston. The compact parcelling of land and the high-density residential areas resulting from this are among the root causes for the overcrowding and environmental problems faced by Kingston today.

Other important crops are bananas, coffee, cocoa, pimento, citrus and coconuts; although in recent years bauxite (the raw material for manufacturing aluminium, extracted through open-cast mining) has become the main commodity earner of foreign exchange, and tourism the predominant industry. In 2001, the total value of agricultural exports from Jamaica stood at US$152 million, gross export earnings from bauxite were US$740 million, and total visitor expenditure in the tourist sector was US$1,235 million (PIOJ 2002a).

The following "pocket history" of the West Indies, written by a Jamaican only shortly after independence, encapsulates many of the key themes of the island's history:

> From the West Indian point of view the central theme in West Indian history is that of the voluntary or forced migration of European and African people into the islands, and at a later period of East Indians. In political terms their organization was in colonies; in social terms, in a caste system resting on slavery, each caste carrying its badge of race and colour; in economic terms, in imperial closed-circuit trading systems. The story develops through almost two centuries of fear, hatred, and a long agony of intolerance and injustice to the emancipation of the slaves; it continues through another century in which old cleavages narrowed and caste became class; and finally, in the last quarter of a century, it unfolds in the emergence of self-respecting independent nations, but with these still beset by insecurity, balancing on the razor-edge between success and disaster, striving desperately to reduce within themselves the areas of poverty and frustration (Sherlock 1966: 10-11).

Although it is not necessary to go into this history in any great detail (Sherlock and Bennett (1998) provide a detailed account from the perspective of the "Jamaican People"), it is perhaps worth mentioning several key events which have had an important impact on

shaping Jamaican society, and which (in many cases) have also impacted on the collective Jamaican psyche. In the history of slavery, the ending of the British slave trade in 1808 marked the beginning of the end of this appalling institution. Although emancipation formally took place in 1834, this was followed by a four year 'apprenticeship' period, which meant that 'full freedom' was not obtained until 1838.

Yet equality of any form was still many years away, and the Jamaica Assembly consisted of a minority of merchants and planters who were primarily concerned with preserving the earlier economic and social structure. Discontent erupted in Morant Bay in 1865, when 400 small settlers led by a Baptist deacon, Paul Bogle, clashed with the Custos and Vestry of the Parish. Twenty-one white persons and nine black rioters were killed in the clash, but the suppression that followed was vicious – 439 people killed and 600 flogged. The Assembly, frightened by its own impotence in dealing with the situation, passed an act abolishing itself, and the country was made a Crown Colony the following year. This is perhaps the key moment of the 19th century in which the Jamaican people stood up against injustice at great personal cost. The event has also been a point of cultural reference: Third World's song *1865 (96 degrees in the shade)*[3] captures both the bitterness of the defeat and pride in the courage to resist injustice.

Although a form of elected representation was reintroduced after two decades, it was not until the Labour Rebellion of 1938 that the rule of the planters finally crumbled. Three weeks of militant action, with Alexander Bustamante and Norman Washington Manley as key figures, signalled the beginning of the end for the colonial period.

[3] From the Third World album *96 Degrees in the Shade* (Mango Records, 1977).

Universal adult suffrage was granted in 1944, and Bustamante and Manley went on to found the country's two main political parties. In the last elections held with a restricted franchise only 60,000 people were eligible to vote. In the first General Election held in 1944 the electorate increased more than tenfold, to 660,000[4].

The impact of Marcus Garvey is also central to understanding social change in Jamaica during the 20th century. Both philosopher and activist, Garvey's actions (including the formation of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Black Star Shipping Line) held great symbolic power in convincing Jamaicans (and many others in the Caribbean and Africa) that they were indeed able to manage their own affairs. Garveyism also profoundly influenced the Rastafari movement: "both movements are Afrocentric and unapologetically defend the beauty and dignity of Africa and people of African ancestry" (Lewis 1998: 147).

Garveyism stressed Africa's social and political redemption, and Rastafari incorporated a spiritual dimension in this agenda. Both movements also had (and continue to have) a far wider impact than the number of their adherents might suggest. Indeed, "by keeping alive the issue of identity and forcing it on national consciousness, the Rastafari movement helped to expose – and by so doing, to overturn – certain assumptions of the ideology of racism in the 1940s and 1950s, particularly among the middle classes" (Chevannes 1998: 55).

However, if there is one date remembered by all Jamaicans, it is Independence Day – August 6, 1962. In the newly-built National Stadium at midnight, the Union Jack was lowered and the Jamaican black, gold and green raised for the first time. According to Rex

[4] Electoral Office of Jamaica website (www.eoj.com.jm; accessed January 2003).

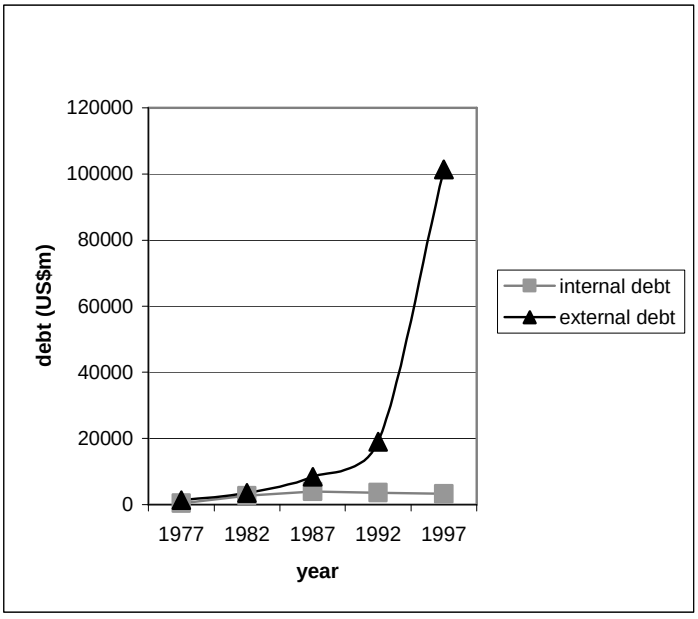
Nettleford, now Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and himself an observer at that event, this was the beginning of the period in which the Jamaican people "would not simply build a nation: they would go about shaping a society"[5]. But in a survey conducted by one of the major national newspapers at the time of the 40th anniversary of this event, 53 percent of respondents indicated that they thought Jamaica would have been better off had it remained a British colony, and only 15 percent thought that the country would have been worse off[6].

This negative perspective on the nation's accomplishments can be at least partially explained by reference to the Jamaican and international economy over this time-span. From independence until 1973, the Jamaican economy experienced strong growth (an average of 5.2 percent growth in GDP per annum)[7], although this period coincided with a favourable international economic environment – commodity prices were good, exchange rates were stable, and foreign direct investment was increasing. Shortly after the People's National Party (PNP) led by Michael Manley took office in 1972 with a radical social agenda informed by socialist principles, the country went into a period of rapid economic decline which lasted until 1980. Between 1974 and 1980, real GDP declined by 22.1 percent, due to a combination of factors including international economic pressures brought about by sharp oil price increases and government policies of acquiring enterprises and increasing spending on social programmes. The government responded to balance of payments problems by increased borrowing, setting the stage for the huge debt problems faced by the country today.

[5] Quote from Institute of Jamaica Exhibition "Jamaica Independence: 40 years on" (September 2002)
[6] "53% say Jamaica would be better as British colony" *Sunday Observer*, 21/07/02. Data collected in association with Stone Polls, a highly respected local polling organisation.
[7] The economic figures used in this section are taken from PIOJ (2000).

The period 1981-1998 was characterised by continuous economic restructuring, initiated by an International Monetary Fund / World Bank programme of macroeconomic and structural reform. This stressed the reduction of the role of the state in the economy, the promotion of export-oriented production, and the reduction of deficits in balance of payments and fiscal accounts. These programmes had devastating social consequences: "living standards declined, particularly for the most vulnerable groups in the society" and "the reduction in government expenditure meant reduced spending on education, health and social welfare programmes" (PIOJ 2000: 9), as well as contributing to the worsening of social and environmental concerns (Lundy 1999a). By 1997, the total external debt stood at more than US$100,000 million (Figure 2.2), and 62% of the 2001 national budget was allocated for the servicing of debts. Despite this, in 2001 the economy recorded its second consecutive year of real growth in GDP, its fifth consecutive year of single digit inflation, and its highest ever level of net international reserves.

Figure 2.2
Jamaica's debt burden, 1977-1997



[source: PIOJ 2000]

Although the most recent annual *Survey of Living Conditions* states that "the living conditions of Jamaicans continue to make steady improvements in several areas" (PIOJ 2002b: xiii) there is little doubt that a substantial proportion of the population do not have a satisfactory standard of living, and Jamaica's world ranking in the United Nations Human Development Index fell from 69th in 1990 to 103rd in 1997 (PIOJ 2000). There is a huge inequality in the distribution of wealth, with the richest 5% receiving 32% of the national income – a figure classified as 'appalling' by the *New Internationalist*[8]. The *New Internationalist* goes on to state that "as in the days of slavery, there seem to be two Jamaicas divided by class and colour… it seems that only music and Red Stripe beer unites Jamaican society".

Politically, Jamaica benefits from a relatively stable democratic system based on the Westminster Model. The Queen is Head of State, with a Governor General as her representative. There have been regular, free, and fair elections since independence, and there is a widespread respect for democracy and its institutions. However, political tribalism is deeply entrenched, and has erupted into violence around elections, particularly in 1980. The extremely high levels of support in particular wards and constituencies for either political party is probably not related to explicit fraud, but rather to intimidation or 'forced' persuasion via the threat of violence. Parts of the urban area are therefore overtly politicised and territorially segmented (including the so-called 'garrison communities'), which may have important implications for inhibiting or framing knowledge of the urban environment (cf Figueroa 1994, Munroe 1990, Sives 2002). Indeed, although "the quality of democracy in Jamaica leaves much to be desired… powerful forces favouring democracy have been forged in the country, not least by a people who have become attached to their own electoral traditions" (Payne 1991: 43).

[8] Issue 213, November 1990 (www.newint.org; accessed January 2003).

The most recent general election was held in October 2002, at which the People's National Party (under the leadership of PJ Patterson) retained office for a fourth consecutive term, but with a much reduced parliamentary majority. Prime Minister Patterson has stated his intention to retire during the next term, and Opposition Leader Edward Seaga may also not contest the next general election, raising the possibility of a new era of leadership for both major political parties.

These processes and events occur within a population of 2,599,300 (2001 Census). This is a 9.2 percent increase over the previous (1991) census, and an increase of approximately one million since the time of independence. Although the population is still young, with one-third of the population being in the 0-14 age group, this proportion has declined substantially in recent years (from a high of 45 percent in 1970), and Jamaica's population is now among the most rapidly ageing in the developing world (PIOJ 2002b). The population continues to grow, although much less rapidly than previously (the annual growth rate in the 1960s was 1.39 percent, compared to 0.88 percent in the 1990s), and migration represents a considerable check on population increase (with a net migration balance of 192,000 people leaving the country in the decade preceding the census).

Just over half (52.1 percent) of the population live in areas classified as urban, and just over one-fifth (580,000) live in the Kingston Metropolitan Area. Other major towns are Spanish Town (with a population of 131,100); Montego Bay, the centre of the tourist industry (95,000); May Pen (57,400); and Mandeville, a popular location for returning migrants (48,000). Spanish Town and May Pen are part of the broad conurbation in the south-east of the island, of which Kingston is the traditional centre. Portmore, a large residential community constructed during the last 30 years, is also part of this system, and has a population of 160,000.

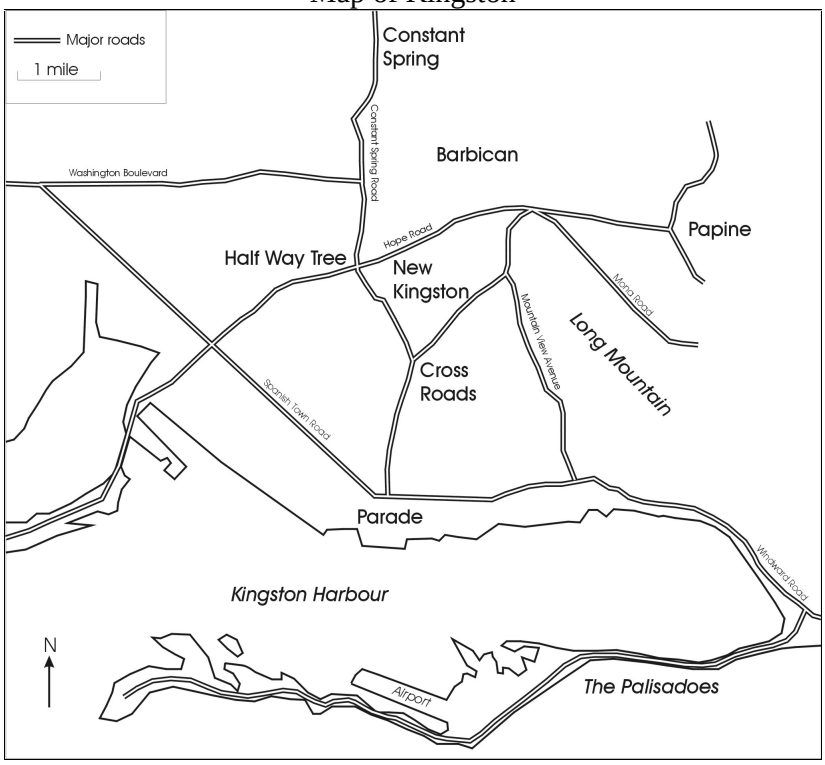
As an island nation, with a relatively dense population, plantation agriculture, open-cast mining and intensive use of the coastline, there is a wide variety of environmental pressures. The *Jamaica National Environmental Action Plan* (NRCA 1996) identified eight 'environmental priorities': land use management; human settlements; forestry, agriculture and watershed management; waste management; pollution – air, land and water; coastal and marine resources management; national parks, protected areas and wildlife; and public awareness. It also identified the environmental health issues of water supply, waste water and excreta, food quality and safety, hazards in the work environment, ambient air quality, and travel and tourism. Key issues identified by the Jamaica Environment Trust (a leading environmental NGO) in a promotional brochure are coastal pollution, soil erosion, deforestation, waste disposal, destruction of wetlands, air quality in Kingston, groundwater quality, and coral reef degradation – concerns which are echoed by a wide range of individuals and agencies.

The government agency with direct responsibility for the management and protection of the environment and natural resources is the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA). This is a new body, formed in 2001 by the amalgamation of the Natural Resources Conservation Authority, the Town Planning Department, and the Land Development and Utilisation Commission. There are many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in environmental projects, and the role of these and of civil society more broadly will be examined later in the thesis. For example, a recent pamphlet on Local Sustainable Development Planning in Jamaica acknowledged the contributions of 29 government and non-government agencies (ENACT 2001).

The Urban Context: a brief history and geography of Kingston

Kingston is situated in the south-east of Jamaica (Figure 2.1; Figure 2.3), and is located on the broad, gently sloping, Liguanea Plain. Its natural setting is both beneficial and beautiful (Figure 2.4; Figure 2.5) – bordered to the south by Kingston Harbour (the seventh largest natural harbour in the world), to the north and east by the foothills of the Blue Mountains, and with coastal plains stretching away to the west.

Figure 2.3
Map of Kingston



The location of the city in the rain shadow of the Blue Mountains means that water shortages are a recurring problem, with various infrastructural developments (such as the Mona Reservoir and the pipeline from the Yallahs River) only partially alleviating these. Water is a problem in other respects – inadequate drainage systems leave parts of the city vulnerable to flooding, although this situation has been greatly improved since the Sandy Gully drainage project of the late 1950s.

Figure 2.4
The waterfront district in Kingston, looking north towards the Blue Mountains



The city has grown inland from the sea, where the original site was bought by the Council of Jamaica in 1692. Although Kingston was neither the first, nor for many years the most important, settlement in Jamaica, it initially became the capital in 1755. This position was soon rescinded, and did not become permanent until 1875. The city received its charter in 1802, which included the privilege of a mayor and a corporation, although there was little fanfare celebrating the 200th anniversary of this in 2002, and despite being celebrated in international popular culture[9], local references are often far less complimentary.

[9] From Harry Belafonte singing *Jamaica Farewell* ("I had to leave my little girl in Kingston Town") to UB40's *Kingston Town* ("Kingston Town, is where I want to stay").

Figure 2.5
The main market district in downtown Kingston, looking south to the Harbour

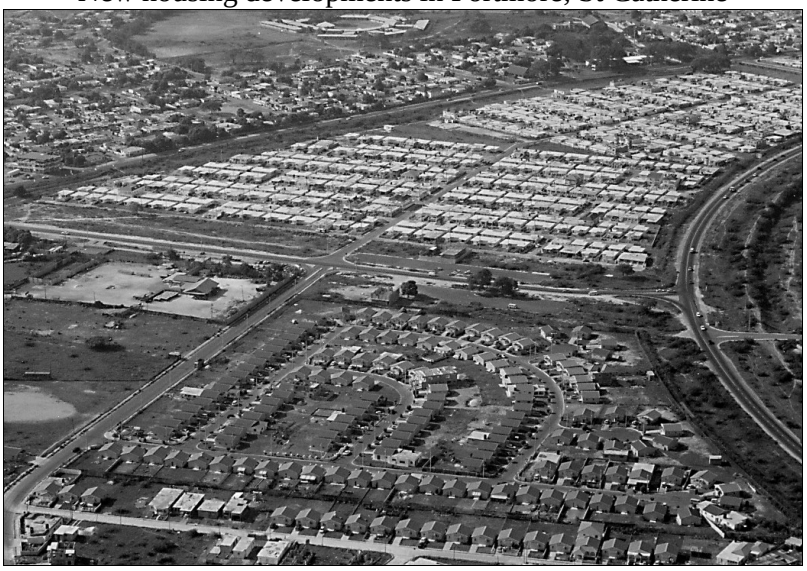


The population of Kingston[10] has grown steadily (and occasionally rapidly) over time, with an apparent stabilisation in recent years. The population increased from approximately 5,000 in 1700 to 25,000 in 1800 and 60,000 in 1900. At the eve of Independence, in 1960, Kingston's population was 380,000, and the current population of the Kingston Metropolitan Area, as identified in the 2001 Census, is 577,600. However, I would suggest that many of the newer urban developments to the west of Kingston (in the parish of St Catherine), including Portmore, Hellshire, and Spanish Town, also function as part of the city, leading to an overall metropolitan area population of almost one million. The KMA alone contains almost one quarter of Jamaica's population, and 43.5 percent of the national population lives in the contiguous south-eastern parishes of Kingston, St Andrew and St Catherine.

[10] Throughout this study, when I refer to 'Kingston' I will be referring to the area officially known as the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA). This is comprised of the parish of Kingston and the urban areas of the parish of St Andrew, and is the most widely accepted definition of the city. When it is necessary to refer solely to the parish of Kingston, this will be made clear in the text.

The population of the parish of Kingston, the historic centre of the city, peaked at 123,400 in 1960, and has declined slowly but steadily since then, with the 2001 Census registering a population of 95,810. In the last ten years, the population of the parish of St Andrew grew at a rate of 0.3 percent annually, considerably less than the national growth rate of 0.88 percent. Perhaps the most important factor limiting the growth in Kingston's population has been the expansion of low- and middle-income housing developments in St Catherine (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6
New housing developments in Portmore, St Catherine



This parish has experienced a population growth rate of 2.3 percent over the last ten years, almost three times the national average. The boom period of rural to urban migration experienced in the middle of the century appears to have ended, with international migration occurring from urban and rural populations alike.

Secondary towns now host a larger share of Jamaica's urban population than at any previous point in time (30 percent of the island's urban population in 1991 compared to 14 percent in 1970), and significant socio-economic and spatial transformations are taking

place in these urban centres (Thomas 2002). Much of the Liguanea Plain is totally built up, with limited room for expansion into the hills, thus resulting in the westward expansion outlined above. There is some evidence of out-migration from the parish of Kingston and other down-town areas because of violence and the threat of violence, and population densities may also have decreased as slums and shanty-towns have been replaced by new housing projects.

Kingston, like many Third World capital cities, is a site in which wealth and power are concentrated, whilst simultaneously exhibiting some of the country's most profound problems of social exclusion and deprivation. Norton (1978: 2) identified "the gap between two Kingstons, a gap that is symbolised by the increasing necessity for burglar bars and security guards in the 'modern sector'", and it is indisputable that there are huge contrasts in living conditions within a small spatial area (Clarke and Howard 1999). These differences are encapsulated in the ubiquitous use of the terms 'uptown' and 'downtown' to refer to the rich and poor areas of the city respectively. Although the actual boundary between these two broad zones may be disputed, it is certain that "affluent residents of Kingston avoid downtown" out of a mixture of fear and shame (Austin-Broos 1995: 159). However, these divisions are also accentuated at the points at which global capital accumulation 'touches down' in the Third World city, such as in the business district of New Kingston, where goats and beggars share the shade provided by gleaming skyscrapers built for local and international companies.

Environmental problems in Kingston are similar to those in many other Third World cities. Kingston is still facing the public health and sanitation issues that plagued western cities in the 19th century, whilst simultaneously having to deal with more recent environmental problems. These include low levels of sanitation and sewerage treatment,

poor drainage, severe water pollution, severe urban air pollution from vehicle emissions and use of low quality fuels, inadequate solid waste collection and disposal, lack of hazardous waste management, ineffective land-use controls, and frequent disasters due to natural and other hazards (Williams 1997). The national murder rate is high (various unsubstantiated sources place it as the third highest in the world), and much of this is concentrated in downtown Kingston. Some of this is related to political factors (see Eyre 1984, 1986), although the drug trade (including Jamaica's role as a trans-shipment point between South America and North America and Europe) has been an important contributing factor in recent years.

The Position of the Researcher

To conclude this introduction, it is appropriate to add a few words about my position as the researcher. In recent years geographers (and social scientists more generally) have become aware of the importance of positionality and reflexivity in understanding research. There is a growing consensus that knowledge cannot be separated from the knower, that "data and facts are the constructions or results of interpretation" (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000: 1), and that "nothing speaks for itself" (Denzin 2000: 500). Rather than claiming to see the whole world while remaining distanced from it, making one's position known and the specificity of one's purpose clear can help to counter "overgeneralizing, universalizing claims" (Rose 1997a: 308). On the simplest level, the way in which the participants in this research (and the readers of this thesis) relate to me, the researcher, is unavoidably affected by their perceptions and understanding of me, the person.

In the process of carrying out the research I was always careful to introduce myself and explain my purposes, as the first impression is of a white male in his mid-twenties, carrying out research from a prestigious western university (all signifiers of wealth),

among a population which is predominantly black and poor. I first arrived in Kingston in February 1983, days after my fifth birthday. My English parents came to Jamaica as mission partners with the Church of Scotland, initially working in Hannah Town, a highly deprived community in West Kingston. An initial short-term commitment has extended until the present, with my mother continuing community work at a non-government organisation and my father serving as the minister of a local church.

In common with most middle-class Jamaican children, I was educated at a private primary (preparatory) school, and after taking the Common Entrance Examination (now replaced by the Grade Six Achievement Test) at age ten went to a Government-run and -funded high school[11]. My parents' work in the inner-city meant that I would spend weekdays in the middle-class surroundings of my school and home in 'uptown' Kingston, whilst spending a large part of my weekends and vacations in the heart of the inner-city. This exposure to the full spectrum of urban life in Kingston from an early age is doubtless a contributing factor to my interest in the urban geography and sociology of the city. I became a Jamaican citizen in 1995, and although I have not been permanently resident in Kingston for some years (because of studying in the United Kingdom), I have remained engaged with these issues, and continue to participate formally and informally in community programmes in inner-city Kingston.

[11] The intricacies of the Jamaican educational system are addressed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3

Nature, Power and Participation in the Urban Caribbean: towards a practical participatory methodology

Introduction

As explained in the previous chapters, the motivation behind this research is largely political, and is concerned with assessing and addressing the material conditions experienced by the citizens of Kingston. Yet many of the conceptual tools used by geographers do not adequately take lived experience into account, and are not informed by circumstances in the cities of the Third World. This is particularly the case with the first two keywords examined in this chapter – nature and power. As Noel Castree (2000: 540) has stated, "much of the debate over nature in geography has focused on western – and specifically Anglophone – ideas and practices". In contrast, the third keyword – participation – has almost become the holy grail of development policy, and is widely cited both as a desirable end in itself and as the means to achieve sustainable development in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Third World.

In this chapter, I discuss these keywords of nature, power, and participation, and critically analyse their relevance to the study of urban geography in Kingston. I then identify some of the challenges which are particular to the context in which this research is being conducted, notably the difficulties of undertaking research in the urban Caribbean. This theoretical and contextual background is a necessary prerequisite to the final section of this chapter, which proposes a practical participatory methodology for urban research in

Kingston, involving multi-method research and privileging local knowledges. I also make special mention of the involvement of children and adolescents in the research, and the relevance that this has both to the study of children's geographies and to the study of social and environmental processes in Kingston.

I have deliberately combined a review of the literature with an explanation of the theoretical approaches taken. Much of the context-specific literature has been dealt with in Chapter 2, and other aspects are included in the chapters to which they relate directly. The production of theory does not take place in a vacuum, but rather is intrinsically linked with past productions and texts, and with the process of research. The combination of literature, research, and theory is therefore a means of simultaneously enriching each of these.

Understandings of Nature

> Nature is material and it is spiritual, it is given and made, pure and undefiled; nature is order and it is disorder, sublime and secular, dominated and victorious; it is a totality and a series of parts, woman and object, organism and machine. Nature is the gift of God and it is a product of its own evolution; it is a universal outside history and also the product of history, accidental and designed, wilderness and garden (Smith 1984: 1-2).

Constructing nature in the city

The city is a particularly important location for social relations. A wide variety of groups – differentiated by class, gender, ethnicity, age and various other factors – find themselves located in close spatial proximity to each other. These different groups experience the urban environment in myriad different ways – indeed, people's understanding of nature and landscapes "is based in large measure on the particularity of the social, political and economic relations within which they live out their lives" (Bender 1993: 246). However, the converse is also true: people's social, political and economic relations are affected by their surroundings. Constructions of the environment inevitably and fundamentally affect

people's relations with the environment and with each other. In order to begin to untangle this complicated web of interactions, it is first necessary to take a look at the ways in which nature is constructed: both from an ontological viewpoint, as well as from a more material perspective.

The debate over the 'social construction of nature' is at the centre of much current discussion and research in geography. Raymond Williams' comment about 'nature' being perhaps the most complicated word in the English language has been much repeated (Castree 2000), and as Neil Smith's quote which began this section indicates, the term can be put to a great many uses. Narrowing the perspective to the urban environment hardly seems to help. Indeed, "words like 'nature' and 'environment' convey a commonality and universality of concern that can all too easily be captured by particularist politics" (Harvey 1996: 118). For this reason, it is worth examining the concept of nature, as well as attempting an explanation of the relationship between nature and the city.

In what follows, I first sketch some of the ontological positions relating to the 'social construction of nature', with particular reference to critical realism. I then look at the impacts of both discursive and physical constructions in altering urban nature, with specific reference to media constructions of the urban environment in Kingston. By disentangling ontological and epistemological questions, I show how "the world exists separately from us but our knowledge of it can only ever be partial and is mediated through social practice" (Gandy 1996: 35). The analysis then takes a turn towards the epistemological, with an explanation of the implications of this perspective for research in the Third World city in general, and Kingston in particular, before explaining some specific ways of creating a socio-ecological understanding of urban nature.

A qualified critical realism

The basic ontological stance that will be taken in this study is consistent with critical realism. Critical realism is marked by a qualified, though vigorous, rejection of strong forms of relativism in understanding nature (Proctor 1998). While acknowledging that our criteria for judgement are inescapably context-bound, this position maintains that geographers and others interested in concerns of representing nature can still have something of importance to say. Although critical realism rejects strong forms of relativism, its distinct separation from positivism must also be stressed, and is explained by Sayer as follows:

> "[A positivist perspective suggests that] (i)f we are to explain processes we must discover the regularities or universal laws governing their behaviour. Hence the thrust of research must be towards the discovery of order.
>
> [A realist perspective suggests that] (i)f we are to explain why things behave as they do we must understand their structure and the properties which enable them to produce or suffer particular kinds of change" (Sayer 1985: 61).

This is both a political critique of the supposed value-neutrality of positivism and a philosophical critique of the empiricist foundations of positivism (Hoggart *et al* 2002).

Critical realism is broadly compatible with a Marxist approach to understanding the relationship between human agency, social interaction and social structure in social systems. It suggests that "specific forms of human agency (social labour and class struggle) and social structure (the forces and relations of production) have explanatory primacy in shaping the constitution and dynamics of social systems" (Creaven 2000: 1). Although an important influence on this study, this approach is not being taken dogmatically. Jamaican society cannot be constrained by such inflexible descriptors of social class, particularly because of the heritage of slavery and colonialism which have produced a very different class structure from that conceived of by Marx. Critical realism also shares some aspects of structuration theory, broadly conceived as a project to address

the apparent contradictions between structure and agency, and "to think through the implications of Marx's deceptively simple claim… that people make history, but not just as they please or in circumstance of their own choosing" (Gregory 1994: 110).

Environmental perception

During the 1980s, there was much interest in issues of 'behavioural' geography and 'environmental perception' (e.g. Gold and Goodey 1983, Goodey and Gold 1985, Spencer and Blades 1986). This approach can help to clarify the degree to which actors understand the environments in which they operate, which in turn forms part of the circumstances under which they make and remake their own geographies (Emel 1994). However, it also conceals the role of structural forces and power relations in affecting human-environment interactions.

A more useful approach is to recognise that nature and society are not mutually exclusive categories, that our understandings of nature are always constructed, and that these are affected by historical and social forces. This approach helps to liberate us from western biases, by recognising that the entire process of linking environmental and social processes is culturally entrenched. For example, Karan and Bladen (1982) studied the creation of mental maps made by residents of Katmandu-Patan, but failed to analyse any deeper levels of meaning behind this process. This assumed that two dimensional maps were a 'natural' way of representing urban space, whereas in fact they are strongly steeped in a particular set of cultural, social, and educational histories. The linguistic significance of focusing on 'perceptions' has a tendency to privilege the 'objective' viewpoint of the researcher, and to hide the fact that the researcher also embodies a suite of assumptions and prejudices. It can also obscure alternative ways of seeing the world if these do not fit the previously identified framework. It may partially be for this reason that the techniques of

environmental perception were not widely employed in Third World research, as the cultural barriers proved too high for the methodologies to cross. Indeed, the places in which these methods appear to have been successful are those which share the language and educational system of the researcher, such as Potter's work (1984, 1992) on a cognitive approach to environment and development issues in the Eastern Caribbean.

Yet radical geographers were relatively slow to address the issue of nature. Perhaps the first major effort at dealing with this topic was Neil Smith's *Uneven Development* (1984), which explicitly addressed issues of the ideology of nature and the production of nature. Yet in 1989, Fitzsimmons noted that still "the question of the material reality of what [she calls] 'social nature' has received relatively little theoretical attention" (p106). Since then, however, it has become *de rigueur* to view nature (and, indeed, almost everything else) as constructed. Whereas this provides us with a new armoury of intellectual tools, an over enthusiastic application has often fallen into the traps of extreme relativism and even nihilism - precisely the opposite of what these pioneering writers would have wanted. Reflecting on *Uneven Development* in 2000, Swyngedouw reflects that "at the time of its writing the notion of 'producing nature' may have sounded rather opaque and confusing" (p267). Yet over a relatively short period of time, it has become axiomatic that "nature is as much an idea or concept as it is a material reality" (Castree 2001). However, much "modish radicalism" (Demeritt 2001: 37) forgets that the converse is also true: that nature is as much material reality as it is an idea or concept. In the following section, the precise components of what is meant by the 'construction of nature' will be more closely examined.

The social construction of nature

Just as 'nature' is an immensely complicated word which can be used in myriad different senses, the term 'social construction of nature' has acquired a bewildering multiplicity of meanings. Indeed, an acceptance of the constructedness of nature is not, in itself, a radical standpoint. Even the discourse and practice of environmental management "is little more than a technocratic, neo-liberal rendition of the construction of nature, albeit evoking an especially narrow productionism which keeps nature and culture in separate spheres" (Smith 1998: 273). It is firstly necessary to clarify whether the 'construction of nature' refers to "the construction of our *concepts* of nature" or to "the process of constructing nature in *the physical and material sense*" (Demeritt 2001: 23, emphases in the original).

Whereas ontological questions about what nature 'is' are important, these are ultimately outside the remit of this discussion. However, an epistemological focus on the construction of nature, which addresses the ways in which knowledges about nature are constructed and distributed, is important for several reasons. It can "challenge the apparent self-evidence of nature and the physical environment as pregiven things with certain fixed physical properties that exist independently of and apart from social practices" (Demeritt 2001: 24), whilst also challenging the ultimate authority of 'scientific' knowledge. These positions can retain an open-mindedness about the ontological basis on which concepts of nature are founded by acknowledging that even if an 'external' nature does exist, "our empirical observations of it would still be biased by our socially constructed preconceptions of it" (Demeritt 2001: 26). This position draws strongly on Marxist political economy, reducing the anthropocentric nature of this although not eliminating it entirely – an important concession, as it is "only through socially specific structured human action and interpretation that 'nature' can be known and transformed at all" (Castree and Braun 1998: 9), and that "what counts for truth and valid knowledge about

the world is relative to the groups and individuals in question" (Demeritt 2001: 28). This is a discursive approach, in which "constructs of political economy and ecology as specifically modern forms of knowledge, as well as their objects of study, must be analysed discursively" (Escobar 1996: 46).

This epistemological position also helps to dismantle some of the rigid dichotomies associated with nature, and to provide an alternative definition which is not solely in opposition to other concepts. Indeed, nature provided one pole of all of the great Enlightenment antinomies (nature and society, nature and culture, nature and nurture) (Fitzsimmons 1989). However, a view which positions nature as external to society reinforces the positions of those who control space and who control discourses of scientific knowledge – and thus excludes the majority of the world's population. The theoretical field of the sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK) has stressed the ways in which scientific knowledge is produced through its sociological analysis of the processes taking place in laboratories and by 'scientists'. This traces the emergence of nature in the specific historical practices of the laboratory and of writing, and provides a more complex account of how specific knowledges come to be held without compromising the essential materiality of nature (Castree and Braun 1998). An analysis of the social construction of nature in this way therefore requires physical, mental and social worlds to be linked together (Gerber 1997).

David Demeritt (1998, 2001, 2002) has identified several key ways in which the 'social construction' of nature can be used. He identifies the first of these as "construction as refutation", in which "critics use construction talk to refute taken-for-granted beliefs about the essential nature of things" (Demeritt 2002: 769). It is in this sense as "construction as refutation" that the social construction approach to nature has been criticised from the

traditional Left as leaving "no epistemologically secure foundation from which to speak truth to power" (Demeritt 1998: 28). It is suggested that increased attention to 'discourse' rather than to 'material reality' enables those who are already powerful to capture discourse for their own uses. If the environment as we know it is nothing more than discourse, the argument goes, then powerful actors can structure the environment according to their own agenda. For example, industrial polluters would be able to claim that environmental pollution blamed on them is an inaccurate construction, and that no mitigating action is necessary. However, the exact opposite is true. By recognising that all portrayals of the environment and environmental problems are socially constructed, the terrain is opened up for alternative positions and voices. A situation in which various knowledge claims circulate and mutually inform each other is a system of discourse which prevents a small number of powerful actors from transforming their perspective into a hegemonic truth. It should also be remembered that anti-essentialism does not necessarily imply a rejection of the material world. Indeed, as Arturo Escobar asks, "is there a view of nature that goes beyond the truism that nature is constructed to theorize the manifold ways in which it is culturally constructed and socially produced, while fully acknowledging the biophysical basis of its constitution?" (Escobar 1999: 2). Perhaps the more relevant question to ask therefore is not "what are the different constructions of nature?" but rather "why do these different constructions exist, and what produces them?"

This is the approach taken throughout this study. Privileging local knowledges does not automatically assume that these are a sufficient base upon which to build strategies or actions, although it does recognise that they are often formed out of longer-term and more extensive involvement than other forms of knowledge. However, it does position these knowledges in the same realm as those of more 'official' voices, so that they too can be taken into account in the assessment of the situation of Kingston's urban environment.

Yet the power of viewing nature as constructed can also be stretched into a second broad kind of constructionism, "construction-as-philosophical-critique" (Demeritt 2002: 769). Whereas the first use of the 'social construction of nature' is relatively easily reconcilable with more traditional epistemological stances (such as critical realism), the view of construction-as-philosophical-critique adopts a more postmodern stance. In turn, Demeritt divides this perspective into four sub-categories: phenomenological, Sociology of Scientific Knowledge (SSK), discursive, and Actor-Network Theory (ANT). However, rather than being blueprints for a 'ready made' epistemology, I would suggest that each of these has particular strengths which can help in getting to grips with individuals' experiences. The phenomenological approach is agnostic about the truth of concepts of nature, but realist about social actors – a position which is apolitical and non-acting; and some of the tenets of SSK were mentioned previously. A discursive approach suggests that concepts of nature are constructed through language and discourse – a position which does not seem to be incompatible with the position of 'construction as refutation'. The position of actor-network theory (ANT) is perhaps more challenging, in suggesting that actors are heterogeneously assembled networks of human and non-human entities, and that it is not merely human actors who have the power of agency.

Indeed, rather than the social construction of nature becoming an excuse for not paying sufficient attention to the 'natural' world, the incorporation of some of these ideas restores the centrality of nature. Nature can be viewed as a constructed actor, and rather than being merely the external structure within which human activities occur, obtains agency of its own. This breaks apart the false nature-society divide, enabling a deeper understanding of "the particular way in which organisms work with… quite different possibilities in dynamic and interactive ways" (Harvey 1996: 192). The breaking down of the nature-society dualism simultaneously creates a space for human resistance to unequal and unjust

power relations. Instrumentalist views of nature have "been a feature of enlightenment thinking and capitalist social relations of production since the eighteenth century" leading to "common threads between the exploitation of nature and the exploitation of people" (Katz 1998:48). An awareness of the constructedness of nature therefore provides us with a framework in which both environmental and social injustice can be assessed and redressed.

Castree (2002) argues that it is both possible and productive to "'split the difference' between ANT and green Marxism in a way that shows the latter can be strengthened – rather than undermined – by drawing on the insights of a 'weak' version of the former" (p116). He suggests that retaining an awareness of the separation of nature and society is a potent tool in making nature "amenable to social analysis while calling into question courses of social action… supposedly necessitated by the needs or limits of 'nature-in-itself'" (p118). However, drawing on the insights of ANT, particularly as this recognises the hybrids and quasiobjects which inhabit the world, produces an ontology of "not quite natural, not quite social entities [which] rejects the pure transcendences of binarist thinking and urges us to see them as *outcomes* that illicitly compartmentalise a messy, impure, heterogeneous world" (p118). Gandy (1996) commences his argument from the opposite perspective, arguing that insights from critical realism can strengthen postmodern environmental thought. He suggests that this can combat the problem of relativism which results in our inability to answer the question: "how can we determine which interpretations of environmental problems are more cogent and which political responses will allow a greater degree of social justice?" (p33). He concludes that "a critical realist approach lying between relativism and rationalism has the potential to allow for the progressive development of knowledge rooted in a combination of practical human

achievements; the effective incorporation of the independent agency of nature into our analysis; and the possibility for a radical integration of social and natural science" (p35).

In other words, we are confronted with an external nature which we can never objectively assess, although its influence can be felt and it can be affected by our actions. The principle is similar to chaos theory: we can never know anything about the world without affecting it, and we can never affect the world without knowing something about it – but the two processes are mutually incompatible. However, while we do not have control over nature itself, we do have an immense amount of control over the production of nature (Smith 1984: 65), and this control creates the space for action and socio-ecological change.

The production of (urban) nature

Although the terms 'production' and 'construction' of nature are often used synonymously, it can be helpful to understand them as different concepts. Neil Smith suggests that the "materialism of the '*production* of nature', with its focus on social labor builds in an antidote to the most idealist impulses of social constructionism, but at the same time focuses so centrally on social agency that the insights of cultural constructionism can, if the will is there, be spliced together with… political economic analyses" (Smith 2000a: 274). In the context of the urban environment, this materiality becomes increasingly important, as social labour *produces* a new ecological setting. This produced space is then the location in which power struggles over environmental issues take place.

In the specific context of the city, it has long been recognised that space is of central importance to understanding urban processes and that different human practices create and

make use of distinctive conceptualisations of space (Harvey 1973). More recently, there has been an increased recognition that space is "intricately operative in the constructions of social power and knowledge" (Balshaw & Kennedy 2000: 2). These authors go on to suggest that although the city cannot be separated from its representations, it "is neither identical with nor reducible to them" (p3). Representations of the city – in the form of literature, film, art, music, and other forms – describe both the city and people's perceptions of the city in a way that cannot be reduced to textuality. An interpretation of these items can help to illuminate the categories of spatial duality (inside-outside, self-other) which "often work to naturalise the symbolic order of the city, reproducing social divisions and power relations" (p11). As such, metaphor and image are conceived not as surface representations of a deeper truth but as creative intervention in actually making the truth (Cosgrove 1990), and "how cities are imagined has real effects on how they are lived and *vice versa*" (Hall 2003). Feminist geographers have been particularly aware of the role of visual imagery and narratives as sources of empirical data and "as method to elicit specific information within a coherent context" (Rocheleau 1995: 459). The nature of symbolism in creating and reinforcing power relations within the city also spreads into architecture and infrastructure, as David Harvey's (1985) analysis of the role of the *Basilica de Sacré Coeur* in Paris, Matthew Gandy's (1999) description of the Paris sewers in the 19th century and of "concrete and clay" in New York (2002), and Maria Kaïka and Erik Swyngedouw's (2000) account of the fetishizing of urban technological networks clearly show.

However, nature is being reinserted into the urbanization process in new ways, and is increasingly central to how urban spatial regulation and urban political regimes are reconstituted (Keil and Graham 1998). Struggles over the urbanization of nature, such as the appropriation of water resources, indicate how the natural, the political, the economic,

and the social are all integral parts of urban form and urban life. In the city, "society and nature, representation and being, are inseparable, integral to each other, infinitely bound up, yet simultaneously, this hybrid socionatural 'thing' called city is full of contradictions, tensions, and conflicts" (Swyngedouw and Kaïka 2000: 569). William Cronon (1991) provides us with a view of Chicago as *Nature's Metropolis*, in which the city can only be defined and understood in association with the ecological processes which feed it. If this example is of the modern city, then Mike Davis' (1990) discussion of Los Angeles presents a clear example of the ways in which nature and society are materially and discursively connected in the postmodern city. Yet this does not imply an ontological separation between the 'concrete' and the 'constructed' in the city, but rather suggests a "thirdspace" in which the real and the imagined are combined in urban life (Soja 1996). Far from being the antithesis of nature, therefore, the city is the point at which nature and society interact in the deepest, most meaningful, and most far-reaching ways. The city is a mixture of constructed and produced nature, and is the location in which these constructing and producing processes occur most rapidly.

A case study of construction: the role of the media

Textual descriptions and media portrayals play a central role in influencing people's understanding of the environment. Derek Gregory (2001) explores EM Forster's descriptions of the city of Chandrapore in *A Passage to India*, identifying the ways in which the 'native' section is constructed as "a nature of excrescence" and the 'European' centre is constructed as "a prospect of delight and desire" (p101). Deeply held ideological positions continue to influence 'news' reporting, such as the highly negative images ascribed to Havana, Cuba by major US newspapers (Klak 1994). An analysis, also of North American newspapers, of reporting on the 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro "reinforced northern assumptions about the contemporary geopolitical nature of

modernity, despite the summit's ostensible purpose of reshaping global politics" (Dalby 1996). The mass media play "a fundamental, if too often neglected part, in the social construction of environmental knowledges" (Burgess 1999: p142). Coverage of environmental issues such as the greenhouse effect has been used to try and promote behavioural changes to ameliorate this environmental problem, although to limited effect (Staats *et al* 1996). A separate study by Burgess and Harrison (1993) suggested that "it is practical life lived locally which determines the sense that people make of media texts" (p218). It should be clear, therefore, that although the role of the media is important in informing environmental knowledges, this can only be made sense of with reference to the broader social and environmental context.

An analysis of newspaper reporting on environmental issues in Jamaica indicates some of the ways in which the media influences constructions of the environment in that context. A survey of the environment section in one of the daily newspapers over the course of a year[1] revealed a very high proportion of stories dealing essentially with activities being run by environmental agencies and organisations. In many of these cases, it appeared that reports were basically along the lines of corporate advertising, with companies which may be associated with large-scale ecological damage acting to ameliorate visible environmental problems. In many cases, these activities were also beneficial to their own business – for instance, in the case of employees of a large locally-owned hotel chain assisting in coastal cleanups, when these same resorts rely on the imagery of pristine beaches to sell their product. It is also worth mentioning that this same hotel chain is part of the newspaper owner's business empire, and that over the course of the year, there were

[1] The Environment Section is published each Monday in the *Daily Observer*. All the issues of this for the calendar year 2001 were examined and the stories recorded.

eight stories or photographs (six percent of the total) which referred to this chain in a positive light.

Many of the 'environmental' stories in the newspaper would appear to fit into a more traditional pattern of environmental concerns, which focuses on the 'green agenda' of the 'developed' world rather than on the 'brown agenda' concerns which are predominant in the Third World. There was very little recognition of specifically urban environmental problems, or indeed of the environment as anything other than a necessary resource for the tourist industry. Equally, there was only one story about a community's response to an environmental problem, and no reference to the stalwart work (particularly by women and young people) involved in keeping many of Jamaica's communities clean and pleasant. There was no reference to farmers or agriculture, or to workers in the sanitation industry. Where activism was reported, it was either in the context of traditionally middle-class aesthetic concerns (e.g. beach clean-ups) or in the context of developing tourist attractions (e.g. the development of a sea turtle attraction in the parish of St Elizabeth).

It appears that the media are promoting the environment as external, as something which is managed by others, and which is a fundamentally middle-class concern. The issue of environment and livelihood on a subsistence level was barely touched, whereas the issue of environment and opportunity for corporate development appears to be central. It is promoting a discourse which places the environment squarely in the realm of powerful middle-class and business concerns. It simultaneously conceals the environmental problems faced by the urban poor whilst denying this same group access to the positive environmental benefits which are located within the country.

Towards a socio-ecological epistemology

For this reason, the documentation and discussion of various constructions of the urban environment is an integral part of this study. Many of the people who I spoke to in the course of this study had much richer conceptions of the environment and the city. These people did not need postmodern geographical theory to explain to them that the environment could not be treated as an externality. In common with their perspective, the epistemology of this study is not about untying the Gordian knot between nature and society, but rather about exploring the relationships between the two, and defining ways in which both can be dealt with simultaneously. Indeed, it is far more important to address issues of social relations than it is to quibble over the exact nature of social constructions. An adequate treatment of the issue of nature must address not only discourse, but also science, politics, and economics (Smith 1998).

Rather than endless navel-gazing about the 'nature of nature', or debating the best way to preserve (an already irretrievably changed) nature, studying the interaction and intermingling between the natural and the social enables us to gain a far deeper understanding of the social, political, and economic situations in which people live their lives. Indeed, "all critical examinations of the relation to nature are simultaneously critical examinations of society" (Harvey 1996: 174). The point of this research is therefore to build critical perspectives "that focus attention on how social natures are transformed, by which actors, for whose benefit, and with what social and ecological consequences" (Castree and Braun 1998).

Approaches to Power

The nature of power

Before advancing much further it is necessary to clarify the ways in which the term 'power' is used, and the ways in which 'power' can be felt. In social research, 'power' is often used loosely to mean 'domination', or is reified to produce the impression that it is something that can be either possessed or used. As John Allen suggests,

> More often than not, [power] is under-theorized, with little attention paid either to the different *modes* of power – domination is different from authority, which is different from coercion, which is different from seduction, and so forth – or the different *conceptions* of power – as a capacity or a practice (Allen 1997: 59).

Allen subsequently identifies three broad theorizations of power. The first of these is a "loosely based realist account of power" (p59), in which "power may be considered as the capacity of an individual or an institution to realize their will or to secure certain outcomes" (p60). This is in accordance with the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of power as "ability (*to do*), capacity (*of doing, to do*)… ability to act or affect something strongly"[2]. In many ways, this assumes that power is located in individuals or institutions because of the social structure in which they act. This also tends to suggest that the possession of power is not the same thing as the exercise of power. While the possession of power may be an effective means of control, in this schema power relations are conceived of as a 'zero-sum' game, in which the gains made by one actor are reflected in the losses of others. Allen produces the example of "a zero-sum geography, whereby certain areas of the UK benefit at the expense of others depending upon their prior economic, political and cultural histories. To put it another way, those regions which attracted HQs and R&D establishments at the expense of other regions effectively construct the latter as less developed" (1997:61). However, in many situations within the Third World city, regions (or communities) stand to gain the most by constructing

themselves as *less* developed, and therefore as in greater need of financial and organisational support from state or international organisations. The same process can also be seen at the global scale, whereby countries which are not classified as being in the lowest income / human development groups are not seen as being eligible for debt cancellation, even if these countries are very highly indebted (such as Jamaica). In the eyes of global aid, being able to effectively construct the nation or the community as being the 'needy poor' can be a lucrative business.

The second of Allen's categories suggests that "power may be conceived as some kind of medium for securing certain ends… a conception that stresses the 'power to' rather than the 'power over' dimension of things" (Allen 1997: 62). Power is therefore a "fluid medium" which can expand or contract, which although not suggesting that the possible outcomes of power struggles cannot be mutually exclusive, stresses that "the amounts of power in circulation are variable and context-bound". Rather than a simple hierarchy of power, therefore, in which power is exerted in a cascade from macro- to meso- to micro-scales, we can see in the negotiation of the urban environment in Kingston a more fluid conception of power. Actors who are weak in one relationship (for example community groups in relation to the state) can be strong in another (international NGOs place great importance on the role of community groups, yet are frequently disparaging about the national government). This approach therefore provides us with the benefits of being able to assess power relations as multi-directional, and breaks down the rigid dichotomies between 'oppressor' and 'oppressed'. It also facilities a negotiation of the structure-agency dilemma, by providing a space for human agency even if this is located within a system of inequality in which the odds are stacked against particular individuals and groups.

[2] Accessed online February 2003 (dictionary.oed.com)

The final account of power is based explicitly on Foucault's approach to power as a series of strategies, techniques and practices which facilitate regulation and control. This conception of power suggests that "it is not something which is held or possessed, but rather something which is exercised" (Allen 1997: 63). In this sense, power is an elusive phenomenon which is not centred in groups, institutions or individuals, but is instead practised by them. In some respects, this approach risks neglecting material conditions of inequality and injustice, by refusing to acknowledge that oppressive structures exist – a particularly untenable position in spaces where the structures of colonialism are concealed only by new forms of global neo-liberalism and US hegemony. However, it does provide a revealing lens through which to view the replacement of overt (violent) power by moralisation (Dews 1987). Whereas it is widely accepted that one of the roles of the state is a monopoly on the means of violence, this conception reveals the myriad ways in which other actors can exercise power.

This is particularly revealing when applied to urban environmental problems in Kingston. Environmental deterioration has been identified as a form of disempowerment in itself (Douglass 1992), whilst Harvey suggests that:

> A cynical observer might be tempted to conclude that discussion of the environmental issue is nothing more than a covert way of introducing particular social and political projects by raising the specter of an ecological crisis or of legitimizing solutions by appeal to the authority of nature-imposed necessity (Harvey 1996: 182)[3].

Diane Austin's study of education in Kingston shows a similar process of moralisation as a means by which certain groups are able to express power over others.

[3] It should be noted that Harvey goes on "to draw a somewhat broader conclusion: all ecological projects (and arguments are simultaneously political-economic projects (and arguments) and vice versa" (1996: 182)

She notes that “the uneducated, it is often suggested, deserve their position at the bottom of society, and thus does a laudable aspiration come to serve the cause of class subordination” (Austin 1984: xiv). Environmental issues in the city now occupy a similar position, with justifiable concern over the state of the urban environment (primarily from the educated classes) being used by more powerful actors in the process of the continual ideological and physical marginalisation of the weak. Indeed, Weis notes that in rural Jamaica, “despite the fact that peasants are marginalised by a grossly inequitable land regime, reports of deforestation nevertheless typically carry with them critiques of peasant stewardship” (Weis 2000: 300). Understanding the exercise of power over the urban environment in this way does, however, highlight the spaces within which it can be avoided, nullified, or resisted.

This form of moralisation as power in the environmental sphere can be illustrated by the fact that environmental non-government organisations (ENGOs) in the Third World are often composed largely of domestic élites, or are closely linked with international NGOs reflecting northern orthodoxies (Jamison 1996). Pelling (2000) shows how community organisations involved in environmental issues in urban Guyana “have been co-opted by political elites reproducing embedded distributions of power and vulnerability” (p249), and a study of environmental groups in Jamaica has shown that membership of these organisations is “overwhelmingly drawn from the middle classes and the better educated” (Lundy 1999b: 86) with a “substantial influence of expatriates” (p92). These groups have the power of surveillance over the city (although admittedly in an imperfect form): through the views from residences on the hills surrounding the Kingston metropolitan area, from the tall office blocks of New Kingston and the redeveloped waterfront, and through the windows of their cars and SUVs as they travel through the streets. This imperfect view is frequently used as the basis on which conclusions about the urban

environment are drawn and expressed. The power to express opinions of this sort is rooted in issues of language and access, whereby the ability to spread information and opinion through the media is selectively biased towards wealthier and more educated groups. Whilst these discourses are in themselves manifestations of power (Harvey 1996: 78), these discourses frequently go on to be used as the basis for action (physical power), showing how power as moralisation can achieve its objectives without ever having to 'get its hands dirty'.

Power and political ecology

One of the starting points for this study is political ecology. This term has appeared at various times in the last 30 years (e.g. Enzensberger 1974), although it has only acquired its modern meaning in the latter half of that time-scale. One of the first 'modern' definitions of this concept was given by Blaikie and Brookfield, who stated that:

> The phrase 'political ecology' combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy. Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987: 17).

They go on to suggest that this approach has at its centre the linking of Marxist and behavioural approaches to the study of the environment. This definition has subsequently been expanded, for example by Raymond Bryant (1992) who suggested that the 'environment' in general rather than specifically 'land' is a more suitable basis for analysis. He also sought to remove the apparent economic reductionism from this definition, and stressed the role of the 'powerless' in affecting and being affected by environmental issues.

It can be seen from the above that concepts of power and the primacy of the political are central to this body of researchers, particularly when these conceptions of power reflect

Foucault's analysis of power as strategies, practices and techniques (Rabinow 1984, Johnston 2000). There is a wide concern with dismantling the stable conceptions of meaning, subjectivity and identity which have been taken as axiomatic in much previous research, and in breaking free from pre-existing discourses which have served to produce knowledge about and exercise power over the Third World (Escobar 1995). An understanding of power and power relations, and how these are manifested in the context of the Third World city, are essential pre-requisites to understanding the environmental processes and problems faced by these urban areas.

Yet despite its relative youth, political ecology is already a contested term. Perhaps the most severe critique comes from Peet and Watts (1996), who suggest that political ecology is "radically pluralist and largely without politics or an explicit sensitivity to class interest and social struggle" (p8). Although this may have been partially true with reference to early political ecology work which tended to be based on ideas of economic determinism (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 10-15), it appears less convincing in the light of more recent research. It also contradicts the critique of Blaikie *et al* (1994) who suggest that political ecology focuses *too* deeply on class and should be broadened to include the whole range of social relations. Another aspect of Peet and Watts' critique, which perhaps has greater validity, is the stated absence of a coherent theoretical framework. However, it is part of the strength of the field that theory is being developed from research rather than the other way around.

Bryant (1997) suggests that political ecology's focus on the ultimate causes of environmental degradation puts the field in a position to transcend the impasse in mainstream environmental research. He later (1998) outlines some of the main areas to which this research field should turn its attention, and suggests that this widening of

research will, in turn, deepen the understanding of material and discursive practices in the environment. The areas suggested for expansion are a movement away from land-centrism, the development of 'urban political ecology', the linkage of organizational attributes of various actors to their capacity to act in political-ecological conflicts, and the relationship between political ecology and the human body. This study addresses various parts of this call, and by doing so sheds light both on the study of political ecology and the study of Third World cities.

Power and governance

The process of governance is one of the primary processes through which power relations are manifested. Although this concept will be addressed in depth in Chapter 7, along with the ways in which it relates to the context of the environmental agenda in Kingston, it may be helpful at this point to outline some of the ways in which new discourses of governance and participation are implicated in the shifting power relations surrounding the urban environmental crisis. The World Bank suggests that governance was a "rarely used term in development circles" until employed in one of their reports in 1989. The rise in popularity of the term has coincided with the flourishing of the environmental agenda, and with some attempts to widen the traditional 'green' environmental concerns to include the 'brown' issues facing many urban centres. Governance is obviously a cross-cutting concept, involving issues as diverse as public sector reform and models of grassroots participation, but it has particular relevance in addressing the difficulties encountered at the intersection of social and environmental problems. An analysis of the ways in which this concept is used helps not only to explain urban environmental processes in the past, but also to provide a better understanding of how to address them in the future.

The term governance can be interpreted in a variety of ways. In the first of these definitions, governance refers only to "the action or manner of governing" (OED)[4], a usage which has many similarities with the more conventional word 'government'. However, in both policy and academic usage, it tends to be viewed separately from government, although in a related context. Although there is no widespread consensus on the sense in which this term is used in current development discourse, I present a few of the most commonly used alternative definitions below.

A second set of definitions focuses on the outcomes of the process of governance. One of the earliest definitions of this type was provided by the World Bank in its first report expressly on the topic of governance, *Governance and Development*, published in 1992. In this report, governance was defined as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (World Bank 1994: vii). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) uses a similar definition, but broadens the projected outcomes: "governance refers to the process by which society manages its economic, social and political resources and institutions – not only for development, but also for the cohesion, integration and well-being of its people" (1997: 4). Definitions of this type focus on the formal structures through which power is channelled, and are implicitly justified by the outcomes which they are then meant to provide.

A third set of definitions focuses on the increasing role of a wider range of actors and institutions, particularly in regards to service provision and policy outcomes, often arrived at through a recognition of the failures of existing government structures to address certain issues. The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) suggests that

[4] Accessed online February 2003 (dictionary.oed.com)

good governance "includes a more effective framework of support for citizen groups and NGOs within more accountable and transparent government structures" (2001: 3). In this case, 'government' is merely one component of 'governance'. Whilst it is undeniable that the workings of social systems have always been a result of complex negotiations between state and non-state actors, many writers who use this definition of governance go on to argue that the state has become less prominent and non-state organisations have become more important within the overall process of governance, a situation often referred to as the 'hollowing out' of the state (Painter 2000).

The final set of definitions which I identify here is more process based, and is centred on the ways in which relationships are negotiated between different actors and organisations. These definitions are often associated with a theoretical analysis of the transition from Fordist to post-Fordist regimes of accumulation, and identify a parallel transition to post-Fordist political regimes. They contrast the previous hierarchical systems of government with a new network based system of governance. In some ways, these definitions are associated with a more theoretical approach to the issues addressed by the previous definitions, and seek to explain the underlying causes of this shift in patterns of governance. In many cases, these definitions analyse formal relationships between state and non-state actors, although it is possible that this approach can be broadened to include a wider variety of participants. Harpham and Boateng (1997) stress the dynamic nature of governance as a process, and refer to governance as the "relationship between civil society and the state, between rulers and the ruled, the state and society, the government and the governed". This focus on relationships rather than necessarily on outcomes creates an 'action space' between government and civil society in which a variety of actors can play a role in addressing the complex issues facing urban centres.

But what does this process of 'governance' actually entail? Harpham and Boateng (1997) assess nine different systems of classifying the components / dimensions of government, and then suggest one of their own which includes the technical dimension, the political dimension, the institutional dimension, and the cultural dimension. This last dimension accepts that alongside economic and social progress, the ability to live a fuller and more meaningful life is an important element of development. Whilst these definitions are useful for categorising various types of actions, they do remain open to a wide variety of interpretations, and the specific mandates for the actions of governance tend to be written by organisations such as the World Bank and the UNDP rather than by academics. As an example, the UNDP (n.d.) identifies six service lines for democratic governance: legislatures; electoral systems and processes; access to justice and human rights; access to information; decentralization and local governance; and public administration and civil service reform.

Geographies of power

What, then, does a geography of power look like? In his work on Belize, Roger Few proposes a working model of power which incorporates three key points: "power is dispersed throughout society, rather than concentrated solely in the hands of the 'dominant'; power is entangled in social relations between agents that differ in their interests, identities and resources; and social power is articulated through complex mechanisms including tactics of negotiation" (Few 2002: 31). However, whilst Few acknowledges his focus on the micro-sociological aspects of power, it is debatable as to whether power can ever be confined solely to a particular scale. Indeed, many geographers (who should, after all, know better) fail to pay adequate attention to the role of space and scale in understanding power relations.

Indeed, scaled places represent "the embodiment of social relations of empowerment and disempowerment and the arena through and in which they operate" (Swyngedouw 1997b: 169). As Pile (1997: 13) suggests, "different power relations spatialise in distinct ways… the local and the global are not natural scales, but formed precisely out of the struggles that seemingly they only contain". Power is situated geographically, but also creates geography. One possible means of addressing this multitude of scales is to approach from a perspective which recognises a system of power characterised fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: an Empire which "wields enormous powers of oppression and destruction" but which also "offers new possibilities to the forces of liberation" (Hardt and Negri 2000: xv). From a much less radical perspective, but in a similar vein, the former chief economist of the World Bank has argued that although the way in which globalisation has been managed has been devastating for many of the poorest people in the world, it also provides new opportunities to redress these issues (Stiglitz 2001). Sharp *et al* (2000) identify power as "an amalgam of forces, practices, processes and relations" (p20). Power can be seen to be everywhere (Massey 2000), and whilst discourses of power are materialised in particular places, interpretations of the material world can also be translated into discourses of power.

Yet it can also be useful to conceptualise power as a "relational effect of social interaction" (Allen 2003: 8), located in a complicated net of relationships which are far more than merely domination-subordination. Indeed, the dominant party in one spatial relationship may be the subordinate in another. By solely addressing power relations as being between the powerful and the powerless, the complexities which arise when recognising that these are not homogeneous groups are ignored. Some of this thinking is doubtlessly influenced by the romanticisation of resistance (Cresswell 2000), which detects "in all kinds of activities the expression of a resistant spirit refusing to knuckle

under the yoke of domination" (Sharp *et al* 2000: 11). Resistance is obviously an appealing concept to researchers wishing to stress the agency of victims of oppression of whatever kind, but its overuse has limited its explanatory power. Indeed, it contributes to the continuation of the tautology which suggests that power is possessed by the dominant, and the dominant are those who possess power.

Therefore, rather than accepting the dichotomy of power-resistance, it is more helpful to look for power as it is manifested and as it occurs in flows. Swyngedouw (1997a) explains some of the many methods used by the less powerful to gain power over nature's water in the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador. In Kingston, power over space is held unevenly – whilst more affluent groups are able to exercise control over space (and exclude less wealthy groups) through their manipulation of capital, other groups (notably in the ghettoes of West Kingston) are able to exercise control over space through social codes and processes which exclude those who are not part of them (whether these are gangs from neighbouring communities, or wealthy 'uptown' residents) – neither of which represents a clear-cut example of domination or resistance. What is more, this control is unevenly exercised over space, with places existing along a continuum from easily accessible to totally inaccessible for different groups.

It is therefore necessary to liberate ourselves from the exercise of looking at power relations as dichotomous. Marxist geography has stressed the role of class struggle; postcolonial and dependency theory has focussed on core-periphery relations; and much neo-liberal analysis is based around the power relations between the state and civil society. The more sophisticated and nuanced perspectives of power described above help us to move beyond looking for a single causative factor for urban socio-ecological conflict, and

into a realm which acknowledges multiple influences on the existing situation and multiple prospects for changing it.

Participation and Justice

Introduction

When in doubt as to the breadth of knowledge required by a human geographer, I frequently consult Johnston *et al*'s (2000) *Dictionary of Human Geography*. However, unlike 'nature' and 'power', 'participation' is not included in this encyclopaedic tome (although participatory research does warrant a short entry). Yet the application of the concepts of nature and power in the context of a socio-ecological study of a Third World city can only be accomplished through an assessment of participation and participatory processes. In this section, I assess the rise of the rhetoric of social capital and participation in research and policy in the Third World over the last decade, before explaining the shortfalls and dangers inherent in these apparently benign concepts and outlining the linkages between participation and environmental justice. This informs the final section of this chapter, which entails a description of the actual methodologies used.

In the context of a research project such as this, participation needs to be examined in two main ways. The first of these is methodological and involves addressing the ways in which people living in the area being studied can be involved in the process of research; whereas the second is the subject of the research itself, that is the way in which people participate in the socio-ecological processes affecting their lives in the city. Indeed, these two must go hand in hand, just as any analysis of power relations in society must also take into account the power relations involved in the research. This approach is both practical and ethical – information gathered from the people who experience the conditions which are being researched are able to provide more in-depth information about this than 'experts' who are

further removed from the issues; whilst there is a moral component involved in amplifying the voices of those whose opinions are seldom heard. In the same way that I draw on, but do not depend on, current understandings of 'power' and 'nature', I intend to analyse critically the discourse of 'participation'. Whereas 'participation' is seen to be a normatively positive term, the ways in which this discourse has been used have perpetuated old inequities and produced new ones. However, the critique which follows also recognises the value of the concept, and suggests ways in which this can be enhanced, not only for research but also for practical action.

The prolonged lack of analysis of the rhetoric of participation in the geographic realm is symptomatic of a more general failing, in which key theorists of the discipline have tended to forget the regional aspects of geography. Whilst geographers have engaged deeply in participatory planning throughout the world (for Caribbean examples, see Pugh and Potter (forthcoming)), the core assumptions behind this which address the roles of the subjects of research have received relatively little attention. Yet the rhetoric of participation has been almost unanimously adopted by international institutions (such as the World Bank), national governments, and local NGOs. Indeed, it is perhaps the most important discourse influencing the ways in which power relations are structured and nature is constructed in the Third World today.

Social capital

Underlying the rhetoric of participation and the alleged shift from government to governance is the frequently hazy concept of social capital. This term has only become widespread in the last decade, with Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* (1993) frequently cited as the pivotal text in awakening the issue in the public consciousness. However, it is inaccurate to see Putnam's contribution as being the sole influence in

raising awareness of social capital – the very concept is inextricable from broader policy shifts towards widening participation in the process of governance and the reduced role of the nation-state inherent in the neo-liberal project.

Putnam defined social capital as referring to "features of social life… that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (Putnam 1995, quoted in Mohan and Mohan 2002: 190). Social capital has come to play an increasingly significant role in academic and policy debates, and is often seen to be "an intangible, but vital, policy ingredient for ensuring the effectiveness of various interventions" (Mohan and Mohan 2002: 191). In practice, this has been manifested in a move towards multiple stakeholder approaches involving partnerships between state, private capital and civil society, commonly referred to as the 'third way'. Mohan and Mohan conclude that the popularity of 'social capital' is linked with academic and political developments seeking 'cost-free' redistribution policies, and warn that this privileging of certain forms of social capital over others serves to normalize a partial approach to political economy at the expense of alternatives. If there is a role for 'social capital', it would seem to be located in an analysis beginning with the realisation that the notion of economic 'capital' is in itself "social, global, exploitative, and embedded… in broader relations of which the state forms a part" (Fine 1999: 16). Whereas talk of social capital often implicitly or explicitly favours the economic aspects of life, this comes at the expense of the neglect of social and political components.

Social capital is often constructed as a normatively good thing, ignoring the many harmful consequences of particular forms of social organisation which depend on this (including, as just one extreme example, Fascist movements). It also conceals the role of power relations, conflict, elites, and the systems of contemporary capitalism (Fine 2002). The

framework flows easily into a "blame the victim perspective" which suggests that "if you are poor, or your neighborhood is poor, it is because you have not networked enough and have not constructed enough social capital" (DeFilippis 2002: 794). In other words, the onus for action is placed on individual agency rather than on the transformation of local, national or international structures of inequality.

The neoliberal use of social capital is not to be confused with more useful definitions, or indeed with alternative explanations. Mohan and Mohan (2002) distinguish social capital from human capital, which they suggest is the ability of individuals to perform productive tasks, and also from social capital as conceived of by Pierre Bourdieu which is the "possession of the cultural resources and skills necessary to participate in élite social interactions" (Mohan and Mohan 2002: 192). The concept of social infrastructure is also an alternative means of coming to terms with the power held by individuals and communities (Pelling 2001), and is linked specifically to a context of uneven power relations. Indeed, Pelling's definition of social capital as "the quantity and quality of social linkages associated with a defined social group facing a specific developmental pressure" (1998: 470) specifically recognises the role of external structures as well as highlighting the potential variability in the quality (and usefulness) of social actions.

The tyranny of participation?

The discourses of social capital and participation are inextricably linked. Social capital is often said to be a pre-requisite for effective participation, whereas participation is frequently seen to be a means of building social capital. Both tend to focus on the scale of the local, and construct local communities as simple, homogeneous entities. Perhaps ironically, this new localism has been accepted by both the 'new' Left and the 'new' Right for very different ideological reasons. Whereas the Left welcome the rhetoric of

empowerment and the supposed liberatory potential for people to direct their own lives, the Right see in participatory rhetoric the opportunity for reducing the role played and costs incurred by the nation state in addressing issues of individual well being. Like social capital, participation is "generally associated with moral or desirable goals and, as such, given a positive connotation… it seldom comes to mind that the act of partaking may apply to evil or malicious purposes" (Rahnema 1992). In actual fact, this focus on the local scale and local participation can underplay both local inequalities and power relations as well as national and transnational economic and political forces (Mohan and Stokke 2000).

Yet despite their increasingly widespread acceptance, there are no universally accepted definitions of 'participation' or 'participatory development'. Mohan (2002) suggests that the concept of participation is used either in an *instrumental* sense (meaning that it is used to increase the efficiency of formal development programmes) or a *transformative* sense (in which giving value to alternative voices enables meaningful social change to occur). Similar classification systems are used by other researchers, such as Pelling (1998) who contrasts *utilitarian* and *empowerment* approaches to participation, and Cleaver's (2001) conceptions of *efficiency* benefits and *equity and empowerment* benefits. Rahnema identifies four functions of the popular participatory approach: *cognitive*, in which conventional development discourse is replaced by a different knowledge system; *political*, which provides a new source of legitimation for development; *instrumental*, providing new answers to the failure of conventional strategists; and a *social* component, which rallies "all institutions, groups and individuals involved in development activities… in the hope that the participatory approach would finally enable development to meet everyone's basic needs and to wipe out poverty in all its manifestations" (p122).

But ‘participation’ has important theoretical and practical shortcomings. Cooke and Kothari (2001: 7-8) identify three ways in which participation can function as tyranny, and suggest that the answers to all of the following questions is, or can be, yes:

i) “Tyranny of decision-making and control” – do participatory facilitators override existing legitimate decision-making processes?

ii) “Tyranny of the group” – do group dynamics lead to participatory decisions that reinforce the interests of the already powerful?

iii) “Tyranny of method” – have participatory methods driven out others which have advantages participation cannot provide?

The first of these can be expanded to include concerns about knowledge systems and decision-making. According to Rahnema:

> While participatory thinkers do admit that all knowledge systems carry a number of values and biases, they seem to exclude the possibility that, as products of a certain knowledge born out of the economic/developmental age, they could be, themselves, the carriers of very questionable values and biases. Neither do they pay enough attention to the fact that traditional or local knowledge systems suffer, too, from similar, sometimes even more inhibitive prejudices. The fact that the latter have been distorted and confused by the processes of change in the colonial and development eras does not change the picture. As such, any attempt to realize a mix of the two knowledges, represented by local and outside persons interacting with each other, is not only a conceptually reductionist and patchwork type of exercise, but also may turn out to be a strange mix of very heterogeneous biases (Rahnema 1992: 122).

‘Local’ knowledge is therefore often seen as a fixed commodity owned by ‘local’ people, rather than understood as being culturally, socially and politically produced. This focus on the micro-scale also insidiously reproduces the idea that the sites of real social power and control are to be found solely at the macro-level. The inclusion of local knowledges within an externally determined framework effectively “‘purifies’ knowledge and the spaces of participation through the codification, classification and control of information, and its

analysis and (re)presentation (Kothari 2001: 142). Indeed, a process of 'knowledge laundering' occurs, in which the dominant discourses of more powerful actors are filtered through the allegedly participatory process. Experts are thus able to claim the legitimacy of locally produced ideas, whereas in fact the participation process can be merely an exercise of regurgitation of those ideas which the experts wish to see implemented in the first place.

The discourse of participation can also have the effect of closing down spaces for resistance. If formal agencies, whether state or non-governmental, attempt to include all local knowledges within a formal framework whose very nature is organisational and hierarchical in structure, this has the effect of neutering their revolutionary potential. The local potential for action becomes co-opted into a broader project which the individuals involved are powerless to change. A focus on participatory development also fails to address the structural inequalities which perpetuate underdevelopment. Whilst participation seeks to give control to local people, many of the processes affecting their lives are not readily tackled at the local scale (Mohan 2002).

The process of participatory development also has a tendency to assume that communities are simple homogeneous entities. Whereas the intricacies of power relationships within communities have been picked up in more recent, 'sensitive', participatory programmes, these still tend towards essentialism. For example, an analysis of water provision may justifiably choose to focus on the role of women as the major water collectors, and therefore involve women in the project. However, the women who are able to participate in discussions may well be older or may otherwise be removed from the process of water collection, particularly because these are often the most able to attend meetings as they are not constrained by the time-consuming business of household tasks. Therefore, those

women whose participation would be the most valid remain excluded from the participatory process (Cleaver 2001). Although communities can involve inclusions, such as ones joining people together in the fostering of a 'community spirit', they also involve a variety of exclusions (Rose 1997b, Sharp *et al* 2000). Some of these exclusions are well documented (such as those based around gender, race, and ethnicity) whereas others are less so. Cooke (2001) also identifies the ways in which social-psychological factors can distort the participatory process, and suggests that "participation can cause decisions to be made that are more risky, with which no one really agrees, or that rationalize harm to others, and it can be used consciously or otherwise to manipulate group members' ideological beliefs" (p102).

In the Jamaican context, notable exclusions within communities may be based around subtle and unquantifiable differences in skin colour. Exclusion as a consequence of sexuality (characterised by rampant homophobia) is also common, although it has been suggested (Chevannes 2001) that there is a greater degree of tolerance within communities towards homosexual men than the lyrics of popular songs suggest (there is scarcely a time when one of the local top ten hits does not refer explicitly to ways of killing gay men). As will be specifically addressed below, there is also the risk of exclusion on the basis of age, in which children's opinions are either ignored or actively discouraged.

The involvement of local actors in community projects can indeed improve the effectiveness of these. Wacker *et al* (1999) argue that the formation of partnerships between local civil society, researchers, and urban authorities is the best means of improving urban environmental management, and McGranahan *et al* (2001) stress the role of collective action in organising environmental improvements in deprived neighbourhoods. In the context of Kingston, Figueroa (1998) has shown how the

community is a resource for solid waste management, and has stressed the role of social capital in enabling this. Yet the ends should not justify the means, and much participatory development involves making the 'patients' responsible for their own care (Rahnema 1992).

Indeed, the participatory approach "shifts responsibility for the consequences of… projects away from the agencies and the development workers onto the participating people" (Henkel & Stirrat 2001: 183). Participatory approaches can also result in a perverse system of transferring costs to those who are least able to bear them. Whereas residents in more affluent areas of a city frequently enjoy the provision of adequate structural infrastructure, the poor may be made to construct this for themselves, bearing both some of the financial costs as well as providing their labour for little or no payment. What is more, if participatory development projects fail to function properly, the blame is shifted away from the facilitating agency and towards the local participants. This is in keeping with a broader inadequacy in development theory, in which the gap separating the rich from the poor is perceived "in the first place as a deficit of the powerless and not as a fault of the powerful" (Sachs 1999: 172). If a participatory project does not achieve the desired results, it is therefore constructed as a consequence of insufficient participation rather than of the inadequacies of the sponsoring organisations.

The focus on social capital and participatory development also creates tensions between local NGOs and between local and international organisations. As more and more funding is channelled through such organizations, "it is the better organized, more acceptable or least scrupulous which capture resources" (Mohan 2002: 53). 'Partnerships' between First World and Third World NGOs are often anything but participatory, with the local bodies frequently operating solely as the delivery mechanism for a pre-determined agenda.

Because many of the influential international NGOs who state allegiance to participatory processes are not run directly by governments, they are often assumed to act on the basis of ethical or moral imperatives. In fact, the agendas which they promote are founded on the values of the societies from which they originate, with the possible consequence that "moral intervention [becomes] a frontline force of imperial intervention" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 36).

In the same way that participation in development projects has both instrumental and transformative aspects, the use of participatory methods in research can be justified according to results or according to a fundamental belief that participation is positive for those involved. Participatory methods can yield detailed, high-quality information from a different perspective than that of the researcher. However, there must be a constant awareness of the power relations between the researcher and the other people involved in the research in order to limit the normative aspects of responses which are always likely to be biased as a result of perceptions of what the listener expects to hear. There are also ethical issues related to the use of other people's knowledges in a research process for whom the prime beneficiary is likely to be the researcher. On the simplest level, care must be taken not to waste participants' time or effort for something which may not provide them with any clear benefits. Any transformation which comes out of the research will also be shaped by the researcher and her/his biases, as well as by the participants, and therefore relies on the assumption that the researcher somehow has a privileged position in knowing what is best for the other participants. Whilst it has been argued that academics should also be activists (Maxey 1999), this should not extend to exerting undue influence on particular local processes in cases where the researcher cannot help but be constructed as an outsider.

Indeed, the effects of participatory rhetoric may be the opposite of the results they profess to encourage. Mark Pelling has found that in urban Guyana, "marginalized groups with limited social resources (women, children, the aged, the economically poor, petty-agriculturalists and squatters) continue to be excluded from local participatory decision making in environmental management, and that the top-down construction of community has enabled local and national political elites to capture institutional structures designed to facilitate local empowerment and sustainable environmental management" (Pelling 1998: 469). Despite the best intentions of many of its protagonists, "participatory research methods tend to reinscribe relations of authority between the outside facilitator and the grassroots" (Mohan 2001: 153). However, "people-centred orientation" to development and research projects is still of great importance. Approaches of this kind are promising but inevitably messy and difficult, and must be subjected to rigorous critical analysis (Cleaver 2001).

Environmental justice and participation

Many socio-ecological projects which include reference to participation still neglect issues of equity and justice. Even in cases in which the empowerment component of participation is central, there is little focus on redressing fundamental socio-ecological inequities. Whereas participatory rhetoric is almost invariably aimed at the poor and 'powerless', a consideration of environmental justice must also take into account the role of the affluent and powerful. Although much of the research about environmental justice has taken place in the context of the United States (in particular with regards to racial discrepancies in exposure to environmental hazards), some of the conclusions are also valid in the context of Kingston.

Just as in the case of 'participation', few would suggest that seeking 'justice' is undesirable. However, the use of the term 'environmental justice' can help to place concerns of social justice within the analysis of environmental problems (Pulido 2000). It can also unpack the hegemonic concept of participation, by addressing not only the role of the poor and under-privileged, but also that of the wealthy and privileged. Rather than treating urban environmental degradation solely as a problem of improving the lot of the marginalised, environmental justice simultaneously assesses and critiques the role of more affluent urban dwellers. The use of the term 'justice' is also of particular importance in the Jamaican context, in which television newscasts frequently show disgruntled residents protesting poor utilities, police brutality, and the like with cries of "we want justice". These demands are often localised and particular, yet they indicate an awareness not only of improving immediate conditions but also encompassing issues of human dignity and inclusion in the wider society.

Justice is a key intermediary between spatial form and social processes, although traditional conceptions have frequently been "devoid of time and place" (Merrifield and Swyngedouw 1995). When conceptions of justice are broadened to include environmental justice, these omissions must be rectified. Traditional analyses of sustainable development have tended to privilege the aspect of justice over time rather than justice over space, as can be seen in the Brundtland Commission's (in)famous definition of sustainable development as being "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition puts the spotlight on 'needs' and 'generations', terms that are socially neutral and comprise both rich and poor, powerful and powerless, whereas these distinctions are crucial when it comes to addressing current inter-generational equity (Sachs 1999). An acknowledgement of the principles of environmental justice calls attention to all those

who are unable to participate in the highest realms of policy-making, whether because they are poor and excluded or because they are not yet born, and shows that redressing current environmental problems and ensuring future sustainability must be addressed side-by-side. The concept of environmental justice also highlights the incompatibility between the development project and traditional definitions of justice. With regards to issues of development, justice has frequently been taken to mean enabling the consumption of the poor to rise to the level of that of the rich, a situation which environmental constraints make impossible (Sachs 1999). Environmental justice is a more politically charged term, "one that connotes some remedial action to correct an injustice imposed on a specific group of people" (Cutter 1995). It therefore shows that environmental concerns cannot be separated from either social justice issues or wider processes of economic and social development.

Haughton (1999) identifies five equity principles which represent the environmental justice dimension of the concept of sustainable development. These are the principle of *intergenerational equity*; the principle of *intragenerational equity*; the principle of *geographical equity* or transfrontier responsibility; the principle of *procedural equity*; and the principle of *inter-species equity*. Although the order in which these are presented is revealing, Haughton also stresses the difference between 'participation' and 'procedural equity', by indicating that "some forms of participation can undermine rather than support democratic processes of engagement" (p67) in which active lobbying by one group of people can result in an unjust distribution of environmental goods and bads to other groups. However, a rigid set of 'rules' for determining what is environmentally just ignores the importance of contextual differences: for example, whereas providing universal household water connections may be realistic and just in one city, in another this may divert attention from the more immediate health challenge of improving conditions

for those who are not going to have household connections in the near future (McGranahan *et al* 2001).

Environmental justice can be assessed at a variety of scales, as well as in the networks operating between these. An example of inequalities at the global level can be seen in differential levels of carbon dioxide (CO_2) production. A rough estimate of the capacity of the earth's oceans and terrestrial biomass to absorb this gas suggests that 2.3 tons of CO_2 per person could be absorbed each year, whereas the average German citizen at present produces nearly 12 tons, and the average US citizen 20 tons per annum (Sachs 1999). As this and many other studies show, there are also vast inequities within individual cities, in which access to environmental amenities and impacts of environmental problems are felt differentially even within relatively small spatial areas. What is more, these average figures hide the fact that processes of globalisation have resulted in pockets of extreme wealth (and consequently high levels of resource use and waste generation) within the poorest of Third World cities, and of extreme poverty (both relative and absolute) within the wealthiest of First World cities. Within cities, and around the world, the environmental burdens of poverty fall primarily on the poor, whereas the environmental burdens of affluence are spread much more widely (McGranahan *et al* 2001).

Many of the processes which produce environmental inequities are global processes, and require addressing at the global as well as the local scale. Strong campaigns against polluting industries which are based only at the national scale can often result in the relocation of toxic industries from developed to developing countries, perpetuating environmental injustice at a different spatial scale (Cutter 1995). As Harvey (1995: 65) paraphrases Friedrich Engels, "the bourgeoisie has only one solution to its pollution problems: it moves them around" – movement which can either be around the city or

around the globe. In working towards environmental justice in the city, it is necessary to look "both beyond and within the citywide environmental burdens conventionally associated with urban development: up to the larger-scale problems that may affect the entire globe; and down to the smaller-scale problems that are confined to individual households, workplaces and neighbourhoods" (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 157).

Much of the environmental justice movement in the USA has been mobilised around the unjust location (in poor and non-white areas) of polluting industries, or "the attempt to equalize the burdens of pollution, noxious development, and resource depletion" (Shrader-Frechette 2002: 6). However, a much more fundamental relevance is achieved if the environmental crisis is identified as being one of excessive resource use rather than merely of an uneven distribution of pollution (Sachs 1999), and in which both the causes of injustice as well as inequalities of outcome are addressed (Haughton 1999). It is at this point that the foci of environmental justice, political ecology, and the discourse of participation converge: a point at which ultimate causes matter more than surface effects, and at which meaningful involvement in decision-making is more important than *post hoc* protests. Whereas environmental injustices are often perpetrated and perpetuated through an unjust social order, urban environmental problems can provide the site for resistance to far more than environmental injustices (Watts and Peet 1996), in which "the coupling of the search for empowerment and personal self-respect on the one hand with environmentalist goals on the other means that the movement for environmental justice twins ecological with social justice goals in quite unique ways" (Harvey 1996: 386-7). The environmental justice movement, although limited in scope and frequently marginalised by mainstream environmentalists, may therefore have the potential to redefine the environment itself as incorporating the totality of life conditions in urban conditions, as well as recognising and seeking to redress both spatial and temporal injustices.

The Role of Context

The constructions of nature, power relations, and patterns of participation described above do not take place in a vacuum but rather in particular contexts, and any account of the ways in which these processes operate must take account of the specificities of place. Although the field location of Kingston has already been introduced, there are some issues which relate a more general conception of the Third World city and Third World nations to this research project.

Urban environmental problems in the Caribbean

Many Third World cities remain in a long-lasting state of crisis. Policy approaches based on the contrasting views of cities as centres of growth which will lead the way in development (associated with the modernisation theorists of the 1950s), or as parasitic entities which serve to depress their surrounding areas (as outlined by Michael Lipton's (1977) theory of urban bias) have both failed to alleviate this situation. This crisis has manifested itself in many ways, including extreme poverty, an inequitable distribution of wealth, and high levels of crime and violence. Urban infrastructure (where present) is stretched, with detrimental effects for health provision, educational facilities and general well-being. Third World urban centres must also address 20th century environmental problems, such as air pollution from cars and factories, while still dealing with the general public health and hygiene problems which plagued western cities during the 19th century. However, relatively little attention has been paid to the environmental issues affecting cities, with rural areas tending to attract larger amounts of research and funding.

These two broad sets of environmental problems are often characterised according to the 'brown' and the 'green' agendas. The 'brown' agenda prioritises environmental health, and addresses local issues related to inadequate water and sanitation, urban air quality and

solid waste management – all of which are particularly relevant to poor urban dwellers. In contrast, the 'green' agenda is of particular relevance to future generations and natural systems, and places a premium on ecological sustainability and addressing issues related to resource degradation, contributions to global environmental burdens, and other largely extra-urban problems (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 5).

The brown agenda has frequently been neglected in environmental accounts of Third World cities, despite the fact that, for example, a lack of sanitation and drainage has far more serious health impacts than current levels of sulphur dioxide in the air (Williams 1997). It must also be noted that the promotion of certain green agenda concerns often arises from an incorrect understanding of the role of poverty in environmental degradation. This may include the assumption that urban poverty is a major contributory factor to environmental degradation when, in fact, "levels of consumption and waste generation among low income urban households are very low so it is difficult to see how this is the case" (McGranahan and Satterthwaite 2000: 87). The promotion of the green agenda may also serve political motives, as may be the case when middle and upper income groups "claim to be promoting the green agenda to defend the maintenance of large 'green areas' in or around their homes when their real priorities are maintaining their privileged access to open space and ensuring that no lower income residential developments take place in their vicinity" (McGranahan and Satterthwaite 2000: 82). Because of the traditional neglect of the brown agenda, it will receive special attention in this study, although it is also acknowledged that neither of the agendas can be ignored, and the two cannot be separated.

The majority of people who are not familiar with the Caribbean region tend to think of its constituent territories as agricultural economies which are now highly dependent on

tourism (Potter 2000). Much of the academic literature from and about the Caribbean has also failed to take account of the highly urbanised nature of this region – for example, a series of issues of the journal *Caribbean Geography* dealing with Environment and Development in Small Island States (1992) and Issues in Caribbean Sustainable Development (1994) contain no articles dealing with the effects of urbanisation on the environment or *vice versa*. Kingston has long been identified as an example of "uncontrolled urbanisation" (de Albuquerque *et al* 1984), and for this reason, further research on environmental issues in Caribbean cities is not only timely but essential.

Global power relations and Third World environmental problems

Although local power relations are important in framing the environmental issues facing Kingston, many of the environmental problems have their origins in international power structures. Global environmental issues such as climate change are expected to have especially severe impacts on small island developing states, including changes in the frequency of tropical storms, the loss of protective coral reefs, and flooding of low-lying coastal communities (NRCA 1997). However, globalisation also affects environment and development issues in the Caribbean (Potter 2000), with the 'rolling-back' of the state, the rise of transnational corporations, and the increasingly important roles of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and international development agencies acting in concert to influence these processes (Pugh and Potter 2000). In fact, the entire development project over the last half century has served to create "an extremely efficient apparatus for producing knowledge about, and the exercise of power over, the Third World" (Escobar 1995: 9).

Perhaps the most important global factor influencing the environment in the Third World is the impact of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) imposed by the IMF. One of the

major results of the imposition of these SAPs is the progressive disempowerment of the poor, with severe impacts on local environments. Redclift (1995) argues that environmental problems are the "necessary structural consequence of the development process, not simply a failure to recognise 'natural' imperatives or evidence that policy instruments require greater refinement" (p57). He goes on to suggest that in many middle-income countries (of which Jamaica is one), structural adjustment leads to the development of the "environmental sores of development, as well as those of underdevelopment" (p63). In other words, the application of SAPs continues the process of trapping Third World countries between the problems of the past and the problems of the future without adequately alleviating either.

The linkages between economic processes and the environment are many and complicated, and the economic instability resulting from the instigation of SAPs has myriad knock-on effects. Many of these are caused by the closer linking of local economies with the capitalist system, thus inhibiting local industrialisation and perpetuating traditional trade patterns in which these countries have provided markets for manufactured goods produced in the North and have produced mainly raw materials (Tevera 1995). In the case of Jamaica, these include low stumpage prices on government-owned land which were often below replacement costs, thus aggravating deforestation; trade barriers and subsidies (especially on agricultural inputs) which may have encouraged the overuse of chemical pesticides; the production of bauxite and coffee without proper guidelines on the levels of environmental damage to be allowed; and the failure to link fuel costs to environmental damage or fuel conservation, causing increased use of firewood (Markandya and Shibli 1996). Jamaica's exceedingly high level of national debt ensures that the country is locked into global economic networks. The vast extent of this debt limits the power which the Jamaican government can exert over the country's

economy and hence environment, and the profound structural and environmental implications of this must be acknowledged.

Towards a Practical Participatory Methodology

Cultural turns and local knowledges

When conducting research in the Third World, it is important to recognise that many of the defining and classifying mechanisms used in academic thought are remnants of a totalising colonial discourse. This has provoked a substantial backlash from some quarters, such as the Rastafarian movement in Jamaica. Indeed, the Rastafarian concept of "Babylon", the "oppressive social, political, economic and cultural realities of Jamaica and the Western world" (Murrell *et al* 1998: 443) frequently identifies (western) academic research alongside organised Christianity as a means of perpetuating the marginalisation of oppressed peoples[5]. One way of responding to this type of post-colonial critique is to stress the importance of local knowledges and perceptions. As long ago as 1961, David Lowenthal's influential essay on "Geography, Experience and Imagination" recognised that "there is no natural or best way to classify anything; all categories are useful rather than true" (Lowenthal 1961a: 253) and that "separate personal worlds of experience, learning, and imagination necessarily underlie any universe of discourse" (p248)[6]. The process of documenting these separate personal worlds, and ascribing importance to them, is one way in which the academic exercise can be made more inclusive.

[5] To this end, witness Peter Tosh's lyrics "wi sick an wi tired wid di isms, schisms" (Get Up, Stand Up: 1973), or Bob Marley's "building church and university, deceiving the people continually" (Babylon System: 1979).

[6] Sentiments such as these sit comfortably alongside more modern trends of geographic thought. However, much in this important and thought-provoking paper does not, such as the essential agreement with Garrett Hardin's views which appear to support an idea of linguistic determinism.

This focuses attention on the so-called 'cultural turn', which is of relevance particularly in so much as it engages with post-structuralist, feminist and ecological literatures, and in the mutation of the emancipatory politics of class struggle into the representational politics of political, cultural, and environmental recognition (Crang 1997). It manifests itself in many different ways, all of which start from the position that "knowledge is multiple and positional, that different groups perceive, interpret and represent things depending on their economic and social position, their culture, gender and their place in power relations" (Hamnett 2000: 65) and which "emphasise the contingency of knowledge claims and recognise the close relationship among language, power and knowledge" (Barnett 1998: 380). This is a turn away from the 'scientific' conception of objects of geographical knowledge as things to be explained, towards looking at them as symbols whose meaning must be interpreted (Hoggart *et al* 2002). The interpretation of social meaning (such as discourses of the urban environment) can simultaneously have *explanatory power* for how and why things (such as urban environmental issues) have arisen and *predictory power* as to the best ways of addressing these.

The 'cultural turn' in geography is related to, but by no means the same as, the tradition of cultural studies. Cultural studies grew out of the experiences and efforts of a group of researchers who were primarily located outside the social (Anglo-Saxon) mainstream, and were actively involved in seeking their own place in a society that was in itself changing. Personal experience is seen as being vital – Stuart Hall, one of the best known proponents of cultural studies, is Jamaican by birth and has never shied away from linking own history with his research concerns (Chen 1996, Hall 2003). In turn, this leads to a research approach in which the struggle for equality, recognition and transformation of attitudes are an integral part (Evans 2001). In practice, this is frequently manifested in various types of 'participatory action research', a research method "often associated with social

transformation in the Third World" (Kemmis and McTaggart 2000: 568) which also has roots in liberation theology and neo-Marxist approaches to community development. Action research is not satisfied with merely studying and interpreting phenomena, but rather "aims to solve pertinent problems in given contexts through democratic inquiry in which professional researchers collaborate with local stakeholders to seek and enact solutions to problems of major importance to the stakeholders" (Greenwood and Levin 2000: 96).

If the field of cultural studies tends to focus on dealing with inequities within a society, then a postcolonial approach broadens this to the international level. This approach recognises that "colonialism left enduring marks on those societies that experienced it – societies stratified by race, class and colour where certain attitudes formed during the colonial period still linger" (Evans 2001: 18). The two are linked by their focus on representations and modes of perceptions, which were "used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonised peoples subservient to colonial rule" (McLeod 2000: 17), yet which simultaneously provide a space for resistance and emancipation.

The privileging of local knowledges is another possible way of redressing some of these inequalities. Whilst recognising that local knowledges are fluid and affected by the context in which they are produced and reproduced, it is highly desirable to focus attention on the discourses produced by the people who are most acutely affected by a phenomenon. Indeed, "a focus on knowledge-cultures enables us to illustrate how reality is constantly negotiated" (Tsouvalis *et al* 2000: 922). As the researcher exists in a privileged position, which entails "greater access both to material resources and to the power inherent in the production of knowledges about others" (Rose 1997a: 307), there is both an academic and a moral obligation to put local knowledges, no matter how limited, specific and partial

they may be, to the forefront wherever and whenever possible. Indeed, "only local stakeholders, with their years of experience in a particular situation, have sufficient information and knowledge about the situation to design effective social change processes" (Greenwood and Levin 2000: 96).

The position of the researcher also needs to be examined. If research findings are to be anything more than conversations between individuals, it is necessary to analyse how the researcher's position has influenced the outcome of these findings, as well as identifying and limiting personal biases. The research process itself ought to be reflexive, such as in the model proposed by grounded theory, a general methodology for developing theory grounded in systematically gathered and analysed data (Strauss and Corbin 1994), in which:

> research design and analysis are cyclical. Through research activities, reading the technical literature and the non-technical literature, and the recording of field notes, the researcher develops tentative explanations or propositions. These are then 'tested' and revised to guide a fresh collection of data, to review the original data and literature, to appraise new literature and to form new explanations… Creativity, intuition and, to some extent, curiosity guide the planning of the research process, which in *itself* leads the research critically to examine and reflect upon this research process (Bailey *et al* 1999: 173).

This principle is extended by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) who advocate a research strategy of 'reflexive interpretation'. Although their argument leans heavily on an implicit hierarchy of theoretical perspectives – grounded theory, hermeneutics, critical theory, post-structuralism and post-modernism (in that order) – they use this to outline their suggestion of reflexivity, in which different levels can interact rather than merely reflect; and stress the value of a composite theoretical position. Grounded theory has come under attack for its supposed proximity to a positivist worldview, although as Charmaz (2000) makes clear, a version of 'constructivist grounded theory' is able to "celebrate firsthand

knowledge of empirical worlds" whilst taking "a middle ground between postmodernism and positivism" (p510).

Multi-method research

Although the research in this project is characterised by the use of a variety of different methods, both qualitative and quantitative, the selection of such an approach is, in itself, a clearly methodological decision. Triangulation, essentially the use of multiple research methods, can do much to improve the validity and reliability of data collected, and acknowledges the value of both quantitative and qualitative research as alternative and complementary modes of understanding. Multi-method research can help to counter weaknesses in existing data resources and approaches, can lead to an increased breadth of understanding, can help in gaining the confidence of an audience, and can aid in identifying a general overview from which case studies can subsequently be examined in detail (McKendrick 1999). This approach was chosen as being the most appropriate for the particular context of Kingston, as well as for its potential to elicit new information about nature, power, and participation in this city. Any meaningful study of the urban context must take into account both the material and immaterial, the concrete and discursive, aspects of the city (Lees 2002). Yet much recent urban geography has failed to provide explicit descriptions of the research methodologies which have informed their theoretical analyses (Lees 2003). In this section, I provide a brief description of the broad suite of methodologies employed in this study, in order to provide a foundation upon which the particular methods can be examined in subsequent chapters.

Calls have been made for research "which attempts to identify the nature and causes of environmental degradation for people in need, but which does not reiterate such pervasive assumptions about crisis as we have seen in the past" (Batterbury *et al* 1997: 127). These

authors suggest that locally-based 'hybrid' research methods, taking particular account of environmental histories, are the best way to accomplish this. Qualitative methods, which can enable a synthesis of rhetorical and scientific thinking, are especially appropriate for carrying out this form of research. The creative and continually reflexive process of grounded theory provides an ideal methodological framework for work in the contested spaces of the Third World city, by enabling systematic enquiry whilst remaining open to unexpected paths of questioning and discovery. When dealing with changing phenomena and ongoing processes, more rigid research methods are likely to create only a 'snapshot' with little ongoing relevance. Qualitative research is particularly well-suited to solving this problem by its ability to focus on actual practice *in situ*, and in identifying how social interactions are actually enacted (Silverman 2000). Theory is *developed* during the research process, rather than (as in the case of quantitative research) simply tested (Philip 1998).

Feminist geographers, particularly feminist political ecologists, have been at the forefront of work in this "boundary zone between positivist and critical paradigms, consciously combining critical theory, empirical fieldwork, and quantitative and qualitative analysis" (Rocheleau 1995: 458). Multi-method research has thus been proven to be a vital tool in the study of marginalised groups and their relationships with the environment. This helps to explain why there is still an important place for quantitative research in this project. Whereas qualitative methods excel in creating detailed, richly textured pictures of specific situations and phenomena, the collection of quantitative data enables a broader picture to be developed on which this detail can be superimposed.

Inclusive research

Recent geographical research has shown an increased interest in 'local', 'lay' or 'contextual' knowledges (Irwin *et al* 1999, Tsouvalis *et al* 2000). The inclusion of public understandings of environmental issues is of importance in lending legitimacy to any project, in increasing the likely effectiveness of any future communication with local communities, and in creating cognitive gains for policymaking (Irwin *et al* 1999). This study of Kingston therefore privileges local knowledges, focusing on specific issues, specific areas, and specific sources of information.

Yet the involvement of these groups in the research project is not, in itself, sufficient. Rather, the methods used must be tailored to the interests and abilities of the participants. This is important not only for improving the quality of the data, but also for ensuring that the participants themselves can gain from taking part in the research. Formal interviews and questionnaires are frequently associated with government researchers and may increase suspicion of the researcher and his / her motives. They are also more likely to lead to normative responses, in which the respondent constructs the persona or answers that they feel the researcher would like to hear rather than the most honest answer.

These issues can be subverted by the use of novel methodologies, which reduce the role played by language. Many of these qualitative techniques were originally devised by practitioners of Participatory Action Research, which emphasises the political aspects of knowledge production and starts with concerns for power and powerlessness (Reason 1994). These methods rely on the use of drawings, diagrams, and discussions, and are seen to be particularly useful in undertaking research with marginalized groups (Pain and Francis 2003). Focus groups of this type have already been found to be a rich source of information in the Jamaican context (e.g. Le Franc *et al* 1996). As these activities take

place in a group setting, it is hoped that the group will challenge any normative responses, and that the discussion will encourage all participants to think about the issues involved more deeply. On the flip-side, group activities can frequently be dominated by one or two strong personalities. For this reason, informal discussions with members of particular communities or organisations were also conducted, in which issues brought up in group sessions could be revisited, and new areas explored. In certain settings (such as government ministries) more formal interviews and discussions were required, and this was frequently supplemented with documentary research. However, the over-riding principle employed was to select the most appropriate method for any given context, bearing in mind both the principles of good research and respect for the participants.

Children's geographies of the city

A large part of this research also involved children and young people. In the first instance, this facilitated a much greater coverage of the spatial area and socio-economic variations in Kingston. Issues of violence and suspicion in large areas of the city limit the extent to which large numbers of people can be engaged with in an academic study. The implementation of a questionnaire survey in schools, to which more than 700 responses were obtained, meant that opinions could be sought of a large number of individuals in the context of a reasonably representative sample of the city's socio-economic diversity. The use of participatory research methods has been shown to be an effective means of exploring the interactions between children and their surroundings (Mulhall and Taylor 1998, Chawla 2002), as has the use of visual methods (Aitken and Wingate 1993, Skelton 2000, Young and Barrett 2001). Quantitative and qualitative methods were therefore used in combination, to obtain both a broad base of information as well as more specific and detailed data.

The second important advantage of involving children and adolescents in the research is to do with privileging oft-ignored voices (James 1990, Matthews *et al* 1999, Matthews and Limb 1999, Holloway and Valentine 2000). Children's geographies have frequently been ignored in academic research, or have been represented in a simplistic and essentialised way. The use of a comparative study of this sort, which involves both boys and girls, both affluent and poor, helps to de-essentialise conceptions of childhood and adolescence. Some children's issues receive a disproportionate amount of attention: whereas the plight of children on the street is undoubtedly important, street children represent only a small percentage of those at risk in Kingston and in other Third World cities, yet are the focus of a great deal of research (Bartlett 1999). Rather than suggesting that there is one particular 'child's' view of a particular issue, this research stresses the fact that different children and young people construct their surroundings in very different ways. Although the legal status of young people is such that they are children until the age of 18, much of the literature assessing the needs and rights of children is based on the age group 0-15 (Satterthwaite *et al* 1996). This study can therefore be seen to be addressing not only "children's issues", but also the even more neglected and complicated area of "adolescent issues" (Aitken 2001). Adolescents of this age remain an under-studied group because of their ambiguous position of being perceived as being neither children nor adults, neither innocent nor mature (Skelton 2000).

Thirdly, and related to this, the focus on children helps to address some of the negative issues surrounding their position in Jamaican society, a particularly relevant goal when it is remembered that the under-18 age-group comprises nearly 40 percent of Jamaica's population. In Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean, academic literature referring to young people "concentrates on aspects which can be seen as problems for society, for example delinquency, pregnancy, or inter-generational conflict" (Leach 1978: 46). In

studies in inner-city communities in Kingston, Brown and Chevannes (1998: 29) found that "the concept of children's rights (as opposed to children's obligations) was rarely discussed and seemed almost a 'foreign' concept, particularly rights related to expression of independent ideas or feelings. Too often, such independent speech is seen as 'feisty' and 'disrespectful' and thus socially unacceptable." In contrast, this study encourages an independent expression of the views of children and young people, whereas traditional community focussed research has tended to imply that what is good for a community is good for the children who live in it.

This project showed 13 and 14 year olds in Kingston as being complete social actors, and as having clear personal opinions about many aspects of their surroundings. Many indicators suggest that children in Jamaica begin to take on adult roles and responsibilities shortly after they enter their teens, and that this is a pivotal point in the development of the attitudes and behaviour patterns which they will carry through the rest of their lives (McDonald Levy 2001). Their involvement in a research project of this type may encourage them to think more deeply about issues involving their surroundings; and the research project itself benefits from recording the embryonic opinions of this group which will inform much of their adult lives.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the main concepts underlying this project. Constructions of nature, power relations, and patterns of participation all come together in the context of urban environmental issues in Kingston. Children and adolescents receive special attention, because whereas adults and policy-makers may be aware of issues related to the physical welfare of young people, "children and youth are the experts on what fosters or fractures their personal sense of well-being" (Chawla 2002: 220). By involving young

people on the cusp of adulthood, as well as a wide variety of other participants, this study explores both children's geographies and the geography of the city. There is no "one-size-fits-all" methodology which can adequately involve young people and adults, rich and poor, powerful and powerless people in Kingston, and the methodological framework for this research recognises that different techniques are required to involve different groups of people in the research. In the following chapters, these multiple methods are used to examine the ways in which different groups and individuals are involved in environmental issues and integrated in power structures in Kingston.

Chapter 4

Shooting in the City: an autophotographic exploration of the urban environment in Kingston

Introduction

Life in the city is an intensely visual process, and visual representations of the city are increasingly treated as 'texts' to be studied (Balshaw and Kennedy 2000). In this chapter I discuss the potential of the autophotographic method as one means of obtaining information about the urban geography of Kingston. Cameras were distributed to young people from different social backgrounds, in order for them to record their own impressions and interpretations of the urban environment and urban environmental problems. These individuals took part in a photography project which was enjoyable and educational for them – many of those involved had little previous exposure to photography, and were extremely enthusiastic about taking part. This combination of an unusual methodology with a high level of youth participation provides a unique insight into human-environment interactions in the city. Although this involves an assumption that the photographs taken by an individual are reflective of their actual relationship with the urban environment, this seems less problematic than the assumption that the information given during an interview or questionnaire is unbiased and accurate.

I begin this chapter by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the autophotographic method, and outline the precise methods utilised in this phase of the research. I then present the data obtained from this study, including some of the photographs taken by

participants. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies are used to analyse the data. These reveal the various ways in which social class, gender, and age influence perceptions of and relationships with the urban environment, as well as providing information about the interaction between social and environmental processes in the city. The interpretation is also informed by feedback from undergraduates at the Department of Geography and Geology at the University of the West Indies, and by public responses to the pictures when they were exhibited at a 'Community Expo' in Kingston.

Through doing this, I address some of the main aims of this thesis. The autophotographic process helps to unravel the complex interactions taking place in the urban environment, particularly as these affect children and adolescents. Similarly, it explores the ways in which environmental problems are constructed and managed by this group of individuals. The rigidly (although unofficially) stratified nature of the school system in Kingston provides a location in which embryonic power relations can be studied, particularly with regards to constructions of and relationships with the environment. By comparing the photographs, spatial patterns can be identified of the environmental concerns of young citizens in Kingston. By involving young people from a variety of school and, by extension, social backgrounds, this section of the research introduces the class and gender differences which affect the ways in which people construct the urban environment, and gives some indications as to whether these are formed at an early age or later in life.

The Value of Autophotography

Although "one of the major changes in geographical research over the last ten years has been a shift towards qualitative, discursive forms of inquiry where the aim is to engage people in extended conversation so as to better understand the nature of argument and evidence they draw upon to make sense of the world" (Burgess 1999: 142), the use of the

word "conversation" already hints that this has frequently depended on verbal communication. Yet the use of language can constrain rather than liberate qualitative enquiry, and verbal methods can perpetuate and exaggerate a wide variety of social inequities. Combating this is of particular relevance in the Jamaican context, in which particular forms of language are associated with particular socio-economic, and thus power-related, positions. As Evans states:

> Jamaica has a Creole language derived from the languages of the colonizer and the colonized and the language of the former colonizers is more extensively accepted. Because the standard language, in this case Standard Jamaican English (SJE), is closely associated with the dominant social and economic classes, it has more prestige and status and its use is mandatory for certain social and public situations. The Creole language, in contrast, is low in status and prestige, derived as it is from oppressed slave societies and the poor marginalized groups in Jamaica (Evans 2001: 105).

She goes on to identify the main structural problems faced by speakers of the Creole[1] language when learning or speaking SJE, as well as explaining the difficulties which Creole-speaking students in Jamaican schools have in speaking and writing SJE. Nettleford identifies "Standard English of the metropolitan brand" as "functionally a second language" for most Jamaicans (Nettleford 2003: 11), and as noted above, SJE is seen to be mandatory for certain social and public situations. Interaction with the researcher, an unknown adult from outside of the community, would certainly be one of these occasions. However, as the following anecdote makes clear, a combination of Patois and SJE is the normal means of negotiating any formal or informal encounter. When P.J. Patterson was elected as President of the People's National Party in 1992 (a position which also made him Prime Minister of Jamaica), the first few minutes of his acceptance speech were made in a mixture of SJE, Patois, and quotes from the King James Version of the Bible.

[1] The term 'Patois' is more usually used within Jamaica to refer to what Evans terms the 'Creole language'.

Each of these speech forms catered to particular needs of the Jamaican people: to know that their leader was 'well-educated' and able to represent them properly at the highest levels; the desire for their leader to remain 'one of the people' who could speak in the everyday language of those he represents; and the knowledge that the Prime Minister was a 'God-fearing' man with moral as well as political integrity. I therefore related to the children in this study, and indeed to all participants in this research project, by speaking 'naturally' in a combination of the first two of these idioms. Were I to have spoken only in SJE, then the interpretation could have been one of being disconnected and stand-offish; conversely, were I to have spoken only in Patois it would have been perceived as being condescending.

One way in which the pitfalls associated with the use of verbal communication can be addressed is through the relatively recent acknowledgement that many different modes of expression can be used as texts for study. Geographers have begun to embrace an expanded concept of the text, which includes other cultural productions such as paintings, maps and landscapes – a broadly post-modern view which sees texts as constitutive of reality rather than mimicking it (Barnes and Duncan 1992). This study, which utilises photographs as a means of understanding the views that young people have of the environment, falls under this broad framework. Photographs are able to "engage thought, extend the imagination, and to undermine the implicit authority of the written word" (Walker 1993: 73). The use of photographs serves both to question the hegemony of the written word, whilst simultaneously providing an alternative to the use of language for descriptive purposes. Whilst the very fact that I am writing about photographs shows the limitations of this method[2], the presentation of some of the photographs later in this

[2] Despite the post-modern trends in geography, I doubt whether the submission of a DPhil thesis consisting solely of photographs would be viewed favourably by the examiners.

chapter does provide a more transparent representation of the life-experiences of the participants in the study.

The use of self-directed photography as a research method can therefore help to obviate many of the problems associated with representing the viewpoint of another person. In spite of our best efforts, the research voice is often intrusive and imperial, “for as soon as we begin an interview, draft a questionnaire, or engage others in conversation, the very language we use creates frames within which to realize knowledge” (Walker 1993: 72). The act of photography is associated with the integration of the photographer with her/his surroundings, and the unique position of the photographer to document her/his own world rather than attempting to document the world of others. Photographs are therefore able to provide complex information, stimulate discussion, sustain engagement, and play a part in encouraging participation or self-reflection. According to Ziller (1990), “understanding is facilitated through observation of what the other selectively attends in the environment” (p10). Whilst this process is likely to be somewhat impressionistic, it has been suggested that the use of cameras “documents the subject’s perceptual orientation with a minimum of training and without the disadvantages of the usual verbal report techniques” (Ziller and Smith 1977: 173).

The application of this method is also an attempt to avoid one of the common problems involved in research with children, in which they tell people in authority (including researchers) what they think they want to hear. Although it is impossible to tell whether the participants photographed what they thought the researcher wanted to see, it is hoped that the absence of adult supervision when the photographs were taken enabled these to move away from being normative statements and towards a more accurate record of the children’s feelings and experiences (Johnson 1996: 34). The autophotographic method is

also a direct method of empowerment, as the act of photographing requires "putting oneself into a certain relation to the world that feels like knowledge – and, therefore, like power" (Sontag 1973: 4).

Autophotography has already been identified as a useful method for uncovering children-environment transactions in a geographical framework. Aitken and Wingate (1993) provided three groups of children in San Diego with cameras and instructions to create a "photo-journey". The participants were from distinct social and cultural backgrounds (one group defined only as 'middle-class', another of children at a centre for homeless families) as well as group of mobility impaired children with cerebral palsy. They found that the middle-class children took many photographs "which focused directly upon the physical environment", that the physical environment "appears as a secondary backdrop for the social orientations" of the homeless children, and that the children with cerebral palsy "had a strong, and impelling, orientation towards the dynamic activities of other children" (p71). Wang *et al* (1996) used what they termed the *photo novella* as a participatory approach to bridge the gap between Chinese women in rural villages and policymakers. They found that this method fulfilled three main educational goals: empowering rural women to record and reflect their lives from their own point of view; increasing collective knowledge about the health status of women; and informing policymakers and the broader society about health and community issues that are of greatest concern to rural women. They suggest that photography is a medium "that can be used to reflect the community back upon itself, and to reveal the everyday social and political realities that influence people's lives" (p1392). The appeal of this methodology is therefore that it enables personal empowerment, the communication of disempowered voices to centres of power, and academic research to be directly combined.

By siting this research in Jamaican schools it is also hoped that it contributes to the education and self-awareness of the participants, as this has been observed to be lacking in many cases. As Evans (2001: 145) states, "although the general aims of education in Jamaica make mention of cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual awareness, commitment to moral principles, self-esteem and quality education, in reality schools focus on the passing of external and national examinations as a measure of their success". I would suggest that participation in this project certainly contributed to the issues of cultural and aesthetic awareness, and to the promotion of self-esteem.

The School Context

The research was carried out in three high schools in Kingston, chosen to ensure that the participants came from a wide variety of social backgrounds. A total of 45 students, 15 in each school, were supplied with a single-use (disposable) camera, simple instructions on its use, and a suggested outline for a project. The photographs were developed and returned to the students, who then had an opportunity to create posters and discuss some of the photographs in greater detail. Without exception, the participants were enthusiastic about the project, and special thanks should be registered to them and to the schools for their assistance.

The schools involved are all government institutions classified as 'secondary high schools' and, in common with 26 of the 39 secondary high schools in Kingston and St Andrew, are co-educational. However, a complicated pattern of social and educational factors tend to lead to social and educational stratification at the high school level. This system is worth examining briefly in order to understand fully the context of the study and the validity of the conclusions drawn from it. The structure of the Jamaican educational system is best described by the Ministry of Education:

> Jamaica's formal education system has four levels established by the Education Act of 1965: early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary… Secondary level education is offered in two cycles. The first cycle is three years and is provided in grades 7 to 9 for students 12 to 14 years old. This is followed by a second cycle of two years in grades 10 and 11 for students 15 to 16 years old. Some institutions offer a further two years at grades 12 and 13. Five years of secondary education is offered in Secondary High, Comprehensive High, Technical High, Vocational and Agricultural schools. Junior High, All-Age, and Primary and Junior High schools offer only three years of secondary education (Ministry of Education 2001: 3).

At the end of primary education, children take the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT), the results of which affect the secondary school which they then attend. The children with the highest GSAT results usually choose to attend traditional high schools with a record of success in external school-leaving examinations. Children with lower scores in the GSAT examinations are placed in what were formerly new secondary schools, now upgraded to high schools, and the all age and junior high schools. An analysis of the scores in the GSAT examination shows that students who attend preparatory (fee-paying primary) schools perform better than those attending the government primary schools in all subjects. The mean grades for preparatory school students range from 77.1 percent (in mathematics) to 84.9 percent (in language arts), whereas those for primary school students range from 49.0 percent (in mathematics) to 58.0 percent (in language arts) (Ministry of Education 2001: 110). The improved performance by students whose parents are able to afford to pay for them to attend a private primary school is at the root of the socially segregated secondary school system.

Although resources are limited, there is a general belief in the value of education in Jamaica, and the government allocated 28.6 percent of the non-debt budget (10.8 percent of the total budget) to the education sector for the financial year 2001-2002 (PIOJ 2002a). However, while there is universal enrolment up to the end of the first cycle of the secondary level (the end of Grade 9), enrolment and attendance alike drop-off rapidly after

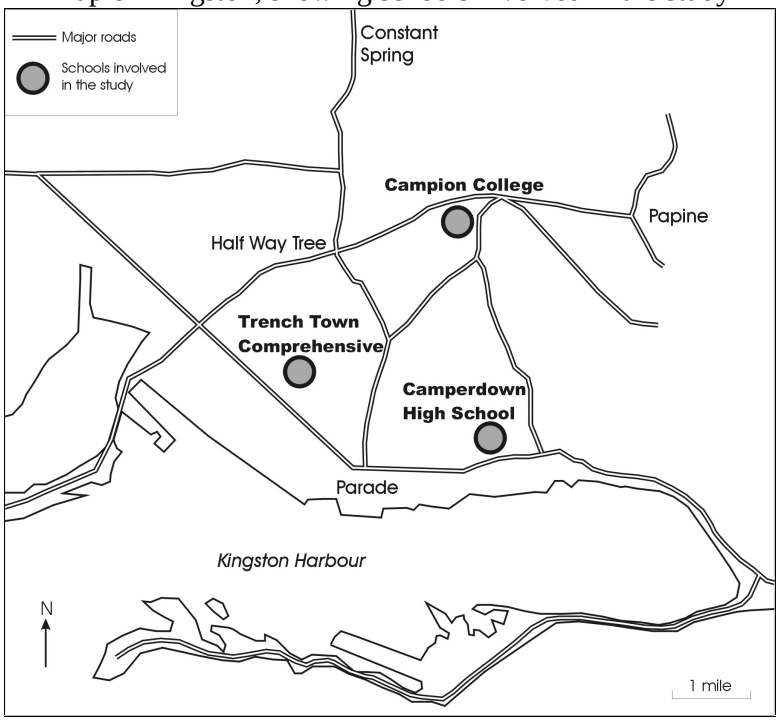
this point, particularly among the poorer sections of society. For example, among young people aged 15-16 years, the enrolment rate for the poorest quintile is 67.6 percent, compared to 94.6 percent for the richest quintile (PIOJ 2002b). Boys dominate the out of school population, and school attendance is also worst among children of the lowest consumption group. As the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (PIOJ 2002b) report concludes, "although there has been some increase in the provision of more spaces beyond Grade Nine over the last decade, creating greater opportunities for participation in five full years of secondary education, it has not yet had a significant impact on enrolment of the poorest children in this cohort." This was one of the central reasons for involving students aged 12-14 in several parts of this research project, as it provided an efficient means of sampling a wide cross-section of social groups at the oldest level at which the most vulnerable still attend school. Indeed, 98.9 percent of children in the 12-14 age group in Kingston are enrolled in school. At the Grade Eight level (the level at which all of the data collection in schools was carried out in this study), there were 12,291 students in all types of school in Kingston and St Andrew (1999-2000), 9,175 (74.6 percent) of whom were in secondary high schools.

The issue of anonymity is obviously important in a research project which seeks to document the personal feelings of those involved. I have decided to name the schools involved, but to keep the actual classes and students anonymous. The schools were an important location for taking photographs, and could be identified by many people who are familiar with Kingston. Moreover, none of the principals, teachers or students involved expressed any concerns about this issue. For people who are not familiar with Kingston it would make little difference whether the actual names or an imaginary name were used[3].

The schools involved in this project were Trench Town Comprehensive High School, Camperdown High School, and Campion College[4]. These were chosen both on the basis of my own experience (particularly in implementing the questionnaire survey described in Chapter 5), and after discussion with teachers at several Kingston schools. The locations of these schools are the first of a variety of markers that can be used to summarise the socio-economic status of their pupils (Figure 4.1). Trench Town Comprehensive High School is a former secondary school in the heart of West Kingston, in the highly deprived community of Trench Town. Unlike the other two schools, it does not include a Sixth Form, and a much higher percentage of the students live in the area immediately surrounding the school. The area surrounding the school is volatile, and road blocks and violence can make it difficult for outsiders to visit the premises. Camperdown High School is located in East Kingston, just north of Windward Road. It is a 'traditional' high school, with a long history and reputation. Campion College is located in the uptown area of Liguanea, and is commonly identified as being an 'elite' educational establishment. It was originally established as a fee-paying school run by Jesuit priests, and maintains some of these connections. The school buildings at Trench Town are owned and maintained by the Jamaican government, whereas those at Camperdown and Campion are owned by churches (the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands and the Roman Catholic Church, respectively), which are heavily represented on the boards of governors of these institutions.

[3] The names of the schools were not revealed in a published version of this chapter (Dodman 2003).
[4] It is appropriate to note that the author was a student at Campion College between 1989 and 1996.

Figure 4.1
Map of Kingston, showing schools involved in the study



As well as being in very different locations, there are many other factors which differentiate the schools. Although there is an overall lack of capacity in Kingston's schools, several secondary schools in downtown Kingston operate with a much smaller enrolment than they are capable of holding. This may be influenced by the overall decline in the population of downtown Kingston in recent years. However, the extremely low enrolment of schools such as Trench Town (Figure 4.2) cannot be explained solely by this (as Camperdown is also located within this area), and is an indication that the school is held in low regard and that neither students nor their parents would wish them to attend it. Students from within the community would prefer (if at all possible) to attend a school outside the community, whereas those from outside the community are unlikely to attend because of negative perceptions about the community and the school. It is likely that the students who attend this school do so only because they have no other opportunities, and those who participated in the study all came from communities very close to Trench

Town. The fact that Camperdown and Campion are over-enrolled suggests that there is a demand for places at these schools because they are perceived to be educationally and socially desirable. In the case of Camperdown, the students came from a variety of lower middle-class communities, although some were from deprived inner-city locations. At Campion, many of the students live in 'uptown' areas in the east and north of the Liguanea Plain.

Figure 4.2
Summary of schools participating in the study

	Percentage attendance	Capacity	Enrolment
Trench Town	70	1385	607
Camperdown	84	500	1372
Campion	97	980	1426

[source: Ministry of Education 2002]

Several indices addressing the socio-economic position of the actual participants in the study are shown in Figure 4.3. It can be noted that the students at Campion are generally younger than those at the other schools, and there is a general tendency for children from more affluent backgrounds to have started secondary school a year younger than those from less affluent backgrounds, primarily as a consequence of attending private primary (preparatory) schools. Another indicator is the hospital of birth: Victoria Jubilee Hospital is the main public maternity hospital in Kingston, and it can be seen that all of the students involved in the study at Trench Town were born here. The students at Camperdown were either born at Victoria Jubilee Hospital or at rural public hospitals, whereas many of the Campion students were born at private hospitals (or the University of the West Indies Hospital (UWI) which operates on a part-public / part-private basis). The occupations of the parents also supports the socio-economic gradient I have identified.

Figure 4.3
Summary of students participating in the study

	Campion	Camperdown	Trench Town
Gender	Male: 9 Female: 6	Male: 8 Female: 7	Male: 5 Female: 10
Age	11: 3 12: 9 13: 3	12: 3 13: 11 14: 1	12: 4 13: 11
Hospital of Birth	Victoria Jubilee: 1 Other Public: 2 UWI: 5 Private: 6 (not given: 1)	Victoria Jubilee: 9 Other Public: 6 UWI: 0 Private: 0	Victoria Jubilee: 15 Other Public: 0 UWI: 0 Private: 0
Parents' Occupations (Father / Mother) N.G. = not given	Doctor / Doctor Logistics Manager / Accountant Computer Manager / Housewife Accountant / Secretary N.G. / Salesperson Managing Director / Teacher Newspaper Rep. / Housewife N.G. / N.G. Chemist / Bank Analyst Salesperson / N.G. Works for Telephone Company / Exec. Secretary Self-Employed / Self-Employed Farmer / Midwife Contractor / Housewife Contractor / Office Worker	Taxi Driver / N.G. N.G. / N.G. Mechanic / Vendor Supervisory Mechanic / Office Attendant N.G. / Housewife Carpenter / Porter Taxi Driver / Teacher Architect / Security Guard N.G. / Fashion Designer N.G. / Teacher Works for Chemicals Company / Housewife Delivery Driver / Teller Delivery Driver / N.G. Driver / Domestic Helper Mechanic / Sales Clerk	Unemployed / Domestic Helper Works at Bakery / Office Helper Self-Employed / Shopkeeper N.G. / Cook Shopkeeper / Shopkeeper Painter / Waitress N.G. / Shopkeeper N.G. / N.G. N.G. / N.G. Soldier / Works at KSAC N.G. / N.G. Shopkeeper / N.G. N.G. / N.G. Mechanic / Hairdresser N.G. / N.G.

All of the figures presented above point to a very clear socio-economic hierarchy between the three schools involved, a situation substantiated by discussions with educationalists, teachers, students, and members of the public. Campion is clearly the wealthiest school with the most affluent and most privileged students, Trench Town is clearly the poorest with the most deprived students, and these two schools are representative of the two extremes of Kingston society. Camperdown falls somewhere in between according to the indices used to assess social class.

Putting Autophotography into Practice

The methodology used in this study is based on frameworks previously used in social science research (such as Aitken and Wingate 1993; Wang *et al* 1996; Young and Barrett 2001), as well as on the more psychology-oriented methodology outlined by Robert Ziller (Ziller and Smith 1977; Ziller and Lewis 1981; Ziller 1990), although with modifications to fit the context and the aims of this study[5].

The research was carried out with 15 students at each of the three secondary high schools described above. One class of Grade Eight students, usually consisting of about 40 individuals, was identified by teachers at the schools. Grade Eight is the second year of secondary education, and all the students involved were aged between 11 and 14, with the majority (41 students) being aged 12 or 13. Once the class had been identified, the entire group was given an outline of the proposed activity. Any students who did not wish to be involved were allowed to leave, though in practice no students at Trench Town or Camperdown left at this stage, and only three students left at Campion. Those students who remained then took part in a 'lucky draw' to determine the fifteen who would participate.

An introductory session was then held with the students who had been identified in this way. Each student was issued with a *Ferrania Solaris* or a *Kodak Ultra* single-use camera containing 27 exposures, and a handout explaining and giving instructions for the project (Figure 4.4). Although the 'technical' quality of the photographs was not relevant to the research, the participants were given instructional material in case they were interested in

[5] Some of these modifications were suggested by Anna Blackman, Founder and Project Manager of *Photovoice*, an international non-profit organisation specialising in photographic training for people in need around the world.

developing their skills with the camera. They were also given a notebook to use as a 'journal' in which they could record information about the photographs they took.

Figure 4.4
Instructions to secondary school participants in the study

As part of a larger research project, I am very interested in finding out how different people look at and perceive the environments in which they live. In this part of my research, I am lending cameras to 45 different students in various schools around Kingston, and getting them to take photographs of their surroundings. As well as helping me with my research, I hope that this will be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for you. Each camera contains a film which I will develop for you. You will be given the opportunity to display the pictures in a project, and I will discuss the pictures that you have taken with you.

Instructions

There are two separate parts to this exercise.

Firstly, imagine you are taking photographs to show to a pen-friend from abroad who has never visited you in Jamaica. You want to show this pen-friend your surroundings, or the area in which you live your life. These pictures will help to explain what your life is like to your friend. Imagine that they have already seen photographs of your friends and family, so you don't need to take pictures of them. I would like you to take **ten** (10) photographs in this part of the exercise.

Secondly, imagine you are taking photographs to illustrate a magazine article about the environment in your area. The article could be about the good aspects of the environment, or it could be about environmental problems - or it could be a balanced report covering some of both. The areas that you cover should be the places that you visit regularly, although not necessarily only home and school. I would like you to take **ten** (10) photographs in this part of the exercise as well.

In both parts of this exercise I would like you to use the notebook I have given you to write down the *number* of each photograph, *when* (date and time) you took each photograph, *where* you took each photograph, and *what* you were taking the photograph of.

As a reward for taking part in this project, you can also take **five** (5) pictures of anything you like, and I will return these to you after they have been developed. (I will **not** return more than 5 photographs to you, so there is no point in taking more photographs of this sort!)

Please return the cameras to me on...

I will then process the films and return them to you. When I return them I will also bring materials for you to create your own projects (scissors, glue, cartridge paper, etc.). This will probably be done one afternoon after school in the next month.

Thank you very much for your help!

The initial session was held in the week preceding half-term (October 8-12, 2001), to enable the participants to take the photographs over this holiday. After discussion with the participants, it was decided to allow them to keep the cameras for 10 days, a length of time which included two weekends, the half-term holiday and some regular schooldays. A brief visit was paid to each of the classes to collect the cameras (although not all the cameras were collected on the same day, other arrangements enabled those forgotten or those of absent students to be reclaimed). The films were then developed and each photograph labelled with a unique code.

Some analysis then took place in the format of a seminar given to first year undergraduate students in the Department of Geography and Geology, University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona. This group was chosen to enable as much participation in the research process as possible, and to expose this group of students to different ways of thinking about research. This is the only university geography department in the West Indies, and the students are from a variety of different Caribbean nations. Although the majority of these students were recent school-leavers, there were also a few more mature students. After a short lecture, the students were divided into groups, and photographs were distributed to each of these. Each group received two (or, in some cases, three) sets of photographs taken at each of the three schools, although the photographs were not labelled, and worked through the instructions below (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5
Instructions to UWI geography undergraduates

- Divide yourselves (randomly) into seven different groups. Each group should appoint a 'recorder' to make notes of the discussion – this is a very important task! Each group will have six 'sets' of photographs – two sets from each of the schools studied.
- Go through each set of photographs, looking at the things that the student has chosen to include in these. For each set of photographs, make some notes on the 'photographer'. Where do you think he/she lives? How do you think he/she perceives the 'environment'? What are the important issues affecting his/her life, community and environment?
- Identify the **four** main 'themes' which you think are represented by the photographs. Ideally, each photograph could be categorised under at least one of these, but there is no reason why some photographs cannot contain more than one. Write these four themes on sheets of paper, and pick one or two photographs that you think are the best representatives of this type of picture. Do not discuss your themes with any of the other groups!
- A representative from each group will then come up to the front and stick the chosen themes on the blackboard and talk **very briefly** about each of these. The themes chosen by each group will then be grouped together, to give some idea of the most commonly occurring themes and also the ones which were deemed to be the most important.

Following on from this class activity, six students volunteered to assist in the process of classifying the photographs. Unfortunately, time constraints meant that this process could not be completed as desired, although the discussions from this session were used as the basis for the later coding of the photographs. The photographs were returned to the school students who had taken them, including the 'personal' photographs which were theirs to keep. Originally, I had not intended to include these photographs in the analysis, but it was not possible to identify these from the journals kept by the students.

The participants were then supplied with equipment to make posters displaying the photographs. This exercise aimed to enable more depth to be obtained from the pictures, as the students were able to display the picture in the context in which they felt it most appropriate, as well as to write some text describing them. This process enabled the students to remain involved with the photographs which they had taken. At this time, I also talked specifically to the participants about particular photographs that they had taken,

and made notes on their comments. I took the posters away for analysis, but later returned them to the participants who mounted them on their classroom walls. The information gained from each student was summarised on a single sheet, which contained basic information about the student (school, sex, date of birth, place of birth, etc); information on each photograph; a summary of the photographs according to various categories (outlined below); a written description of the poster and photographs which were displayed; and comments made on the set of photographs by the UWI geography students.

The final stage of this project involved displaying a selection of approximately forty of the photographs with accompanying text to a wider audience. A small number of posters were combined to represent each school, with larger photographs (5" x 7") and typed text of verbatim quotes from the students. A summary poster was also prepared to explain the project to viewers. These posters were then displayed at the National Arena in Kingston, during a 'Community Expo' from November 29 to December 1, 2001. This was a major national event, opened by the Minister of Local Government, and attended by a wide variety of people both representing communities and interested in community development across Jamaica. A small questionnaire was also prepared as a prompt from which to obtain feedback from interested people. This elicited responses from a broad range, including Members of Parliament, representatives of local and foreign non-government organisations (NGOs), and members of local community based organisations (CBOs). The quantitative data from this were entered into SPSS for analysis, and the open-ended responses were recorded for comparison.

Data Analysis I: a numerical analysis of the photographs

In one sense, to use quantitative methods to evaluate the results of this autophotography project would be to miss the entire point of the exercise. Part of the value of visual

methods is in breaking apart existing preconceptions of what counts as 'data'. Questionnaires and discussions privilege the knowledge of more literate or forthright individuals, and the conventions of scholarly writing mean that the results of these studies often remain unknown to their participants.

It must also be stressed that it is impossible to identify an external reality represented by the photographs. Each picture was taken at a specific moment by a specific person and cannot be taken to represent the entirety of that person's lived experience or even how they always feel about a particular place. The technical aspect of the photograph can also be misleading: a photograph of a happy or loved place can end up looking sinister and unpleasant if taken in poor light. In the process of analysis, each photograph has equal weighting, whereas different pictures could be of varying levels of importance to the photographer. This can be seen in the contrasts between the analysis made by the UWI students of the entire set of photographs produced by an individual, and the content of the posters which the individual later prepared.

It is important to recognise that this was only a relatively small study. I propose that both gender and social class are of great importance in explaining how young people in Kingston relate to their surroundings, but each class / gender group consisted only of between 5 and 10 individuals. Because of the nature and the size of the study, therefore, I decided not to subject the data to statistical tests. In one sense, therefore, much of the data analysis presented below is based on my personal reading of the photographs. As outlined above, my method of substantiating my own perceptions was to share the photographs with as many other interested parties as possible, hence the involvement of the university students and the people attending the Community Expo.

Notwithstanding these issues, there are some trends that can be picked out through some basic quantitative analysis. The analysis below combines a quantitative approach with a level of qualitative analysis, including some less tangible observations which I made during the course of analysing the photographs, discussing them with the students, and observing their presentations.

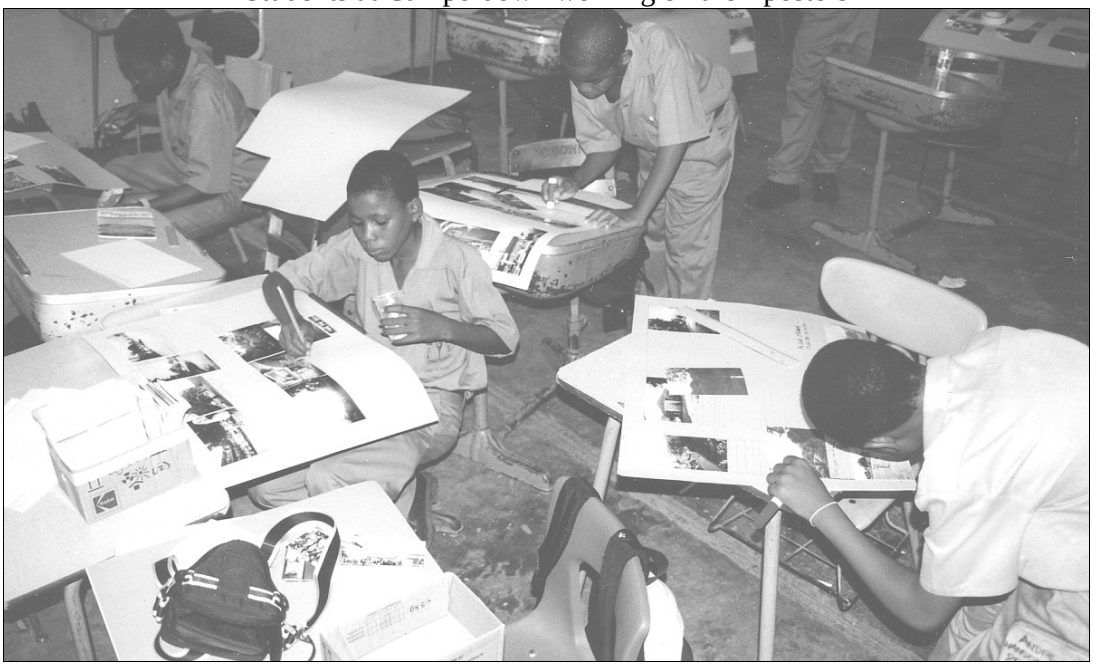
Level of participation

A total of 45 cameras was issued, all of which were returned. Although there were slight differences in the gender balance of participants between schools, the overall ratio was as evenly spread as possible. In total, 838 photographs were taken, an average of 18.6 photographs per participant (Figure 4.6). Of these participants, 14 students at Trench Town, 13 students at Camperdown, and 13 students at Campion (out of 15 at each school) prepared posters displaying their photographs, indicating a very high level of enthusiasm among the participants (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.6
Participation in the study

		Number of participants	Total number of photographs taken	Average number of photographs taken
Camperdown	Male	8	153	19.1
	Female	7	128	18.3
	Total	15	281	18.7
Campion	Male	9	138	15.3
	Female	6	138	23.0
	Total	15	276	18.4
Trench Town	Male	5	103	20.6
	Female	10	178	17.8
	Total	15	280	18.7
Overall	Male	22	394	17.9
	Female	23	444	19.3
	Total	**45**	**838**	**18.6**

Figure 4.7
Students at Camperdown working on their posters



However, the number of photographs taken does suggest some differences in the level of commitment to, and interest in, the project. The group who took the lowest number of photographs were the male students in the most affluent group (Campion). This may suggest that these individuals were less interested in the project than the students at the other schools – possibly because this group are likely to have the greatest access to cameras and were therefore less thrilled by the potential to take photographs. However, the highest number of photographs per individual was observed with girls at the same school. Many 'green' environmental activities in Jamaica are more strongly supported by more affluent socio-economic groups (see also Lundy 1999a, b) and by women, and it is possible that this group of individuals was the most interested in the traditional 'environmental' component of the study. In the other two schools, boys took slightly more photographs than girls, which is possibly linked with general patterns of opportunity and mobility.

More subjectively, there was considerable excitement among the students at the schools as to which individuals would be able to participate in the project, and those who were selected were invariably pleased to be involved. In this respect, the research was successful in enabling broad participation and the dissemination of the views of young people who would not normally be heard but who were willing to engage in this type of research activity. The use of an enjoyable methodology made the participants keen to take part, and they were able to (quite literally) see the results of their participation. Although the implementation of this activity was to some extent a learning experience, it does serve to illustrate one possible way in which more meaningful participation can be achieved. In many cases, the only participant who retains something meaningful is the researcher, whereas the participants in this study all participated in an enjoyable activity and were left with photographs to show it. Many of the participants do not have the opportunity to use a camera frequently, not least because of the prohibitive cost of the equipment, film and processing. In this research project, the students were given 'personal' pictures at no cost to themselves, and many of them were visibly appreciative of this. One girl from Trench Town wrote on her poster "these picture was so important to me and the person who put this project together and I had Mr Dodman and Mr Johnson [the teacher who assisted at that school] for that I am very happy that I got the chance to do something very important to me."

Location of photographs and mobility patterns

Perhaps the most marked quantitative difference in the distribution of photographs was in their spatial distribution (Figure 4.8). The photographs were classified according to where they were taken, and as such were placed in one of six categories: school; home; community; city (Kingston); surroundings of Kingston; and rural Jamaica. The 'school'

and 'home' classifications are self-explanatory. The 'community' category referred to the immediate surroundings of the home and school, whereas the 'city' category referred to sites in the Kingston Metropolitan Area. The 'surroundings of Kingston' refers to photographs which were taken within the areas in which the participants live, therefore mainly referring to the southern parishes of St Catherine and St Thomas. There is therefore some potential for confusion between the 'community' and 'city' categories, and also between the 'community' and 'surroundings of Kingston' categories. The 'rural Jamaica' category refers to photographs which were taken anywhere else in the country.

Figure 4.8
Location of photographs (number and percentage) by school and gender

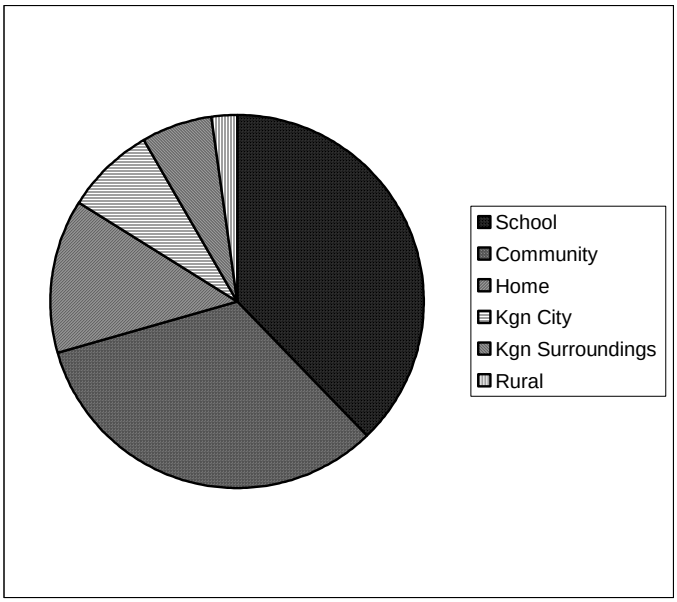
	School	Home	Community	City	S'dings of Kingston	Rural Jamaica
Camperdown Male	54 (35%)	11 (7%)	64 (42%)	8 (5%)	11 (7%)	0 (0%)
Camperdown Female	43 (34%)	14 (11%)	35 (27%)	9 (7%)	24 (19%)	0 (0%)
Camperdown Total	97 (35%)	25 (9%)	99 (35%)	17 (6%)	35 (12%)	0 (0%)
Campion Male	58 (42%)	28 (20%)	10 (7%)	25 (18%)	10 (7%)	4 (3%)
Campion Female	79 (57%)	17 (12%)	2 (1%)	17 (12%)	0 (0%)	13 (9%)
Campion Total	137 (50%)	45 (16%)	12 (4%)	42 (15%)	10 (4%)	17 (6%)
Trench Town Male	23 (22%)	5 (5%)	65 (63%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)	0 (0%)
Trench Town Female	50 (28%)	33 (19%)	90 (51%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
Trench Town Total	73 (26%)	38 (14%)	155 (55%)	6 (2%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)
Total Male	135 (34%)	44 (11%)	139 (35%)	38 (10%)	25 (6%)	4 (1%)
Total Female	172 (39%)	64 (14%)	127 (29%)	27 (6%)	25 (6%)	13 (3%)
TOTAL	**307 (37%)**	**108 (13%)**	**266 (32%)**	**65 (8%)**	**50 (6%)**	**17 (2%)**

* 25 pictures could not be coded in this classification

The overall pattern shown is not surprising, and clearly shows the effects of distance decay (Figure 4.9). Most photographs (37 percent) were taken at school, followed by the

community (32 percent) and home (13 percent). Fewer photographs were taken around the city of Kingston (8 percent), fewer still in the surroundings of Kingston (6 percent) and the smallest number (2 percent) in rural Jamaica. Indeed, only 17 photographs were taken in rural Jamaica, all of these by students at Campion College. This suggests that it is unusual for the less affluent students to travel long distances around Jamaica, and they are therefore less likely to be exposed to the different environments which can be observed elsewhere in the island. While several of the Campion students appear to have been 'to the country' at the weekends or during the mid-term holiday, it appears that none of the students from the other schools went.

Figure 4.9
Sites at which photographs were taken (all students)



However, there are important differences within and between the groups. The boys took most of their pictures in the community followed by the school, whereas this pattern was reversed by the girls. Girls took more photographs in the school than boys (39 percent compared to 34 percent), and in the home (14 percent compared to 11 percent). In contrast, boys took more photographs in the community than girls (35 percent compared to

29 percent) and in the city (10 percent compared to 6 percent). This is suggestive of gender roles and expectations which tend to constrain the movements of teenage girls, but encourage teenage boys to explore a wider area: a pattern known in Jamaica by the proverb "tie the heifer, loose the bull"[6]. As Barry Chevannes (2001) observed in rural Jamaica, the "gender role division finds coherence in the view that boys should be grown tough, while girls should be protected, and the semiotic life of the community, in which the male-female dichotomy is represented in an opposition between *out a road* and *yard*[7]. The road, which includes the village square, represents a domain frequented and controlled by the male, the yard a domain governed by the female" (p44).

In a community in west Kingston, Chevannes reported that although "girls may be seen recreating in the streets, it is the males who dominate, both by their numbers and the types of activities" (p148). The people living in that community also suggested that girls do better in school "for they are not as distracted as the boys are by the activities taking place outside the yard and can better concentrate on their academic work" (p130). Although this is a Caribbean-wide phenomenon (for example, Leach (1978) reported that girls exhibited less spatial and social mobility in St Kitts; see also Brown and Chevannes (1998)), it is possible that the particular risks posed by big city life cause these patterns to be accentuated in Kingston.

Some of these gender patterns are reinforced when comparing male and female photographers within the same school. The most marked differences were in the number of photographs taken at home and in the community by male and female students at the

[6] Meaning allow the male of the species to roam free, but ensure that the female is kept confined.
[7] Brodber (1975) defines the 'yard' as "a geo-social entity of special significance in the lives of some urban Jamaicans" (p1). The yard is in many respects a small community in itself, but cannot be differentiated from the 'home'. Much of the housing in downtown Kingston is in single-room dwellings, and the shared space (yard) between these is used for cooking, washing, and socialising.

two less affluent schools. For example, 63 percent of the photographs by boys at Trench Town were taken in the community, compared to 51 percent of those taken by girls; the figures for Camperdown were 42 percent and 27 percent respectively; and those at Campion were 7 percent and 1 percent. This suggests both a class and a gender divide: within each socio-economic group males took more photographs in the community than females; but there is also an even more clear decline in community involvement with increasing affluence.

The Campion students took a much larger proportion of their photographs at school, a much lower proportion of their photographs in the community, and a much larger proportion of their photographs in the city than the other two groups. In all of these categories, the Trench Town group were at the other extreme, with Camperdown in the middle. It appears from this that the main site of social and environmental interaction for the Campion students is within the school confines, whereas for the Trench Town students this takes place in the context of the community, and for the Camperdown students there appears to be a balance between the two locations. The extremely low number of 'community' photographs taken by the girls at Campion and the extremely high number taken by boys at Trench Town shows how large the disparities are when both social class and gender are taken into account. It is very unusual for a middle-class teenage girl to be able to move freely around her own neighbourhood, even in the relatively safe and affluent areas of 'uptown' Kingston. By way of contrast, the students in Trench Town have a much greater degree of freedom within their community, in spite of its reputation for extreme poverty, social problems and violence.

Interestingly, the girls in the least affluent group and the boys in the most affluent group took a very similar proportion of their photographs at home: 20 percent of the photographs

taken by boys at Campion and 19 percent of those taken by girls at Trench Town fell into this category. The reasons mentioned above are likely to explain the constraints placed on girls in inner-city communities, and it is possible that the large number of photographs taken by boys at Campion in this category may be indicative of their lack of engagement with the project (as reflected in the relatively low total number of photographs which they took) – taking photographs at home requires very little planning, forethought, or time. In contrast, the less affluent males took very few photographs of their homes: 7 percent and 5 percent respectively in the case of Camperdown and Trench Town.

The Campion students took more photographs in the city of Kingston than either of the other two groups. This group is able to move around the city, although many of the photographs taken in the city were of important national or cultural sites which they may have visited specifically for the purpose of photographing. While the Trench Town students showed very few photographs taken outside their community, those taken by the Camperdown students were often of more prosaic sites in the city such as bus termini. On a more subjective note, it appears that the Camperdown students have a greater degree of freedom than those from the other two schools. Campion students mainly rely on their parents to drive them to locations, whereas Trench Town students have limited resources to enable them to move outside of their own community. The Camperdown students often travel large distances across the city to attend school, and have a much greater amount of independence to participate in the life of the city. The Campion group has the greatest spatial mobility, although this spread of knowledge and transport comes at the cost of intimate knowledge of locations outside the home and school. The Camperdown students have to find their own way around the city, whereas in many respects those living in Trench Town and surrounding communities are excluded from much of the city for economic and class-related reasons.

These patterns have great relevance for the understanding of social and environmental processes in Kingston. The places in which individuals interact most closely with their surroundings are affected by both gender and social class, and this should help to determine the most appropriate locations for environmental projects and activities. It would appear that students at Campion would be more likely to become engaged with projects aimed at their schools or their individual homes, whereas those at Trench Town would be more likely to become active with community projects. Indeed, this could already be seen in some of the photographs – photographs taken by the participants from Trench Town included street cleaners and local vegetable gardens; whereas photographs from Campion showed flower gardens within the school compound. The Camperdown students appear to be more aware of 'city-wide' environmental issues, such as the problems of waste and pollution in Kingston Harbour, which some of the participants showed in their photographs.

However, very few photographs were taken at sites that have been expressly designated or developed as catering to the environmental needs of Kingston. Although 'Urban Parks and Green Spaces' is one of the current priority areas of the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ)[8], with active projects at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Hope, Hope Zoo, and National Heroes Park, the students had not taken any photographs at these locations[9].

[8] The EFJ is an independent foundation which uses the proceeds from a debt-swap arrangement agreed between the Jamaican and United States governments to promote sustainable development in Jamaica. Its role will be addressed in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7, but at this point it is sufficient to note that it is the largest environmental funding organisation in Jamaica.

[9] One of the returned films (from a boy at Campion) did contain photographs of some of the monuments to the National Heroes in National Heroes Park. However, when I spoke to the individual concerned, it transpired that his mother had taken these photographs while he was at school. This further supports the argument laid out below that the motivation for projects of this type are related to adult perceptions of what children need and want.

The development of national parks has also been much trumpeted by the government and by NGOs in recent years, with the closest of these to Kingston being the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park (approximately 15 miles north-east of the city). No photographs were taken in this area either. Despite the suggestion that "green spaces in urban areas provide aesthetic, recreational and sociological functions in community life… they are critical to contributing to the well-being of citizens" (EFJ promotional literature), it appears that the type of green spaces promoted by the government, non-government organisations and international institutions have little impact on the lives of adolescents in the city. As will be shown later in this chapter, these individuals have clearly defined ideas of the environmental issues that affect them and that they are involved in. In particular, the students in Trench Town focussed on small gardens and farms in the community and a park area (the 'Peace Garden') within their own school. These are smaller scale projects that provide less public prestige to the organisations implementing them, but that appear to have a much greater direct impact on the lives of these young people. In summary, therefore, the data collected from the photographs suggest that many environmental projects in Kingston are guided by adult perceptions of what children need and want, without taking adequate notice of the children's perspectives.

Environmental content and coding

The coding of photographs with regards to their environmental content is fraught with difficulties. As mentioned previously, claims for objective, value-free, assessment of visual productions are both unjustifiable in theory and impossible in practice. Rather than attempting a 'scientifically' controlled experiment, with independent observers categorising the content in isolation from each other, the coding process was designed to be as participatory as possible. As all of the photographs had to be returned to the photographers for them to produce their own analyses, this was not possible for the entire

set of photographs. However, the initial coding exercise took place in a group setting with undergraduate students at the University of the West Indies. Six first year geography undergraduates spent a day going through some of the photographs from each school, discussing them with each other and with the researcher, and coding these according to a *leitmotif* system. This provided a benchmark against which the other coding then took place.

This *leitmotif* coding is based on that used by Aitken and Wingate (1993), and codes photographs according to whether their main focus is on the built environment, the natural environment[10], social activities, or dynamic / action (Figure 4.10). Overall, the highest proportion of photographs fell into the category of 'built environment' (40 percent), followed by 'natural environment' (30 percent), and 'social' (23 percent), with the least number of photographs taken of 'dynamic / action' topics (7 percent). This pattern is perhaps not altogether surprising, given the context of the study (the urban environment), and the guidelines given which may have reduced the number of social and dynamic pictures. However, the fact that 70 percent of the photographs referred to the built or the natural environment suggests that, in general, the students took the project seriously and concentrated on the topics outlined in their instructions.

[10] As suggested in Chapters 1 and 3, the distinction between 'natural' and 'built' environments is largely artificial. However, this terminology was used in order to determine the relationship between the participants and different aspects of their surroundings. The UWI students quite rightly pointed out that 'natural' environment is an inappropriate term, as many of the photographs were of 'managed' environments such as gardens. For ease of reference, however, I use the term 'natural' environment to refer to the non-built environment, thereby including farms and gardens.

Figure 4.10

Leitmotif coding of photographs by school and gender (number and percentage)

	Built Environment	Natural + Managed Environment	Social	Dynamic / Action
Camperdown Male	57 (37%)	37 (24%)	46 (30%)	12 (8%)
Camperdown Female	48 (38%)	25 (20%)	39 (30%)	16 (13%)
Camperdown Total	105 (37%)	62 (22%)	85 (30%)	28 (10%)
Campion Male	46 (33%)	77 (56%)	13 (9%)	2 (1%)
Campion Female	47 (34%)	58 (42%)	31 (22%)	2 (1%)
Campion Total	93 (34%)	135 (49%)	44 (16%)	4 (1%)
Trench Town Male	57 (55%)	24 (23%)	16 (16%)	6 (6%)
Trench Town Female	81 (46%)	30 (17%)	50 (28%)	17 (10%)
Trench Town Total	138 (49%)	54 (19%)	66 (23%)	23 (8%)
Total Male	160 (41%)	138 (35%)	75 (19%)	20 (5%)
Total Female	176 (40%)	113 (25%)	120 (27%)	35 (8%)
TOTAL	**336 (40%)**	**251 (30%)**	**195 (23%)**	**55 (7%)**

* one picture could not be coded in this classification

As in the coding according to location, there are clear differences based on both gender and on social class. Both boys and girls took the most pictures of the built environment (41 percent and 40 percent respectively) and the least pictures of dynamic / action (5 percent and 8 percent respectively). There was also very little difference in the proportion of photographs taken of social topics, with 27 percent of the girls' photographs falling into this category compared to 25 percent of the boys. Boys took more photographs of the natural environment: 35 percent of their photographs fell into this category, as against 25 percent of the girls'. Boys therefore took more photographs of the natural environment than of social topics, whereas girls took more photographs of social topics than of the natural environment.

When the data are disaggregated according to school, patterns involving both socio-economic status and gender can be observed, though in most cases it appears that social class is the more important factor influencing individual-environment interactions. The Trench Town students took the highest proportion of photographs of the built environment – almost half (49 percent) of the photographs taken by these students fell into this category, compared to 37 percent of the photographs from Camperdown and 34 percent of those from Campion. This was particularly evident with the boys at Trench Town, who took 55 percent of their photographs in this category, far more than any other group of participants. This is at least indicative of the surroundings in which these children live, summed up by Bob Marley in the title of his song about Trench Town, "Concrete Jungle". However, it may also suggest that the interpretation of 'the environment' by these individuals is much more holistic, involving far more than just plants and trees. Several photographs suggest that this may be the case, including photographs of garbage collectors, and of individuals sweeping the public street outside their 'yards'. There was much less difference between the Camperdown and the Campion students, who took 37 percent and 34 percent respectively of their photographs in this category. There is a clear gradient following social class in the percentage of photographs taken of the built environment, with an increase in affluence resulting in a decreased focus on the built environment.

The inverse of this gradient can be seen in the proportion of photographs taken of the natural environment. Campion students took the highest percentage of photographs in this category (49 percent of their photographs), followed by Camperdown (22 percent) with Trench Town students taking the least (19 percent). As was the case in the previous category, it is possible that this is a reflection of the surroundings in which these young people live – the students at Campion were more likely to live in the suburbs of Kingston

in which housing densities are low and in which many houses have substantial gardens containing fruit trees and decorative plants. However, the fact that they took more than twice as many photographs of the natural environment as any of the other groups suggest that their interpretation of the environment is based much more strongly on the natural environment, as shown by the many photographs of trees and flowers. Within each school the boys took a higher proportion of their photographs of the natural environment than the girls, and overall boys took 35 percent of their photographs in this category compared to 25 percent for girls, with the largest gap being between the male students at Campion (who took 56 percent of their photographs in this category) and the female students at Trench Town (17 percent). Although this may reflect the more limited mobility of girls (as shown and explained above), this seems unlikely, as many of the photographs categorised as 'natural environment' appeared to be taken in gardens and around houses. It may therefore indicate that the girls had a broader interpretation of environmental issues in the city, and do not rely as heavily on 'green things' to understand the concept of the environment. There is therefore a clear gradient relating the focus on the natural environment to socio-economic and gender factors, with male students and the more affluent apparently placing greater stress on this component of their surroundings.

However, a greater proportion of the photographs taken by the female participants was classified as being in the social and the dynamic / action categories. This would again suggest that the girls had a more holistic vision of the urban environment, and included buildings, people, and activities as being within this realm. In general, the photographs that fell into these categories accounted for 30 percent of the photographs, and it is likely that these were fairly closely related to the approximately 26 percent of the photographs (7 photographs on a film of 27 exposures) which it was suggested the students could take for their own use. The journals kept by the students were not sufficiently clear for these

'personal' photographs to be identified, and so they were included in the analysis. The proportion of photographs which fell into the social category varied from 16 percent at Campion to 30 percent at Camperdown, with a particularly small proportion of photographs in this category (9 percent) contributed by the most affluent male students. Perhaps more interesting is the very low number of photographs classified as being dynamic / action from both male and female students at Campion (1 percent each). This is at least partially accounted for by the fact that there were no photographs taken of environmental actions, such as cleaning streets or digging flowerbeds, by this group, whereas the students from the other schools did take pictures of this sort. This will be discussed further in the section on environmental management below.

Perspectives of environmental issues

The final coding exercise involved looking specifically at photographs with an 'environmental' focus. In total, this represented 309 photographs, or 37 percent of the total number of pictures. The participants had been asked to take 10 photographs "to illustrate a magazine article about the environment", and these 10 photographs would also have represented 37 percent of the exposures available to them. These photographs were categorised according to whether they showed 'scenery / natural beauty' (such as photographs of flowers or scenic views), 'environmental problems' (such as photographs of litter), or 'environmental management' (such as photographs of garbage collectors). As in the previous coding exercise, this procedure was informed by discussions held with undergraduate geography students at the University of the West Indies. In total, 21 percent of the photographs were classified as scenery / natural beauty, 10 percent as environmental problems, and 7 percent as environmental management (Figure 4.11)[11].

[11] This does not add up to exactly the 36 percent mentioned above because of rounding of decimal points. All the figures referred to in this section are percentages of the entire number of photographs taken, not just the ones included in this part of the analysis, and therefore do not add up to 100 percent.

Figure 4.11
Environmental coding of photographs by school and gender (number and percentage)

	Scenery / Natural Beauty	Environmental Problems	Environmental Management
Camperdown Male	25 (16%)	13 (8%)	2 (1%)
Camperdown Female	15 (12%)	4 (3%)	9 (7%)
Camperdown Total	40 (14%)	17 (6%)	11 (4%)
Campion Male	57 (41%)	14 (10%)	5 (4%)
Campion Female	53 (38%)	7 (5%)	3 (2%)
Campion Total	110 (40%)	21 (8%)	8 (3%)
Trench Town Male	10 (10%)	16 (16%)	6 (6%)
Trench Town Female	14 (8%)	26 (15%)	23 (13%)
Trench Town Total	24 (9%)	42 (15%)	29 (10%)
Total Male	92 (23%)	43 (11%)	13 (3%)
Total Female	82 (18%)	37 (8%)	35 (8%)
TOTAL	**174 (21%)**	**80 (10%)**	**55 (7%)**

Overall, the male participants took a slightly higher percentage of their photographs of both scenery / natural beauty and environmental problems, although the female participants also took a relatively large number of photographs in these categories. However, taking pictures of this type generally required freedom to move around the community or city, and this trend may have been influenced by the impact of gender on mobility outlined above. The general trend emerged that participants from Campion took a higher proportion of pictures of scenery and natural beauty, and within each social group the male students took more photographs of this type, as previously shown in the *leitmotif* code of 'natural environment'. Although the highest proportion of photographs of environmental problems were taken by boys and girls at Trench Town, the lowest proportions were taken by girls at Campion and at Camperdown. This suggests that apart

from those living in the extremely challenging areas of the Kingston inner-city, boys place a higher priority on environmental problems than girls.

In contrast to this, the girls took nearly three times as many photographs of environmental management as the boys. This suggests that the girls are much more aware of, and actively engaged in, activities of this sort. Moreover, this pattern is also affected by socio-economic factors. Both male and female participants at Campion took a relatively small proportion of their photographs of environmental management (4 percent and 2 percent respectively), whereas at Camperdown and Trench Town, the girls took a much larger proportion of photographs in this category than the boys at the same school. Indeed, the girls at Trench Town took almost twice as many photographs in this category as the girls at Camperdown (13 percent compared to 7 percent), and almost seven times as many photographs of environmental management as the girls at Campion. The relatively high proportion of photographs in this category taken by girls at Trench Town suggests that the burden of environmental management in the city falls predominantly on poor women. The large gaps in the proportion of photographs taken in this category between girls and boys at Trench Town (13 percent and 6 percent respectively) and at Camperdown (7 percent and 1 percent respectively) suggest that even within the same social group, females place a much higher priority on managing the environment, possibly because they are more actively involved in this on a day-to-day basis. Indeed, "it is common for girls and women to be at risk from particular environmental hazards, because of the work they do or the discrimination they face in terms of access to resources, income or housing" (Nunan and Satterthwaite 1999: 6). It is also noticeable that the figures for both males and females at Campion in this category are low, suggesting that the harsh material conditions involved in the processes of managing the city's environment may have become invisible to the more affluent groups in society. For this group, "the mess, the dirt, the underbelly of the

city, both socially and environmentally, [have become] invisible and banned from everyday consciousness" (Kaïka and Swyngedouw 2000: 135).

Data Analysis II: summary and examples from each school

It should not be assumed that because the numerical data were presented before any of the actual photographs that this is somehow of greater importance. The empirical information and the actual pictures have been separated deliberately, as I feel that presenting them alongside each other would result in the photographs being seen as merely illustrations rather than as meaningful in themselves. Therefore, in the section that follows, I present some examples of the photographs which were taken by students from each school, together with brief comments explaining how I have viewed their content, and my overall perceptions of the themes which were most commonly observed at each school. The photographs are presented alongside verbatim quotes from the participants which were included in their log books, posters, or in discussions with the researcher. Although the photographs presented below are an unsystematic sample, it is hoped that by presenting the photographs in this way the reader will be able to come to her/his own conclusions about what they say about the interactions between young people and the environment in Kingston.

The content of the photographs suggests important differences in the ways that young people from different socio-economic backgrounds construct their urban environments. It is, however, worth mentioning the fact that students from all the schools involved took photographs of representations of prominent Jamaicans – such as the Bob Marley statue next to the National Stadium, the statue of Alexander Bustamante (Jamaica's first Prime Minister) at Parade, and the murals at the Trench Town Culture Yard. The

accomplishments of these Jamaicans, and their recognition by people from hugely varied backgrounds, is surely part of the social glue which binds all Jamaicans together.

Photographs and comments from Campion

These students were from the most affluent socio-economic group, and were also the group who would have achieved the highest grades in the GSAT examination. It appears that some members of this group approached the project with the ambition of displaying a 'balanced account' of the environment, with several students focussing on the juxtaposition of the natural beauty of Jamaica with the environmental issues they perceived as problems. Indeed, one girl titled the poster she prepared "The Better Side of Jamaica / The Other Side of Jamaica", and one boy presented his as "Isn't this CLEAN! / Can it get any WORSE?".

Dirt and litter were the most common themes representing negative aspects of the environment, although these were occasionally linked to other types of environmental problems – for example, a picture of a rubbish pile was linked with burning, air pollution, and damage to vegetation (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12

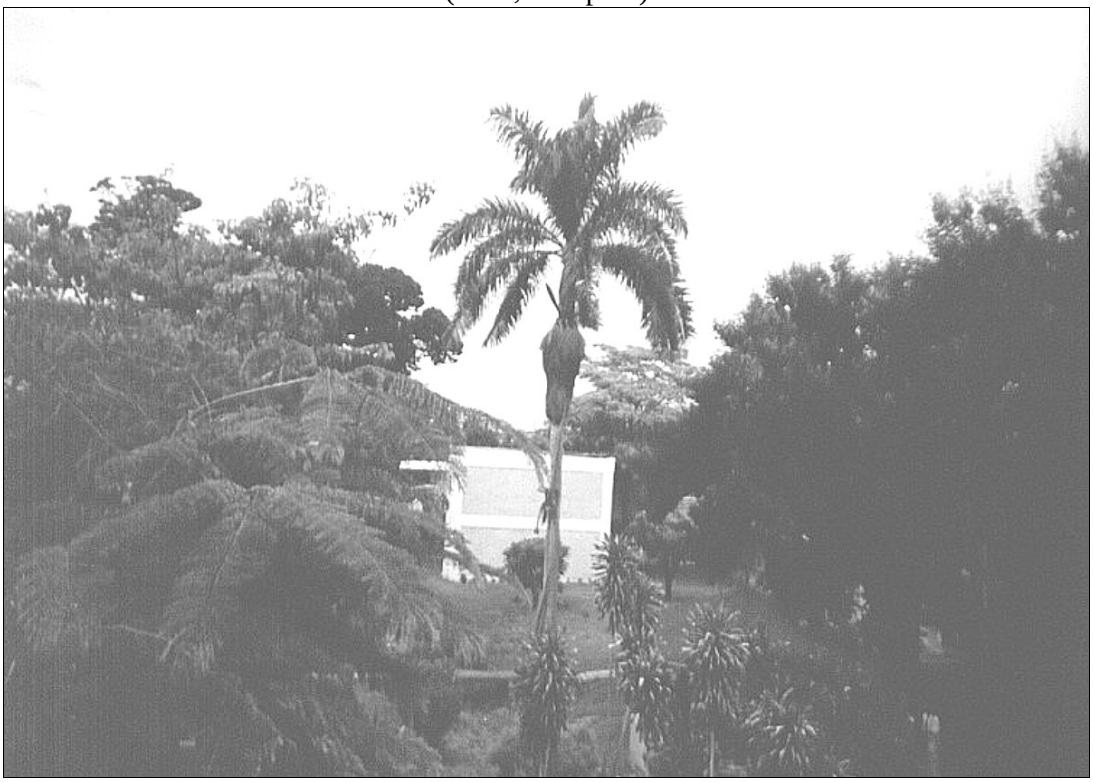
"This is the garbage heap next door… it shows how people treat Jamaica badly. They dump garbage and litter, they burn garbage and make the air unclean. They don't make the place beautiful… and this is also harming the tree"

(female, Campion)



The most common positive representations of the environment included plants and trees, and this was often commented on directly. One girl wrote "flowers make the campus bloom", and one boy took a picture showing "lush green trees" (Figure 4.13). As mentioned above, the students at Campion took a very high proportion of their photographs on the school compound. Although they were aware of problems on the compound (for example a skip overflowing with plastic bottles collected for recycling), in general they took pictures of attractive buildings (such as the original school building in the centre of the compound, and a newly built sixth form block) and of plants and trees. However, while some students at both of the other schools took photographs of the Jamaican flag, none of the students at Campion included this.

Figure 4.13
"The lush green trees at my school… in the background is the Sixth Form block"
(male, Campion)



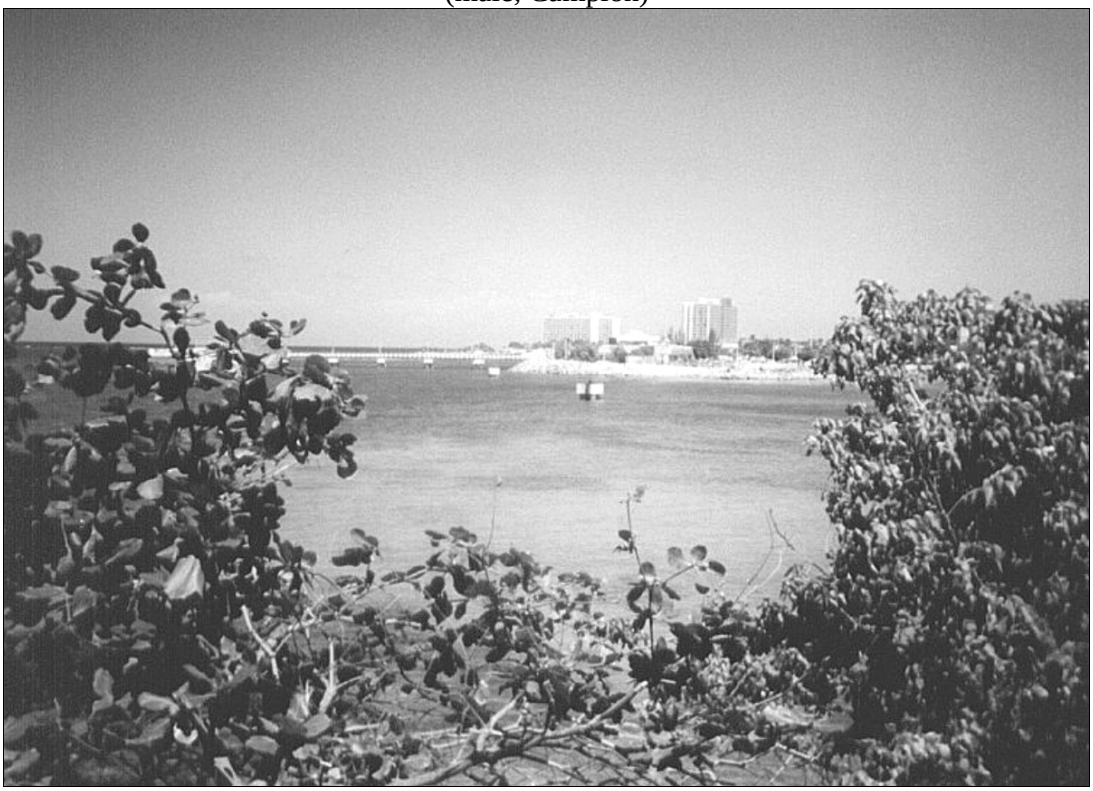
This group also took some pictures of their homes (Figure 4.14). These emphasise the socio-economic differences existing within Kingston and between the individuals from the different backgrounds. Moreover, it appears (from the quote below) that some of these individuals perceived their own type of housing as being 'normal' for the city, when in fact it is representative of only a minority of privileged households.

Figure 4.14
"These are some houses across the way from mine. I wanted to show housing – where people live and how people live in Kingston"
(female, Campion)



Positive representations of the environment included coastal and mountain scenes, but several of these were taken some distance from Kingston (for example in the parishes of St Ann and St Elizabeth, several hours drive by car). The natural beauty was perceived as being important. One girl commented, "I went on the hills when I was in St Elizabeth and took this picture… just to show the trees and the view". However, the absence of visible pollution, particularly litter, also influenced the portrayals of what was perceived to be positive (Figure 4.15).

Figure 4.15
"This is a good picture – you can see the Caribbean Sea, and there's no litter anywhere. This shows the way that Jamaica is beautiful"
(male, Campion)



They also recognised the role of infrastructure in the environment, and in common with students at the other two schools, some students took photographs of gullies (the large artificial storm-drainage channels which cross the Liguanea Plain). These serve an important purpose in preventing flooding, but are also frequently sites for the dumping of garbage or industrial waste and therefore serve as a habitat for rats and other vermin. According to one student who took a photograph of the Sandy Gully, "Jamaica has some really dirty and some really clean gullies, and this one is sort of in the middle" (male, Campion). Although the students at Campion did not take any photographs of people 'getting their hands dirty' with regards to improving the environment, they did take photographs of the end result of much hard work. One male student took a photograph of the Caymanas golf course, explaining: "It's a very clean environment. Before, it was a

dump, an old hill, but this man cleaned it up to make it nice… he made it into a beautiful place" (male, Campion).

Photographs and comments from Camperdown

As was evident from the spatial distribution of photographs, the students at Camperdown appeared to have the greatest amount of personal mobility. They are the most integrated with their surroundings, and are able to move around freely both in their own communities and in the city. Many of them take public buses to school on their own, and some of the photographs were taken independently at major transport termini such as the Parade in downtown Kingston. Several of the participants took photographs of the buses and taxis[12] which they take, and appear to ascribe a great deal of importance to these as being essential to their mobility and well-being.

They were also the only group who appeared to have the freedom to explore the hills or the coast independently, but unlike the Campion students' photographs of the popular 'tourist' areas, these were of the more rugged shoreline close to Kingston. Positive representations of this included pictures of the coastline at Hellshire (in St Catherine, close to areas of new lower-middle-income housing), described as a place where "I go on Sundays to look at the views and swim" (male, Camperdown). Whilst the beauty was recognised, there was also disappointment at the way in which the coastline was treated, particularly in Kingston Harbour, and some individuals identified environmental problems as having multiple effects on humans and on wildlife (Figure 4.16). Interestingly, the Executive Director of the National Environment and Planning Agency identified walking beside the harbour on his way to Primary School as an important factor influencing his

[12] Particularly in rural Jamaica, 'taxi' refers to a car which follows a particular route and picks up passengers at any point. This is an important means of transport for areas which are served sparsely or not at all by buses.

own interest in environmental issues[13], and the freedom to explore in this way is undoubtedly a positive influence in these individuals' lives.

Figure 4.16
"This is the seaside, where people pass and dump garbage. It's near where I live – I go to the sea to walk at weekends with my friends, we swim as well. This shows bad things happening in the community – the garbage can kill fishes and pollute the water. The garbage comes from elsewhere – people dump it, and then it gets washed up"
(male, Camperdown)



Many of the photographs focussed on the development of infrastructure in Jamaica. As well as the photographs of transport facilities identified above, there were photographs of houses being built, of new shopping centres, and of service clubs engaged in community development activities. There were pictures of churches, shops, and markets including 'Linstead Market', the subject of a popular Jamaican folk song. Figure 4.17 shows a typical representation from this group of students, several of whom took photographs of houses in various stages of construction. This figure also shows teenaged boys playing

[13] Interview with Franklin MacDonald, 04/01/02.

football, and many of the 'action' photographs taken by the students from this school were based on predominantly male activities such as sports and dominoes.

Figure 4.17
"This is me and my friends playing football in front of my house. I took it to show how we have fun… My mother is building up this house – she wants it to be finished by next year" (male, Camperdown)



The participants at Camperdown frequently showed the linkages between community, culture and the environment. They took photographs of the Jamaican flag and of statues of national heroes, such as that of Alexander Bustamante at Parade, about whom one participant wrote "Bustamante risked his life for the people… I took it to show that I respect Bustamante" (female, Camperdown). Indeed, this appreciation for culture and education was particularly evident in the photographs which many of the participants took of a 'Heritage Day' concert which had been held at the school on the occasion of National Heroes Day (Figure 4.18). Although the instructions for the project gave the students a specifically environmental mandate, it appears that they view cultural aspects of their

surroundings as an important part of the environment, and that they do not see the distinctions between culture, nature, and history as being important – a linkage made clear in the quote accompanying the image below.

Figure 4.18
"They are dancing at the school Heritage Concert. It shows how we 'big up' our heritage and our environment, and how we respect them. It was a nice concert – I sang at it" (male, Camperdown)



Some of the students at Camperdown live in semi-rural communities to the east of Kingston, such as Bull Bay and Yallahs. These students displayed a particular awareness of a wide variety of environmental issues. They took photographs of small-scale agriculture, such as a man carrying sugar cane (Figure 4.19), and of environmental problems such as trucks collecting sand from the river bed – an activity which is both illegal and environmentally damaging. There was also a photograph taken in a heavy rainstorm, which the photographer explained as "other places hardly have rain, but we always have rain… this means we can grow a lot of crops and plants like banana and

cocoa" (male, Camperdown). The students who live in Kingston also took some photographs of small-scale urban agriculture, notably the growing of leafy vegetables such as calaloo and pak choi. They also took pictures of gardens at school, such as "the most beautiful garden in Camperdown" (female, Camperdown), and at home, and of particular trees (such as the national tree, the Blue Mahoe).

Figure 4.19
"This was taken on the road to the farm… I like the view and I like how it looks with the man and the cane. He is taking the cane home to juice it… using a special machine to turn it into sugar. Lots of people make their own sugar from cane near where I live (Bull Bay)" (male, Camperdown)



The photographs taken by the students at Camperdown appear to suggest that the environment is something that they can engage positively with. It can be shaped (notably by agriculture and the development of infrastructure) but it is also something which should be appreciated and respected (such as the coastline and the rain). Indeed, as one participant wrote on her poster:

> If you take a good look at these pictures you would see they have a lot in common even though they are taken of different things. Some of the things they have in common are their beauty and how full of nature they are. Another thing they have in common is the feeling you get when you look at them. Most likely when you look at these pictures the first thing to come to mind will be, how would I feel if I live at that beautiful place and then you would start daydreaming (female, Camperdown).

The participants from this school appear to have a general sense of civic responsibility, and a deep vein of interest in their environment and culture.

Photographs and comments from Trench Town

While many outsiders feel that Trench Town is a hostile community in which it is difficult or impossible to move around, a perception bolstered by the appallingly high levels of violent crime in the area, the students at Trench Town Comprehensive High School are obviously well versed in the particular social codes which govern safety in this area. They were delighted when they were able to attend the exhibition of their photographs at the Community Expo at the National Arena, at least partially because it provided them with an opportunity to travel outside the community.

In common with the other participants, the students from Trench Town included photographs conveying a mixture of positive and negative sentiments about the environment. Most strikingly, however, they included an awareness of the processes involved in upgrading the environment, with photographs of garbage collectors (Figure 4.20), urban gardens, urban farming, and people engaged in cleaning streets.

Figure 4.20

"These are the rubbish men taking up rubbish in the community – they come every Thursday morning. This helps prevent us getting germs from flies which come into the house"

(female, Trench Town)

"Trench Town should have less garbage, because the government pays people to look after the school yard and the gardens"

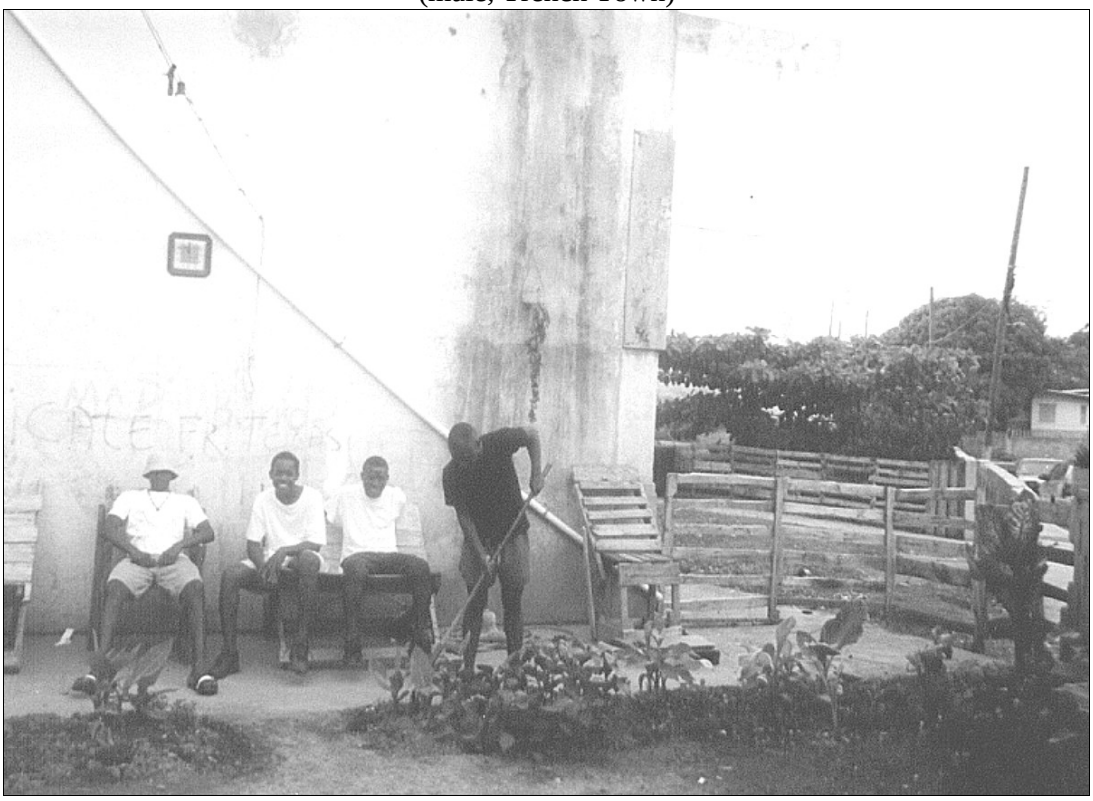
(female, Trench Town)



In a community whose very name is inextricably linked with poverty and violence, it is a genuinely powerful statement for people to develop gardens and plant vegetation (Figure 4.21). Other photographs were taken of roadside gardens, such as one which the photographer said she took "because it is beautiful and clean – the way the environment should be" (female, Trench Town). Photographs were taken of small farms in the community, as well as of a chicken-rearing project. There is an appreciation for the mundane aspects of environmental stewardship, which appear to be taken for granted by the students from the other schools. Even in settings in which these structures do not function perfectly (for example, in a photograph of an overflowing rubbish skip), their usefulness was still stressed. Similar themes of actively engaging with the environment are

evident in some of the photographs that were taken of the Trench Town school compound. Two students took photographs of the cleaners and janitors at the school, and there were also photographs of children picking up litter in the school yard.

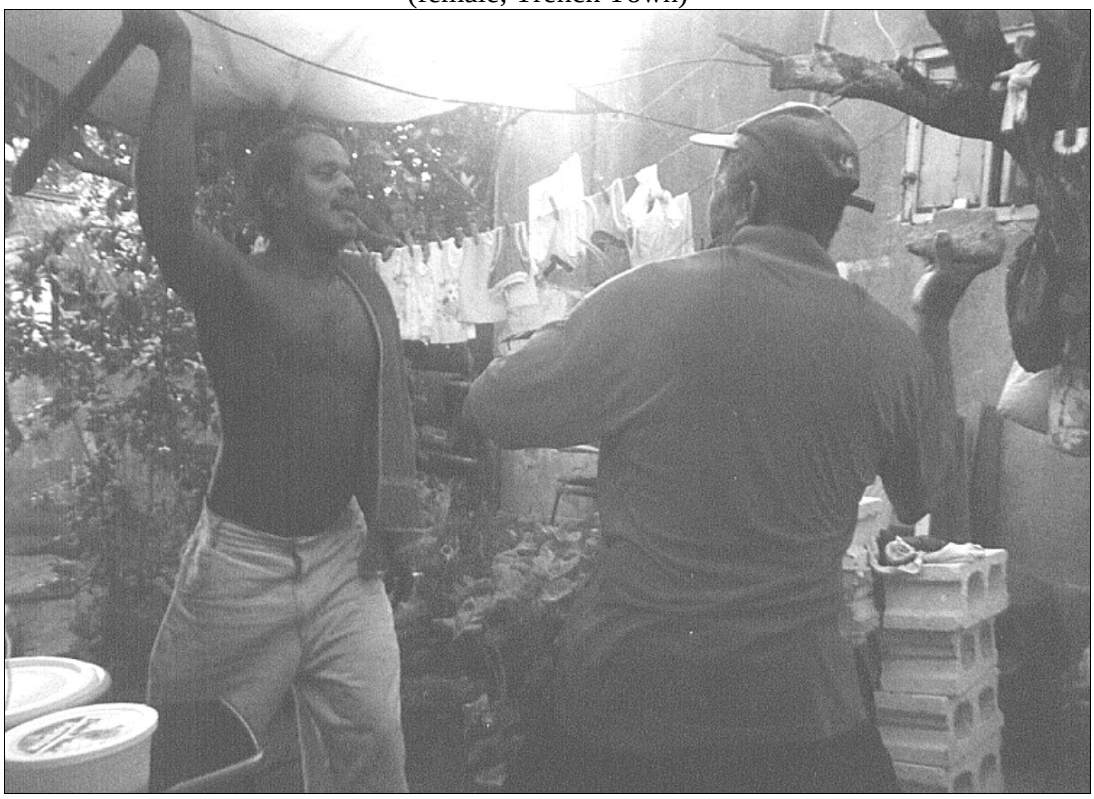
Figure 4.21
"This man is digging up the garden to plant flowers. The rest of them are going to take out the stones and plant the flowers. This is the side of my yard – the community never look good, so wi tek out the garbage and build a farm to grow cane and flowers"
(male, Trench Town)



However, the students did not shy away from representing the problems in their community. Some participants took photographs of poor housing conditions, of run-down buildings, and of garbage in the gullies. Several students took photographs of a derelict cinema, which was indicative of a lost opportunity (they wished that films could still be viewed there), a generally poor environment, and a place of fun where they could play outside the reach of adult supervision. There is a sense of immediacy attached to these photographs of environmental and social problems, possibly because they appear with

greater frequency and are taken from a closer distance than any similar photographs from the other schools. One student arranged for friends to pose for a picture showing problems with violence in the community. The fact that she went to the trouble of making these arrangements suggests that she feels very strongly about the issue, as does her explanation of the picture (Figure 4.22). The social aspects of poverty were clearly documented by this group, including pictures of rum bars ("I don't like this because the men go there and get drunk" (female, Trench Town)), and pictures which document the impact of violence ("The violence leaves the children tearing themselves apart" (female, Trench Town)).

Figure 4.22
"This is a picture to show how fighting is always affecting the community. I asked these two friends of my family to pose to take it. It shows how people fight and people get hurt. Fighting causes damage in the community and causes people to die"
(female, Trench Town)



Another frequently occurring topic was roadblocks in the community (Figure 4.23). These are present throughout downtown Kingston as a way of communities protecting

themselves against drive-by shootings by gangs from outside the area. To 'uptown' observers, these are frequently seen as eyesores or as representative of social ills, whereas some of the students pointed out that these were actually positive installations which improve their quality of life[14]. In fact, I have seen people conscientiously sweeping litter away from roadblocks of this sort in order to keep them tidy. In a similarly contradictory fashion, one participant took a picture of a charcoal heap used to produce charcoal from wood by slow burning. This is usually considered to be an activity which should be kept separate from residential areas (and, indeed, is illegal within the Kingston Metropolitan Area). However, one student identified this as a positive aspect of Trench Town life, saying "I love this – yuh nuh haffi go no place fi buy coal"[15] (male, Trench Town).

Figure 4.23
"This is Ninth Street where the taxis run. The road is blocked because of the war, to protect us from danger. The gunmen cannot come into our places, it makes me feel more safe. They use garbage and old things to block the road"
(female, Trench Town)



[14] A comparison comes to mind with the gated communities found in the more affluent parts of Kingston.
[15] Translation: you don't have to go anywhere else to buy charcoal.

Several important signifiers were also identified in the school grounds. These included the Jamaican flag, which was photographed by several individuals, and captioned by one as "this picture makes me feel good about my country" (female, Trench Town). Another was the school motto over the entrance to the school: "One for All, All for One". This marked a boundary between the 'street' and the 'school', described by one student as "when you walk through the big gates, you leave the 'possa possa', the arguing and the fighting, behind you on the street" (female, Trench Town)[16]. A third important signifier was the Peace Garden in the school (Figure 4.24). Almost half of the students (7 out of 15) took pictures of this Peace Garden, a green and shady area in the centre of the school compound, and the accompanying captions show a degree of pride in a community which is frequently dismissed by outsiders.

These pictures all suggest that the students in Trench Town are very actively engaged with their environment, and appreciate the processes which must take place in order to maintain environmental standards. Although it has been suggested that "children in Kingston's so-called garrison communities grow up in an environment devoid of nature… the power which they assert over their own environment reflects inner anger rather than positive interaction" (Thomas-Hope 1996: 10), the photographs taken by these young people suggest that this is not necessarily the case. Despite the apparent hopelessness of the Kingston ghetto, these students have managed to find many examples of hope – people working in their environment, green spaces and gardens, and a solid desire for peace.

[16] 'Possa Possa' is a term from a popular song, meaning disturbance or rowdiness.

Figure 4.24

"This Peace Garden shows peace in my school. Most people say my school is in a bad environment, but the peace garden shows that the school isn't that bad. It shows peace in the school, and tells us not to fight"
(female, Trench Town)
"A garden of peace and unity"
(female, Trench Town)



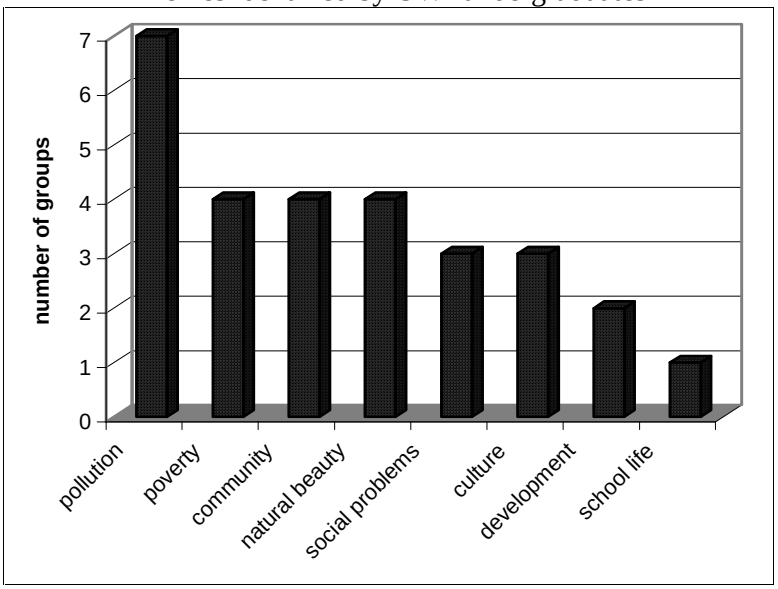
Responses to the Urban Environment: the views of some viewers

Feedback from UWI undergraduates

As an alternative method of identifying the main themes contained in the photographs, these were discussed with undergraduate geography students at the University of the West Indies (UWI). An undergraduate 'practical' class of about 100 hundred students was divided into seven groups, each of which indicated the four main themes that they thought were shown in the photographs. These categories were discussed by the entire class, and similar themes grouped into the categories shown (Figure 4.25). It appears from this that the UWI students identify pollution as the most important theme appearing in the

photographs, with every group mentioning this topic. This is despite the fact that according to the coding exercise only 10 percent of the total photographs taken were of environmental problems. In contrast, 21 percent of the photographs were coded as being of scenery / natural beauty, but only 4 of the 7 groups identified this as one of their four themes.

Figure 4.25
Themes identified by UWI undergraduates



In general, the response of the UWI undergraduates to the Trench Town photographs was negative, and focussed more on the infrastructural problems shown than on the positive activities depicted. They suggested that there are "few good things about life" and that the "environment [is] unclean and polluted, buildings are old". However, there was an acknowledgement that some of the photographers wanted to be involved in a process of transformation, as shown by comments such as "perceives environment of poverty, underprivileged, lack of opportunity – but wants change". Comments made about the photographs from Camperdown were far less critical. Many of these focussed on social aspects, or on the relationship between home and community life. They suggested that the "perceptions of the environment focussed more on the social environment" and that some

of the participants had “balanced perceptions of the environment: environment encompasses the natural, physical and social environment – photographed all these various aspects”. The responses to the Campion photographs tended to revolve around the attention paid to the natural environment, scenic beauty, and general affluence, with reference to the “clean streets, lush environment, huge houses” and that the “environment is seen as beautiful”.

Although pan-Caribbean in origin, undergraduates at the UWI are likely to have similar class backgrounds to the Camperdown and Campion students. This may have influenced the clear distinctions in the issues which they raised about the photographs from the different schools. Trench Town was broadly seen as representing a polluted environment, a site of environmental problems, whereas the Camperdown photographs were seen as primarily representing the social environment. The Campion students were broadly seen as representing nature as beauty, a theme also linked with affluence, as noted by a variety of comments about the types of houses depicted.

Feedback from the Community Expo

Other feedback was obtained at a ‘Community Expo’ held at the National Arena in Kingston in December 2001. The fact that the people observing the exhibition of photographs had attended this Expo indicates that they all had some degree of interest in issues of community and national development. However, they were from a wide variety of occupational backgrounds, including driver, office assistant, teacher, social worker, minister of religion and member of parliament. Of the 69 individuals who completed a short questionnaire after viewing the photographs, 41 percent said that they felt more optimistic about the future of the urban environment in Kingston, 42 percent said they felt more concerned about this, and 17 percent said that their feelings were much the same as

before. The fact that 83 percent of those who responded had a different perspective on the future of the urban environment after viewing the photographs suggests that this method of research does provide people with a novel viewpoint through which to observe the city, which promotes thought and may lead to positive environmental action.

These observers were asked to identify which set of photographs were the most technically proficient, and which set of students they thought were the most environmentally aware. Although it must be acknowledged that they only viewed a non-randomly selected sample of the photographs, and that the participants were aware of which group had taken which photographs, the majority of respondents identified the photographs from Trench Town as being the most technically proficient and the students at Trench Town as being the most environmentally aware (Figure 4.26). The fact that the majority of the people viewing the photographs identified those from Trench Town as showing the highest level of environmental awareness suggests that their own opinions of the environment revolve around issues of sanitation and urban infrastructure rather than around natural beauty or vegetation.

Figure 4.26
Responses to questionnaire questions at exhibition of photographs

	Trench Town	Camperdown	Campion
Which set of photographs do you think are the most technically proficient?	59%	23%	18%
On the basis of these photographs, which set of students do you think are the most environmentally aware?	61%	24%	15%

Many of the viewers of the exhibition commented on the quality of photographs which the participants had produced, and made comparisons between the different sets of photographs (Figure 4.27), which in general support the observations made above.

Figure 4.27
Comparisons made by viewers of the exhibition of photographs
(with information on gender and occupation)

Type of Comparison	Examples
Social Content	• *Children from Trench Town are more exposed to violence and degradation but students from Campion see more beauty in the environment (Female, Teacher).* • *The students of Trench Town seem to understand and articulate the problems of urban blight. The Campion students produced technically good photos but lacked depth and understanding. Camperdown found themselves in the middle (Male, Minister of Religion).*
Emotional Involvement	• *I got the feeling that they really photographed what had an impact on them (Female, Teacher).* • *Trench Town and Camperdown students took more pictures of their communities, which may indicate a relationship between identity and place (Female, Research Assistant).* • *While Campion seemed very on the surface and general, Trench Town invited you into their lives (Female, Student)* • *Emotional involvement of Trench Town versus fairly boring 'factual' comments of Campion (Female, Sociologist)*
Environmental Involvement	• *Campion attempted to show 'beautiful' environments as well – issues of access? (Female, Community Development Consultant).* • *The fact that all the photographs portray the ways in which garbage is being disposed of means that the students have one common goal and that is to stem the problems (Female, Student Teacher).*
Other Comments	• *The Trench Town kids had no opportunity to take photographs outside of their immediate environment (Female, Financial Consultant).* • *They are unpretentious, focussed, and depicting life as it is in Jamaica (Female, Teacher).* • *In my opinion students from Trench Town have captured some deep and telling moments. I could have been fooled into believing a professional photographer took them (Male, School Principal).*

The number and variety of responses elicited by the photographs suggests that the research aim of disseminating the perspectives of young people on the urban environment was, to a large extent, successful. The display of photographs attracted the attention of many people who would otherwise have been unaware of some of the environmental issues existing within Kingston, and also portrayed these from the viewpoint of a group whose opinions have traditionally not been given expression.

Conclusion

The autophotographic methodology has served to illuminate many different aspects of the urban environment in Kingston. It circumvents some of the rigid power structures associated with the use of language, and provides an alternative viewpoint into the ways in which young people in Kingston relate to their surroundings. By indicating both the emotional significance ascribed to particular places, as well as the ways in which the physical setting is used and altered, the choice of subject matter reveals some of the ways in which these adolescents discursively and materially construct the urban environment. As well as providing information about the individuals who took the photographs, the photographs also revealed parts of the city, and aspects of community life, which are seldom seen by outsiders. Having a discussion point, such as a photograph, appears to enable people to examine their own views and circumstances more readily and in more depth than might otherwise be the case.

There are clear differences in the content of the photographs taken by the students at the three schools involved in this study, and also between the male and female participants. The more affluent students appear to have a greater degree of access to attractive locations, and their understanding of environmental issues appears to be based more closely on traditional concepts of the natural environment. The less affluent participants did not have the same mobility, but made up for this by having a more detailed and independent knowledge of their immediate surroundings. The commonalities between the groups are also telling, as all those involved appear to have a level of pride in their nation, yet none appear to have access to or interest in some of the environmental facilities such as urban green spaces which are provided by the government and other agencies. However, the central conclusion that can be drawn is that there is a huge variation in environmental experiences, determined primarily by class but also affected by gender. The

pattern of access to particular locations, and the variations in the portrayal of the urban surroundings, serve to indicate the uneven ways in which urban environmental problems are experienced, and environmental amenities enjoyed.

Chapter 5

Constructing the City and its Citizens

> Today there are few more fearsome places than west Kingston, a sprawling network of shanties where most locals fear to tread and where the downtown Burger King closes at 5pm so that its workers can be bussed out safely. Ganja, knives and machetes have been replaced by crack, sub-machine guns and deepening poverty.[1]
>
> For a city that has as much to offer as any of the world's major cities, Kingston is a 'wasted opportunity.'[2]

Introduction

Traditional understandings of the city focus on the role of global capitalism, the state, and the activities of urban residents in shaping the physical and geographical profile of urban development (Smith and Feagin 1987). Yet of these three forces, the influence of individual citizens in producing the city has been overlooked most frequently. From the political Left, these people have been seen to act within the constraints of a state-produced system, whereas the Right has frequently viewed them as a workforce to meet the needs of capitalist development. Both of these perspectives limit the agency ascribed to individuals to shape their own surroundings. Moreover, they fail to recognise the way in which individual perspectives on, and constructions of, the urban environment can affect the political processes occurring in the city, and can therefore effect physical environmental changes. The way in which space is produced is increasingly understood as a dynamic field of social action, ideological confrontation, and political struggle. By examining the ways

[1] "Fighting for Survival" *The Guardian* 01/06/01.
[2] "Natural Love for Kingston Lacking" *Daily Gleaner* 15/06/02.

in which the city and its spaces are produced, both mentally and physically, the bases for political struggle can therefore be better understood.

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which a variety of individuals and groups construct the urban environment in Kingston. In doing so, I describe the 'imaginary' landscapes of the city and its environmental problems (Lowenthal 1961a, Gregory 1994), as a pre-requisite to discussing the political processes of urban governance that are inscribed on this. In order to achieve this, I first introduce some of the ways in which Kingston and Jamaica have been constructed throughout the colonial and post-colonial period. This is related to issues of identity and the ways in which people view their surroundings. The main part of this chapter, however, is concerned with presenting and discussing the results from a questionnaire survey and focus group discussions that investigated the ways in which individuals and groups in Kingston construct their surroundings in general, and environmental problems in the city in particular.

Caribbean Views of Caribbean Land

In the summer of 1961, just a few months before the referendum in which Jamaicans voted by a narrow majority to leave the Federation of the West Indies[3], David Lowenthal's paper on *Caribbean Views of Caribbean Land* was published (Lowenthal 1961b). Although it would be naïve to suggest that no subsequent geographical research in the region has carried colonial biases, this essay marks the moment in history at which the Caribbean islands began to assert their own nationhood. It provides a convenient review of the geography of the region at that point in time, and when viewed in conjunction with Lowenthal's oft-cited *Geography, Experience, and Imagination: Towards a Geographical*

[3] 217,319 voted in favour of staying in the Federation, whereas 256,261 voted to leave.

Epistemology (Lowenthal 1961a), published just a few months later, it can be seen that Lowenthal was applying his radical philosophical / geographical ideas to the study of the Caribbean region. As Lowenthal (1994) subsequently explained, at this time geographers were generally content to explore the world as they thought it existed, whereas in contrast, his main objective was to see how people made sense of the world around them.

Lowenthal drew on a history of alienation, in which the plantation system separated people from the land, a situation which resulted in the products of the soil and the soil itself being rejected as relics of slavery and shame, unfit for consumption by free people. This was then manifested in the post-emancipation period by the valuation of land solely according to its economic potential. With the growth of nationalist movements in the twentieth century, Lowenthal suggests that the passion for sovereignty increasingly rendered land precious, and concluded that at the eve of independence "Caribbean land and Caribbean people do, in fact, belong to each other more than at any time for centuries past" (p7).

Yet forty years later, a poll conducted by a Jamaican Sunday newspaper showed 53 percent of participants responding that they thought Jamaica would have been better off today had it remained a colony of Britain[4]. Nine percent of respondents said that the country had achieved no successes in the last 40 years, and a further 42 percent were unable to name any successes. Shortly before, the *Daily Gleaner* had printed an article proclaiming that a "natural love for Kingston" was lacking, citing the views of radio talk-show host Barbara Gloudon that "the city has a history, but the city itself has forgotten its history"[5].

[4] "53% say Jamaica would be better as British colony" *Sunday Observer* 21/07/2002.
[5] "Natural love for Kingston lacking" *Daily Gleaner* 15/06/02.

Whereas these examples do not refer specifically to individual relationships between people and the land, and may be related more directly to the socio-economic rather than the natural environmental level of the nation-state, they do suggest a profound ambivalence about the way in which the city and the nation have been constructed in the post-independence period.

The Tropical Imagination: constructions of Jamaicans and the Jamaican landscape

Although much academic research in the Caribbean region is undertaken by researchers from outside it, this endeavour is at least concerned with fairness and openness in representation. The same cannot be said of many other representations, such as films and novels, which have frequently served to perpetuate certain popular imaginations of the West Indies in general and Jamaica in particular. As Jamaican comedian, Tony Hendricks (2001), put it in a recent column:

> If we look back at some of the films made and inspired by our culture over the years it comes as no surprise to find that the vast majority are of a similar genre. "The Harder They Come", "Third World Cop", "Dancehall Queen", "Marijuana Affair", "Klash" (I know you were hoping I'd forget that one. Trust me, I tried.) and "Marked For Death" were all written based on the same stereotypical image of our island: music, ganja and guns.
>
> Of course aside from action there are more character driven movies such as "Milk & Honey", "Smile Orange" and "The Lunatic", but what are they really saying? The first is about illegal immigration, the second perpetuates big bamboo sex tourism in an extremely bad hotel and the last has an ugly German tourist getting freaky with a madman who talks to plants and animals before turning to robbery and attempted murder.
>
> Documentaries have been no kinder. "Yardies" dealt with crime, corruption and poverty, "Jamaica ER" dissected the horrors of KPH[6] and "Caribbean Uncovered", a whole series on Sky TV, harked back to a subject that has haunted almost every article I have written in this column; drunken, naked white people.

[6] Kingston Public Hospital

This list is almost, although not quite, exhaustive – Hendricks fails to mention the Disney film *Cool Runnings*, a comedy with the idea of people from tropical islands taking part in winter sports as its central joke. On a slightly more serious note, these same representations are present in news and media portrayals of the country. For example, the UK's *Guardian* newspaper described a scene in downtown Kingston in which "combat-helmeted soldiers slide from corner to corner with their backs to the corrugated steel walls of the shanty-town houses. It looks like a skill learned from the British and transported to a tropical version of Belfast at its worst" [7]. Yet, as David Livingstone has shown, the concept of tropicality belongs with other geographical imaginaries such as 'darkest Africa', the 'Orient', and the 'Pacific World', producing a mental-material space with grave material consequences (Livingstone 2002: 47). All of these issues are related to the myriad ways in which the Caribbean in general, and Jamaica in particular, have been consumed by outsiders over the past 500 years: the natural environment, commodities, bodies, and the culture of the region have all been constructed and used in a variety of ways (Sheller 2003).

In this respect, many of the representations of the Caribbean and Jamaica in general, and Kingston and its citizens in particular, are detrimental to the well-being of the city and its people. On one hand, the nation is constructed as a 'paradise island', a place where dreams come true, a place where happy-go-lucky black islanders climb coconut trees, and where time-keeping is based around the maxim 'soon come'. Jamaicans appear in the public gaze as 'happy-go-lucky' individuals with 'easy-going charm'. Yet this apparently innocent construction nevertheless has important negative consequences. It constructs Jamaicans as people who are happy with their lot, reduces the tourists' (and other outsiders') feelings of

[7] "Bodies pave the way to Jamaican polls" *The Guardian* 12/07/01.

responsibility towards improving the frequently appalling conditions of life, and conceals the way in which this tourist paradise is produced through exploitative trade and employment practices. More subtly, it propagates ideas of difference which suggest that Jamaicans are not suited to the rigours of metropolitan capitalism, or capable of functioning on the same intellectual level as the tourists, reporters, or researchers in whose gaze they exist. Simultaneously, these ideas are transmitted to the Jamaicans themselves, resulting in a vicious circle in which both foreign and local expectations of Jamaican abilities are reduced. With an apparent rise in forms of postmodern tourism (Dodman 2004a) in which the consumption of symbols is becoming more important than actual material consumption (Harvey 1989a), these stereotypes are becoming ever more prevalent. The agency of Jamaican individuals to act independently is therefore limited both by external constructions of their role, and by the internalisation of these in individual persons.

On the other hand, Kingston is portrayed as a violent "Third World City", a "tropical version of Belfast at its worst". The message, though seldom explicitly stated in print, is that Kingston is a dirty, untidy, sprawling dangerous place to be (Austin-Broos 1995: 149). To outsiders, the city is constructed as part of the 'other', against which the self and the 'normal' can be measured (Said 1978). Its similarity and its strangeness are juxtaposed to produce the concept of a space which is accessible only to the intrepid explorer, and where danger and dangerous people are seldom further than a few footsteps away. Whilst inhibiting outsiders from any deeper engagement with the city, this message also constrains the city's inhabitants, particularly those from the most deprived areas. Through their association with the space of the city, they are seen as both threatening and shiftless. This discourse combines with direct prejudice as a result of skin colour or place of birth to

produce a powerful force which encourages apathy, despair and low self-esteem. As Frantz Fanon (1967, 1968) so clearly illustrated, these discursive constructions produce very concrete effects in the ways in which individuals perceive themselves and act in their relations with one another and with society as a whole, a situation documented in Jamaican society by Rex Nettleford (1970).

Poverty and the Culture of Poverty

In many cases the way in which more affluent Kingstonians describe and understand the continued urban poverty in the city is remarkably similar to that of Oscar Lewis' "Culture of Poverty" (1966). This is not restricted to the much-mocked 'upper St Andrew verandah-talk' (generally ascribed to light-skinned housewives, chatting on the shady verandahs of their suburban houses, attended by various maids), but takes a much wider hold on both private and public discourse. Much of Lewis' description of the plight of the poor in Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the United States in the 1950s still appears remarkably contemporary. Indeed, the contradictions he observed in understandings of poverty and the poor are very similar to those frequently heard in Jamaica today:

> Just as the poor have been pronounced blessed, virtuous, upright, serene, independent, honest, kind and happy, so contemporary students stress their great and neglected capacity for self-help, leadership and community organization. Conversely, as the poor have been characterized as shiftless, mean, sordid, violent, evil and criminal, so other students point to the irreversibly destructive effects of poverty on individual character and emphasize the corresponding need to keep guidance and control of poverty projects in the hands of duly constituted authorities (p218).

Lewis suggests that the culture of poverty develops as a distinctive subculture, which is "both an adaptation and a reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class-stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society" (p220). Yet the most dangerous

conclusion he reaches, and one that is implicitly or explicitly stated in many discussions of poverty in Jamaica, is that:

> Once the culture of poverty has come into existence it tends to perpetuate itself. By the time slum children are 6 or 7 they have usually absorbed the basic attitudes and values of their subculture. Thereafter they are psychologically unready to take full advantage of changing conditions or improving opportunities that may develop in their lifetime (p220).

This concern about "attitudes and values" is widespread in discussions about the ways of dealing with the situation of urban poverty in Kingston. It is the frequent theme of policy discussions, such as the recent symposium on "Transforming Values and Attitudes: Policy Challenges for Jamaican Society" at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies (20-21 March 2003). According to the Jamaica Information Service this symposium "comes against the background of the Prime Minister's announcement that he would once again be placing the issue of values and attitudes on the national agenda" [8].

Yet this focus on a culture of poverty, characterised by some form of inherent degeneracy in values and attitudes, essentialises the poor as a group and contributes to their othering by more affluent and powerful members of society. It emphasises the personal aspects of, and responsibility for, poverty, rather than the socio-structural processes which produce and reproduce these conditions. By doing so, it contributes to feelings of worthlessness on the part of poor urban residents, who are continually bombarded with both subliminal and overt messages implying that they themselves are somehow responsible for their position, and that their inability to break out of poverty is a symptom of their own inadequacy.

[8] Jamaica Information Service Press Release, 21/03/03.

This is not to say that more radical perspectives have not been suggested. Perhaps the most notable of these is the contribution of the Rastafarian movement, which has done much to exorcise ideologies of racism and classism in Jamaican society (Chevannes 1998). Whereas the social reforms implemented by the People's National Party in the 1970s, led by Michael Manley, owed much to the traditions of Fabian socialism, they were also strongly influenced by the more revolutionary influence of Rastafarianism. Rastafarian psychology is "resistance and liberation psychology – the sum total of the organized and spontaneous campaign against racist subjection, fired by the burning desire to be free from all forms of social, economic, and political domination" (Hutton and Murrell 1998: 36). Manley's policies of worker's rights (such as the introduction of a minimum wage), women's rights, and the rights of the poor (such as the 1976 Status of Children Act – popularly known as the Bastards' Act – which ended legal discrimination towards children born out of wedlock) did much to improve the physical conditions of poor Jamaicans, whilst also helping to reduce social gaps within the society, despite strong international pressure to the contrary (Manley 1982).

These ideas of radical (although resolutely democratic) socialism have fallen out of favour, with the economic consequences of international disapproval helping to turn the majority of the Jamaican middle-class irrevocably against this political ideology. And whilst overt colour discrimination is rare, and pride in blackness frequently proclaimed, the trappings of race prejudice remain, with images of beauty frequently being aligned with 'European' features such as thin lips and a thin nose. The ways in which poverty and race are constructed therefore continue to limit the agency of poor Kingstonians to alter their own lives, and the lives of their communities and city.

Some of the issues surrounding the particular place of children, especially girls, in the city have been addressed in Chapter 4. It is also necessary to mention the place of women in Jamaican society. Cultural norms, as described in Madeline Kerr's *Personality and Conflict in Jamaica* (1952) and Edith Clarke's *My Mother who Fathered Me* (1957) stress the importance of motherhood and the role of women in holding the society together; and some recent scholarship has focused on the alleged marginalisation of the Jamaican male (Miller 1991). Indeed, the position of women in Jamaican society is generally identified in a relatively positive light, with the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) (2001: 5) suggesting that "women are better able to earn income", "are more likely to take executive positions in church and community organisations" although they "seem prepared to work harder and for lower wages than men do". The *New Internationalist* also recognises that "women are prominent in all professions and form a majority of graduates", and awards the country four stars (out of a possible five) for the position of women[9].

Yet women still bear a disproportionate load of social burdens and remain under-represented in influential positions. In particular, the combination of class, colour, and gender discrimination can weigh particularly heavily[10]. It remains less culturally acceptable for women to celebrate traditional African forms of dress or hairstyle, and women who choose not to 'process' or straighten their hair report particular difficulties in 'professional' settings, such as being refused promotion because they 'project the wrong image'. Despite being a National Hero, Marcus Garvey's injunction "don't remove the kinks from your hair, remove them from your brain"[11] is seldom quoted in Jamaica, and in

[9] Issue 333, April 2001 (www.newint.org; accessed January 2003).
[10] See Glenda Simms "Gender and the Colour Complex" *Sunday Gleaner* 11/05/03.
[11] Quoted by "The Drum Collective" (www.thedrum.org; accessed January 2003).

April 1996 the nation erupted in discussion and argument when Joan Andrea Hutchinson, a respected radio presenter, presented a current affairs programme on national television wearing her hair in the 'natural' style of 'Nubian Knots'. Whereas some callers on radio talk shows made comments such as "if my helper turned up to work like that, I'd send her home" (an extremely loaded statement, indicating the particular social direction from which comments of this type were likely to come), this event has begun to challenge the established view of 'straight hair' being more beautiful and more appropriate. The last word in this section therefore rightfully belongs to Joan Andrea Hutchinson, with an extract from her poem "Dat Bumpy Head Gal"[12].

> Yu say me hairstyle disgusting chacka chacka an tan bad
> An fayva sinting outa street
> An say me shoulda shame fi lef me house tan so
> An me smile, me feeling sweet.
>
> Yu see, di truth is me no afraid of me owna self
> Me not afraid of me
> When me look eena di mirror me like di smaddy
> Weh me see a look pan me.

Constructing and Representing the City

This study is not principally concerned with depicting the patterns of urban life, although this is an essential pre-requisite to understanding the ways in which the urban environment is physically and discursively constructed by different groups. The above introduction to some of the cleavages in Kingston's society serves to focus attention on the relevance of involving both the extremely wealthy and the extremely poor in any study of the city and its environmental problems, and highlights the importance of incorporating a gender-based analysis in this.

[12] From the Joan Andrea Hutchinson audio cassette "Dat Bumpy Head Gal" (1996)

Different groups will produce different physical and discursive constructions of the urban environment, different ways of organising space, and different ways of ascribing meaning to places. Indeed, "cities are not simply material or lived spaces – they are also spaces of the imagination and spaces of representation" (Bridge and Watson 2000b: 7). Putting a greater emphasis on these issues of representation can help to redress earlier biases in the study of colonial urbanisation which focused on political, social, cultural and behavioural interpretations of the colonial city from the position of the coloniser (King 2000, Yeoh 2001).

Physical constructions of the urban not only inform, but are also actively produced by the discursive constructions of the citizens; with the constructions of more powerful actors tending to have further reaching effects. The production of urban space is an intrinsically social and political project, and therefore it is particularly important to explore the ways in which a variety of citizens understand and represent their surroundings. These may be linguistically based, although representation also involves material, visual and psychic forms and practices that cannot be reduced to textuality (Balshaw and Kennedy 2000).

Methods of Exploration I: the questionnaire survey

In keeping with the broad themes outlined at the beginning of Chapter 4, and with the priorities described above, the methods used to investigate the ways in which Kingston is constructed and understood by its citizens prioritised local knowledges and broad participation, as well as working towards ways to circumvent the power relations associated with the uses of particular forms of language. Most of the data presented in this chapter and Chapter 6 are based on two data-gathering instruments, a questionnaire survey and focus group sessions. The questionnaire survey was implemented in high schools in

and around the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA), and focus group meetings, described later in this chapter, were held in a variety of communities in the city.

The questionnaire study involved 20 of the 39 Secondary High Schools located in the parishes of Kingston and St Andrew (Figure 5.1), all but two of which are categorised as urban by the Ministry of Education (2002). In each of the schools involved, the questionnaire was implemented in one Grade 8 class (with one exception, in which a Grade 9 class was involved). The students were all aged between 11 and 15, with the mean age being 12.7 and the modal age being 13. Twelve of the schools were co-educational, and 58 percent of the students surveyed attended these schools. In total, 410 of the respondents (55 percent) were female and 329 (44 percent) male[13], a very similar proportion to the ratio (53 percent female: 47 percent male) observed in Kingston and St Andrew in the 1991 census. Students of this age may also be educated at All Age Schools, Primary and Junior High Schools, and Technical High Schools, and there are a total of 6,125 boys and 6,166 girls in Grade 8 classes in Kingston and St Andrew. In total, this questionnaire, *Youth and the Environment in Kingston* (Appendix 1) was administered to 744, or approximately 6 percent, of these. Some of the ways in which high schools in Kingston are socio-economically stratified are explained in Chapter 4, and the schools involved in this study covered a wide variety of social class groups. This was ensured through discussions with several educators in Kingston, and can be identified through the use of a variety of surrogates (see Monteiro (1989) and Howard (1997) for fuller descriptions of the ways in which these factors can be applied more comprehensively).

[13] There were 5 non-responses to the question on gender.

As one example of this, the participants were asked to record the hospital in which they had been born, and the percentage of participants at each school who were born in the Victoria Jubilee Hospital (VJH) is recorded below (Figure 5.1). The VJH is a large public maternity hospital located at the edge of the eighteenth century downtown grid, and is surrounded by violent inner-city communities. Although, particularly by the standards of developing countries, the quality of health care in Jamaica is generally good[14], the VJH is poorly equipped and would generally be seen as the maternity hospital of last resort. Wherever possible, people would prefer to use the facilities of the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) (which operates partially as a government hospital and partially as a private facility), public hospitals outside of Kingston, or one of several private hospitals in the city. In total, 695 (93 percent) of the respondents noted this information, of whom 46 percent were born at the VJH and 20 percent at the UHWI. Smaller proportions were born at private hospitals (14 percent), at public hospitals outside Kingston (12 percent), at home (3.9 percent) or overseas (3.5 percent). However, 12 percent of the students at the two rural schools involved in the study had been born at home, compared to only 2.5 percent of the students attending schools in the city. These data help to indicate the levels of social segregation between the different schools in the city, all of which are government-run and -funded.

This general ranking is supported by other criteria, such as the relationship between the school's capacity and its enrolment, and by attendance figures.

[14] For example, Jamaica's infant mortality is 10 per 1,000 live births; compared to 6 in the UK and 83 in Haiti (*New Internationalist* Issue 333, April 2001) (www.newint.org; accessed January 2003).

For example, only two of the schools in the KMA involved in this study have enrolments of less than their stated capacity: Trench Town (44 percent) and Haile Selassie (65 percent); and these two schools also have the lowest attendance figures (70 percent and 65 percent respectively). In contrast, two of the three schools with the lowest proportion of their students born at the VJH exhibit the two highest attendance ratios: 97 percent at Campion and 96 percent at Ardenne.

Figure 5.1
Schools participating in the survey

School	**Proportion of participants born at Victoria Jubilee Hospital (ascending order)**
Campion College (co-ed)	11 %
Immaculate Conception High School (girls)	13 %
Ardenne High School (co-ed)	17 %
Wolmers School for Girls (girls)	22 %
Calabar High School (boys)	25 %
Jamaica College (boys)	27 %
St George's College (boys)	28 %
Wolmers School for Boys (boys)	30 %
Meadowbrook High School (co-ed)	31 %
The Queen's School (girls)	36 %
Merl Grove High School (girls)	41 %
Camperdown High School (co-ed)	51 %
Mona High School (co-ed)	62 %
Donald Quarrie High School (co-ed)	77 %
Vauxhall High School (co-ed)	86 %
Clan Carthy High School (co-ed)	86 %
Trench Town High School (co-ed)	97 %
Haile Selassie High School (co-ed)	100 %
located outside the Kingston Metropolitan Area, therefore distance rather than social class likely to be most important factor influencing hospital of birth	
Mavis Bank High School	38%
Oberlin High School	60%

Also, as shown in Chapter 4, children who have experienced a private primary education are more likely to be admitted to the better performing high schools on the basis of the competitive GSAT examination. These socio-economic and educational figures therefore support the general opinion of most educationalists in Kingston about the socio-economic

rankings of the different schools, and suggest that these are microcosms of the social class structures in Kingston[15].

The students who took part came from a wide variety of home communities. Overall, 63 percent lived in the Kingston Metropolitan Area. A further 17 percent lived in urban St Catherine, which includes Spanish Town, Portmore and Greater Portmore, all of which are essentially overflow residential settlements constructed in the last 30 years[16]. This survey therefore covered both a wide socio-economic spectrum, as well as a broad geographical representation of Kingston and its hinterland.

Young People's Constructions of the Urban Environment

One way of assessing the light in which people see their surroundings is through the use of attitude rating scales utilising the semantic differential, in which respondents are invited to indicate their feelings on a continuum between two opposite adjectives. This method is described as "a good tool for measuring *affect* – people's positive and negative *feelings* towards an attitude object… it is useful in situations where people are likely to have strong emotional reactions to a topic but not well thought out opinions" (Henerson *et al* 1987: 89). For this reason, it was felt that it would be an appropriate tool to measure the feelings of adolescents towards particular locations with which they are familiar.

The participants were asked to tick boxes describing how they felt about their school compounds, the area around their homes, Kingston, and Jamaica; choosing between the paired adjectives clean-dirty, healthy-unhealthy, good-bad, pretty-ugly, happy-unhappy,

[15] Although no official league tables are published, parents and pupils alike in Kingston are keenly aware of the class-colour-socio-economic standings of the different schools in the city.

and safe-dangerous (Figure 5.2). These adjective pairs were selected from DiVesta (1965) and Henerson *et al* (1987), with the exception of safe-dangerous, a pair which was thought to be particularly relevant in the context of Kingston. The table was arranged with random polarity, so that the 'positive' adjective was not always placed at the same side of the grid, thus encouraging the respondents to address each pair on its own merits.

There were a total of seven boxes between each pair, enabling participants to indicate whether their feelings about a particular location were extremely close to one of the possible choices, more inclined to one than the other, or totally neutral. When analysing the data, it was noticeable that the 'in-between' boxes were ticked less often than the ones at either end or in the centre of the scale: the participants may have been inclined to see issues as clear-cut rather than nuanced; and although the concept of the scale was carefully explained, some of the participants still had difficulty in grasping this.

Figure 5.2

Attitude rating scale used in questionnaires. The numbers displayed in the boxes were not included in the questionnaires, but help to indicate the scoring system outlined below.

How do you feel about your school compound / the area around your home / Kingston / Jamaica?

Clean	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	*Dirty*
Unhealthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	*Healthy*
Good	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	*Bad*
Ugly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	*Pretty*
Happy	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	*Unhappy*
Safe	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	*Dangerous*

[16] Although Spanish Town is an old city in its own right, and the former capital of Jamaica, its population has increased rapidly in recent years as new housing estates have been built on its outskirts.

The standard method of analysing this data is to allocate scores from 1 to 7 (with 1 the box closest to the most negative, and 7 the box closest to the most positive adjective). A given location can be assessed according to these individual adjectives, or according to an average score for all the different adjective pairs. This overall score can therefore vary between 1 (the most negative feelings) and 7 (the most positive feelings) for a particular site, with a score of 4 representing a 'neutral' figure exactly half way between the two extremes. The tabulated data of the average scores recorded for the different locations was sorted according to gender, school, hospital of birth, and location of home, and is given in Appendix 2.

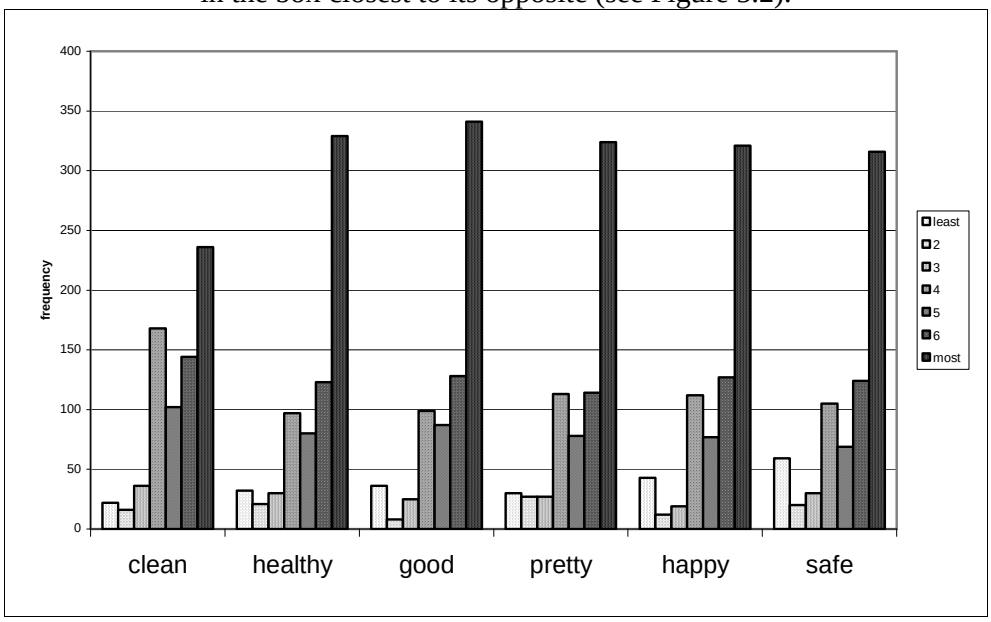
Feelings towards the school compound

The overall responses to the question "how do you feel about your school compound" were generally positive (Figure 5.3), with the modal class being the most positive response for each of the adjective pairs.

When the overall results for this question were sorted by school, the average scores ranged between 4.58 and 6.14. Four of the five lowest scoring schools were single-sex boys' schools, and three of the five highest scoring schools were girls' schools. No boys' schools were in the top half of the rankings, and no girls' schools were in the bottom half, in keeping with the general personal observation that the compounds of the girls' schools were kept in better condition than those of the boys' schools. This is not likely to be due simply to girls reporting more positive feelings about their surroundings, as the figures for girls and boys at co-educational schools are very similar (girls=5.65, boys=5.43), but in fact reflects some qualitative differences between the standards of these locations. However, the students were generally positive about their school compounds, although

there is a trend which suggests that they are not as clean as they would like them to be: in all of the semantic differentials except clean-dirty, the most positive box was ticked by between 42 percent and 46 percent of the respondents; whereas overall only 32 percent ticked the box closest to 'clean'.

Figure 5.3
Total responses to "How do you feel about your school compound?"
For each adjective, the bar shaded "most" represents the number of responses in the box closest to that adjective, the box shaded "least" represents the number of responses in the box closest to its opposite (see Figure 5.2).



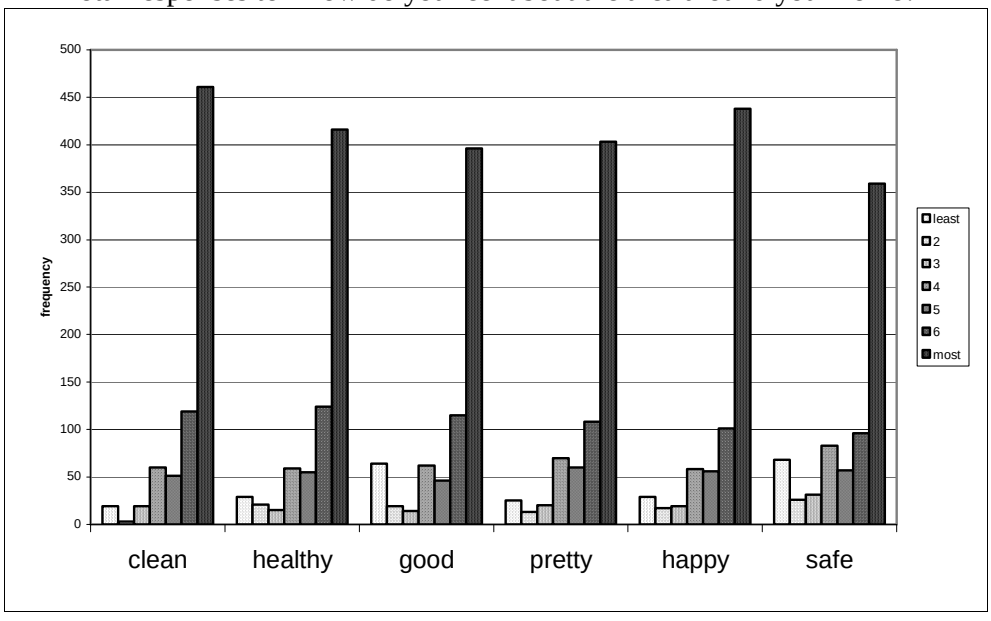
There were particular differences in whether the students identified their school as being safe or dangerous. A particularly low score (2.86) was observed at Trench Town, indicating that these students felt that their school compound was a dangerous location. In contrast, the average score for safe-dangerous at five schools was greater than 6, indicating that the students felt that these were very safe locations: the Queen's School (6.02), Wolmers Girls' School (6.12), Immaculate Conception High School (6.15), Oberlin (6.21), and Merl Grove (6.45). Four of these are girls schools, and the exception (Oberlin) is a co-educational school located outside the KMA. In general, it seems that schools located in the downtown areas of Kingston are thought of as being more dangerous, whereas girls'

schools are thought of as being more safe. At the co-educational schools there was very little difference between girls and boys as to whether these locations were felt to be safe or dangerous.

Feelings towards the home surroundings

The responses to "how do you feel about the area around your home?" were even more positive than those addressing the school compound (Figure 5.4). For each aspect of the home environment more than half of the respondents ranked the area around their home in the most positive way possible, with the exception of safe-dangerous where the figure was 49.9 percent. The figures for clean-dirty and happy-unhappy were particularly high, with more than 60 percent of the respondents saying that their homes were as clean and as happy as could be.

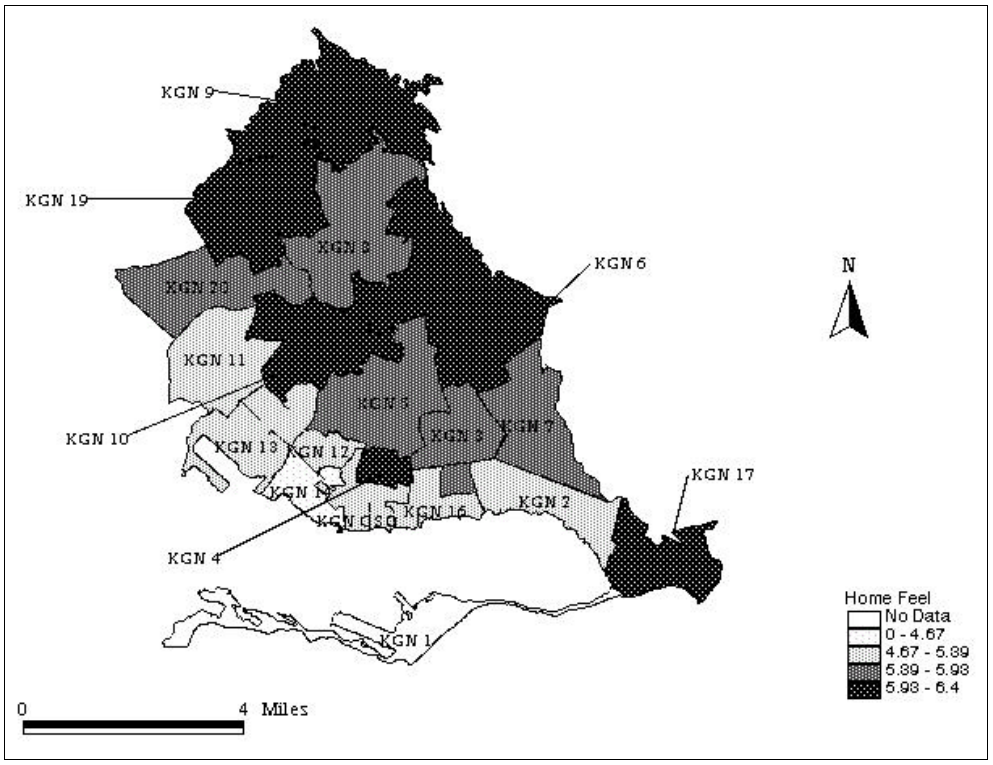
Figure 5.4
Total responses to "How do you feel about the area around your home?"



Perhaps because of this overwhelmingly positive response, there were no clear differences between students at the different schools in reporting positive feelings towards this

location. However, when sorting the data by home location, the lowest scores were recorded by people living in the depressed downtown areas of Kingston 16 (5.05), Kingston 13 (5.15) and Kingston CSO[17] (5.22) (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5
Chloropleth map showing responses to the question
"How do you feel about the area around your home?"
Data displayed by postal district based on average scores from the seven semantic differentials. The darker the shading, the more positive the attitudes towards the area around the home.



The outcome for the most highly ranked home locations was less predictable: whereas the highest scores came from people living in the relatively affluent area of Kingston 19 (6.40), the less affluent areas of Kingston 4 (6.39) and Kingston 9 (6.37) also scored highly. However, the general pattern corresponds with the general trends in housing quality in the KMA, in which the south-west of the city has consistently been associated with areas of lower quality housing and infrastructure (Figure 5.10, Figure 5.13). The

[17] Central Sorting Office – the postal district for the central part of downtown Kingston.

average scores for all residents of areas outside of the KMA (rural St Andrew, St Thomas, Portmore, Greater Portmore, rural St Catherine, and elsewhere) were greater than 6, with the exception of residents of Spanish Town (where the figure was 5.43). While the majority of participants appear to have positive feelings for the areas surrounding their homes, these feelings are most positive among the more affluent groups living in Kingston and those who live outside the main area of the city.

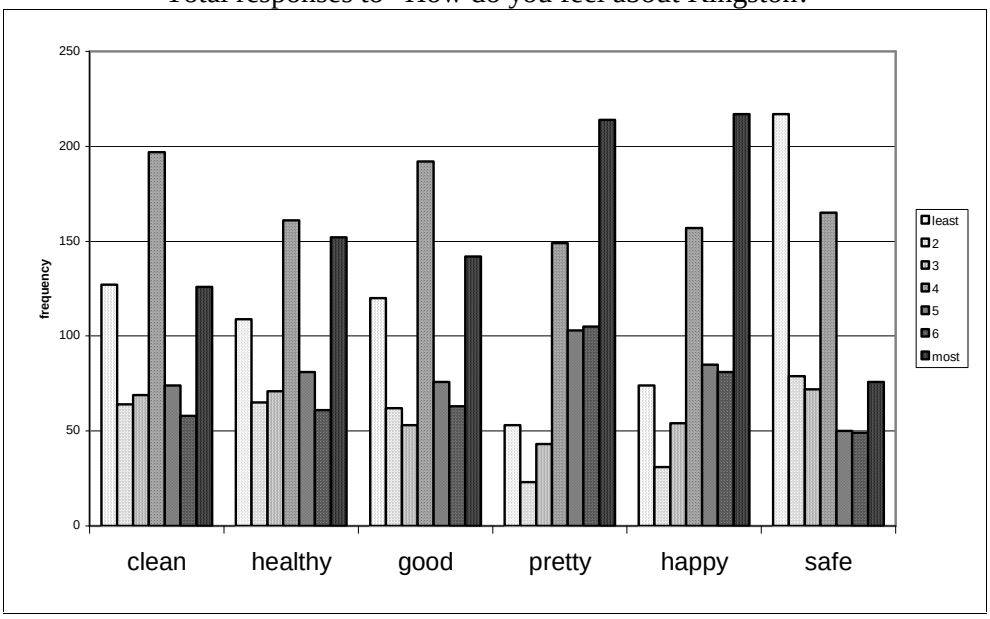
The responses obviously contain a complicated mixture of attempted objectivity and subjective biases. When responding to the surroundings of the home, feelings were generally positive, although there were differences in the extent of this between individuals living in different locations. When responding to the everyday surroundings of the school, feelings were also positive, although there was a trend suggesting that the actual physical conditions had been taken into account, as seen by the higher scores attributed to the generally cleaner and more pleasant surroundings of the girls' schools. This suggests that although the participants did take the actual physical conditions into account, their responses were also affected by more personal associations with particular places.

Feelings towards Kingston

In contrast to the semi-private everyday spaces of the home and school, the feelings towards the city of Kingston (Figure 5.6) were far more mixed. Overall, in two cases (happy and pretty) the modal class was the most positive rating, although in both cases this referred to only 31 percent of responses. In the case of clean-dirty, healthy-unhealthy, and good-bad, the central category (half-way between the most positive and the most negative ratings) was the modal class, whereas in the assessment of safe-dangerous the highest response was in the most 'dangerous' category, with 31 percent of the participants ticking

this box. The data can be summarised by suggesting that the general feeling among these adolescents is that while Kingston is a happy and a pretty city, it is not particularly clean, healthy or good, and it is certainly dangerous.

Figure 5.6
Total responses to "How do you feel about Kingston?"



The overall average score ascribed to feelings about Kingston was 4.21, compared to 5.15 for Jamaica, 5.52 for the school compound, and 5.88 for the area around the home. By this measure, Kingston was clearly the location about which the respondents felt the least positive, although it is noteworthy that this figure is still just above the central, neutral, mark of 4.0. However, there are stark contrasts in the feelings reported by different groups. The average figure from 9 schools was less than 4.0, with the least positive feelings towards Kingston being reported from St George's College (3.58), Ardenne (3.62), and Campion College (3.62), the latter two of which are among the most privileged schools in Kingston (see Figure 5.1). At the other extreme, the average figure from 3 schools was greater than 5.0: Haile Selassie (5.35), Trench Town (5.43), and Clan Carthy (5.50). These

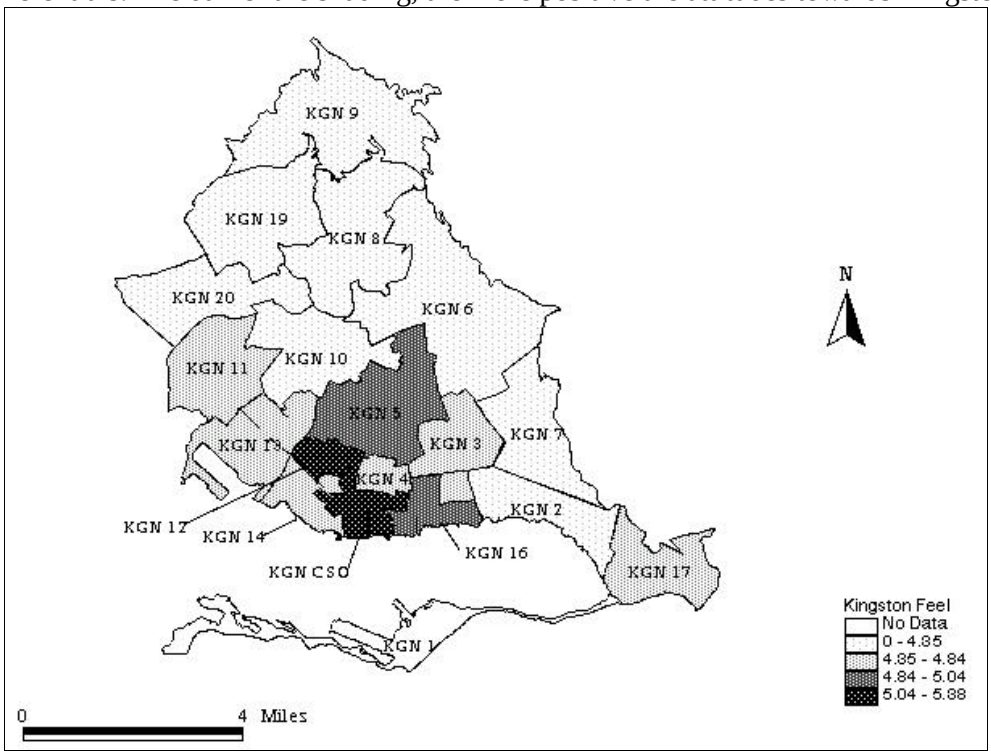
are all located in poor inner-city communities, with students coming almost exclusively from under-privileged backgrounds. This is a clear indication that the more affluent groups within Kingston construct the city in a more negative light than their less affluent fellow-citizens. Even though these groups live in and experience the better aspects of the city, they see it in a less positive way. However, they are also more likely to have the necessary financial resources to have visited other cities and countries, and may therefore be comparing Kingston unfavourably with these.

A similar pattern can be seen when the data is disaggregated according to hospital of birth. Respondents who had been born at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital recorded an average score of 4.52 in reporting the way they feel about Kingston, in contrast to the lower scores of 3.90 for those born in private hospitals and 3.67 for those born overseas. Respondents who had been born at home also recorded more negative perceptions of Kingston (3.45), although this may be linked in with the high proportion of these people who lived in rural areas (another factor leading to relatively negative feelings towards the city).

There is also a clear spatial pattern in the attitudes held by young people about Kingston (Figure 5.7), in spite of the fact that even the more affluent parts of Kingston contain deprived neighbourhoods. Residents of the more pleasant parts of the city in the north and east of the Liguanea Plain see the city in a less positive light than those of the more crowded and deprived parts of the city. Although the lowest figures reported for feelings towards the city came from children who were resident in the downtown area of Kingston 2 (3.88), the most positive feelings came from residents of the even more deprived areas of Kingston CSO (5.38) and Kingston 12 (5.35), and in general the more affluent areas reported lower scores (e.g. 3.99 in the case of Kingston 19).

Figure 5.7

Chloropleth map showing responses to the question "How do you feel about Kingston?" Data displayed by postal district based on average scores from the seven semantic differentials. The darker the shading, the more positive the attitudes towards Kingston.



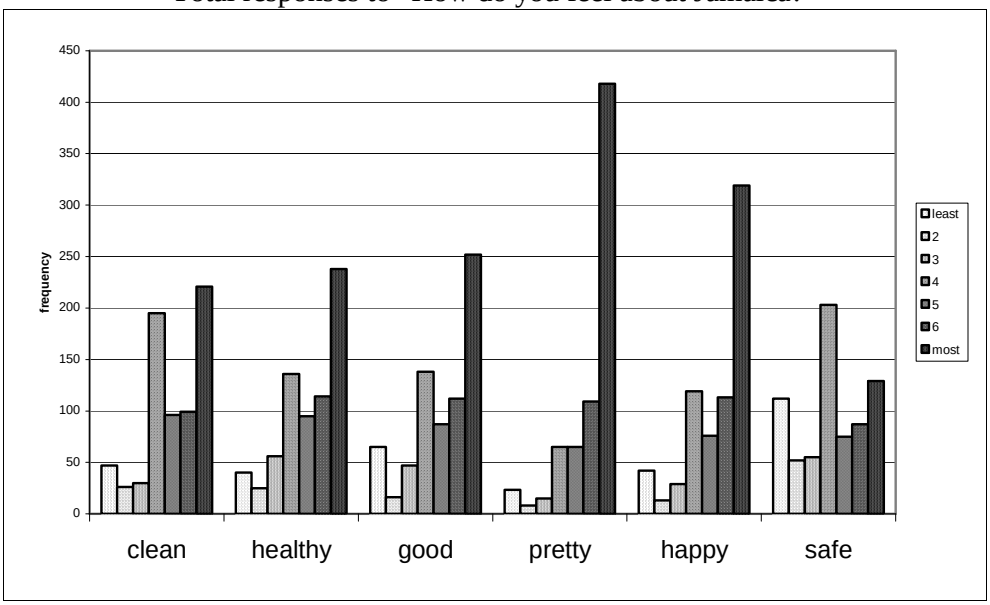
Residents of areas outside the city clearly reported more negative feelings towards Kingston, with residents of St Thomas providing an average figure of 2.61, and the few residents of areas further afield in Jamaica providing an average figure of only 2.50. In summary, therefore, the respondents who live in areas outside of Kingston are the group who reported the most negative feelings about the city. The breakdown for each of the semantic differentials shows a similar pattern, with rural residents and residents of more affluent areas consistently reporting the least positive feelings towards Kingston.

Feelings towards Jamaica

Some of this ambivalence can also be seen in attitudes towards Jamaica as a whole (Figure 5.8). The modal class was the most positive option for five of the six pairs of adjectives, although by a much smaller margin than was the case for responses to the home and

school. However, there was widespread acknowledgement of the beauty of Jamaica, as indicated by the fact that 59.5 percent of respondents chose the most positive box in responding to the pretty-ugly pairing. In the safe-dangerous pairing, the modal class was group 4, falling exactly between the opposites. It appears that feelings towards the country are generally positive, although not overwhelmingly so.

Figure 5.8
Total responses to "How do you feel about Jamaica?"



Although the differences were not as great, similar trends can be observed to those noted for Kingston. The school groups reporting the least positive feelings towards the country were Campion (4.44), St George's College (4.62), and Immaculate Conception (4.67); whereas those reporting the most positive feelings were Camperdown (5.73), Haile Selassie (5.89) and Trench Town (6.20). As Chapter 4 has shown, students at the first of these schools have a greater degree of access to attractive locations within (and outside) the city and country, yet despite this feel less positive about these places. The analysis by hospital of birth also shows this trend, with individuals born at Victoria Jubilee Hospital producing a more positive score (5.44) than those born in private hospitals or overseas

(both 4.69). The pattern based around home location was similar to that recorded for feelings towards Kingston, with the notable exception that the residents of areas outside Kingston who had reported less positive feelings towards Kingston were among the groups reporting the most positive feelings towards Jamaica.

Summary

The data presented here suggest that young people attending school in the KMA are generally positive about their surroundings. They feel that their school compounds are generally safe, happy, pretty, good and healthy, and that they are reasonably (although not exceptionally) clean. These young people are proud of the areas around their homes, which they feel are extremely safe, happy, pretty, good, healthy and clean. They have mixed feelings about Jamaica: while they feel it is very pretty and quite happy, they are less certain that it is clean, healthy, or good, and are unsure whether it is a safe or dangerous place overall. In contrast, feelings towards Kingston are much less positive: although they feel it is generally happy and pretty, they do not feel that it is particularly clean, healthy, or good, and are inclined to think that it is a dangerous place.

Yet there are distinct variations between groups. Whilst there is some correlation between the feelings ascribed to the home and school environments and their actual condition, this is not particularly marked. However, it appears that more affluent groups feel less positive about Kingston and Jamaica, despite being shielded from many of the worst aspects of these places and having a greater degree of access to the more pleasant locations within the city and country.

Environmental Problems in Kingston

Some of the main environmental problems facing Third World cities have already been introduced in Chapter 3. In this section I briefly introduce some of the problems peculiar to Kingston, as a pre-requisite to presenting data on the ways in which members of different communities understand the environmental problems facing the city. While individual environmental issues have been studied in the past, until recently there has been little effort to synthesise a broader picture on a city-wide scale, and none to relate this to the ways in which the citizens actually experience these problems. Hardoy *et al* (1992) have identified three inaccurate assumptions about Third World cities which pervade most discussion about their environmental problems: most of the problems are in huge mega-cities; the high concentration of population and production is a major cause of environmental problems; and existing documentation of environmental problems is an accurate representation of such problems. By documenting environmental problems from a primarily social perspective these assumptions can be challenged and alternative models developed. However, it is still necessary to identify the physical aspects of environmental issues which affect Kingston's urban population.

In 1995, only 80 percent of Kingston's population was covered by the Metropolitan Parks and Market's (MPM) waste collection. A considerable number of people are thus left without this facility, and although there are 15 officially recognised disposal sites in Jamaica, none of these operates as a 'sanitary landfill', preventing fires, with facilities for proper effluent discharge and with daily covering of the waste (NRCA 1997). In 2000, the five regional bodies (including MPM) with responsibility for dealing with garbage were merged into the National Solid Waste Management Authority, although "the length of time taken to collect garbage, transportation of the waste, the lack of adequate landfills and

holding stations and the question of who is actually responsible for garbage collection" remain major public concerns[18], a situation no doubt aggravated by the nearly 60 percent increase in domestic waste generated annually between 1995 and 1999 (NEPA 2001).

Uncollected and uncovered waste results in "foul odours, vermin and flies" (Ministry of Local Government 2001a: 3), and may frequently be dumped in gullies (artificial drainage channels) (Figure 5.9).

Figure 5.9
Garbage blocking a drainage gully in a residential area of Kingston



This provides a habitat for disease vectors, and by blocking the channels can result in flooding after heavy rains. In some of these gullies, "rubbish piles up nearly as high as the walls", and elsewhere "raw sewage flows several feet high"[19]. The deficiencies of this system may also be compensated for by the burning of refuse, which has been identified as

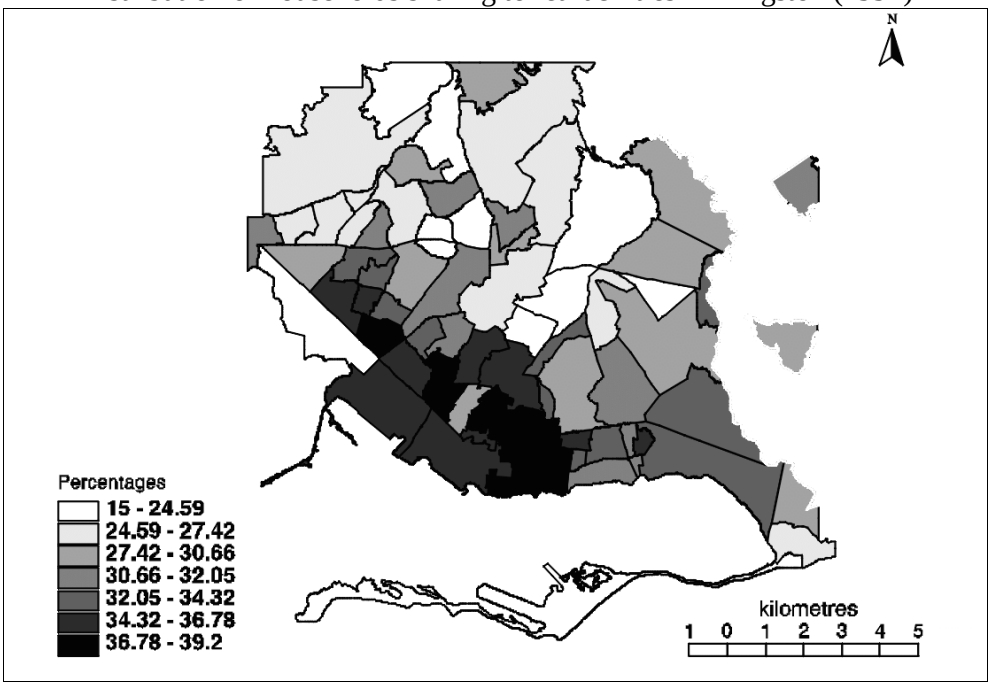
[18] "Garbage a Major Concern" *Daily Gleaner* 08/08/03.

"an important contributor to poor air quality" (NEPA 2001: 56), with the consequence that "deterioration of air quality in the major urban population centres has been a persistent cause for concern" (Ministry of Environment 1998: 42).

Sewage treatment and effluent quality is also an issue in Kingston, with concerns that sewage plants "often do not generate effluent that meet acceptable standards for disposal" (NEPA 2001: 15). The largest treatment plant for Kingston's sewage, with a capacity of 52.8 million litres / day, was not operational during 2000, yet continued to receive sewage which was discharged untreated into Kingston Harbour (NEPA 2001). While the proportion of Kingston's households with exclusive access to a water closet is higher than the rest of the country, one-third of households do not have exclusive access to this facility (PIOJ 1999), with the proportion of households sharing toilet facilities highest in West Kingston (Figure 5.10). The combined impacts of inadequate sewage treatment and improper solid waste disposal have drastically affected the condition of Kingston Harbour, the seventh largest natural harbour in the world, causing it to be classified as a "Heavily Contaminated Bay" by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNOPS 1998).

[19] "Mayor McKenzie's early challenges" *Sunday Gleaner* 10/08/03.

Figure 5.10
Distribution of households sharing toilet facilities in Kingston (1991)



[source: Colin Clarke (personal communication 2003) (Leverhulme Project Data)]

Some of these environmental problems are manifested in health issues in the city. A recent Jamaican newspaper report suggested that "although there is limited local research linking environment to respiratory, intestinal and other illnesses, health officials say that anecdotal stories from caregivers and research from other countries, regarding the harm caused by dust, smoke and bad environmental practices, provide enough evidence for authorities to take the impact of environment on especially children's health, seriously"[20]. Another report identified an outbreak of gastro-enteritis, caused by poor sanitation, among children in south-eastern Jamaica (including Kingston) which "has left eight people dead within the last two weeks"[21]. On a broader scale, the 'child crisis' of malnutrition and disease has been separated from discussions of environmental problems, although this crisis is frequently caused by exposure to pollutants and pathogens and a lack of access to natural

[20] "Enviro Pollution Taking Toll on Children" *Daily Gleaner* 23/5/02.
[21] "'Gastro' kills 8 – Virus mainly affecting children in the south eastern parishes" *Daily Gleaner* 23/7/03.

resources (Satterthwaite *et al* 1996). Other important processes impacting on health which cannot be entirely separated from the physical environment include the consequences of crime and violence which are often accentuated through overcrowded living conditions (Eyre 1984, 1986). Yet the condition of the urban environment is just one of the factors which operates against the health of the urban poor, along with the direct correlates of poverty (low income, limited education, bad diet) and the social and psychological conditions of insecurity (Phillips 1990).

The patterns of morbidity and mortality resulting from these 'brown' environmental concerns frequently vary according to location and social class. This was shown by Fox in Mexico City (1972), although similar processes were noticed as long ago as the 1850 cholera epidemic in Kingston. Clarke (1975) quotes a contemporary account of this event which stated that "while death was thus raging in every direction among the great mass of the people, the well-conditioned classes all but escaped" (p43). Within Third World cities more generally, the good health experienced by the wealthy is often at the expense of the health of the poor:

> [T]he air conditioned car which protects the solitary wealthy passenger in cities adds an extra dose of pollution to the city; the maintenance of the swimming pool is often at the expense of drinking water in poor areas of cities. The arguments of principles such as 'the polluter pays' stress the dirty diesel buses used by the poor and the dirty home industries in the informal sector. Off the agenda are the inequities in society which drive the poor's reliance on polluting resources. Such inequities are rarely analyzed, let alone put on the policy agenda (Stephens 1996: 17).

Although little documented, the effects of informal sector activities have an important influence on the urban environment in Kingston (Lloyd-Evans and Potter 2000). Whereas these may contribute to good health by providing livelihoods, in some circumstances waste, effluent, and air pollution from these can pose serious environmental health threats

(McGranahan *et al* 1999). Not only are these activities unregulated, but they frequently take place in residential areas, with heavy industrial traffic and uncontrolled emissions in close proximity to people's homes. Informal enterprises include illegal petrol filling stations, in which adequate safety procedures are not in place, and in which equipment is unsuitable or dangerous. In January 2001 a fire which began at an illegal petrol station in Greenwich Town destroyed 3 houses leaving 45 people homeless[22], and less than three months afterwards another such facility went up in flames, "causing damage estimated at millions of dollars"[23].

Other activities related to automobile maintenance, such as the improper disposal of waste engine oil from unlicensed garages and the lack of facilities for dealing with discarded car batteries, have damaging environmental side-effects. Whereas about 120,000 car batteries are discarded in Jamaica each year, only about half are collected and exported to the USA whilst the rest remain uncontrolled in the Jamaican environment (NEPA 2001). Jamaica's soil is naturally high in lead, which means that the presence of additional lead from discarded batteries can cause extremely high soil and water levels of this element. This in turn results in high blood lead levels, causing a potentially serious health risk, particularly to children (Anglin-Brown *et al* 1996). Pollution from motor vehicles has also increased in recent years as second-hand vehicles have been imported which do not meet the emissions control regulations of their home countries (Ahmed 1998).

Despite still exhibiting some of the characteristics of "urbanisation without industrialisation" (Clarke 1989: 21) large-scale industry also exists in Kingston, with bulk chemical industries, cement manufacturing, brewing, and petroleum refining being just

[22] "Blaze Leaves 45 Homeless" *Daily Gleaner* 06/01/01.

some of the processes taking place within the city (Government of Jamaica 1987). Environmental hazards are also important, if intermittent, problems facing Kingston, which experienced major earthquakes in 1692 and 1907, and serious hurricanes in 1951 and 1988. As Pelling (1999) has shown for Guyana, the geography of natural hazards in urban environments can be seen to co-evolve with political, social, and economic systems. These problems are often worsened by modification of local hydrology through the urbanisation process (Gupta 1998), a situation which has taken place through the development of the Sandy Gully drainage system in Kingston.

Case Study: the Drewsland community[24]

The environmental problems affecting individuals living in Kingston are perhaps best described by way of a case study of one particular location. Drewsland is an unplanned housing settlement along the banks of the Sandy Gully, just south of Washington Boulevard (Figure 5.11). It is located on the fringe of the large area of poverty and deprivation of West Kingston, which stretches from Parade to Washington Boulevard (Figure 5.13). Whilst not the most deprived or violent area of the city, it suffers from high levels of unemployment and is generally socio-economically marginalised. In March 1997, the local "Building Together Citizens' Association" contacted the United Nations Development Project Local Initiative Facility for the Urban Environment (UNDP-LIFE) in Kingston, requesting assistance in improving the environmental situation in the community. In this letter, they reported that "Our community is a depressed one and we would like to upgrade same. Many homes does not have lavatory facilities and when

[23] "Gas Station Blows" *Daily Gleaner* 27/03/01.

[24] The information in this section was obtained from visiting the community, interviewing members of the Building Together Citizens' Association and staff at UNDP LIFE, and reviewing documents and proposals produced by these organisations about Drewsland.

people defecate they throw same in the gully. We need to organize clean and healthy lifestyle in our community but without your help we cannot do so".

Figure 5.11
Part of the Drewsland community



Ongoing involvement and research by UNDP-LIFE enabled the citizens' association to produce a list of "Poor Sanitation and Environmental Practices in the Drewsland Community". The problems identified were:

- Irregular garbage collection system
- Improper garbage disposal
- Garbage in gully and gully cleaning
- Rat infestation
- Industrial waste from dairy factory
- Smelting and other environmentally unfriendly operations
- Homes without toilets and the dumping of human waste in the gully.

A particular problem in this area was air pollution from informal metal smelting operations (Figure 5.12). In these operations, furnaces are created by burning waste engine oil, a process producing thick black smoke. Scrap metal (usually aluminium) is melted down, and used to produce pots, pans, spoons and other metal objects. Reports suggest that between three and eight such operations are located in the area of Drewsland. Concerns have been raised about the health and safety of those who work in these plants, as well as their impact on the health of the community, particularly children.

Figure 5.12
Working conditions in an unregulated smelting operation



A further problem associated with this practice is the dumping of waste metal in the gully. However, as well as providing employment for community members, these small operations represent one of very few examples of recycling taking place in Jamaica, and provide cheap locally-produced utensils to Jamaicans, thus reducing the need to buy more expensive imported products.

The area also suffers from inadequate sanitation facilities. A survey undertaken (at an unspecified time) found that approximately 50 households had no toilet facilities at all, and many others had only a hole in the ground with a drum in it. Human waste was therefore frequently dealt with by "parachuting", in which plastic bags containing this were swung into the gully. As municipal garbage collection was irregular, much household waste was also deposited in the gully. This situation was compounded by industrial waste being pumped into the gully, and by trucks from factories elsewhere dumping chicken fat and boxes into the gully at night. Although the lighter household and human waste would have been washed away with rainfall, the presence of heavier industrial waste eventually caused the gully to become blocked. It was also stressed to me that the people who live in closest proximity to the gully do not dump their waste there, as they are aware of the consequences of this.

The blockage of the gully led to particular problems with an infestation of rats, with the *Daily Gleaner* reporting that "Drewsland needs a Pied Piper"[25]. The accumulation of garbage in the Sandy Gully provided a breeding ground for what the residents reported as "twelve-inch rats, with tails twice as long", who were not even afraid of cats ("Dem nuh fraid of the puss as sometimes they are even bigger than the puss and not even we dem 'fraid of"). According to one resident, the rats would come into people's houses, knock the tops off pots which were on the stove, and eat the food inside. Residents had contracted meningitis and leptospirosis as a result of rats contaminating food, whilst another woman had "nearly lost her fingers and toes after rats climbed into her bed one night".

[25] "Drewsland needs a Pied Piper" *Daily Gleaner* 23/02/00.

The community eventually managed to clean up the gully, receiving assistance from the Jamaica Defence Force, but not from the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation or Metropolitan Parks and Markets (the organisations formally responsible for this). A revolving loan project has been put in place which has provided some citizens with money to build basic septic pits and toilet facilities, and between April 1999 and July 2000, 17 beneficiaries were loaned amounts of between Ja$16,000 and Ja$50,000 (approximately £300-£800) for this purpose. Although there have been marked improvements in the environmental situation in the community, dumping continues to take place and there are still households without sanitary facilities. The revolving loan project has almost come to a standstill, as there has been great difficulty in reclaiming the capital which was originally paid out.

Drewsland was not chosen as an example of an area with particularly severe environmental problems. However, it does serve as an example of the ways in which a variety of seemingly discrete issues can combine to have a huge and detrimental impact on the qualities of people's lives.

Methods of Exploration II: focus group research

The environmental issues described above are not evenly spread geographically or socially in the Kingston Metropolitan Area. They affect different groups of people in different ways depending on the resources they have at their disposal and their abilities to deal with these problems. This section of the research focuses attention on the particular problems which groups in different locations feel to be the most important for their communities and the city.

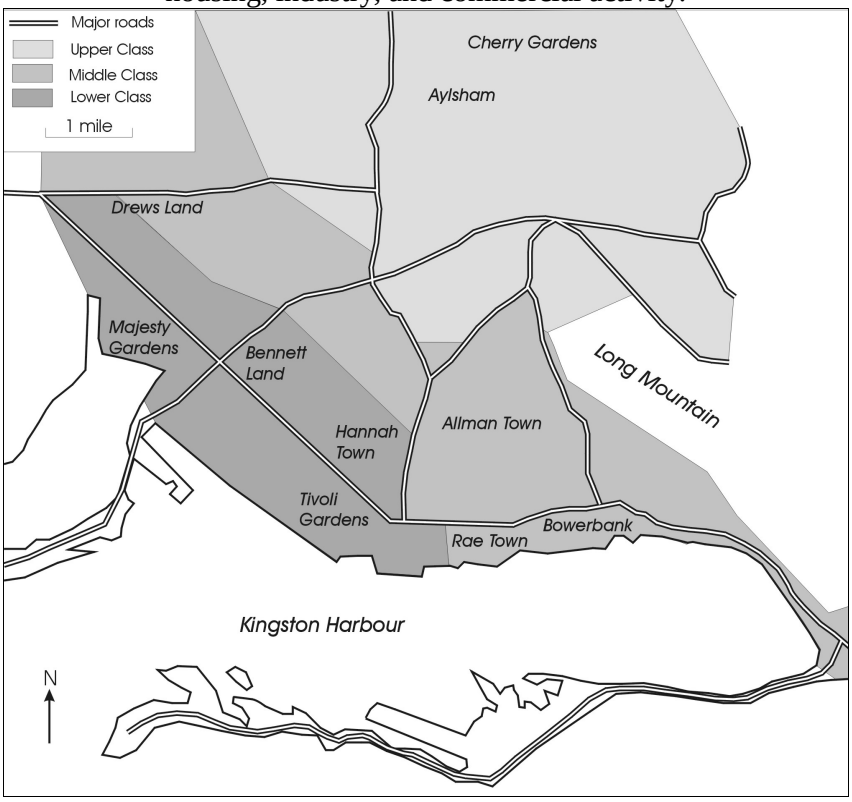
Despite the contested nature of participatory approaches to development projects (as described in Chapter 3), these projects have pioneered innovative ways of conducting research in situations in which traditional methods are inadequate or impossible. In this part of the study, I utilised techniques broadly aligned with Participatory Rapid Appraisal / Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA), particularly as developed by Robert Chambers (1983, 1997). In contrast to other environmental assessment techniques, participatory appraisal prioritises the political aspects of local environmental problems, and utilises NGOs and other community organisations as the fora for research rather than government offices or universities (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 124). The specific methods used follow those suggested by various international and Jamaican organisations for participatory research in communities (e.g. Pretty *et al* 1995, Charlesworth and Rodwell 1997). These techniques involve working with groups, in order for concepts to be suggested and discussed by a variety of participants, as well as to provide an opportunity to observe the ways in which power relations within these groups operate. They also stress the use of visual methods, in which diagrams and drawings are used to both generate and record discussions.

This research was conducted in nine focus group meetings in December 2001 and January 2002. Seven of these addressed environmental problems in their own communities, and the other two discussed environmental problems in the city as a whole. Although these all covered similar material, the very nature of this sort of activity precludes accurate replication of methods. Indeed, some of the group sessions took place in extremely fluid settings in which different participants came and left, and in locations as varied as upper St Andrew verandahs and street corners in informal settlements (Figure 5.13). The participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds, and were from very different age

groups (Figure 5.14). These data were supplemented by information gathered from surveys conducted by the Government of Jamaica's Social Development Commission (SDC) in two communities (Allman Town and Tivoli Gardens). These surveys addressed more general issues of community development, and the inclusion of these data enables an examination of the linkages between 'environmental' and more general problems facing the residents of Kingston.

Figure 5.13

Map of Kingston showing communities referred to in Chapter 5 and main socio-economic divisions. The divisions are obviously much more complicated than shown here: the area depicted as "Middle Class" is particularly heterogenous, and also incorporates areas of low quality housing, industry, and commercial activity.



[source: 1960 census data, unpublished non-aggregated 1991 census data, 2002 aerial photographs, personal observation]

Figure 5.14
Groups involved in focus group research

Community and Location of Meeting	Description of Group and Community
Aylsham (Private House)	• Group of professional women and housewives, meeting in one of their homes • Middle-class neighbourhood in uptown Kingston
Bennett Land (S-Corner Clinic)	• Group of citizens involved with S-Corner Clinic, a community development organisation / NGO • Deprived downtown community, between Spanish Town Road and Maxfield Avenue
Bowerbank (Windward Court Basic School)	• Group of citizens gathered by a community leader • Deprived downtown community, south of Windward Road, but with many local and international NGOs and infrastructure projects
Cherry Gardens (Private House)	• Strata meeting for a housing development • Luxurious new gated community, located in the most prestigious part of Kingston, inhabited mainly by high-ranking professionals
Hannah Town (M) (Edith Dalton James Community College)	• Woodwork students at a vocational training college (all male, aged 16-18), some of whom live in the community and some of whom do not • Deprived and violent community in the heart of West Kingston
Hannah Town (F) (Edith Dalton James Community College)	• Dressmaking students at a vocational training college (all female, aged 16-18), some of whom live in the community and some of whom do not • Deprived and violent community in the heart of West Kingston
Majesty Gardens (Street Corner)	• Residents of the community at a "cook shop" bar / restaurant, facilitated by staff at the local Community Development Organisation (who also live in the community) • Deprived community in West Kingston (near Three Miles); part of the community has proper houses, but the part in which the focus group took place is made up entirely of 'shacks'
Rae Town (Fishing Cooperative Building)	• Members of the Rae Town Fishing Cooperative (primarily male) • Poor community located on Kingston Harbour, but less deprived than many due to fishing and music industries
Schools Environment Network (Jamaica Environment Trust, Half Way Tree Road)	• Members of the Schools Environment Network, a body facilitated by the Jamaican Environment Trust (a large environmental NGO); primarily 5th and 6th Form students • Non-geographic group, students from a variety of backgrounds, all of whom attend school in Kingston

A similar programme was followed with each group. This began with an introduction to the research project, and a brief description of the format of the meeting. The first activity was brainstorming – the members of the group were asked to identify the environmental issues that affect the area being examined, with the aim of enabling the group themselves to identify the problems in their surroundings. These issues were written up on flipchart paper, and the whole sessions (when possible) were recorded and transcribed.

This was followed by an exercise of preference ranking, using a matrix system. The issues identified in the brainstorming were written along both the horizontal and the vertical axes, and each issue was paired against each other issue. The group was asked the question: "Which of the two issues being compared is most important?" or, if this did not provoke discussion or caused confusion, "If you could only address one of these two issues, which would it be?". The discussion was noted, and where possible the group came to some form of consensus about which of the two issues was more important. This was repeated until all issues had been addressed. The issues were ranked according to which had been chosen as being more important the most often, and the results were discussed. It must be stressed that although the actual 'results' are of interest and facilitate comparisons between the different groups, the content of the discussion is also of great relevance, as this provides an understanding of the ways in which decisions are made and the processes by which people relate to their surroundings. The meeting concluded with discussions about the actors and stakeholders involved in environmental management, reported in Chapter 6.

I deliberately avoided defining 'the environment' in these exercises, or indeed at any point in this study. Although I am interested in the ways in which the physical environment in Kingston is changing, in this study I am primarily concerned with the ways in which discourses of environmental problems are mobilised in social debates. This can be understood through exploring the ways in which different groups construct urban environmental issues, and investigating the understandings of 'the environment' held by different sets of individuals.

Constructions of Environmental Problems in Kingston

Seven of the groups took part in discussions about the main issues they identified as environmental problems in their communities, identifying a total of 27 different issues. In these discussions, ten environmental problems were identified by two or more groups (Figure 5.15). The methodology also enabled these problems to be prioritised, as they were not only named, but also ranked by the different groups – Figure 5.15 also includes this information, with 1 representing the most highly ranked problem from any given group (full results are in Appendix 3**)**. This table includes some grouping: for example, smoke from burning of garbage refuse (Aylsham) has been placed with smoke from the incinerator at the Kingston Public Hospital (Hannah Town (M)) under the topic of 'pollution'. However, the problem of 'dumping' identified in Aylsham has been retained as separate from the 'garbage' problems identified elsewhere, as it primarily referred to the dumping of garden waste in communal areas rather than the non-collection of household waste.

The two remaining groups followed a slightly different format, by focussing on the environmental problems facing the city as a whole rather than specific locations, and the data from these is not included in the table below. In addition, 17 problems were identified by only one of the groups, and are possibly examples of more localised problems (Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.15
Environmental Problems identified by more than one Focus Group

Unemp-loyment	Water	Toilets	Poor Housing	Garbage	Lack of Education	Pollution	War / Violence	Electricity	Drainage / Sewage
Bower-bank (1)									
Bennett Land (2)	Hannah Town (F) (1)	Bennett Land (3)	Majesty Gardens (2)						
Hannah Town (F) (2)	Hannah Town (M) (1)	Majesty Gardens (3)	Bower-bank (3)	Bennett Land (3)	Bennett Land (1)	Aylsham (6)			
Hannah Town (M) (3)	Bennett Land (3)	Hannah Town (M) (5)	Rae Town (3)	Hannah Town (M) (8)	Rae Town (1)	Rae Town (7)	Hannah Town (M) (1)	Majesty Gardens (4)	
Majesty Gardens (4)	Aylsham (5)	Bower-bank (8)	Hannah Town (M) (6)	Hannah Town (F) (9)	Hannah Town (M) (3)	Hannah Town (M) (8)	Bennett Land (6)	Bower-bank (7)	Majesty Gardens (1)
Rae Town (5)	Bower-bank (6)	Rae Town (8)	Bennett Land (7)	Rae Town (9)	Bower-bank (4/5)*	Hannah Town (F) (11)	Hannah Town (F) (6)	Hannah Town (M) (7)	Bower-bank (9)

* the Bowerbank group listed 'lack of skills' at 4, and 'illiteracy' at 5.

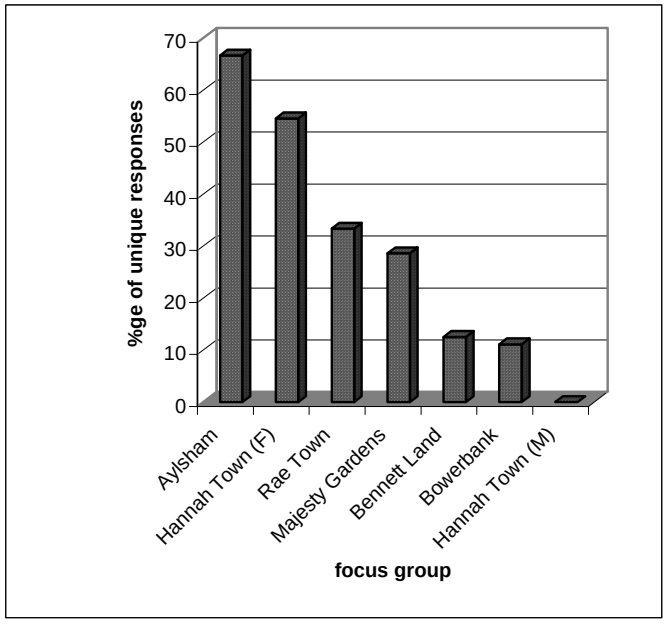
Figure 5.16
Environmental Problems identified by a single focus group

Problem	Group	Ranking
Dumping	Aylsham	1
Mosquitoes	Aylsham	2
Stray Animals	Aylsham	3
Cars 'Racing'	Aylsham	4
Overcrowding	Bennett Land	8
Lack of Communication	Bowerbank	2
Food	Hannah Town (F)	3
Poor Policing	Hannah Town (F)	3
Street Boys	Hannah Town (F)	5
Drugs	Hannah Town (F)	6
No Human Rights	Hannah Town (F)	6
Transport	Hannah Town (F)	10
Bad Roads	Majesty Gardens	5
No telephones	Majesty Gardens	5
"No love in the youth"	Rae Town	2
No community centre	Rae Town	3
Need bigger boats for fishing	Rae Town	5

The proportion of the problems identified which were shared with other groups varied greatly between the groups (Figure 5.17). Whereas all of the problems identified by the

Hannah Town (M) group were also identified by other groups, two-thirds of the problems identified by the group of women in Aylsham were unique to these participants. The only other group in which more than half of the topics were unique was the female group from Hannah Town (6 out of 11 topics mentioned).

Figure 5.17
Proportion of responses 'unique' to each group



Unusual Groups

The very high proportion of responses unique to the group of women in the uptown suburban area of Aylsham suggests that this community experiences a very different set of environmental problems than the other communities involved. The issue of dumping was identified as the most important environmental problem affecting the community. Although the dumping of garbage in gullies was mentioned, much of the discussion referred to the disposal of garden waste, and focussed on the aesthetic issues related to this. Much of the blame for this problem was placed on the gardeners working in the community, with one participant complaining that "the gardeners – despite all you do and say – they throw it over the open land", although another did recognise that the

householders were also responsible, suggesting that "we have more control over the dumping – I suppose if we follow up our gardeners and check that they do what we say". The issues of mosquitoes, stray animals, and cars 'racing' on the streets around the neighbourhood were also mentioned solely by this group. Residents in this area have also campaigned to seek a court injunction preventing the erection of a new cellular telephone mast[26], although this concern was not mentioned by the group. However, this group's concern with water availability was shared with four of the downtown communities involved.

The only other group in which more than half of the topics identified were unique was also the only other group made up entirely of female participants. This has implications both for the understanding of gender as a factor affecting experiences of the urban environment, as well as for questioning the validity of participatory methodologies which typically treat the community as a homogeneous entity. This group, the dressmaking students at the Edith Dalton James Community College, identified food, poor policing, street boys, drugs, no human rights, and transport as environmental problems affecting the Hannah Town community. Although this group mentioned violence as a problem, they saw poor policing and the presence of "street boys" as causes of this: "there is a lot of police that are not doing their job", and "you have a lot of street boys on the street that need to go to school, because some of them that are not going to school can become gunman". The issues of human rights and the drug problem were also seen as part of a broader set of social problems affecting the lives of individuals in the community. These young women were also particularly aware of occasional limitations in food supplies, represented by scarcity or high costs in the markets – it is likely that they, rather than their male counterparts

[26] "More residents oppose erection of cell site" *Daily Gleaner* 17/04/02.

involved in a similar course of study, have responsibility for the practical aspects of feeding family members.

Unemployment and lack of education as environmental problems

Unemployment was mentioned as an environmental problem by all six of the groups which met in downtown communities, as well as in the discussion of the issues preventing development in Allman Town (also a downtown community). However, it was not mentioned by the group in Aylsham or by either of the groups that discussed the environmental problems in the city as a whole. In general, it also tended to be identified as one of the more important problems facing the community. One participant in the Bowerbank discussion, (a senior male) spoke at length about this issue:

> Unemployment is one of the major problems here… Even though there are times when agencies come in and give lectures or give training to members of the community, especially the young people, they are not willing to put full participation in it and that is what cause a lot of the environment that develops in our communities. Because you have quite a lot of teenagers in our community that if they would just at least stick to a skill they would at least become more better people, you know, more what you call it, have a much more better community relationships. Because they go out and they learn a skill and it helps them to earn a dollar or two. For instance, Mr S there. He wasn't employed you know, he was going to school too. I think he feel like learning a skill or preparing himself to get a job out there is something that he had to do. But many of the other young people there they not willing to… What is one of our main problems is that no-one is responsible and if you don't have responsibility in our community you will have a lot of environment… For instance, if I go out there and I earn $2000 for the week[27], I can come in and give my mother $500 and give my baby $500 and keep $1000 for myself… three people that would help.

[27] $2000 is slightly more than the national minimum wage for a week's work, and was worth approximately £30 at the time of the research.

Unemployment was also mentioned as a barrier preventing other issues from being dealt with. In several groups it was mentioned that employment would enable people to provide certain facilities (such as toilets) for themselves, and that in this way unemployment caused the environmental problems. As one woman in Bennett Land expressed, “mi would work – for mi can work fi put a pipe inna mi house, inna mi yard”, meaning that if she had employment she would be able to pay for a water connection into her home. Unemployment was also linked with patterns of violence, with one male student in Hannah Town commenting that “right now, the reason so much gunshot a fire is unemployment”.

This problem of unemployment was not seen in isolation, but in several cases was linked with problems with education. Indeed, in two cases (Bennett Land and Rae Town), lack of education was identified as the most important environmental problem in the community. In several cases, the linkages between employment and education were discussed in depth, as were the linkages between employment and violence, although these were sometimes seen to be complex, as evidenced in this discussion between the male students in Hannah Town:

- You see – if you solve the problem of education, you solve kind of everything
- But wah dem a go do wid education if dem dead-off?
- But if dem educate before dem nah go turn to di gun.

The lack of education was also linked more directly with other environmental problems, with one participant in Rae Town explaining that “if yuh don’t have education, yuh don’t know how to keep the toilet clean, or the garbage, or anything.” However, in Bennett Land there was considerable discussion between the male and female participants as to whether education or water supply was more important. The female participants placed the priority

on the immediate issue of water availability, perhaps because these participants are most responsible for the physical burdens of carrying water from standpipes. However, after a somewhat heated discussion, the male viewpoint that addressing the problems related to education was more important prevailed. Were this mechanism to have been used to actually set priorities for community development, the women's priorities for physical infrastructural development would have been sidelined. The participatory approach may therefore marginalise particular viewpoints because of micro-political inequalities inherent in groups and communities.

Water and sanitation

Together, these issues were mentioned by all of the groups, although the emphasis differed between the supply of clean water and the removal of dirty water. The Allman Town group identified this as one of the problems preventing development in that community, and the SEN and Cherry Gardens groups both identified sewage as a major environmental issue in Kingston. Several groups mentioned that "water is life", the motto of Jamaica's National Water Commission, and one participant from Bowerbank explained that although substitutes could be found for some other resources, there was no substitute for water.

However, the importance ascribed to water and sanitation problems varied between the groups. In the suburban community of Aylsham, water was identified as the second lowest priority following the pairwise ranking exercise. The problem with water supply was one of temporal inadequacy, in which water shortages occur in certain months of the year, resulting in temporary lock-offs. The occasional brown colour of the water was also a cause for concern. This was identified as affecting "every aspect of what we do, from flushing the toilet to washing your hands, just proper hygiene, it affects everything". In

contrast, the water supply problems in the poorer communities had both a temporal and a spatial component. In Bennett Land, for example, “yuh have to walk far to get water”, and water could be scarce because of ‘gang warfare’ preventing people from leaving their own yards to fetch water from a standpipe on an adjacent street. Irregularity of supply was also an issue in some places: a male student in Hannah Town explained that “wi have water, yes, but more time it go weh… sometime it barely a drip-drip-drip”. In some of these locations water supply was identified as the most important environmental problem facing the community.

Problems with toilet facilities, sanitation, and sewage were also mentioned. In several cases, the problem was related to toilets not functioning properly, or to the inadequate number of toilets in the community. This caused a variety of problems, such as a lack of privacy, described by a member of the Bowerbank community as “the toilets, bathrooms, washrooms – whatever you call it. Not all of them is properly working inside here, and all of them is overcrowded… you can never have privacy really in the ghetto”. It could also result in the improper disposal of human waste: “wi need toilet more cause some people all use the toilet a turn garbage… what mi mean by dat, dem faeces in a scandal bag[28] and jus a throw it on the road, or open land” (male student, Hannah Town). Yet these complaints were not simply a request for assistance, as in many cases education and employment were seen as more important problems. In general, the people wished to be employed in order to be able to provide sanitary facilities for themselves: “when yuh get a work yuh can buy yuh own toilet” (male, Rae Town). As the case study from Drewsland shows, people are anxious to invest their own time and money in order to provide themselves with toilets.

[28] “Scandal bag” is the Jamaican term for a plastic bag, so called because the plastic is transparent and it is possible to see what is being carried in it.

Although Bowerbank had suffered from major problems with raw sewage in the past, some infrastructural development had taken place which alleviated this problem. In Majesty Gardens, however, sewage was identified as the major environmental problem in the area. Although the meeting held here could not be recorded (it took place in a cook shop / rum bar with a sound system blaring nearby), my field notes from the time recall:

> A relatively small gully forms the eastern border of the community. The gully receives waste from various factories (canned goods, cosmetics, etc), but the outlet to the sea is blocked. Because of this, the gully is half-full of stagnant liquid (water?), almost black in colour with a large amount of waste matter (including dead animals) floating in it. It appears that this gully is a major concern for the inhabitants of Majesty Gardens – whenever it rains the gully overflows and the effluent spills into the paths and into people's houses.

Figure 5.18
Pigs in the gully bordering Majesty Gardens



Although many of the other communities face serious environmental and social problems, the appearance and stench of the blocked gully in this location were in particularly close proximity to people's houses (which were primarily wooden and zinc shacks), and

possibly represent some of the most unpleasant environmental conditions in the city (Figure 5.18).

Poor housing conditions

Poor housing conditions were mentioned as an environmental problem in five of the six downtown communities. These were seen as being particularly important in Majesty Gardens, Bowerbank, and Rae Town, where much of the housing stock is in poor condition. This situation was also frequently linked with inadequate toilet facilities, as it was assumed that if housing conditions were upgraded that indoor plumbing would be included. People also expected that addressing the problems of unemployment would enable them to improve the standard of their own homes.

The physical standard of a house was judged to be important for both practical and emotional reasons. It was seen to be important to have a house capable of withstanding the elements, which in some cases includes the hazards of gunfire: the young men in Hannah Town explained how bullets could pass through walls made of wood and harm people inside a building. Wooden houses were also judged to be vulnerable to the risk of fire, leading one man in Majesty Gardens to express his feeling that "wi waan fi live inna concrete". Proper housing conditions also create peace of mind, enabling more productive employment to be found. A participatory research facilitator who had been working in Allman Town explained that:

> If you do not live in a proper house then it affects the mind. If you are even employed, then you are probably wondering when it rains what will happen to my furniture… you will be wondering how long will this house last, how long before it collapses? And as long as you are not living comfortably then you are unable to produce at work and school in the way that you should.

Pollution and garbage

Although widely mentioned, these problems did not score highly in the pairwise ranking exercise. It appears that whilst they are commonplace, they are not viewed as requiring such urgent attention as the problems of unemployment, water, and sewage. Air pollution from the burning of garden waste was identified as a problem in Aylsham, although this was ranked as the least important problem overall, and it was recognised that other places in the KMA had more serious problems of this sort: "I really don't think people burn in their yards like how they do in Mona". The only other group that specifically mentioned air pollution was the male students in Hannah Town, who identified smoke from the incinerator at the Kingston Public Hospital (KPH) as a problem. One participant vividly described the situation as: "KPH smoke come over – when baby born and die, or dem cut off a man hand or him foot, dem have something what dem burn it in and di smoke come over and nasty up wi clothes and wi house, bad smell, everyting." Despite the horrendous nature of this description, this was ranked as the least important of the problems identified in this location.

Pollution of Kingston Harbour was identified as a problem by the fishing co-operative in Rae Town. Although this community borders the harbour, and the pollution has affected livelihoods by requiring fishing to be carried out further from the shore, this problem was not ranked highly in the pairwise ranking exercise. The sources of the pollution were identified as the General Penitentiary (Kingston's main prison, officially known as the Tower Street Correctional Institution), businesses located on the coastline, and the four main gullies which empty into the Harbour. Because of these gullies, it was noted that "when the rain fall is when yuh get the most garbage in the harbour." Large ships were also blamed for polluting the harbour: "ship come in the harbour more time, and changing

their engine oil, and jus a dump it in the harbour… Dem let it out a night and di current push it and yuh doan know which part it coming from. Cover di shore and di net." The problems of the pollution of the harbour were also linked to broader problems of garbage disposal, which were explained as "pollution is jus like di garbage yuh know – when yuh a deal wid pollution is di garbage yuh a deal wid".

Garbage was also not ranked as a major problem. In some cases, this was because this issue had already been addressed – large skips had been placed at the entrance to the Bowerbank community, and I was assured that all community members were conscientiously depositing their refuse in these. However, the description given by a woman in Bennett Land ("True di garbage deh deh, and dem doan collect di garbage on time, it breed rats… and up to when you see a girl baby, and it bite up the baby, and the baby have to admit into childrens hospital") may explain why the problem was thought to be more serious here.

Crime and violence

Crime and violence were not necessarily seen as environmental problems, and two of the three groups that identified this issue gave it a relatively low ranking in terms of importance. However, the young men in Hannah Town identified this as the most important environmental problem facing their community. Young men in inner-city communities are the group who are most likely to be affected by violent crime, and are therefore potentially the most aware of this as a serious, indeed life-threatening, problem. In Bennett Land, consequences of violence included the inability to go to the standpipe to collect water and difficulties in leaving home to travel to a place of work or school. The male students in Hannah Town seemed to believe that crime and violence were

determining factors in preventing them from receiving education or employment. The frequency of gun violence was also deemed to be a particular problem, as shown by the comments when the problems of water and violence were compared: “A nuh like water gaan every single day, but gunshot every day. Every day all five somebody dead by the gun.” “Every day somebody dead by gunshot.” The uniqueness of this experience shows clearly how different problems affect different groups, and that the effects of age, gender, and location all play a part in this.

Metaphysical environmental problems

Several of the groups also identified more ephemeral concepts as being major environmental issues or having important environmental consequences. The female students in Hannah Town were concerned about “no human rights”, whereas the group in Bowerbank complained about the “lack of communication”. One male participant in this group summed up this issue as follows:

> Let me just add one more to the list of environmental problems… the lack of communication… To sum that all in a nutshell, the time change and most person of those who is older now, to just put it into the word ‘respect’… Where there is no respect the communication break down, and without communication nothing can function.

The Rae Town group poetically identified “no love in the youth” as a major issue affecting that community. One member of the group suggested that because members of the community recognise this problem and consciously seek to alleviate it, levels of violence are low compared to other inner-city areas: “if you check most community, more war inna it dan dis community.” In the survey of Allman Town (see below), “lack of self-motivation”, “community persons too dependent on government” and “youth not focussed on what they want in life” were identified as barriers to community development.

These concerns show a very deep appreciation for the ultimate causes of social problems and environmental degradation. Whilst the surface conditions are observed, and possible fixes for the proximate causes of these can be identified, the ultimate causes of environmental problems are thought to be deeply rooted in social patterns. Unemployment was widely seen as an environmental problem, as this reduces the potential for individuals to act positively in their surroundings. From the upper St Andrew affluence of Cherry Gardens, where it was suggested that only by addressing the values and attitudes of the population of Kingston could environmental problems be solved, to the shores of Kingston Harbour at Rae Town where "love in the youth" is thought to be a central issue, there is a belief that addressing individual attitudes and behaviour is an essential component of environmental improvement. There is undoubtedly some truth in these perceptions, and in the role of individual agency. However, much of this seems also to be associated with moralistic discourses, focussing on the role of 'others' (in the case of Cherry Gardens, implicitly the poor; in the case of Rae Town and Allman Town, explicitly the young), which belong with other deterministic discourses such as Oscar Lewis' "Culture of Poverty". It is noteworthy that none of the groups mentioned structural issues, patterns of governance, or government responsibilities as root causes of the environmental problems facing their community or city.

Barriers to community development

Participatory Learning and Action exercises have been undertaken in many communities in Kingston. These have tended to focus on community problems in general rather than environmental issues in particular. Figure 5.19 shows the problems (in priority order) as identified in two of these communities, Tivoli Gardens and Allman Town. Tivoli Gardens is a very deprived community in West Kingston, and the data here is taken from the Tivoli

Gardens Development Plan, produced by the Tivoli Gardens Development Committee in association with the Social Development Commission (SDC). Allman Town is a working class community located near the National Heroes Park in East Kingston. The data from this community were also collected by the SDC, and were obtained through attending a meeting of the Allman Town Combined Citizens Association.

Figure 5.19
Community Problems in Allman Town and Tivoli Gardens (in order of priority)

Allman Town	Tivoli Gardens
• Lack of proper housing structures • Lack of proper sanitary facilities • Inadequate garbage collection procedure • Lack of employment • Crime and violence • Lack of self motivation • Community persons too dependent on government • Youth not focussed on what they want in life • Lack of health clinic • Malfunctioning street lights	• Unemployment • Gullies need cleaning • Inadequate water supply • Police brutality • Crime and violence • Healthcare (need for maternity clinic) • Bad road condition • Street lighting poor • Lack of street signs • Inadequate housing condition • Manholes need covering • Undevelopment of basic school • Inadequate recreational facilities (park renovation) • Zinc fences • Blocked drains

The similarities between these lists and those provided by the groups which were explicitly addressing environmental problems are enlightening. Many of the general problems identified are specifically linked with urban environmental issues, such as sanitation, water supply, garbage collection, and urban parks. General discussion in a community meeting I attended in Allman Town also addressed environmental issues, such as the problem of mosquitoes in a local basic school which was linked to the presence of stagnant water in the adjacent gully and had caused health problems for some of the children attending this school. Similarly, those groups which were specifically looking at environmental problems saw these in a broader framework of urban and community development. It is increasingly

evident that social and environmental processes in the city are not just linked, but are perceived as being closely related by the citizens themselves.

Views of environmental problems in Kingston

Two groups discussed environmental problems for the entire city of Kingston: a group of people living in a newly built executive gated community in Cherry Gardens, and a group of young environmentalists who were members of the Schools Environment Network (SEN). SEN is a project of the Jamaica Environment Trust, a leading local environmental NGO. The priorities which these groups identified for Kingston are shown in Figure 5.20.

Figure 5.20
The most important environmental issues in Kingston (in order of priority)

Cherry Gardens Citizens	**Schools Environment Network**
• Values and Attitudes • Security • Sewage • Garbage • Kingston Harbour • Noise pollution • Drainage • Dust	• Solid waste management • Kingston Harbour • Sewage treatment • Air pollution • Hazardous waste • CFCs

In Cherry Gardens, the participants noted that most of these problems do not have a direct effect on their home lives, with the exception of noise pollution (mainly from traffic and from dogs barking). However, several of the participants carried out business in downtown areas, which exposes them to many more of these problems. The SEN participants identified the interconnected nature of many of the problems they identified, notably the problems of solid waste management, sewage treatment, and the pollution of Kingston Harbour.

Neither group identified unemployment or a lack of education as environmental problems for the city – possibly because these would not be included in their understandings of the environment. Both groups also failed to see poor housing conditions as urban environmental problems. Whilst they did identify problems with sewage, this was not placed in the context of sanitation and the lack of adequate toilet facilities for many people in Kingston, but rather the more public problems of sewage in drains and gullies. Similarly, water supply was not seen to be a problem, although many of the downtown communities placed this as the most important issue affecting these locations. This suggests that although more affluent or more environmentally conscious groups are aware of many of the environmental problems facing Kingston, they are not aware of the smaller-scale water and sanitation related issues which have a daily impact on the lives of many citizens. Whilst their environmental knowledge is not solely confined to the 'green agenda', it fails to take individual struggles over issues with direct impacts on human health and livelihoods into account. The perceptions of these relatively powerful actors is likely to have a disproportionate impact on environmental decision-making, potentially retarding improved living conditions for many in the city.

Summary

The environmental problems facing Kingston are similar to those of many other lower middle-income urban economies. These include low levels of sanitation and sewage treatment, poor drainage, severe water pollution, severe urban air pollution from vehicle emissions and use of low quality fuels, inadequate solid waste collection and disposal, lack of hazardous waste management, ineffective zoning regulations, and frequent disasters due to natural and other hazards (Williams 1997). As shown above, the issues which cause most concern among members of poorer communities in Kingston are primarily related to

the problems of sanitation provision and solid waste management. It is noteworthy that members of these communities are concerned with receiving opportunities to address some of these problems personally, particularly through employment which would provide them with the money to improve their own sanitary facilities. Whilst these same problems were identified by groups taking a broader view of the city, these tended to focus on larger-scale, more abstract problems, rather than on the everyday conditions which these inflicted on poorer groups of citizens.

There are hints of moralistic discourse from wealthier groups in the society, and even from sub-groups within communities who are more powerful on the micro-scale. The pattern of blaming those who are worse off or less powerful (such as the poor and the young) appears in several cases. The general willingness to take personal responsibility for improving certain conditions should not be seen as the panacea to Kingston's environmental problems. For example, the proliferation of small-scale sanitary solutions involving the construction of soak-away pits will increase groundwater pollution, and in certain locations may further harm the ecosystems of Kingston Harbour. Whilst it is commendable for people to wish to take charge of their own situations, structural support is also essential for these to achieve any degree of environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter have shown that perceptions of the urban environment and the precise problems faced vary socio-spatially across the Kingston Metropolitan Area. Environmental problems cannot be separated from the feelings which the inhabitants of Kingston have towards the city. The many environmental problems, some of them serious, reported by people living in different areas of the city are surely an influence on the

relatively negative feelings recorded towards Kingston in the assessment of perceptions of different locations.

In some cases, Kingston's environmental problems are very different from those considered to be the norm in Third World cities. Rapid urban population growth is often thought to cause important economic, social and environmental problems in relatively small cities, and to overstretch the limited capacities of urban and national authorities (Drakakis-Smith 1995). However, the population of central Kingston has declined in the post-independence period, although localised overcrowding is still a problem. Yet in other cases, Kingston appears to be a text-book example. McGranahan *et al* (1999: 131) suggest that "the most severe environmental health problems are closely interrelated and found predominantly in low-income homes and neighbourhoods", a situation which seems to be corroborated by the information gained from focus groups in Kingston. Structural adjustment projects also appear to have had negative impacts on the environment due to a progressive disempowerment of the poor (Redclift 1995), although it must also be stressed that the total transfer of control and responsibility to poor urban residents cannot be seen as the solution to this problem. Indeed, transferring responsibility to powerless groups may over-stretch their abilities, and consequently cause further disempowerment.

Williams (1995) identifies the different problems facing urban centres in low income urban economies, lower middle-income urban economies, upper middle-income urban economies, and high income urban economies; whereas Satterthwaite (1997: 216) explains how environmental transformations can occur in cities "as they get larger, wealthier, and better managed". However, these approaches focus on large-scale and temporal differentiation; whereas in the case of Kingston a much smaller scale spatial differentiation

occurs. The wealthier suburban areas of Kingston enjoy extremely pleasant environmental surroundings, whereas the poorest inner-city areas continue to experience the characteristic problems of low income urban economies including the lack of basic environmental services such as water supply, sanitation, drainage, and solid waste collection. In between, there are communities which experience one or more of the problems of low levels of sewage treatment, air pollution, and inadequate solid waste management.

Conflicts may also occur between proponents of the 'brown' and the 'green' environmental agendas, with the general feeling being that poor urban residents are more likely to be concerned with the first of these, and more affluent citizens with the latter. These rigid dichotomies do not appear to function in quite this way in Kingston. For example, whereas McGranahan and Satterthwaite (2000) suggest that the brown agenda is characterised by the idea of working with people, and the green agenda by the idea of educating people, most groups in Kingston appear to be more drawn towards the latter opinion. Conversely, the brown agenda is thought to be concerned with the inadequate provision for collection and removal of solid waste and the green agenda with the excessive generation of waste, and most groups in Kingston appear to be more inclined towards the former. Mohai (2003) refutes the myth that African Americans are less concerned about the environment than white Americans[29], and the data presented here suggest that the view that environmental problems in Jamaica are primarily a middle-class concern is also false.

[29] Reporting, for example, that according to the United States' *General Social Survey* "for most years, blacks were more likely than were whites to say that we spend too little improving and protecting the environment" (Mohai 2003: 13).

These alliances and decisions do not take place solely in the realm of environmental discussions, but are intricately linked with economic and social considerations. Indeed, while it can be argued that some of the problems identified by the groups in Kingston are not environmental because they do not refer directly to the physical surroundings, it may also be misleading to refer to the conditions of the physical surroundings as environmental problems. These are problems of access, which "arise not from some particular shortage of an environmental resource (such as land or freshwater) but from economic or political factors which prevent poorer groups from obtaining them and from organizing to demand them" (Hardoy *et al* 1992: 204). Urban power relations and decision-making structures form the sites at which these mutually influencing issues are negotiated. Discussions of this sort can never be entirely objective, and rely heavily on the subjective feelings and representations of the city held by participants. Simultaneously, urban environmental problems cannot be understood or addressed without engaging with political relationships. For this reason, in the next chapter I turn away from the actual problems identified in Kingston, towards an examination of the actors and power relationships behind these.

Chapter 6

Power in the Urban Environment: an actor-centred approach

Introduction

The previous chapters have introduced the lived experiences of a variety of individuals and groups in Kingston, and have explored the ways in which these people discursively and materially construct the city around themselves. This has been based on privileging the viewpoints of groups that have frequently been marginalised in official discourses and academic literature alike. Rather than 'scientifically' documenting the urban environmental problems of the city, these problems have been displayed from the perspectives of the people most affected by them, an approach which takes the into account the understanding that the urban is a space of processes and interactions, while simultaneously focussing attention on the human aspects of the environmental crisis. In the Jamaican context, this approach is of fundamental importance – as Paul Gilroy has convincingly argued, "where lived crisis and systemic crisis come together, Marxism allocates priority to the latter while the memory of slavery insists on the priority of the former" (Gilroy 1993: 40).

Yet despite recognising the role of inequality and injustice over time, a focus solely on lived crisis negates the role of inequality and injustice at a variety of scales over space. It has a tendency to essentialise post-slavery and post-colonial societies, conceal the uneven power relations which perpetuate social and environmental problems, and promote an individualistic approach to dealing with issues that are invariably multi-faceted and

complex. In contrast, I would suggest that neither lived crisis nor systemic crisis can be ignored, but rather that understanding the lived crisis is an essential prerequisite to understanding and redressing systemic inequities. In this and the following chapter, therefore, I move towards an integrated approach which draws on both of these perspectives.

Drawing on the localised discourses of environmental problems presented in the previous chapters, in this chapter I address the roles of a variety of actors in the management of the urban environment in Kingston. The political interests and actions of these various actors will first and foremost be presented from the perspectives of a variety of urban dwellers. This information will then be placed in the context of a more general discussion of the roles that the state, non-government organisations, international agencies, grassroots organisations, and individual citizens can play in the improvement of the urban environment in Kingston and other Third World cities. An exploration of this type thus provides the framework within which the interactions and power relationships between actors can be assessed in the context of urban governance in Chapter 7. By simultaneously addressing both role and context, an actor-centred approach of this sort provides a link between structure and agency in the explanation of urban processes. Yet rather than being simply descriptive, it is hoped that this approach also helps to provide an understanding of "the possibilities for actors operating within broader political and economic structures" (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 2).

An analysis of the actors who are involved in the process of urban management is particularly important in the Third World, because "most cities, even capital cities, are not necessarily managed by or for those who live in them" (Drakakis-Smith 1996: 706). This is true on at least two levels: the urban poor (who often make up a substantial proportion

of the city's population) are marginalised or disenfranchised from the decision-making processes of urban management; and the processes of urban management are not controlled solely by city officials, but are influenced (and in some cases determined) by other (internal and external) forces. Power in the urban environment has always been held by a variety of actors, and it is only by untangling some of the threads of power relationships that urban processes can be better understood and eventually changed. The conceptualisations of power explained in Chapter 3 recognise that the ways in which these different stakeholders – whether traditionally viewed as powerful or powerless – can act varies across space and time.

The data presented below, obtained from discussions with a variety of community groups and individuals, show that a wide range of participants are already seen to be active in managing the urban environment in Kingston. These include, but are not limited to, the state, the private sector, international institutions, non-governmental organisations, and grassroots actors. The roles of these groups vary over space and time, and according to the prevailing city-wide ethos of the most appropriate way of achieving environmental improvement. McGranahan *et al* (2001) identify three models which have been used as the organisational bases for local environmental improvement: the planning model; the market model; and the collective action model. The planning model operates principally through top-down bureaucratic organization; the market model functions through individualistic market processes; and the collective action model is facilitated by bottom-up voluntary associations. In practice, however, none of the actors operates in isolation; and all three models of organisation for environmental and social change can function simultaneously – sometimes even within the same agency. In common with the people-centred treatment of environmental problems in Kingston presented in previous chapters, in the rest of this chapter I produce a people-centred analysis of the main environmental actors in the city.

Power and Effectiveness in Managing Urban Environmental Problems

The main source material for this chapter came from the focus group discussions referred to in Chapter 5, and was obtained using similar participatory appraisal methods. In the same way that local knowledges were privileged in the examination of local environmental problems, this information source was brought to the fore in order to understand better some aspects of local power relations in the sphere of environmental decision-making and management. Certain questions from the *Youth and the Environment* questionnaire (Chapter 5) also help to shed light on the ways in which young people understand the ability which they, and other actors, have to act on environmental problems in the city.

Issues of power and effectiveness in the management of urban environmental problems were addressed in the focus groups through the production of "dumpling diagrams": Venn diagrams in which "dumplings" represent the different components[1]. The same groups were involved (Figure 4.14), although in some cases the fluidity of the setting meant that the number of participants present fluctuated throughout the meeting and that different people were involved at different times. A snack break was held between the discussion of environmental problems and the discussion of power relations, and the highly interactive and visual nature of this exercise ensured that the focus group participants remained engaged in discussions right until the end of the meetings. Indeed, as a researcher it was particularly interesting and rewarding to observe the ways in which these techniques were positively received and enjoyed by individuals of different ages, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic status. Jokes about gender roles, which suggested that men did not

[1] Circular boiled or fried dumplings made primarily of flour are essential components of the diet for many Jamaicans. When similar exercises have been used in Trinidad, the Venn diagrams are referred to as 'roti diagrams' after the flat round bread commonly eaten there.

know the correct way to form a dumpling, may also have helped to encourage women to speak out in this section of the exercise.

Each group was asked to identify the stakeholders or actors who had the potential to address the environmental problems which they had previously identified. The names of these actors were written down on sheets of paper, and sorted in order of the amount of power which the group thought they had. These sheets were cut into 'dumplings', with the size of the dumpling representing the amount of power which the group determined that particular actor held. These dumplings were pasted onto a large sheet of paper, with "Environmental Issues in _____" written in the centre. The proximity of the dumplings to the centre represented the focus group's opinion of the effectiveness with which the different actors use their power to address environmental problems. This helped to identify the ways in which power relations were understood by the groups, as well as how these affected the actual processes occurring in the community. As in the case of the pairwise ranking, the discussions around these issues were of as much importance as the actual diagrams produced. Appendix 4 shows the dumpling diagrams produced by each group.

Community views of environmental actors

Many different actors were identified as playing a role or having the potential to play a role in addressing environmental problems in the communities surveyed. Figure 6.1 shows the groups and individuals identified in the dumpling diagrams, though it should be noted that this refers only to the frequency with which these actors were mentioned, and does not display the relative importance or the relative effectiveness ascribed to them by the different groups.

Figure 6.1

Actors identified as playing a role in local environmental management

Churches	Member of Parliament	Central Government	Comm. Dev. Org'sations*	Other comm. Groups*	Police	Residents / Citizens	Don(s)	Government Agencies	Local Councillor	Priv. Sector Companies	Schools	The Media
Aylsham	Aylsham											
Bennett Land	Bennett Land	Aylsham										
H. Town (F)	Bowerbank	Bowerbank	Aylsham	Aylsham	Bennett Land	Bowerbank						
H. Town (M)	H. Town (F)	H. Town (F)	Bennett Land	Bennett Land	H. Town (F)	H. Town (F)	Bennett Land	Aylsham				
M'ty Gdns	M'ty Gdns	H. Town (M)	M'ty Gdns	Bowerbank	H. Town (M)	H. Town (M)	H. Town (F)	Bowerbank	Aylsham	M'ty Gdns	H. Town (F)	
Rae Town	Rae Town	Rae Town	Rae Town	Rae Town	Rae Town	M'ty Gdns	H. Town (M)	H. Town (M)	Bennett Land	Rae Town	H. Town (M)	H. Town (F)

* "Community Development Organisation" refers to local citizens' groups and locally based NGOs with the specific aim of community development; "Other Community Groups" refers to other groups (including NGOs) operating within the community

Data collected from other sources in the deprived communities of Allman Town and Tivoli Gardens identified a similar range of stakeholders. In Allman Town, a study undertaken by the Government of Jamaica's Social Development Commission (SDC) as part of a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) project produced a dumpling diagram with information on the organisations which are active in that community (although without a specific environmental focus). The stakeholders identified in this way were the government; the Member of Parliament; youth groups; churches (Anglican and Salvation Army); police; the community development group; and public service providers (the National Water Commission and the Jamaica Public Service Company). The SDC was also involved in the preparation of the Tivoli Gardens Development Plan, along with the Tivoli Gardens Development Committee. This plan lists 38 external stakeholders, which were categorised as being government and government-

related agencies (including the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF)[2], the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), the police, and seven distinct government ministries); elected representatives (the Member of Parliament and the councillor); and private sector and non-governmental organisations (including human rights groups, funding organisations, and universities).

In the discussion of environmental problems, two groups (Cherry Gardens and the Schools Environment Network) were asked to identify environmental problems in Kingston as a whole, rather than in their own communities. In the same way, these groups used the dumpling diagrams to identify the power and effectiveness of stakeholders involved in addressing the environmental issues facing the entire city (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2
Actors identified as playing a role in urban environmental management

Who are the people or organisations who can address environmental problems in Kingston?	
Schools Environment Network • Schools • Environmental Foundation of Jamaica • Schools Environment Network • Jamaica Environment Trust • Metropolitan Parks and Markets (MPM) • National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) • Port Authority • Media • Prime Minister • Ministry of Environment • "We the People" • Factories / Industries	**Cherry Gardens** • Individuals and Families • The Church • Women • Educational Institutions • Unions • Government • Private Sector (There was a great deal of heated discussion as to whether 'dons' should be included in this list, but it was eventually decided to leave them out)

[2] The Jamaica Social Investment Fund is a temporary, autonomous, government sponsored institution which funds projects in social infrastructure, economic infrastructure, social services, and organisational strengthening. Its role is elaborated on later in this chapter.

Children's views of influential actors

After an assessment of the way that high school students feel about their surroundings, and an attempt to identify the key environmental issues that concern this group, the questionnaire survey (Chapter 5) included several questions aimed at discovering whether these students felt empowered to address these issues, and to determine where they felt power and responsibility for doing so lies. Overall, most respondents (58.8 percent) felt that by participating in environmental activities in their school or community they were able to make a lot of difference to these problems, and less than five percent responded that they felt their actions could make no difference at all (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3
Adolescents' feelings of power in addressing environmental problems

Do you think that by participating in environmental activities in your school or community you can make a difference to these environmental problems?	
Not at all	33 (4.5%)
A little	269 (36.7%)
A lot	431 (58.8%)

* missing responses excluded

The students who responded that they thought that they were able to make 'a lot' of difference to environmental problems were significantly more likely to have reported more positive overall feelings towards their surroundings (through the use of the semantic differential as reported in Chapter 5) than those responding 'not at all' or 'a little'[3]. While it is obviously not possible to identify a causative factor, it is worth noting that the young people who felt more positive about their surroundings also felt that they were more able to improve these. One possible conclusion is that these young people see their surroundings as better because they have personally been involved in improving them.

[3] Difference tested between total index scores for all locations and all categories using Kruskal-Wallis test, and for all locations between pairs of categories using Mann-Whitney U Test. For Kruskal-Wallis test, chi-square=9.699, p=0.008. For Mann-Whitney U test between 'not at all' and 'a little' there was no significant difference (z=-0.878, p=0.380); but there were significant differences between 'not at all' and 'a lot' (z=-2.012, p=0.044) and between 'a little' and 'a lot' (z=-2.678, p=0.007). For an elaboration of this, see Dodman (2004b).

However, it is perhaps more valid to conclude that perceptions and interactions with the surroundings are inseparable, and that a sense of belonging is both nurtured and manifested through these.

These young people also appeared to attach great importance to individual action, with the highest proportion of respondents (38.5 percent) suggesting that individuals are able to make the biggest difference in solving these environmental problems (Figure 6.4). In contrast, 31.8 percent responded that they thought the government was most able to solve environmental problems, and 26.2 percent highlighted the roles of school and community groups. Whereas differences could be noted between schools, there were no significant differences between male and female respondents, between participants born at different hospitals, or between those living in different locations.

Figure 6.4
Adolescents' perceptions of the power to address environmental problems

Who do you think can make the biggest difference in solving these environmental problems?	
Nobody / Can't be solved	25 (3.5%)
School / Community Groups	187 (26.2%)
Government	227 (31.8%)
Individuals	275 (38.5%)

* missing responses excluded

Stakeholders in Urban Environmental Management in Kingston

Chapter 5 clearly shows the complex nature of environmental issues in Kingston, in which some problems are nearly ubiquitous and others highly localised, and the data presented above make it clear that there is already a wide variety of agencies and organisations with responsibility for managing these problems. Whereas Chapter 7 will address the structures and procedures of urban governance, and their implications for the urban environmental agenda, the remainder of this chapter will assess the problems and possibilities faced by

different actors in the processes of environmental change. This will be achieved by looking in turn at the role of the state; the private sector; international actors; NGOs and civil society; grassroots actors and individuals; and other actors in the realm of environmental action, and will incorporate both theoretical perspectives and the empirical data gathered in Kingston.

The role of the state

Traditional perspectives on environmental management understand this as a state-centred process, in which "the state is the key actor in the management of 'public' goods of which the environment… is seen to be a prime example" (Bryant and Wilson 1998: 322). Yet despite having played a leading role in conditioning how diverse actors interact with the environment, the state has also frequently taken the blame for urban environmental problems. According to the International Institute for Environment and Development (2001: 8.2), "most environmental problems also arise from the failure or limited capacity of government", though analyses of this type neglect or obscure the fact that states are also affected by a variety of historical and geographical constraints. Indeed, whilst states make their own history, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves.

Yet in the data collected from Kingston, and displayed above, almost one-third of the young people surveyed suggested that the government was the actor able to make the greatest difference in addressing environmental problems. Each of the focus groups mentioned the role of the government in general ('the government') or specific terms (e.g. the Member of Parliament, the Prime Minister), and in several cases both. In spite of the oft-quoted 'hollowing out' of the state (Painter 2000), it appears that the citizens of Kingston still identify the state as having a leading role to play in the management of the city and the urban environment. Indeed, Jamaica (and much of the Commonwealth

Caribbean) has a proud history of democracy. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) asserts that "there is real respect in Jamaica for the principles of parliamentary democracy and for the freedoms of speech, belief and association" (2001: 6). Yet despite this, it is widely felt that there is a crisis of governance, evidenced by declining faith and activity in the formal political system, and a declining level of public involvement in political affairs (Sutton 2002).

Third World governments have come under repeated attack from both local and international organisations for their handling of environmental management and conservation issues. State stewardship of the environment has tended to assume that different aspects of the environment can be managed as discrete entities, as seen in the formation of separate departments for forestry, mining, agriculture, and other environment-related concerns. These have frequently operated as top-down structures privileging the role of scientific 'experts'; and have been based on a problem-solving ethos (Bryant and Wilson 1998). Yet many of these complaints are directly grounded in practices of colonial government, and have been re-inscribed through post-colonial international power relations. Indeed, the Jamaican government recently countered some of these fragmentary tendencies, with the creation in 2001 of the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA). As an executive agency of the government, NEPA has greater environmental powers than the National Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA), which it superseded following the merger of the NRCA, the Town Planning Department, and the Lands Agency.

Environmental conservation is also "rarely seen by states as an end in itself, but rather as a means to various political and economic ends" (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 65). However, analyses of this type tend to assume that the government operates as a single monolithic

entity, rather than recognising that the state is itself a coalition of interests, made up of government ministries and ministers, government agencies, civil servants, and consultants. There is no single course of action that will fulfil the economic and political aims of all these diverse factions, but rather decisions about environmental management are negotiated through a complex set of relationships both within the government and between the government and civil society. Whereas the actions of the state are intrinsically political, it can easily be forgotten that all other actors are also working according to their own, often hidden, economic and political logic.

Urban environmental management is often especially open to claims that it is a politically driven process. For example, the provision of certain environmental services may be seen as part of a cynical process of political patronage and electioneering (cf Stone 1980, 1985). Yet in the context of a Third World city, in which a huge proportion of the population experience poverty and inadequate living conditions, extending the provision of basic services is not only politically desirable, but also has the potential to improve greatly the standard of living for many people. The data from focus groups suggests that, even in cases where 'populist' decisions improving housing and sanitation facilities have been made, urban residents do not automatically adopt an unquestioning loyalty to the individual politicians or government agencies perceived to have helped in this process.

When confronting past failures in the promotion of urban sustainability, the international community has leaned towards bypassing the state rather than facilitating state reform. Yet whereas the level of influence and capacity of the state has changed continuously over time, there is still a distinct role for Third World states in general, and the Jamaican government in particular, to play in the management of urban environments. It is precisely the tensions which arise from the state playing a "combined role as developer and steward

of the environment" (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 54) which produce a unique space which only it can fill. Rather than being too small to address global issues, and too large to address local problems, the state is located at the junction between the global and the local – a vital position, in that most environmental problems cannot be addressed by solely focussing attention on one scale. The state is also positioned at the point of articulation between conscience-motivated community service and profit-motivated business, and between environmental conservation and economic development. In order to achieve urban (and global) sustainability, the state itself must be strong enough to avoid merely being co-opted by the highest bidder or the most powerful negotiator. Indeed, the role of the state is essential in creating the conditions in which other groups and individuals can achieve their potential in improving their own surroundings. In order to achieve this, the state ought to focus on "increasing people's access to key economic and environmental resources" and "empowering households and communities to participate as active decision-makers in the use and management of these resources" (Douglass 1992: 9).

Perhaps the best way of putting these ideals into practice is through the facilitation of imaginative partnerships by the state. In the community of Bowerbank, for example, an inadequate system of garbage removal had been improved by the provision of skips on the main road at the entrance to the community. The households in the community were engaged in the partnership through taking their own rubbish to the skips, a simpler and cleaner way of getting rid of their waste than the dumping and burning previously practised. At the same time, the collection process by the government agency responsible for solid waste was also made more efficient. The structural changes which were made to deal with this particular problem were therefore met by a corresponding increase in the ability of individual agency to make a significant contribution to the improvement of the community's health and appearance. Partnerships can take place at a variety of scales and

levels, and include interactions with the private sector, international groups, non-government organisations, and grassroots actors.

According to the focus group participants across Kingston, the view remains that the government is among the most powerful actors in the urban environmental arena. The two groups that addressed Kingston as a whole identified the government, the Ministry of Environment, and the Prime Minister as central actors, and six of the seven groups that were identifying stakeholders in their own communities identified the Member of Parliament (usually by name). This was the case whether the MP represented the governing People's National Party (PNP) or the opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). The only case in which the MP was not mentioned was by the young male participants in Hannah Town, a community which has traditionally been seen as a PNP enclave within the predominantly JLP West Kingston constituency. Two groups identified local councillors, who were seen as being less powerful but more effective than MPs or the central government, though MPs were generally seen as being more effective than the central government. The general feeling identified was that the state was reasonably effective in some aspects of environmental management, and a relationship between communities and their elected representatives was recognised. Whereas representatives on the national scene were seen to be more powerful than their local counterparts, they were simultaneously seen to be less effective.

As previously shown, the questionnaire survey revealed that about one-third (31.8 percent) of the adolescent participants identified the government as being able to make the biggest difference in addressing environmental problems. Despite the recent neglect of the local government system (see Chapter 7), it appears that more local structures of government are seen by individuals as being better at addressing local environmental problems,

whereas larger and more powerful government agencies are seen to be somewhat distant. This suggests that the potential role of the state in the management of the urban environment in Kingston is still strong.

The role of the private sector

Many commentators have noted the global decline in the role of the nation state, and the simultaneous rise in the economic and political power of businesses and transnational corporations (TNCs). In the Third World context, these developments are particularly noticeable, as many TNCs control far greater budgets than national states – indeed, of the top 100 economic units on the planet, 51 are corporations[4]. International business can therefore exert substantial pressure on national governments in terms of influencing environmental or other policy decisions. Within states, the private sector can affect the environment through influencing government policy, making direct impacts on the quality of the urban environment through the industrial processes it controls, and providing environmental and social services.

Locally owned and operated businesses have the potential to be better stewards of the environment than TNCs, yet frequently fail to achieve this. Their impact may also be more difficult to classify and interpret, as they vary greatly in size and in their levels of integration into the formal economy. They are generally smaller and more labour-intensive than TNCs, and may adopt relatively restrained environmental practices as a result of their local political, economic, and cultural embeddedness.

[4] *New Internationalist* Issue 247, July 2002 (www.newint.org; accessed January 2003)

Yet this embeddedness may also place them in a position from which it is easier to avoid environmental regulations, whether through virtue of their small size or through their close rapport with state officials (Bryant and Bailey 1997).

However, the private sector was not one of the stakeholders identified most frequently by the focus groups, and was mentioned solely in negative terms. It was identified in abstract terms by only two of the focus groups – one in an inner-city community (Majesty Gardens) and the other addressing the entire city (Cherry Gardens). In Majesty Gardens the private sector was identified as being a moderately powerful actor in addressing environmental problems within the community, but as being the least effective actor at doing so. In Cherry Gardens, the private sector was identified as one of the most powerful actors in the management of the urban environment in Kingston (alongside the government and individuals / families), but was identified (again alongside the government) as the least effective actor at doing so. The members of the Schools Environment Network identified "factories / industries" as moderately powerful actors in influencing environmental processes in Kingston, but placed these at the extreme edge of the dumpling diagram, indicating that they felt they were the least effective of the groups they had identified. The only case in which specific companies were named was by the members of the fishing co-operative in Rae Town, who noted the actions of the Caribbean Cement Company and the Shell processing plant. However, these actors were identified as having a detrimental impact on the environmental quality of Kingston Harbour.

The data suggest that the role of the private sector in environmental management is not seen as key by the citizens of Kingston, and that these bodies only appear in the public consciousness as a result of their negative impacts on the urban environment. This analysis indicates that the private sector is rarely thought of as an important actor, and that it does

not appear to be trusted to deal with environmental problems. As a people-centred analysis, this suggests that any attempt to involve the private sector in the provision of environmental services is likely to be met with mistrust at best, and hostility at worst. Whereas the informal provision of certain services (such as transport) can work relatively efficiently in the Third World city, this is only possible because public services are poor and because of the high level of competition (Hardoy *et al* 2001). However, in situations in which a monopoly is provided (such as in the privatisation of water utilities), the creation of a profit-motivated private company almost inevitably worsens environmental inequalities (Swyngedouw 1997a, Budds and McGranahan 2003).

The informal sector operates as a sub-set of the private sector in Kingston and other Third World cities. It provides a wide range of employment and earning opportunities for people who would otherwise be unemployed (de Soto 1989), and can thereby provide them with the wherewithal to improve their own surroundings, including the provision of better housing and sanitary facilities. From a 'green agenda' perspective, many informal industries are directly involved in the recycling of waste materials, thereby reducing global resource depletion, and produce locally required products in close proximity to markets, thereby reducing transport costs and pollution. Yet the unregulated nature of these activities may result in the uncontrolled disposal of toxic waste (Lloyd-Evans and Potter 2000) and dangerous localised levels of pollution, particularly when these are located in residential areas.

In some areas of Kingston, for example, more than one-third of occupied lots are used for purposes other than specified in the official zoning plan, with residents in one area complaining that "the establishment of garages and other heavy industry facilities… had caused them much discomfort and inconvenience"[5].

Ultimately, however, for the private sector to play a leading role in environmental improvement, it needs to be convinced that good environmental practices are also good for business. In the informal sector, the provision of facilities for the safety of workers and the surrounding area alike may be best enabled through the formation of co-operatives. In the case of smelting operations in Drewsland for example (see Chapter 5), each factory only utilises its furnace for a total of 9 to 12 hours each week; thereby clearly creating the potential for combined efforts to purchase and maintain a more efficient furnace that could be used by several independent operations. In the formal sector, Jamaican hotels have already recognised the importance of environmental preservation in order to maintain their market share. Many hotel owners invest in other local businesses, and may therefore see the promotion of good environmental practices in these as assisting their profit-making opportunities more broadly. Jamaica has fortunately avoided becoming a 'pollution haven' for dirty industries relocating from the First World. The role of the government remains central not only to enforce environmental regulations, but also to encourage the private sector to pursue positive environmental practices.

International influences

Urban environmental issues in Kingston and other Third World cities are also affected by a wide variety of processes originating outside the nation's boundaries. International businesses, foreign governments, NGOs, and an assortment of international agencies are

[5] "Eastwood Park Gardens to be rezoned" *Daily Gleaner* 29/04/03.

implicated in exchanges of ideas, skills, and finance in a context of uneven power relations. Globalisation processes in general, and structural adjustment and debt rescheduling programmes in particular, influence both discursive and material constructions of the city. Globalisation is not a uni-directional process, but rather operates across a variety of scales, and "just as action on global issues needs to be grounded locally, so action on local issues needs to be situated and even supported globally" (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 10). It also needs to be noted that the ways in which Third World nations have engaged with globalising processes are very different from those experienced in the advanced capitalist countries (Briggs and Mwamfupe 2000), and each nation's experience ought to be assessed on its own merits. Even within countries, globalisation affects different groups in different ways. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, Riddell (2003) has shown how the relatively small group of the rich (whom he terms the "disciples" of globalisation) "act in a compradorial fashion to ease the incorporation of Third World countries into a neoliberal global economy" (p660), whilst the poor and destitute are "damned".

A specific aspect of globalisation that has particular relevance for the Jamaican context is the influence of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Formed out of the Bretton Woods agreement of 1944, the World Bank was empowered to provide development financing, whereas the IMF was created to provide short-term balance-of-payments assistance (Zack-Williams *et al* 2000). Although initially aimed at facilitating the post-war reconstruction of Europe, these institutions soon came to play an important role in providing development finance in the Third World. The role of the IMF increased greatly through the 1970s, along with a six-fold increase in the amount of commercial bank lending to the less developed countries between 1973 and 1981 (Redclift 1995). Since the 1980s, a key aspect of IMF

and World Bank financing has been associated with the imposition of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Structural adjustment is essentially "the process by which the IMF and the World Bank base their lending to underdeveloped economies on certain conditions, pre-determined by these institutions" (Milward 2000: 25), conditions which are concerned with the drafting and implementation of economic policies acceptable to the institutions themselves. This is based on a neo-classical economic model which "rests upon adjusting the prices of commodities so that the balance between tradable and non-tradable goods shifts in favour of the former which in turn corrects internal and external imbalances" (Mohan 2000: 99). The IMF also rates the credit-worthiness of its member nations, thereby exerting a much broader influence than its own funds would allow.

Jamaica has had a long involvement with SAPs, and has been identified (alongside Ghana, Mali, and Malawi) as an "early adjuster" (Zack-Williams 2000: 59). Following the signing of a three-year agreement in April 1981, and new credit agreements in early 1984, some observers concluded that "the IMF presence will no doubt increase credit-worthiness and provide for other capital inflows that are likely to assist in structural adjustment" (Fraser 1985: 119). However, in 1984 and 1985 Jamaica's real GNP fell by 2.5 percent and 5.9 percent respectively, and real wages fell by 17 percent. The "stringent and wide-reaching measures" advocated by the IMF not only failed to improve the Jamaican economy, but also "had a serious impact on living standards throughout the country" (Kirton 1992: 18). In economic terms, structural adjustment failed to achieve the anticipated positive balance of payments responses, and did not result in the anticipated economic growth. For individuals, the results were even worse: severely inequitable income distribution; poverty; unemployment; increased food costs; inadequate housing supply; and deteriorating transport infrastructure (Kirton 1992). The apparent decline in inequality and poverty between 1989 and 1993, which occurred concurrently with the most drastic

liberalisation policies, appears to have been due to the strong performance of domestic agriculture and the increased inflow of remittances, and as such seems unlikely to be sustained (Handa and King 1997).

As in many other countries, spiralling debt payments took precedence over the funding of education and health provision for Jamaican citizens, a situation which foreign aid was powerless to redress (Corbridge 2002, Burnell 2002). Indeed, total government spending on health fell by a third between 1981 and 1985, leading to a deterioration in health capital stock and equipment (McAfee 1991). Despite quantitative evidence suggesting that structural adjustment has not had negative effects on health care provision (Van der Gaag and Barham 1998), qualitative data show that new problems have arisen which will not immediately affect statistical data because of the effects of time-lag on health issues (Lundy 1996). The sudden and steep devaluation of the Jamaican dollar associated with the liberalisation of the exchange rate in 1991 had serious repercussions for real purchasing power, poverty, general inflation, and food prices, and children born in the aftermath of this policy were found to be significantly lighter (particularly in the case of urban children) than those born before, an indication of poor nutrition among this cohort (Handa and King 2003).

The environmental consequences of structural adjustment have also been noted by several authors. When SAPs were first implemented in the 1980s, the World Bank and other lenders did not consider the environment to be a priority area, environmental protection would have incurred further state expenditure (the antithesis of development programmes), and sustainable development did not register highly in the public consciousness (Redclift 1995; Mohan 2000). Perhaps the most noticeable direct impact of SAPs on the environment in Jamaica was related to fuel supplies and usage. The removal of subsidies

on kerosene meant that many poor households required an alternative source of cooking fuel. Although this has since been reversed, general patterns of poverty and inflation influenced many poor consumers to use wood as fuel (Markandya and Shibli 1996). In rural areas, this has resulted in increased deforestation, and in urban areas, small-scale charcoal production. Whereas charcoal production is officially banned within residential areas, due to the large quantities of smoke released, many such operations have sprung up to feed demand. Indeed, one male adolescent in Trench Town (see Chapter 4) photographed a charcoal yard in his community and identified this as a positive attribute, because it meant "yuh nuh haffi go no far place to buy coal". The ecological footprint of Kingston is also extended by the extraction of sand from riverbeds for construction purposes, an illegal and environmentally damaging practice, but one that circumvents official taxes and tariffs[6]. Another direct effect, although less immediately relevant to this study, is that the adjustment process has intensified pressure on Jamaica's agricultural sector and hence on soil resources (Lundy 1999b); and trade barriers and subsidies on agricultural inputs may have encouraged the overuse of chemical pesticides (Markandya and Shibli 1996).

The political and social effects of SAPs can also have environmental consequences. World Bank / IMF inspired cuts in public expenditure have made an impact on the agencies responsible for environmental management and monitoring, with the result that "gross staff shortages and inadequate equipment have undoubtedly affected the quality of their operations" (Lundy 1999b: 62). However, it must be noted that the more subtle impact of structural adjustment on the context of environmental policy has received little attention (Redclift 1995). The increased poverty and social polarisation which are typical of SAPs

[6] This was also recorded in the autophotographic study: one of the participants photographed a truck transporting sand from a river and commented on this practice and its undesirability.

often force poorer groups into various "coping strategies" including the over-exploitation of "free and available" natural resources (Mohan 2000: 105); as well as reducing their ability to provide certain basic environmental and sanitary facilities for themselves.

By the mid-1990s it had become increasingly obvious, even within the ranks of the IMF and World Bank, that SAPs were producing a wide variety of negative social and environmental effects. Whereas the neo-liberal underpinnings of these institutions' operations remain strong, their rhetoric has shifted towards institutional efficiency and poverty alleviation (Brown 2000a). One aspect of this has involved the creation of institutions specifically designed to counter these newly identified social and environmental problems. Social Investment Funds are quasi-financial intermediaries that channel resources, according to pre-determined eligibility criteria, to small-scale sub-projects for poor and vulnerable groups, around sixty of which exist around the world. Whilst not controlled by the World Bank, these have generally received significant input through World Bank loans. The Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) was launched in 1996 with a US$20 million loan from the World Bank, with the specific aim of funding sub-projects in social infrastructure (such as schools, health centres, and public latrines), economic infrastructure (such as roads), social services (such as counselling, parenting education), and organizational strengthening. Other contributors to the fund are the Inter-American Development Bank (US$10 million), the Netherlands Government (US$3 million), and local counterpart funds (US$15 million)[7].

In the environmental arena, National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs) have assumed some of the same roles. Whereas NEAPs are country-centred and locally generated, the

[7] Data from various Social Investment Fund, World Bank, and other websites and press releases (www.jsif.org; www.zamsif.org; web.worldbank.org; www.iadb.org) (accessed May 2003).

World Bank has contributed funds and consultancy expertise to their formation. The Jamaican NEAP has identified capacity building for sustainable development, environmental management systems, waste management, protection of the atmosphere, environmental health, land resources, forestry and watershed management, freshwater resources, sustainable agriculture, tourism and the environment, conservation of biological resources, protected areas, coastal resources, energy resources, and the mitigation and management of natural and environmental disasters as its priority areas (JANEAP 2002). Whereas the Jamaican NEAP is not an autonomous funding organisation (it operates within the government's National Environment and Planning Agency), the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ) was established in 1993 through an agreement between the governments of Jamaica and the United States of America to use the proceeds from a creative debt-swap arrangement to promote sustainable development in Jamaica. This is achieved through the provision of financial assistance to civic organizations involved in the conservation, management and sustainable use of natural resources, and issues of child survival and development.

JSIF and the EFJ were identified as actors involved in environmental management in communities and in Kingston by several of the focus groups. In the middle class location of Aylsham, the EFJ was identified as being less powerful in addressing local environmental problems than the local Catholic priest – and also as being less effective in their role. In the downtown community of Bowerbank, JSIF, the EFJ and the UNDP's Local Initiative for the Urban Environment (LIFE) project were all categorised (wrongly) as NGOs, but were seen as being both powerful and effective. This may be because of recent projects in this location which were facilitated by these organisations. The young people of the Schools Environment Network identified the EFJ as being moderately powerful (more powerful than NGOs, but less powerful than the government's National

Environment and Planning Agency) and highly effective in addressing the environmental problems of Kingston as a whole. However, the fact remains that seven of the ten focus groups did not identify either of these bodies as being active in addressing environmental issues in Kingston. Even though several of these groups were arranged through, and included members of, organisations that are active in addressing local problems, the individual members remained unaware of some of the prospects for facilitating social and environmental improvements. In the Tivoli Gardens development plan both organisations were identified – the EFJ as belonging to the category of "private sector and non-governmental organisations" whereas JSIF was placed alongside "government and government-related agencies". This perception is interesting, as both organisations receive funding from the Jamaican government as well as from external sources.

However, the stated objectives of these (and other) international organisations is frequently to engage in local capacity building to enable individuals and grassroots organisations to improve their own surroundings. Indeed, the debt crisis, adjustment policies, and the resulting inability of the government to manage the environment may have been the stimulus for the formation of new social movements (Lundy 1999b), and it is to the sphere of social action – in the form of NGOs – that I will turn next.

The role of non-government organisations

Whereas international actors and the state tend to work at larger scales, and grassroots organisations and individuals at the local scale, non-government organisations (NGOs) frequently function as the point of articulation between these two. Whereas top-down and bottom-up approaches can capture a range of international activities related to international political economy and international development, when these are applied to the environmental realm "they tend to miss key ingredients in the policy-making process –

namely, links between the local and the international, on the one hand, and evolving governance structures characterized by anticipation, prevention, and adaptation, on the other" (Princen 1994: 29), as well as the links between science and politics (Jamison 1996, Stott and Sullivan 2000). A consideration of NGOs, and the ways in which they create new political spaces, helps to bridge this gap. NGOs are "mainly private initiatives, involved in development issues on a non-profit basis" (Desai 2002: 495), characterised by being autonomous, relatively institutionalised, non-profit, and staffed by professionals or the educated elite. These may be international (such as Oxfam or Greenpeace) or locally based organisations, and may primarily be concerned with funding grassroots organisations, carrying out projects themselves, or policy advocacy. In recent years, there has been a tremendous growth in the number of NGOs active in environmental programmes, their size, and their organisational capacity (Princen and Finger 1994). This is at least partially due to the inability or unwillingness of state actors to address particular environmental issues, thereby creating an action space in which NGOs can flourish. Indeed, the NGO community in Jamaica flourished in the 1980s, at precisely the time at which structural adjustment was being pursued most ardently and there was least government support for NGO activity[8].

Unlike any of the other actors mentioned above, the power of NGOs is seldom related to their economic strength. Despite their relative lack of this, many NGOs have become powerful actors in environmental decision-making at a variety of scales, primarily through constructing various forms of moral legitimacy. Through this, NGOs have been able to exert their political influence in a variety of ways: by influencing the environmental policies and practices of states, businesses and multilateral institutions; by direct action linked to support for conservation and development projects; by campaigns to raise public

[8] Interview with Horace Levy, Community Development Consultant, 2/10/02.

awareness on environmental issues; and by activities at global environment and development conferences (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 132-3). Like transnational corporations, larger international NGOs may also be able to exert influence directly on Third World governments, thereby shaping their environmental policy (Jamison 1996). However, the role of NGOs has been accepted and indeed celebrated by both the political Left and Right: by the former as an expression of popular resistance that may rescue the world from neo-liberal policies; and by the latter as a tool through which neo-liberal progress can be made to work more effectively (Brown 2000b).

Northern NGOs have successfully redefined environmentalism in more affluent countries as an international movement, and have therefore directed attention away from the more local issues that inspired much of the original activism (Jamison 1996). However, it could be argued that some of the 'green' focussed environmental NGOs in the global south have been co-opted into this vision, at the expense of more locally pressing environmental health issues. As the significance of NGOs has grown, and more resources have been placed in their hands, their characteristics have also changed – the scaling up of projects results in the previous benefits of flexibility, lack of bureaucracy, and closeness to target groups being lost. This may also be interpreted as reducing the democratic mandate that these groups can claim to hold. Unlike government institutions that are ultimately accountable to local electorates, "NGOs are often answerable only to those who provide them with their financial resources" (Brown 2000b: 178).

NGOs vary greatly in their ambitions and efficiency (Davies 2002), and even within Jamaica there are significant differences between NGOs involved in environmental projects. Substantial differences remain between both the organisational structures and the programme activities of groups primarily involved in addressing 'green' environmental

concerns; and those involved in social change and the 'brown' agenda. Perhaps this is best illustrated through the cases of the two NGOs identified as environmental actors by focus groups in Kingston. The Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) was identified by the members of the Schools Environment Network, and is a non-government non-profit organisation, founded in 1991 "by a nucleus of action-oriented people concerned with environmental issues". JET believes "our natural environment is in extreme danger; there has been a great deal of talk but little action; we owe it to our children to ensure that they inherit an unspoiled island and a healthy environment; and if we don't act now, it may be too late"[9]. Although it is a membership-based organisation, and many decisions related to its overall direction are decided by general meetings, it is also a professional agency employing several highly trained people (some with Masters-level degrees). Although the general feeling within the organisation is that environmental issues are frequently marginalised within Jamaican society, it was nevertheless able to obtain office premises from the owner of the Sandals chains of hotels for the token rent of Ja$1 (one dollar)[10] per year. It is also responsible (along with the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust, another local environmental NGO) for running the Schools Environment Project – a project involving 279 schools islandwide in the 2000-1 academic year. This project received a grant of Ja$14.7 million (approximately £250,000) from the EFJ for the period 1999-2001; and has also received funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Green Fund, Save the Children, and Alcan[11]. The SEN members identified JET as not being particularly powerful, but as being effective with what power it had in improving the urban environment in Kingston.

[9] JET promotional literature.
[10] Approximately £0.01 at current exchange rates.
[11] A multi-national aluminium corporation, involved in bauxite mining in Jamaica.

Indeed, it has been identified that the membership of specifically environmental groups in Jamaica is "overwhelmingly drawn from the middle classes and the better educated" (Lundy 1999b: 86) with a "substantial influence of expatriates" (p92). This is part of a broader pattern in which environmental NGOs that emphasise environmental quality issues (such as air pollution and biodiversity) reflect their middle class origins and are rarely representative of the communities in which they work (Bryant and Bailey 1997).

In contrast, the focus group in Bennett Land referred to the actions of the S Corner Clinic and Community Centre in their community. This is a locally based, although professionally run, NGO, started by a Jamaican doctor and a US Peace Corps volunteer in 1990. Although initially founded as a clinic, S Corner has also been involved in issues of urban health and sanitation, or the 'brown' environmental agenda. In 1993 it received a grant of Ja$1.5 million from the CIDA Green Fund for a latrine building project, and in 1995 a grant of Ja$120,000 for a water improvement project. Without disputing the importance of environmental education projects, these clearly have a greater degree of kudos than small-scale environmental improvement projects in inner-city communities. Yet the residents of Bennett Land were full of praise for the S Corner Clinic: although they did not identify it as being a very powerful organisation, they placed it as the most effective actor in their community. Indeed, one resident commented that "if S Corner did have the power like what the MP or the Don have we would get a great impact in this community". It must be stressed, however, that the two meetings which identified these NGOs were held in the offices of the NGOs to which they referred. No other groups referred to NGOs as having the potential to act on environmental issues in their communities or in Kingston[12]. It appears that where there are established links between an

[12] Although the group in Bowerbank identified "NGOs", it transpired that they were referring to JSIF, EFJ, and UNDP LIFE. Whilst strictly speaking these agencies are not government agencies, they are addressed in the section on international influences.

NGO and the community it serves, partnerships can be developed to effect environmental change. However, in more general terms the NGO community is not recognised as a major actor in the urban environment in Kingston.

National governments and international actors alike have become increasingly involved in the NGO sector as part of an attempt to increase knowledge of local problems and improve efficiency in project delivery. By challenging the role of the state, it has been argued that NGOs can help governments to serve their responsibilities to their populations more effectively (Clark 2002), yet the record of NGOs in achieving this is mixed, and "concerns about NGO accountability and performance remain" (Lewis 2002: 522). Perhaps for this reason, in recent years the development industry has shifted its focus towards the so-called grassroots – the next set of actors to be addressed.

"We the People": grassroots and individual involvement

Whereas the NGOs addressed above tend to employ 'professionals', and were started out of social or environmental concern for Jamaica or for particular communities, the grassroots organisations discussed below tend to be endogenous and staffed primarily by volunteer labour. Individuals and families have devised a variety of coping and adaptation mechanisms to deal with poverty and environmental degradation, some of which may be incorporated into wider community-level schemes. In 1992, Atkins wrote that the development business had "discovered" NGOs, a situation which towards the end of that decade was repeated with grassroots organisations. Although these have attracted growing attention in the literature, the role of individuals and families has frequently been neglected. A political ecology approach stresses the abilities of grassroots actors, and several of the groups involved in discussions used exactly the same phrase – *We the People* – to identify a powerful potential source for change.

Indeed, in the questionnaire survey, the largest proportion of participating high school students responded that individuals could make the biggest difference in solving the environmental problems they identified. The majority felt that by participating in environmental activities in their schools and communities they could make a lot of difference to these problems, and only a very small proportion felt that their own actions could not make any difference. Whereas both groups addressing the environmental problems of the entire city identified the role of individuals ("we the people" in the case of SEN, and "individuals and families" by the group in Cherry Gardens), they identified them as having different levels of power and effectiveness. The young people at SEN identified a large number of actors, of which "we the people" was seen to be only moderately powerful and very ineffective. In contrast, the affluent professionals in Cherry Gardens saw "Individuals and Families" as being as powerful as the government and the private sector, but far more effective in addressing city-wide environmental problems. However, neither of these groups identified the role of collective action in the form of grassroots or community-level organisations.

Several groups identified the role of citizens in managing the environment in their communities. In Bowerbank, "the community" was seen as being the most powerful and the most effective actor; the female students at the community college in Hannah Town identified "we the people" as being very effective, but not at all powerful; whereas the male students identified "residents" as being moderately powerful and very effective. It is interesting that in the same setting, the female participants saw individuals as having less power than the male participants. In Majesty Gardens, "we the people" were seen to be the second most powerful group (after the Member of Parliament), and the "Community Development Organisation" was identified as a subset of this group. In the middle-class suburb of Aylsham, "citizens" were seen to be moderately powerful and effective, whereas

the local Citizens Association was seen as being a relatively powerful actor which was the most effective in its role. This group also identified the Aylsham Garden Club – perhaps related to their discussion of the disposal of garden waste, as well as in recognition of its role in creating aesthetically pleasing surroundings.

In Allman Town, Bennett Land, and Rae Town, local citizens' groups were identified: the "People's United Group" in Allman Town, and the Community Development Councils in the other two locations. The Rae Town group also identified the local fishing co-operative – unsurprisingly, as most of the participants were drawn from this organisation. In all cases, these were seen to be effective organisations, though (with the exception of Allman Town) they were also seen to be relatively powerless to effect change.

Grassroots organisations have formed for various reasons. In some cases, this reflects broader patterns of responses to urban problems in the Third World, in which "the typical responses of urbanites to poverty has not been to revolt, but to work harder" (Brockerhoff and Brennan 1998: 101). This can be through attempts to increase earnings through a variety of household-level income-generating strategies, or by addressing local problems first hand, often through some form of collective action. Grassroots organisations can be broadly categorised as either having protest or self-help objectives, and have a tendency to integrate environment and development concerns. In Kingston, most grassroots organisations have a primarily self-help ethos – although this may be seen as a less political aim than protest, by questioning the status quo and by adjusting the balance of power and responsibility for urban problems, these organisations are still inherently political.

Small-scale actors have a great deal of potential to address environmental problems in the city. The assumptions of scientism, developmentalism, and statism have pervaded top-down attempts at addressing local problems (Ekins 1992), and grass-roots organisations provide an alternative mechanism through which to address these issues. Ekins also suggests that it is "ordinary people working through largely voluntary organisations who have acted decisively for human wellbeing, while the established power structures were either blind to the perils or actively promoting them" (Ekins 1992: 165). Environmental management, "no matter how rudimentary or even unsuccessful, is an active concern of poor households" (Douglass 1992: 23), although they may have few expendable resources to invest in this process. Community participation has been portrayed as critical to the success of water and sanitation projects, as this is a spatially localized public good requiring a local public response, and as local communication helps to direct attention to the right problems and to reconcile disparate interests (McGranahan *et al* 2001). It also needs to be remembered that many of the activities used within poor communities to maintain and upgrade the urban environment rely on unpaid labour, labour exchanges, and the reciprocal exchange of materials, none of which are likely to be recorded in any statistical monitoring process. Yet, under supportive conditions, citizens at the neighbourhood and community level can "manage lanes, waterways, and waste disposal systems, and are capable of devising and enforcing access rules and reciprocal obligations among community members" (Douglass 1992: 24).

In squatter settlements around the world, individuals have shown that they can use their abilities to improve services and aesthetics in their surroundings (Pugh 2000a). Yet grassroots attempts to address issues such as household sanitation have tended to be, at best, "patchwork solutions" (Reilly 1992: 338), and a variety of actions which can be taken at the household level – such as the promotion of hygienic water storage, removal of

human waste, and the eradication of disease vectors – can only take place with substantial external support. However, for national or local governments unable to finance urban services, "there is an obvious attraction in having local residents organize and undertake their own sanitary improvements", a situation which can swiftly become highly inequitable; and allowing community participation "can easily slide into attempts to have low-income communities organize and finance services that are subsidized in other parts of the city" (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 110). There is also the danger of treating the community as a 'black box', without recognising that any community organisation is a product of conflict and compromises between community members. Although it should be obvious, it is frequently forgotten that cultural, class and ideological cleavages, as well as divisions related to gender and age, exist within communities and even within households (Zerner 2000, Douglass 1992). The reliance of grassroots organisations on outside actors for financial and technical support can result in a crisis of legitimacy, in which the grassroots organisations which flourish may not be those which are most representative of local concerns, but rather those whose ideals are most in key with those of major funding agencies or those that are best organised to exploit these.

In urban Guyana, for example, some community organisations associated with the system of community sponsored development promoted by international donor agencies "have been co-opted by political elites reproducing embedded distributions of power and vulnerability" (Pelling 1999: 249). In the Jamaican context, the government through the Social Development Commission (SDC) is in the process of implementing formal structures through which local community development committees can be engaged in a city-wide structure of governance, which runs the risk of co-opting these local voices to promote the government's own position – a situation treated in more detail in Chapter 7.

All the focus groups identified the role of grassroots actors – whether citizens, community organisations, or both – in the discussions of power and environmental management. However, it would be naïve to assume that autonomous action by individuals and local groups alone is sufficient to address the serious environmental problems at a variety of scales which the city of Kingston is currently facing. Whereas there is undoubtedly a place for action of this type – both from a practical point of view and from a perspective of improving individuals' sense of self worth and ability – this cannot be used as an excuse by more powerful actors to devolve responsibility for environmental improvement entirely. Recent developments in the relationships between the grassroots, the government, the private sector, and the international community will be more fully addressed in the next chapter.

Other actors

The actors introduced below play a variety of roles, many of which overlap with those described above. However, they received special attention in the community discussions, and have therefore been included below in their own right.

The church was second only to the government in the number of groups identifying it as an actor with the potential to effect environmental change, and was even identified as having the ability to act at the scale of the entire city by the Cherry Gardens group. All but one of the community groups included the church in their dumpling diagrams, either in general terms or by referring to individual churches or their representatives. This reflects the ubiquity of churches in the city – a frequently quoted (although seldom substantiated) claim is that Jamaica has more churches per square mile than any other country in the

world[13]. The only group which did not mention the role of the church was in Bowerbank – whereas many areas in central Kingston have a long community history, the houses in Bowerbank were all erected in the early 1970s, and although there are churches nearby, there is no church located within the settlement. This suggests that a local physical presence plays an important role in creating awareness of and confidence in an institution. In the case of Majesty Gardens, the St Andrew Parish Church was mentioned, although in this case it appears to be functioning primarily in the role of an NGO – this church is one of the largest middle-class (Anglican) churches in the city, and operates a variety of outreach programmes in this deprived community. However, not all churches were seen as being helpful in the community – one participant in Bennett Land explained that "a one church wi have try to help, and di odda one say dem nuh business".

Although three groups identified the role of schools in addressing environmental problems, these were the same three groups in which the participants were directly engaged in the process of schooling – the two groups of students from the community college in Hannah Town, and the members of the Schools Environment Network. However, the group in Cherry Gardens noted the role of educational institutions at the scale of the entire city. Although there are large-scale environmental education projects currently operating (such as the Schools Environment Programme described above), it appears that it is only those who are involved with schools and colleges who feel that they can make a difference. One group, the female community college students, also identified the role of the media in addressing environmental problems.

The police were identified by several groups, as were "dons". Dons are community members who function as informal community leaders, and are involved in maintaining a

[13] Incidentally, the same claim is made about the number of rum bars present in the country.

certain form of 'law and order'. They may be associated with particular politicians, and are frequently involved in illegal activity (usually related to guns and drugs). One male participant in Bennett Land explained that "di don dem have more impact in the community than anyone else… the citizen in the community work with the don more than with the police". Whereas neither group of young people attending community college recognised the role of community organisations, both recognised the role of dons. However, it is noticeable that it was the same three groups that identified crime and violence as environmental problems that noted the potential of the dons to address environmental issues. These same three groups, along with only one other, identified the role that the police could play. The Cherry Gardens group discussed at length whether to list dons as having a role to play in managing the urban environment, but eventually concluded that to name them in the context of environmental improvement would have been to give them an undeserved level of legitimacy. However, the role of dons in the management of the urban environment was also mentioned in an interview by the then head of the Town Planning Department[14].

Conclusion

The citizens involved in the discussions that inform this chapter identified a wide range of stakeholders who are active in the management of the urban environment in Kingston. We can conclude that these people are willing to be engaged in the processes that will improve their own quality of life, and that they do not expect any single individual or agency to provide them with all the solutions to the environmental problems in their communities. What is missing, however, is a joined-up account of how these actors relate to each other, and the power relations which exist between them. A focus on improving the urban

[14] Interview with Joy Alexander, 28/03/01.

environment must also ensure that this does not merely mean transferring environmental costs onto other people, other regions, or into the future (Satterthwaite 1997).

An exclusive focus on structures of inequality is in danger of forgetting the material conditions in which people live, and the ability that individuals have to shape their own surroundings. Conversely, a focus solely on the micro-scale fails to recognise that if environmental conditions are to change – whether on an urban or a global scale – something needs to be done to coalesce a variety of militant particularisms into a meaningful and powerful source of action. It is in the political arena that "urban sustainability, as a concept, overlaps into urban management as a practical process" (Drakakis-Smith 1995: 666), and in which the relationships between the disparate actors described above take place. Indeed, a focus on power and political mediation is essential to resolving environmental conflicts at the local level (Redclift 1992). In the next chapter, I address the ways in which these interactions can function both to perpetuate and to challenge social and environmental inequity in the city of Kingston.

Chapter 7

Participation in Urban Governance: government, civil society and social movements

Introduction

Environmental problems in Third World cities have frequently been blamed on the effects of rapid in-migration, overpopulation, and the inability of traditional government systems to meet the demands of a growing urban population. Although a major factor at certain times in its history (Clarke 1966), the absolute size of the city is not the root cause of the environmental problems facing central Kingston, which has actually experienced a decline in population over the last forty years. This analysis has also been disputed in more general terms, with the 1996 UN Global Conference on Human Settlements attributing many of the problems faced by cities worldwide, including environmental decay, "not to population pressures but to aspects of local political economy, most notably inadequate responsiveness, accountability, and management of municipal governments; insufficient mobilization of community resources; and lack of private-sector involvement in bridging supply-demand discrepancies" (Brockerhoff and Brennan 1998: 99). The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) has suggested that it "may even be misleading to refer to many of [these] problems in low-income cities as 'environmental'… They often arise not from some particular shortage of an environmental resource (e.g. land or freshwater) but from economic or political factors which prevent poorer groups from obtaining them and from organising to demand them" (IIED 2001: 8/1).

It is therefore necessary to ask what these economic or political factors are. The predominant discourse suggests that the failures exist on the part of the urban authorities – the IIED document quoted above goes on to state that "many urban environmental problems arise because urban authorities are unwilling or unable to control pollution, to meet their responsibilities for infrastructure and service provision, or to provide the framework for NGO, community and private sector provision" (IIED 2001: 8/1). Similarly, a common theme in the literature on urban governance is that "municipal governments need to enhance their performance, and hence their credibility, through improved 'responsiveness' to local needs" (Brockerhoff and Brennan 1998: 84). The solutions suggested include shifting from a focus on improving urban management towards a 'good governance' approach involving a more effective framework of support for citizen groups and NGOs alongside more accountable government structures.

Much of the discussion on the best ways of addressing urban poverty and urban environmental issues has focused on the role of national governments and international agencies. Although these actors remain important, there is a danger that a wholesale ideological switch to facilitating local community participation will bypass local / urban government, which has the potential to play a leading role on the scale of the city – probably the best scale at which to address some of these issues. Indeed, as David Harvey has suggested, "many layers of government operating at many different scales should be implicated as partners in the search for better paths of environmental management" (1996: 379). Local government is ideally situated to coordinate the provision of basic infrastructure and services related to the 'brown' environmental agenda, particularly as the improvement of this kind of infrastructure can have a dramatic impact both on human health and on the alleviation of poverty. Local government "naturally lends to the encouragement of entrepreneurship and for the emergence of voluntary groups, NGOs,

and all other civil societies to all work together in procuring social, economic and cultural development" (Ragoonath 2001a: 9). As a consequence of this, new systems of participation and involvement in urban governance are being developed in Jamaica and elsewhere, which facilitate the interactions between the state and civil society in a variety of different ways.

Any analysis of urban environmental problems therefore requires an understanding of the processes of decision-making and governance operating within the city. Furthermore, any attempts to alleviate these problems and improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of low-income cities must also address the prevailing practices of urban management. In this chapter, I first provide an introduction to current thinking about urban governance and the participation of citizens in this process. This will be followed by a description of the way in which Kingston is currently governed, the ways in which the structures of governance in the city are currently changing, and an assessment of whether the much trumpeted recent shift from urban government to urban governance is real or rhetorical. I then provide a theoretical analysis of urban social movements, based predominantly on the work of David Harvey and Manuel Castells, before examining the role of social movements in Jamaica in the twentieth century and their potential for effecting change in Kingston. In the final section, I move towards a discussion of the ways in which urban management can be transformed in the city, in order to improve not only the general state of the urban environment, but also the specific conditions of urban life.

Broadening Participation in Urban Governance

From 'government' to 'governance'

An understanding of the concept of 'governance' is of fundamental importance in explaining the relationships between society and space. Yet despite a dramatic shift in

patterns of government and governance in the last decade, geographers have paid little attention to the impact that this transformation has made and is continuing to make on both physical and social structures. The term itself is open to a wide variety of definitions and interpretations, with variations that become increasingly apparent as the concept is transformed from the realms of theory to the realms of practice. Along with 'sustainable development', 'good governance' has been one of the central principles of the development debate over the last decade. Indeed, in a recent United Nations publication, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is quoted as saying "good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development" (UNDP n.d.). Like sustainable development, it has been almost universally adopted, but (unlike sustainable development) good governance has rarely been subjected to rigorous critique. Regardless of their actions to the contrary, few would speak in favour of 'unsustainable' development, in the same way that few (if indeed any) would speak in favour of 'bad' governance. Though the objective of good governance is obviously important, there is an inherent danger that the apparent self-evidence of the term allows it to be captured and put to use by powerful interests for their own ends.

Much of the analysis of the shift from government to governance has been based on processes observed in western cities in the last 20 years. Goodwin and Painter (1996) identify a "series of crucial transformations in the social, political, economic and cultural relations which operate in and around the local state" (p635). They go on to suggest that the use of the term 'governance' to cover these transformations implies not only a change in the actors influencing the fortunes of any given area, but also that the character of local areas is increasingly affected by them. Part of this transformation has been due to the necessity for cities to compete for scarce resources, including the need to attract investment from transnational corporations. It has been suggested that this shift in patterns

of governance has both influenced and been influenced by a shift from a managerialistic approach to an entrepreneurial approach to the running of the city. Urban processes cannot be separated from social change or from economic development, and although these are shaped by the logic of capital circulation and accumulation, they also help to shape the conditions of capital accumulation at later points in time and space (Harvey 1989b).

Mayer (1994) notes three parallel trends in the transformation of urban politics of Western Europe (and, to a lesser extent, the United States) over the previous two decades. These are the increased importance of local politics as a focus for proactive economic development strategies; an increasing mobilization of local politics in support of economic development and a concomitant subordination of social policies to economic and labour market policies; and the expansion of the sphere of local political action to involve not only the local authority but also a range of private and semi-public actors. These approaches are often linked with the transformation from Fordist to post-Fordist regimes of accumulation, characterised by changes in the social mode of economic regulation and the overall character of the political and social order associated with it (Jessop 1994). Regime Theory goes on to argue that successful governance almost always depends upon the availability and mobilization of resources and actors beyond those that are formally part of 'government', and outlines of an urban regime generally refer to a coalition of interests at the urban scale (Painter 2000). However, it is unclear whether this transformation to post-Fordism has taken place in many of the urban areas of the Third World, or indeed whether a Fordist regime of accumulation was ever in place in these cities. Also, in the case of countries with a predominant primate city, the extent to which cities have to compete for scarce central resources is limited. Among the small countries of the Caribbean and Central America, it would seem that the nation state remains the

most important unit of organisation and competition, particularly in the context of the broadening of free trade in the Americas.

The limits of good governance

The value of 'good governance' appears almost self evident, and it is impossible to deny that existing patterns of urban governance have failed to solve the huge variety of problems facing cities throughout the Third World. There is also an intrinsic appeal to the idea of broadening democracy, and involving multiple actors in the processes of decision-making and implementation of projects in the city. However, the unthinking application of existing models of 'good governance' is fraught with difficulties. In the following discussion, I identify five of these problems, and then seek to suggest some ways in which the concept can be used more productively.

The first problem with 'good governance' is that it relies on defining what good governance actually is, and leads to the question, 'good for whom?'. The agenda for good governance was initially set by the World Bank, and although this organisation has continually shifted its definition (from a focus primarily on public sector accountability to a broader based participatory approach), the extent to which their policies are formulated from the perspective of the inhabitants of Third World cities, particularly the poor, is limited. There is a valid concern that the promotion of the 'governance' and 'participation' agendas by international agencies serves their own purposes, particularly in bypassing the role of the national state and allowing these agencies to pursue their agendas in local communities without accountability to the rest of the society or to the (usually) democratically elected governments. On the part of national governments, an increased reliance on participatory models can help to reduce the burden of service provision to poorer communities, without necessarily ensuring that these communities receive basic

services. In the worst cases, the groups of people in the greatest need of particular services (such as piped water) have to organise to provide their own services, while more affluent groups within a city are served by a pre-existing municipal system.

On a more cynical note, a focus on 'good governance' may serve to divert attention from other problems. Castells notes that urban social movements often fail to address the 'big problems', because "when people find themselves unable to control the world, they simply shrink the world to the size of their community" (1983: 331). While it is undeniable that national governments have sometimes failed to meet their responsibilities to their citizens, the action of international agencies in encouraging civil society's participation in the process of governance helps to reinforce the view that local or national factors are the predominant forces which have caused urban social and environmental problems, when in fact these are often a manifestation of global structural inequalities. By encouraging this viewpoint, the (primarily western) international agencies remove any reference to their own complicity in the production of these problems, and reduce the moral obligation of wealthy governments to participate seriously in the development and aid agendas.

A third problem with the promotion of 'good governance' is in its linkages with the promotion of 'social capital' (Chapter 3). It needs to be recognised that the very concept of 'capital' is, in the first instance, a social construct – that it is a concept without value unless there is some social consensus as to its meaning. In this respect, all capital is 'social', and the inclusion of 'social' capital is only possible if economic decisions have been made which have previously ignored this component. Rather than adding this 'social' component at the end point, a fundamental rethinking of the role of the 'social' in economic processes should be incorporated at the centre of analyses exploring socio-economic-environmental conditions in Third World cities. In this respect, the use of 'good

governance' can be seen as merely addressing symptoms of the problem, rather than the root cause.

Fourth, and related to this point, is that a focus on good governance and social capital necessarily leads to an exclusion of other views of political economic processes in the urban setting. It can therefore serve to neutralise the goals of radical urban social movements, in favour of dominant social interests. Rather than struggling for identity, cultural autonomy, communication, and territorially based self-management, urban social movements become co-opted as 'partners' in a process of governance that simultaneously pacifies and disempowers them, by bringing them into the existing system of governance and thus taming their potential for radical social change.

The final problem I identify with regards to the promotion of 'good governance' is that it frequently neglects micro-scale power struggles within communities, by failing to assess *what* is devolved *to whom*? (Zerner 2000). There is no such thing as a 'community viewpoint', merely the view promoted by those interests that are best able to make their voices heard. The involvement of communities is seldom deep enough to take adequately into account the voices on the margins of the community, who in many cases are those who need the most assistance. Indeed, "communities have to be understood in terms of hegemonies: not everyone participates or benefits equally in the construction and reproduction of communities, or from the claims made in the name of community interest" (Watts 2000: 267). In different settings, these include women, the old, and the young; but also those who are unwell or socially sidelined for other reasons (for example ethnicity and sexuality). In the environmental realm, it must also be noted that the stakeholder approach to local governance, if viewed as a panacea, also fails to take into account the participation of, and requirements for, future generations.

Yet some of the central concepts of 'good governance' remain extremely important. Perhaps the most central of these is the hint of focusing on causes rather than simply consequences. Good governance recognises that many urban environmental problems are a result of political structures which prevent access to environmental goods, rather than a reflection of actual scarcity. What it often fails to do, however, is to stretch the analysis back to the root causes of inequality and injustice. This can be accomplished by incorporating some of the insights of political ecology, such as its focus on ultimate rather than proximate causes, and on the politics of knowledge and how this affects environmental processes and decision-making. There is also a distinct need to address the structures that constrain agents at different scales: from the micro-scale (within households) to the grand-scale of global capital.

Participation in urban governance

Much of the transition to urban governance is predicated upon a broadening of participation in decision-making, and an associated 'deepening of democracy' in the city. An awareness of the inadequacy of existing models of development, coupled with the discovery that the active involvement and participation of local people in development projects leads to much more being achieved with much less financial input, has forced even the most traditional actors in the development arena to take notice of participatory methods. The president of the World Bank stated in 1998 that "participation matters – not only as a means of improving development effectiveness, as we know from our recent studies – but as the key to long-term sustainability and leverage" (quoted in Francis 2001: 72). Indeed, it is now difficult to find a development project that does not in one way or another claim to adopt a 'participatory' approach involving 'bottom-up' planning, acknowledging the importance of 'indigenous' knowledge and claiming to 'empower' local people (Henkel and Stirrat 2001). Whereas the empowerment of individuals and

community groups is important in itself, it is also seen as an important means towards addressing urban problems which could not otherwise be dealt with.

It should then become clear that new models of urban governance and participation should lie within a broader framework of environmental justice. According to a special issue of *Antipode*, "the central issues for environmental justice are community empowerment and access to the resources necessary for an active role in decisions affecting people's lives" (Heiman 1996: 119). In too many cases, inequality and injustice (environmental or otherwise) have been socially constructed as necessary features of capitalist production, and a transformation in systems of governance is one way in which this can be addressed. The use of an environmental justice approach also assists by widening the scale of analysis, by looking at smaller scale processes within communities as well as at larger global processes. Indeed, "while the environmental burdens of poverty tend to fall on the poor themselves, the environmental burdens of affluence fall on an increasingly international 'public'" (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 158). 'Good governance' can only be meaningful if it addresses these inequalities, rather than simply helping the poor to make the best of the situation in which they find themselves.

If this perspective is taken into account, it also begins to address the apparent conflicts between the 'brown' and the 'green' environmental agendas. The 'brown' agenda tends to focus on immediate effects on human health at the local level, with a primary impact on lower income groups, whereas the 'green' agenda tends to focus on delayed effects to ecosystems at the regional and global level, with its most profound effects on future generations. In order to address either of these concerns, a fundamental philosophical shift is required to take into account the perspectives of those who are unable to make their voices heard – whether these are deprived inner-city residents or future generations. It also

entails a shift in the perspective of environmental justice from being about "just us" to being about justice for all, and a shift from the NIMBY syndrome ("not in my back yard") to NIABY ("not in anybody's back yard").

Structures of Urban Governance in Kingston

The ways in which political ideologies are translated into processes of governance are strongly influenced by the historical and structural forces specific to individual cities. Kingston's colonial and post-colonial history have resulted in a variety of formal and informal structures of governance which need to be outlined before they can be placed in the context of urban environmental management.

The city of Kingston received its charter in 1802, which included the privilege of a mayor and a corporation, and there has therefore been some form of urban governance operating in Kingston for the last 200 years. The Corporation of Kingston was dissolved in 1865 when the Jamaica Assembly abdicated following the Morant Bay rebellion, but was reinstated 20 years later. The functions of the Mayor and Corporation of Kingston and the St Andrew Parochial Board were amalgamated to form the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation (KSAC) in 1923. This Corporation was responsible for administration within the urban, suburban, and rural areas of its jurisdiction, and certain offices of local government were maintained at Half Way Tree. However, this body only had responsibility for fire, roads, public health, and poor relief, with most social and economic functions remaining the preserve of central government. Although dissolved for a number of years in the 1960s (during which time its affairs were administered by two commissioners), the KSAC remains the local government authority for the city of Kingston.

The KSAC falls under the broader framework of the nationwide local government system, established during the colonial period and comprised of a system of parishes and parish councils. These were last rationalised in 1867, when the number of parishes were reduced from 22 to 14, and remain the basis for local government today (in which there are 12 parish councils and the KSAC) (Clarke 1974, 1975). Indeed, for many Jamaicans the existing parish units of local government have taken on the character of 'natural' divisions, a barrier which must be overcome for any major change in the structures of public administration to take place. The legislative framework is equally anachronistic, with local government councils still operating under the parameters of *Town and Communities Act* of 1843, the *Poor Relief Act* of 1886, the *Parish Councils' Act* of 1901, the *KSAC Act* of 1931, and the *Town and Country Planning Act* of 1957 (MLGCD 2002).

The KSAC is comprised of forty electoral districts, each of which elects a local government councillor. These councillors, headed by a Mayor elected from within the body of councillors, politically direct the activities of the KSAC. As well as these councillors, the KSAC also employs a staff of about 180 people under the direction of the Town Clerk, who in turn is accountable to the Permanent Secretary in the central government's Ministry of Local Government. As part of the Local Government Reform Programme (elaborated below), there have been moves towards the direct election of mayors in certain towns and cities in Jamaica, though this was not implemented in Kingston and St Andrew in time for the June 2003 local government elections. However, the first directly elected Mayor in Jamaica was elected at this time in the newly created municipality of Portmore, a large lower-middle and middle class suburban development in St Catherine, to the west of Kingston. The success or otherwise of this new endeavour will undoubtedly contribute to whether or not this system of governance is extended to other Jamaican towns and cities, including Kingston.

In its role as a Parish Council, the KSAC is responsible for the following aspects of urban governance: approvals of buildings and sub-divisions; maintenance of cemeteries and parks; maintenance of drains and gullies; fire services; welfare services; solid waste management (although this has recently been placed in the hands of a newly created national agency); public health services; traffic regulations; markets and abattoirs; regulating the keeping of animals; regulating and licensing barbers, hairdressers, and places of amusement; and the maintenance of parochial roads. However, these are not the sole responsibility of the KSAC, but fall under several other government bodies – for example, sewerage facilities are also provided by a public corporation (the National Water Commission) and private sector organisations (Thomas 2001). Yet particularly in recent years, the KSAC has suffered severely from staff and funding limitations: there is only one City Engineer on the staff of the KSAC, compared to the situation in 1962 (when the population of Kingston was much smaller than at present) when the KSAC had a City Engineer, a Deputy City Engineer, an Assistant City Engineer, and an Executive Hydraulics Engineer (MLGCD 2001b). Shortfalls in funding for this body also serve to "seriously and negatively impact on the capacity of the Corporation in fulfilling the goal of governance" (Ragoonath 2001b). In many cases, the fees for the services outlined above are stated in exact dollar amounts in the regulations, such as Ja$2 (two dollars)[1] for a barber's licence (Thomas 2001).

The marginalisation of local government is also evident in the repeated postponement of local government elections. Despite being constitutionally due every three years, these were not held between September 1998 and June 2003, and previous to this there was an eight year gap (between 1990 and 1998). Although a variety of radical changes to the parish council based system of local governance have been proposed (see below), the

[1] Approximately £0.03 at current exchange rates.

administration and councillors of the KSAC appear to exist on the margins of these discussions. The role of councillors is often negated, with representatives from both central government and the private sector questioning the ability and the commitment of some of the individuals serving in these posts. The political marginalisation of the KSAC is accentuated by the region's relatively high level of representation in the national legislature, from which 15 (out of a total of 60) Members of Parliament are elected. Many of these MPs are influential national politicians, are thereby seen to be more powerful than the local councillors, and may be closely involved in 'patronage' relationships with their constituents. Indeed, of the seven MPs representing the governing People's National Party in Kingston and St Andrew, five hold cabinet positions, and opposition (Jamaica Labour Party) MPs include Edward Seaga, the party leader and a former Prime Minister who has held his seat in West Kingston since 1962.

The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) has consistently acted on the basis that Jamaica is too small for both central and local Government to operate, and a JLP government temporarily dismantled the KSAC in 1964[2]. In contrast, the People's National Party (PNP) has long promoted the local government system, and its unbroken rule since February 1989 has resulted in national policy becoming increasingly supportive of local government (Thomas 2001), although much of this has yet to be converted into solid achievements. A Ministry of Local Government 'White Paper' published in 1993 (MLGYCD 1993) noted that "the need for fundamental reform of Local Government in Jamaica has been on the national agenda for the last 50 years, during which period 7 major studies have been conducted on the subject", with the official period of the current Local Government Reform Project beginning in April 1995 (MLGW 1995). The present administration has attempted to

[2] However, the JLP's manifesto for the most recent (2002) general election appeared to support a new regionally based system of local government for the country.

tackle the inadequacies of funding and staffing affecting the local government system, as well as addressing its political marginalisation. It begins with a recognition that the parish configuration finalised in 1867 "did not and could not have taken into account transformations of the economy after World War II and especially since Independence" (MLGCD 2001b: 16), as well as an awareness that "enhanced popular participation and governance at the local level is meaningless without economic power" (p6).

Proposed changes to the local government system

The 1993 White Paper set out seven specific objectives of the Local Government Reform Programme:

i) Restoration of functions and responsibilities which were removed from Local Government, and rehabilitation of the Councils.

ii) Establishment of new arrangements for the financing of Local Government which will allocate to them adequate and independent sources of revenue, and will give Local Authorities effective control over these sources of revenue.

iii) To up-grade the institutional capability of Local Authorities to ensure that they are able to perform their functions in an efficient and cost-effective manner, and are enabled to take on the new challenge of providing leadership and coordination in the process of community development and empowerment.

iv) To effect a comprehensive revision of all out-dated legislation which presently constitute a major constraint to the effective performance of the Councils.

v) To upgrade the quality and cost-efficiency of all Local Government services and regulatory functions.

vi) To shift the focus of Local Authorities to one of providing leadership and a coordinating framework to the collective efforts of the people of their respective Parishes, towards local development.

vii) To examine the present distribution of service responsibilities between Central and Local Government, community organizations, NGOs and the private sector, and to identify better or more cost-effective arrangements for the delivery of these services.

Yet few of these objectives have been achieved, and the current focus – reiterated by the Minister of Local Government after the June 2003 local government elections[3] – seems to be on restructuring the entire local government apparatus. A 2001 document (MLGCD 2001b) proposed transforming the parish-based structure of local government into a region-based structure of local governance. Four regions were proposed (Figure 7.1), with the vision that each region would be "a highly developed export oriented centre with vital linkages with the metropolitan world" (MLGCD 2001b: 21). The implications of the regionalisation proposal would have been profound for the Kingston Metropolitan Region. This would stretch from Portmore and Spanish Town in the west to Bull Bay in the east, from the coast in the south to Stony Hill in the north (Figure 2.1), and have a total population of more than one million. According to the Ministry document, this area has "three major cities", Kingston, Portmore and Spanish Town, although other urban centres (Half-Way-Tree, Constant Spring, Downtown Kingston Business District, Port Royal and Papine) would also be the subjects of special development and management. Yet shortly afterwards, it was recognised that "more time is required to arrive at a consensus on such a fundamental transformation with its implications not only for local but also for central

[3] "Innovations in Local Government" *Sunday Gleaner* 13/7/03: "The Minister last week told the first of a series of planned meetings with mayors and councillors from across the island that there would be no change in the direction and pace of the Local Government reform process."

government" (MLGCD 2002: 13), and alternative proposals were put forward for the amalgamation of five pairs of parish councils (Hanover and Westmoreland; St James and Trelawny; St Ann and St Mary; Portland and St Thomas; and St Elizabeth and Manchester) along the lines of the KSAC.

Figure 7.1
Proposed new regions of local governance in Jamaica

Name of Region	Area covered	Main urban centre	Population (2001)	Proposed Mayors
Kingston Metropolitan Region	Kingston, urban St Andrew, urban St Catherine (Spanish Town & Portmore)	Kingston	1,073,373	3
Western Region: Cornwall	Westmoreland, Hanover, St James, Trelawny	Montego Bay	461,400	4
Central Region: Middlesex	rural St Catherine, Clarendon, Manchester, St Elizabeth	Mandeville	621,527	3
Eastern Region: Surrey	rural St Andrew, St Thomas, Portland, St Mary, St Ann	Ocho Rios	449,500	5

[source: MLGCD 2001b]

New linkages between civil society and the state

A greater amount of progress has been made in the establishment of mechanisms for participatory local governance. This has been facilitated through the Ministry of Local Government and the Social Development Commission (SDC), and is influenced by international guidelines for local sustainable development planning. Indeed, environmental management can be identified as a key motivation for the changes that are currently occurring in this area. The SDC is the government body responsible for implementing social policy, and has been given the mandate for community capacity building. It is involved in the definition, mapping, and identification of communities and community based organisations across Jamaica, and through this has facilitated the formation of Community Development Committees (CDCs) which are comprised of the leadership of recognised community-based organisations. The baseline definition for a CDC is when at

least two-thirds of the recognised community-based organisations in a given community are working together, including the largest and most active of these groups[4].

At the parish level, Parish Development Committees fulfil a similar role, bridged by the intermediate scale Development Area Committees (DACs). Both CDCs and PDCs are "participatory mechanisms that involve the State, private sector, community leaders and other members of civil society in the process of local governance" (MLGCD 2002: 23). The PDCs are the mechanisms for the preparation of a long-term strategic plan for sustainable development in collaboration with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA)[5]; as well as for the enhancement of business competitiveness, expansion of job opportunities, and the provision of incentives for development. Participatory planning for sustainable development is thus both a reason for the formation of these structures, as well as a primary goal for them to achieve. Indeed, according to a senior official in the Ministry of Local Government, these Parish Development Committees are "the point of departure for understanding issues of environment and governance"[6].

In practice, the CDCs and the PDCs do not appear to be joined in any tangible way, and thus far both sets of organisations have met with limited success. Whereas the CDCs are supported by the SDC's community development officers, the PDCs receive very limited funding, and are thus unable to maintain a secretariat or office. However, some parish councils have begun to implement broader participation in the democratic process, for example by broadcasting parish council meetings on local cable television. These are all

[4] Interview with Courtney Brown, Director of Region 1, SDC (25/9/02).
[5] It may be a cause for concern about the integration of this process that the relevant Ministry of Local Government document (MLGCD 2002) wrongly identifies this organisation as the "National Environmental and Protection Agency" (p23).
[6] Interview with Paul Miller, Ministry of Local Government (24/9/02).

case specific, and the ways in which CDCs and the PDC have been implemented in the Kingston Metropolitan Area are addressed below.

Dreams in Action? The Kingston and St Andrew Sustainable Development Plan

The Kingston and St Andrew Parish Development Committee (KSAPDC) is unique amongst the new PDCs, in that it can draw on the highest concentration of wealth and human resources, yet faces the most intensive challenges of urban poverty and violence. The KSAC and the KSAPDC held a joint visioning workshop in June 2001, which produced the vision of "Citizens with recognised rights and responsibilities, participating in the development of their communities and benefiting socially, economically and environmentally from the efforts of their political representatives and public servants" (KSAPDC n.d.). The vision included elements supporting social well-being, elements supporting governance, elements supporting the environment, and elements supporting economic development, and had an overall title of *Dreams in action… from the mountains to the sea*.

The KSAPDC identifies itself as having three main purposes: building consensus on local planning and development efforts, especially with a view to ensuring sustainability over time; monitoring these efforts; and advising the local authority on how best to carry through development in the city and surrounding areas. Yet despite the official rhetoric of the CDCs, DACs, and PDCs being involved in a more 'bottom up' process of development, the KSAPDC appears to be functioning as a top-level organisation, which then recruits participation and involvement from the Development Area Committees and Community Development Committees. According to the PDC, CDCs will comprise representatives of community-based organisations, DACs will be composed of representatives from the CDCs as well as from business, political, religious, service,

academic and other interest groups and agencies operating within the communities; and the DAC Chairpersons will take inputs from their clusters to meetings of the Parish Development Committee. At this point, they will join other partners, identified as "the KSAC, private sector, state and service agencies, Members of Parliament for Kingston and St Andrew, as well as representatives of communities, academia, service clubs and NGOs" (KSAPDC n.d.). There certainly appears to be a risk that the voices from the grassroots will be swamped by the representatives from state, private sector, and other organisations. Indeed, even the practical aspects of organising regular meetings which can be attended by this diverse range of participants are daunting.

The KSAPDC has managed to secure more than US$250,000 in funding from the international *Cities Alliance* programme[7] which will enable it to produce a "KMA Sustainable Development Plan" to be prepared "with input from a wide base of city residents to guide the redevelopment and management of the city over the next twenty years" (KSAPDC 2001: 3). The other key partner is the Government of Jamaica / Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) ENACT programme, which has provided both technical and financial support for the KSAPDC. The government agencies of the Social Development Commission (SDC), the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), and the Ministry of Local Government, Youth, and Community Development are due to be co-financing partners, as is the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation (KSAC). The private sector members of the PDC have also pledged to support activities financially. These resources will enable the PDC in Kingston and St Andrew to employ a project manager, a planning technologist, and support staff.

[7] Montego Bay also applied for funding from this body, but was unsuccessful.

In the interim, the Canadian ENACT project has been fulfilling a secretariat-type role, thus opening the process to charges that it is donor-driven. Yet at the time of fieldwork (September 2002), it was reported that although the grant had been awarded from *Cities Alliance*, the PDC was still awaiting government approval to open a bank account, and these funds were therefore not accessible.

Much of the enthusiasm towards the KSAPDC may be linked with antagonism towards the KSAC. One leading private sector member on the former body intimated that the KSAC staff are "under-qualified, incompetent, and don't care", and suggested that the KSAC in its present form cannot properly manage the city. Yet the precise allocation of tasks appears to be confused – I was informed variously that the PDC was going to employ a planner and that the KSAC was going to employ a planner. A situation had also arisen in which members of the PDC formed a planning sub-committee which came up with various recommendations, which was then over-ruled by the Ministry of Local Government, resulting in the resignation of the chair of the planning sub-committee and much subsequent ill-feeling between the organisations.

Yet in recent years there has been greatly increased support (financial, technical, and moral) from both local and international agencies for local community organisations; and the government's rhetoric has shifted firmly towards promoting "governance" and "participation". It is to an analysis of the extent to which these shifts have been real, as opposed to merely discursive, that I turn to next.

Towards Participatory Governance?

A common feature of the various plans and proposals for improving the social and environmental situation in Kingston is the stress on the importance of good governance

and widened participation. The joint Government of Jamaica / CIDA ENACT programme identifies the economy, the society, the environment and governance as the four elements of sustainable development, in which the first three components exist within the realm of governance; and states that "sustainability will ultimately come about as a result of good governance so that governments and citizens can work together to bring about a prosperous and sustainable future" (ENACT 2001: 2). The proposed Kingston Metropolitan Area sustainable development plan will be "owned and implemented by people in communities, the business sector, the local authority and state agencies" (KSAPDC 2001: 3). Even the Ministry of Local Government recognises the need to change from local government with democracy limited to the election of parish councillors towards "modern local governance [that] is an inclusive and dynamic process through which local citizens achieve effective local self-management by active participation in local decision-making processes about the way they live and interact with their environment" (MLGCD 2001b: 29).

The question therefore needs to be asked: has there been a real change from 'government' to 'governance' or is this merely a rhetorical device aimed at convincing the international donor community and urban residents alike that there has been a broadening of participation and a deepening of democracy in the city? The answer is complex, and is linked with the understandings of power in the city revealed in Chapter 6 as well as with more general questions surrounding the way in which Kingston is managed. The wide range of meanings attached to governance have led to a wide range of expectations from different actors as to what this shift will mean for them and their visions for the city, and no doubt contributes to the variety of perspectives as to whether this has successfully occurred or not. Any process which purports to improve the position of the urban poor, the commercial classes, government agencies and civil society is fraught with difficulties, and

the expectations of each of these (and many other groups) are bound to be incompatible to a certain degree.

Indeed, Keith Miller, a former Town Clerk[8] and now a consultant at the Ministry of Local Government, suggested that good governance is about appropriate governance, and that good governance in Jamaica is therefore different from good governance in the European Union or elsewhere[9]. He also suggested that the governance agenda is about making the government work more effectively and mobilising untapped resources, and that this can be done more effectively with a strong government than a weak one. The benchmark institution for this shift to governance should perhaps be the Parish Development Committees (PDCs), as these are meant to be the site at which interaction occurs between the state, the private sector, and civil society. However, this perspective assumes that the ability to govern rests with the state, which can then devolve it as and when it wills. In contrast, meaningful participation can only be achieved through endogenous processes, such as those of social movement formation. In this section of the chapter, I assess the more formal structures of governance and the extent to which these have resulted in changes in the power structures of the city; and in the following section I turn to activities which fall outside the realm of the state.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the main protagonists of the new agenda for local governance are relatively pleased with its progress. The general feeling that the broadening of participation through parish development committees represented meaningful progress in the shift to governance was evident in several interviews at the Ministry of Local Government, as well as in the various publications produced by this ministry in recent

[8] The Town Clerk is the administrative leader of the KSAC, in contrast to the Mayor who is the elected leader.
[9] Interview with Keith Miller, Ministry of Local Government (5/9/02).

years (MLGCD 2001b, 2002). Yet other sections of the government – notably the KSAC – seem less enthusiastic about this process. The current Town Clerk suggested that the shift from government to governance was a slow process, but did not see the KSAC changing because of this apart from having greater transparency and inclusion. In contrast, another consultant in the Ministry of Local Government suggested that "the KSAC does not begin to resemble what it will be like"[10]. The fact that, despite several postponements to the date for local government elections, the proposed change to having a directly elected mayor for Kingston and St Andrew did not occur, serves to confirm that it is a slow process indeed.

However, in some circles there is a definite feeling that the attention to governance is a cynical exercise, in which government officials have set up formal structures to meet the criteria of the World Bank (and other international lending institutions) for increased consultation and participation. Even among those who see nothing sinister about this process, there is a view that the government talks about governance for ideological reasons, but does not practice it. This is linked in with the governing People's National Party's ideology of being 'community-friendly' – perhaps best exemplified by the words of its founder, Norman Washington Manley, that "the mass of the people are the real people and… those who will not unite with them on all fundamental matters are the real aliens in the land" (quoted in Nettleford 2003: xxi). Yet this dismissal of the government's policies as merely being public relations posturing neglects the long history of social change promoted by post-independence administrations, including the formation of 'community councils' by the PNP government of the 1970s long before the governance agenda became fashionable. Even from outside the government, there are feelings that the international focus on governance has the insidious role of discrediting the governing ability of national governments (in Jamaica and the rest of the Third World) in order to

[10] Interview with Paul Miller, 24/09/02.

clear the path for the introduction of policies deemed appropriate by these organisations and the powerful governments whose interests they represent. This was not an isolated complaint, though the autonomy of the Jamaican government was defended by government employees, who stressed that the government was at pains to avoid using the buzz-words and clichés of international development agencies whenever possible, as these tend to lead to a negative response from within communities.

Dissatisfaction with the lack of progress on the governance agenda was forthcoming from several sides. The clearest tension may be between those who view the new structures for local governance as having the aim of broadening consultation, and those who see them as devolving real decision-making (and economic) power. Two private sector interviewees suggested that governance "is only talk at the moment" and that governance "has been bullshit so far", whereas Jamaican journalist John Maxwell calls for "real local government" and dismisses the recent reforms as a "bureaucratic charade"[11]. The general feeling among private sector actors engaged in the PDCs is that the state agencies retain a dominant position within the PDC, as well as having the power to act independently of the PDC's recommendations. This tension has already led to the resignation of two prominent private sector representatives from the KSAPDC. From the perspective of community participation, the *Coalition for Community Participation in Governance* thought that the community aspect of the parish development committees was being "squashed"[12], and the inherently uneven power relationship between parish councils and the other members of the PDCs was seen to be a major stumbling block.

[11] John Maxwell, "Twilight of the Dinosaurs", *Sunday Observer* 22/6/03.
[12] Interview with Horace Levy 2/10/02.

Both the private sector and the community voices felt that their involvement in participatory processes was limited to an advisory role rather than actually making meaningful decisions, and that the economic changes necessary to represent full participation had not and were not likely to occur. There was a distinct feeling that changes should take place before new bodies were introduced, as the formation of the Parish Development Committees could be seen as being solely cosmetic. Yet the president of one West Kingston community development committee did suggest that although she was not always happy with the way in which decisions were made in her community, she was confident that progress was being made. Whereas decisions could be made, the process still broke down in their implementation[13].

Several respondents suggested that any processes occurring within the government were "too political", and that the government was more concerned with putting forward a particular appearance than with making substantial changes. It certainly appears that the Ministry of Local Government is too closely implicated with any structural changes to be able to facilitate impartially a major change in the balance of power in local governance. It is indeed paradoxical for a central government ministry to attempt to impose a more participatory system of governance on under-resourced local authorities. It is also noticeable that many of the government agencies which are attempting to promote participation function internally on very hierarchical and non-participatory organisational models.

Different actors have adopted a variety of strategies of resistance to the hegemonic discourses of governance and participation. Government ministries have ways of subverting demands from international funding agencies, such as refusing to produce

[13] Interview with Sonia Britton 27/9/02.

documents and reports within specified time-frames. The private sector can organise local changes for its own benefits, such as an alternative trade refuse collection scheme in downtown Kingston. And in local communities, the most frequent resistance is a deliberate disengagement from the structures which are meant to pull individuals into what many recognise as an inherently uneven relationship. A variety of non-governmental organisations operate in the interstitial spaces between these actors, and provide both a commentary on them as well as occupying a position of supposed moral integrity, and association with these organisations rather than with the formal structures of governance can also be interpreted as a strategy of resistance.

In summary, therefore, the general feeling is that there has not been a revolution nor even, as yet, a meaningful change in the decision-making processes operating in the urban management of Kingston. Small alterations have been made, but it remains to be seen whether the shift in political power in recent months will reverse this. The KSAC is now controlled by the opposition Jamaica Labour Party, and the ruling People's National Party's majority in parliament was severely reduced in the 2002 general election. However, it is inconceivable that a government formed by either party will disengage from the international structures which encourage the 'good governance' agenda. The balance of power between the government, the international community, the private sector, and civil society is constantly changing. Perhaps, then, the potential for real changes in the ways in which the city is managed rest on the potential for autonomous social action – whether in the form of urban social movements, action groups, or civil society. In the following section, I describe several models of understanding action of this kind, before assessing the autonomous potential of social movements to effect change in Kingston, as one possible way in which meaningful urban governance can be achieved.

Changing the City? Understandings of Urban Social Movements

The introduction to urban governance and the description of urban management in Kingston given above both rely heavily on formal structures and organisations. Yet radical scholars of the process of urbanisation have long insisted that people's actions – whether termed urban social movements, action groups, or civil society – need not rely on these foundations, but can result from citizen activism and community organisation. In the following section, I introduce the perspectives of two of the main urban theorists who have addressed this issue – Manuel Castells and David Harvey – and explore the development of these organisations, their motives, and their potential for urban change.

A general definition of social movements is that these are "networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani 1992: 235), differing from both "loosely structured protest events" and "political coalitions" (p249). Diani's definition emphasises networks of informal interaction, shared beliefs and solidarity, collective action on conflictual issues, and action which is displayed largely outside the institutional sphere and the routine procedures of social life.

Manuel Castells' view of urban social movements begins with the premise that there is no such thing as a unified "urban culture" (Castells 1977: 75). Although his earlier work is pre-occupied with class as the central division operating within the city, Castells later came to identify cross-class urban movements as the major sources of change within the city. He understood these as "actions that struggled to express themselves popularly, infiltrating the state here, contesting the state there, developing a base in one locale, spreading its message elsewhere, pushing their agenda down the cobbled and dimly lit

democratic road" (Merrifield 2002: 127-8), with the potential to spread contagiously throughout the society.

By the time of his *City and the Grassroots* (1983), Castells had moved away from focussing solely on class-based urban politics towards a recognition that urban societies are created and organised on the basis of both "production and experience" (p305). Within this framework, Castells sees production being the realm of class-based relationships, and experience as existing within the realm of gender relationships. Indeed, he suggests that "social movements revolve around ethnic identity, gender, and self-affirmation as much as economic redistributive justice" (Merrifield 2002: 128). On the basis of this, Castells (1983: 319) identifies three key goals of social movements:

i) *collective consumption*, aiming towards a city organized around its use value rather than its commodity (exchange) value (a Weberian approach to economics);
ii) *community*, searching for cultural identity; and
iii) *citizen movement*, with the objective of increasing power for local government, neighbourhood decentralization, and urban self management.

An urban movement is also identifiable by its structure, which Castells (1983: 322) identifies as containing four basic elements:

i) it must articulate in its praxis the three goals identified above (this being the key condition);
ii) it must be conscious of its role as an urban social movement;

iii) it must be connected to society through a series of organisational operators, including the media, professionals, and political parties;

iv) it must be organisationally and ideologically autonomous of any political party.

Whilst many on the left criticised Castells' shift away from a purely Marxist formulation of the city, it seems to be particularly relevant that he was among the first of these theorists to widen the empirical focus solely from western European and North American cities to include Latin American urban areas. Castells (1985) came to identify class, power, sexual / gender relationships and culture as the four major axes of social oppression and social change; and to view the state as a crystallisation of urban struggles rather than as a monolithic structure. Despite these critiques, Castells did not eliminate the role of class cleavages, but rather acknowledged that urban struggles could not be explained by the use of this variable alone. This multi-dimensional approach – notwithstanding the fact that the precise nature of the struggle varies from place to place – is of greater relevance to the context of Kingston than a dogmatically Marxist approach. Castells furthermore identifies the urban question and the ecological question as "some of the fundamental axes of social organisation and social change in advanced capitalism" (1978: 3). However, his focus on the critical moment of the formation of these movements is not taken forward into an analysis of how they can consolidate and move forward in achieving their idealistic aims.

In contrast, David Harvey is more concerned with the capitalist structures governing urban life. He discounts the revolutionary power of organisation around urban environmental improvements by quoting Engels' analysis of sanitary improvements in the 19th century as being forced by the processes of capitalism rather than by citizen action (1973: 142). He stresses that although different "interests" may exist within the city, "much of the art of

urban and regional politics… consists of finding ways to trade off costs and benefits between groups and interests while containing competition and monopoly powers so as to maintain majority support for a ruling alliance" (Harvey 1989c: 151). The inter-penetration of class, group and individual relations within / between the state and civil society thereby provides a matrix of possibilities which can be used to build a ruling coalition.

Yet his focus on the role and position of "labourers" who can construct "class organisations for mutual support" and thereby "build political power" (Harvey 1989c: 141) does not ring true for the large areas of Kingston in which unemployment and under-employment are endemic, and in which a high proportion of income is obtained through the informal sector. In this sector, the means of production are not formally organised, and the workers involved even less so. When international companies have opened factories in Jamaica these have tended to employ mainly women, such as garment construction in 'Free Zones' in the 1980s, and data-entry and tele-marketing more recently. Responses to the low wages, harsh working conditions, and lack of occupational mobility endemic in these jobs have tended to involve everyday subversive strategies rather than large-scale union organisation (Mullings 1999). Indeed, while the low levels of productivity observed in these industries in Jamaica could be attributed to lack of skill, "it is equally plausible… that low productivity may itself reflect a covert form of resistance" (Mullings 1999: 294).

However, Harvey also notes that "the ruling class produces the ruling ideas in society" (1973: 147) in such a way that it benefits them. This is generally in accord with Castells' acknowledgement that urban movements need to re-write the rules governing the city. The broad idea that meaningful social change must be concerned with changing the structures of urban society, rather than simply addressing local particularities is a common theme,

and one that will be addressed in the context of Kingston later in this chapter. In recent years the concept of class "has fallen out of favour as a lens for viewing the social construction of space, place, and nature" (Smith 2000b: 1011) in favour of issues of identity and cultural politics. Despite this, Harvey's understanding of urban processes is still of huge relevance. As Neil Smith argues, the importance of new political movements needs to be remembered but re-evaluated, with class awareness being central to the manifestation of dramatic social change.

More recently, however, Harvey (2001) has attempted to clarify the potential role for urban social movements and communal action. After raising "the question as to the efficacy of grassroots activities in and for themselves of changing anything other than conditions in their own backyards" (2001: 188), Harvey suggests that these must be understood as "crucial *mediators* between individual persons and a more general politics" (p193, emphasis in original). In this position, these movements can give tangible meaning to universal abstractions (such as environmental or social justice, human rights, liberty and compassion) in particular settings, and therefore reaffirm their significance, power, and meaning. Appealing though this argument is, it positions urban movements as socio-political reflections of a broader political situation, rather than as active shapers of this broader politics.

One specifically Third World conception of urban social movements, and one which also explicitly takes this action component into account, is Haynes' (1997) notion of action groups which aim to achieve "liberty, equality and autonomy" (p5). Rather than focussing on the role of economic processes and capital accumulation, Haynes's assessment sees these groups as precipitated by the draining away of the loyalty and belief placed in the governments of newly independent states. These groups therefore function "at the

forefront of efforts to democratize Third World societies" (p5), although Haynes does acknowledge that their formation is frequently encouraged by international actors. He sees the political significance of action groups as stemming from "the varied responses to a lack of development and empowerment; demands to reduce the state's influence; the effects of economic decline; and the spread of demands for… 'substantive' democracy" (p12). Like Castells and Harvey, Haynes positions these political aims as challenging the established order, in this case a "postcolonial Third World status quo usually dominated by a small urban-rural elite coalition" (p12). However, his distinction between "quality of life" and "sociopolitical" action groups is over-simplified, and lacks the theoretical rigour of Castells' and Harvey's analyses. In contrast to Harvey's strongly structural approach and Castells' oppositional construction, Haynes sees a healthy civil society as having the potential to work alongside and in co-operation with governments. Civil society is "not on its own sufficient for the emergence and growth of substantive democracy" and does not "topple healthy regimes" (p170), but rather adds to the aims of development and democratisation.

Indeed, Peter Phillips – a Jamaican political scientist turned politician[14] – identified class, race, bourgeois "nationalism" and proletarian "inter-nationalism" as "fundamentally inter-connected elements in an essentially singular and complementary set of anti-systemic social movements in the world economy" (Phillips 1988: 99-100). However, whereas during the colonial period Jamaican social movements maintained distinct foci but were conjoined by an inter-linking of personnel and ideology, the withdrawal of the colonial authorities removed much of this common ground.

[14] Currently Minister of National Security in PJ Patterson's administration.

Until 1962, cross-class alliances could exist with the shared aim of escaping colonial rule, yet this unifying objective ceased with the coming of independence. Since then, "the consolidation over the years of bureaucratized trade unions and political party organizations under the control of mainly middle-class leadership has further weakened the capacities for the development of autonomous social movements especially given the limited levels of internal democracy within many of these organizations" (p118).

Civil Society and Urban Management in Jamaica

Citizen action has a long and proud history in Jamaica. The earliest civil society organisations in the country were formed towards the end of the 19th century, including the Jamaica Union of Teachers (1894) and the Jamaica Agricultural Society (1895), both of which remain active today. Rex Nettleford (2003) points to two definitive periods of social crisis in modern Jamaican and Caribbean history – the late 1930s as the ending of colonialism, and the early 1970s as a period of socio-economic transformation of the society. These are related to the three distinct periods in the evolution of modern social movements in Jamaica identified by Phillips (1988): the struggle for basic civil rights and the establishment of the first trades unions (1900-1930); the nationalist movement (1930-1962); and the Rastafarian inspired social changes of the 1970s. Although the first two of these had significant middle-class elements, the latter "represented a significantly different social strata" as it was composed of "the poorest and most dispossessed elements of the sub-proletariat" (p113). These phases are not dissimilar to the "four peaks of volunteerism in Jamaican history" identified more recently by Robotham (1998: 23): the period of abolition of the slave trade and emancipation from slavery (the first half of the nineteenth century); the period of the rise of Black Nationalism under the leadership of Marcus Garvey in the 1920s; the nationalist movement of the late 1930s; and the socialist period of the 1970s (in which Michael Manley's 1972 election victory was "was accompanied by

a surge of national unity and patriotic feeling that at last Jamaica was going to pull itself together and go forward as a united nation" (p36)).

With regards to the latest phase identified by all three of these authors, Kaufman (1988) suggests that the Michael Manley-led experiment with radical socialism in the 1970s faltered because the ruling Peoples National Party was "unable to transcend the limitations of the existing structure of the Jamaican state in order to develop new structures and institutions of grass-roots political, economic and social power" (p45). And, according to Robotham (1998: 37), the collapse of the collective vision of socialism was replaced by no new vision other than that "each person is to seek his or her own benefit and the society will take care of itself". In this situation, a government committed to social change found that the capacity of grass-roots organisations to function as key actors in social transformation was lacking. As can be seen in the difficulties involved in implementing community and parish development committees, these inadequacies are still present today.

Perhaps the most significant organisational development in the support for social movements in Jamaica came with the formation of Jamaica Welfare in 1937. In some respects, the arrangement which led to this can be seen as a fore-runner to the social investment funds (as described in Chapter 6) 60 years later. Jamaica Welfare was born out of negotiations between Norman Manley and the United Fruit Company and Standard Fruit Company, then two of the largest multi-national corporations in the world. These companies agreed to set aside one cent per stem of bananas exported from Jamaica to form a fund "for the good and welfare of the people of Jamaica with emphasis on the rural people"[15].

[15] Norman Manley, quoted on the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture (www.moec.gov.jm).

Various organisational transformations have resulted in Jamaica Welfare becoming the Social Development Commission (SDC), the government agency responsible for implementing social policy and facilitating "the empowerment of citizens in communities, enabling their participation in an integrated, equitable, sustainable national development process"[16].

Prior to the formation of Jamaica Welfare, Robotham (1998) estimates that there were about 10,000 persons attached to social organisations such as scouts, guides, YMCA, and YWCA, as well as 15,000 members of the Jamaica Agricultural Association. By 1948, Jamaica Welfare had activities in 236 villages, with 77 village committees, 51 community councils, and 346 groups. There were 1,180 organised groups in total, including 57 handicrafts groups, 261 co-operatives, 185 savings unions, 30 buying groups, 42 poultry groups and 185 self help groups. At the present time, the SDC has defined and mapped 629 communities and 2,827 districts across Jamaica, and has a register of 5,190 active community-based organisations. In Kingston and St Andrew alone, 83 communities and 651 community based organisations have been identified (Ministry of Local Government 2001b). However, in spite of this large number of organisations, co-ordinating Community Development Committees exist in only about a quarter of these communities[17]. Over the period 1993-1998, Munroe (1999) suggests that the number of Police Youth Clubs doubled, the number of 4H clubs increased by almost a quarter, and the number of Youth Clubs affiliated to the SDC has risen by 15 percent, all of which are associated with the vast growth in the number of community based organisations (CBOs) operating in Jamaica throughout the 1990s[18].

[16] SDC mission statement, from interview with Courtney Brown 25/9/02.
[17] Interview with Courtney Brown 25/9/02.
[18] Interview with Trevor Munroe 8/10/02.

In one respect, therefore, there has been an enormous growth in the numbers of organisations seeking to effect some sort of social change in Jamaican society. Yet this has occurred alongside a narrowing base of loyalty to political parties, and a steady reduction in voter turnout at local and general elections. Whereas in 1972, 60 percent of the Jamaican population expressed loyalty to a particular political party, thirty years later this figure had fallen to 19 percent[19]; although a 1992 study of the low-income areas of Kingston resulted in more than 98 percent of respondents claiming that they belonged to a political party (Portes and Itzigsohn 1994). This growing dissatisfaction with the mechanisms of formal democracy can also be seen in voter turnouts at local and general elections. Indeed, at 40 percent, the turnout at the recent (June 2003) local government elections was the second lowest for any local or general elections since independence (the only exception being the uncontested 1983 general election)[20]. At 57 percent, the voter turnout at the most recent general election (October 2002) was also noticeably lower than in recent years (66 percent in 1997 and 67 percent in 1993), and substantially lower than the high-water marks of post-independence electoral participation (82 percent in 1967 and 86 percent in 1976)[21].

This dissatisfaction is also evident in surveys undertaken in the early 1990s in Kingston. Portes and Itzigsohn (1994) report on some imaginatively phrased questions which suggest that the vast majority of residents of low-income areas in Kingston feel that joining a community organisation is a better use of free time than joining a political party, and more than 60 percent felt that community organisations can accomplish something or a great deal (Figure 7.2). Gordon *et al* (1997) used similar data assessed according to self-identified class groups, and found that among all social classes there was a much larger

[19] Stone Poll data, quoted by Trevor Munroe 8/10/02.
[20] DK Duncan "Analysing the Local Government Elections" *Jamaica Gleaner* 24/6/03.
[21] Data up to 1997 from Munroe (1999); more recent data from *Jamaica Gleaner* reports.

proportion in favour of community action than in favour of political activity, although between one-third and one-half of respondents indicated that they were in favour of political activity. Whereas the conclusions drawn in both these articles suggest that community based organisations represent the driving force for social change, it is worth noting that the proportion of people identifying with traditional political movements is by no means negligible.

Figure 7.2
Participation and attitudes towards party politics and community grassroots organisations in Jamaica (1992).

Variable		Percentage of Respondents (n= 792)
Belongs to a political party		98.1
Belongs to a community organisation		2.3
Supports participation in party politics		41.4
Supports community grassroots organisations		86.0
Believes community organisations can accomplish	Nothing	39.5
	Something	44.1
	A great deal	16.4
Best use of free time is	To join a political party	6.8
	To join a community organisation	83.8
	To remain at home	9.4

[source: Portes and Itzigsohn (1994)]

Yet these figures about political participation and involvement in community-level activities are open to a wide range of interpretations. Robotham (1999: 43) concludes that "people are in favour of participating in local community action but they lack any effective institutional means through which to do so, other than the political party and criminal gang structures". In contrast, Munroe (1999) quotes an article in the *Jamaica Gleaner* on 24/3/98 as saying "an increasing number of non-political community groups [are] emerging from across the country" and that this is possibly "the best thing that has happened to Jamaica since Independence". In the following section, I explore both the shortcomings and the potential of such movements in Kingston, before suggesting some ways in which autonomous action can be made more effective.

Real Social Movements?

Do the forms of citizen organisation and action which have arisen in Kingston in recent years represent genuine "urban social movements" in the sense described above? The answer is both yes and no. Whereas the sheer number of community based organisations identified by the Social Development Commission suggests a vibrant civil society, these bodies are frequently small and localised, with low public profiles and few external linkages. The non-governmental organisations which receive significant media exposure tend to be those linked with special issues, such as the Jamaica Environment Trust and Jamaicans for Justice (a human rights advocacy organisation), rather than with general community-level development. The members of organisations of the former type also tend to be overwhelmingly from an 'uptown', professional background.

Haynes' suggestion that action groups in the Third World work towards the goals of "liberty, equality and autonomy" also does not seem to be the case in Kingston. The main goals of community based organisations in Kingston seem to be predominantly about improving single issues. Lobbying more powerful actors (such as Members of Parliament and funding agencies) for assistance is seen to be more effective than gaining the economic and organisational strength to achieve these goals independently. However, the goals of liberty and equality are perhaps addressed by the alternative terminologies of 'respect' and 'justice'. Levy and Chevannes (1996) titled their influential report on urban violence and poverty in Jamaica *They Cry 'Respect'*, and Nettleford (2003) explains that "the word 'respec' (for respect) is frequently intoned in the argot of Jamaican urban inner city and rural life; and any failure to observe that psychic space claimed by the individual Jamaican is regarded as an assault on one's cultural identity" (p xix). And seldom does a television news broadcast go by without footage of disgruntled citizens protesting against

anything from police brutality to inadequate water supplies with cries of "we want justice".

Although the social action taking place in present-day Kingston is not aligned solely around class lines, there is an important class-based component to this activity. However, it is spatially constrained, and certainly does not comply with Castells' model of cross-class social movements working together towards achieving particular goals. However, neither does it fit Harvey's model of labourers constructing class organisations for mutual support, as the general pattern of informal economies operating in Kingston preclude networks of organised labour which can operate across space. In contrast, the social activity found in Kingston is located in discrete spatial settings, and predominantly concerned with very localised problems affecting "just us" rather than broader issues of "justice" (Berman 1995). Indeed, the particular challenge to citizen groups in Kingston is to move beyond merely addressing militant particularisms towards challenging broader inequalities of production and experience.

However, the current attempts to generate broader civic participation in the processes of urban management are both formal and driven by the state sector. There is an inherent risk in this that the formalisation of small-scale activism removes the potential for autonomous action and genuine urban social movements. It was suggested by several interviewees that the NGO sector in Kingston was at its most vibrant in the 1980s, at a time when national and global forces were pushing for macro-economic reform and structural adjustment. At this time, local actors had a relatively straightforward agenda of resistance, and a clearly defined space in which they could act. With the rise of the neo-liberal agenda in the 1990s, epitomised by the World Bank's adoption of an "adjustment with a human face" policy (Handa and King 2001), the borders became much less clear, and the scope for potential

action less obvious. There is both a much less clear concept of what is to be resisted, as well as a much greater (at least superficial) acceptance of the goals of improving living conditions in the city.

The data from Portes and Itzigsohn's study (Figure 7.2) clearly show that far more people in Kingston are actively involved in party politics than in community organisations. Despite this, more than twice as many respondents expressed support for community grassroots organisations as supported participation in party politics. Even more startlingly, the overwhelming majority (83.8 percent) stated that joining a community organisation was a better use of free time than joining a political party. Neither the broad level of public support, nor the large (and ever increasing) number of grassroots organisations, have been translated into widespread involvement and action.

Diani's (1992) definition of social movements identifies networks of informal interaction as being central to these. In contrast, present efforts in Jamaica are focussed on manufacturing formal social movements. In effect, the government and its allies in the private sector are drawing up another set of rules and structures within which 'democratic' participation can take place. With the best intentions in the world, this process cannot be separated from its architects, and risks becoming a subtle means of controlling the types of projects which community groups can be involved in. Plans are afoot to make the community development committees the only valid groups through which development funding from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (see Chapter 6) can be spent in particular locations, thus further marginalising causes which do not fall within government specified boundaries. Instead of this, those in power need to recognise that community organisations are capable of representing communities without being moulded into a

formal structure. There is a great difference between creating an atmosphere which is conducive to social action and providing a structure within which this must take place.

In far too many cases, the suggested means of improving the city rest on notions of eliminating social deviance. This is illustrated by some of the perspectives on urban environmental problems raised by focus groups in Chapter 6, where it was linked with Oscar Lewis' views on the culture of poverty. In Kingston, the establishment view is echoed by an editorial in the *Daily Gleaner* longing for a situation in which the criminals of downtown Kingston would receive an epiphany through culture: "Imagine if the errant and the truant among us could be persuaded of the value of a softer, more humane way of life, as espoused in all forms of the creative arts… imagine if we could persuade those who have laid siege to the city that a gun never painted a picture or composed a song"[22]. Yet this perspective is completely blind to the complicity of the more affluent groups in the city in reproducing the social conditions which perpetrate injustice and exclusion throughout Kingston. In contrast, therefore, along with John Maxwell, I would suggest that "the real corruption is in the cognitive elite watching as people descend daily into more misery and destitution while the rich get richer and fatter"[23]. The concepts of justice and respect are far more relevant than those of values and attitudes.

However, any template produced by decision-makers in the government and the private sector for facilitating a broader range of participation in urban decision making is inevitably bound to contain some of these biases. It is of paramount importance, therefore, that the creation of broader systems of representation and participation does not close off the spaces for genuine social movements which may seem to be incompatible with the

[22] "Crusade for a City" *Daily Gleaner* 8/12/02.
[23] John Maxwell, "Twilight of the Dinosaurs", *Sunday Observer* 22/6/03.

objectives decreed by more powerful actors. Whereas it might not be possible for officials to micro-manage individual community groups, financial control can certainly be exerted if there is only one formal system through which official funds can be distributed. The method of control would therefore be shifted from direct management to one with a veneer of broad participation and democracy, yet in which the decisions affecting economic power – thereby the power to actually make changes – remains with the higher authorities.

Indeed, there is some suggestion that in the communities in which community development committees (CDCs) have been set up, these have superseded rather than supplemented existing community organisations. In Hannah Town, the Citizens Association was described as "not really functioning", as most members had "turned over" to the new CDC[24]. In contrast, although a CDC was set up in Drewsland, the Citizens' Association remains active. This may well be because this organisation is used as the node around which UNDP-LIFE's sanitation funding is distributed (Chapter 5). It certainly seems that for community organisations to command continuing support, they need to be involved in promoting noticeable improvements and having a level of control over economic resources.

Space and support are therefore required for urban movements which arise autonomously. I therefore return to the proposal made at the beginning of this chapter, that this can best be facilitated through a strong and relatively autonomous system of local government. This is the level at which formal structures of government can relate best to the concerns of citizens, yet at which there can still be formal accountability to an electoral process.

[24] Interview with Sonia Britton 27/9/02.

One caveat must be added to this however. As many organisations which have tried to support community action have found, centuries of marginalisation have left their toll on community capacity to organise. For example, the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica found it necessary to introduce a 'special projects' unit, dedicated to enabling new groups to develop the capacity to apply for funding for projects of their own. Without support of this kind, citizen action in Kingston will remain small and disorganised, unable to reach out of its militant particularisms, and incapable of addressing the large problems facing the city. Proposing a comprehensive structure to facilitate this is outside the remit of this thesis, but it would appear that the existing system of parish councils is shackled by spatial limitations from the colonial era and decrepit from decades of post-independence neglect. The proposals for regional-based assemblies – although far from complete – appear to be a step in the right direction. However, this must be accompanied by increasing the level of financial control which these local government bodies have, as "devolution of power is virtually meaningless without corresponding transfers of control over financial resources" (Carley and Christie 1992: 133).

Yet it will require more than arguments of administrative efficiency to encourage Jamaicans to shift their deep-seated allegiance from their 'parishes' to new 'regions'. This historical moment at which this may have been possible was in the context of the radical rethinking of independent nationhood and widespread citizen action of the 1970s. Yet forty years after independence, the national debt, crime, and a variety of other issues appear to be of more pressing importance to the government than questions of national and regional identity and participation in managing local environments.

The Urban Environment Revisited

Following this discussion of structures of urban management in general, it is necessary to propose how the management of the urban environment in particular is affected by improving structures of governance and participation. I will address this firstly by outlining and critiquing the "new orthodoxy" in urban environmental management, a position compatible with the visions of the global neo-liberal establishment, and characterised by programmes such as Local Agenda 21 (adopted at the Rio de Janeiro 'World Summit' in 1992) and the UNCHS / UNEP Sustainable Cities Programme. As presented below, this new orthodoxy is epitomised by outputs from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Stockholm Environment Institute, and books published by Earthscan[25]. Following this, I offer an alternative radical perspective, and suggest possible ways in which different actors can participate in improving the urban environment of Kingston.

As expressed in Chapter 3, the concept of sustainable development is so widely accepted as to be almost meaningless. It has become far more widely accepted that the issues of poverty and environmental degradation are linked in the context of the Third World city, and that both issues ought to be addressed. Much of this perspective is informed by the shortcomings of structural adjustment programmes (Chapter 6), and is therefore aimed at ameliorating the negative social and environmental consequences of these. As such, there are few influential individuals or organisations that would advocate leaving downtown Kingston to fend for itself and wait for the trickle-down effects of macro-economic restructuring to take hold. Indeed, "it would seem that helping cities to address their

[25] There are many close connections between these organisations and institutions: for example, the foreword to the Earthscan collection *Sustainable Cities in Developing Countries* (Pugh 2000b) is written by the Principal Environmental Engineer of the Urban Development Division of the World Bank.

environmental problems can meet both poverty and sustainability goals, thereby contributing to sustainable development" (IIED 2001: 1/1).

Whereas until recently, attempts to solve urban environmental problems focussed on the role of national governments and international agencies, the new orthodoxy holds that local environmental problems require local solutions (Dahiya and Pugh 2000), as "outside agencies, whether national ministries or international agencies, often misunderstand the nature of the problem and the range of options from which to chose the most appropriate solutions" (Hardoy *et al* 2001: 385). At the scale of the city, it is now thought that environmental problems are "greatly influenced by what city or municipal governments do or do not do" (IIED 2000: 1/1), and that "each city has to develop and implement an action programme, based on a careful evaluation of its own problems and of the resources it can mobilize" (Hardoy *et al* 2001: 385).

There is also an emerging view of a role for local government to play in improving the urban environment. Despite this, local authorities are frequently blamed for poor environmental conditions: "it is the failure of these governments that underlies the most serious environmental problems" (Hardoy *et al* 2001: 389). Alternatively, local government is viewed as being just one of several actors with the ability to improve cities. It is considered important for new partnerships to be formed between public agencies and community organizations, NGOs and private enterprises, with Agenda 21 (1992) and the UN City Summit (1996) also recommending the involvement of researchers (Wacker *et al* 1999). These partnerships are seen to be particularly important "for urban governments that lack the capacity and funds to meet their responsibilities for infrastructure and service provision" (IIED 2000: 2/1), as "acting alone, neither the government, the private sector, nor civil society can be relied upon to address environmental concerns" (IIED 2001: 12/1).

The shift from government to governance is also part of this new urban environmental agenda. It is suggested that more effective responses to urban environmental problems require a shift in focus from one on improving urban management to one on good governance which includes a more effective framework of support for citizens' groups and NGOs.

Finally, it is beginning to be accepted that the brown and green agenda may not be as mutually exclusive as previously thought, and that they can be usefully combined at the local level (McGranahan and Satterthwaite 2000). The value of an environmental justice perspective in addressing the multiple facets of environmental problems is also becoming acknowledged (McGranahan *et al* 2001); as is the fact that urban environmental problems cannot be addressed in isolation from global processes. It is also recognised that "strengthening the capacity of city and municipal governments to address the lack of sanitation, drains, piped water supplies, refuse collection and health services is generally a precondition for building the institutional capacity to address air and water pollution, protect natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions" (Hardoy *et al* 2001: 383).

Towards a political ecology for Kingston

The approaches outlined above can be seen as tinkering with existing global neo-liberal economic and social structures. The environmental and social problems seen in Kingston are constructed as unpleasant but unavoidable side-effects of the processes of economic restructuring, and are therefore addressed through *post hoc* solutions. In contrast, a radical approach is one which fundamentally challenges the existing political ecology and existing relationships between society and nature. Rather than simply recognising that urban environmental degradation and social injustice are linked, a radical perspective goes one step further and identifies the structures of global capitalism as being behind both of these.

Any attempts to ameliorate these problems without tackling the root causes behind them will make no more than surface changes to the conditions of life for the urban poor in Kingston or any other Third World city. The changes to the management of the urban environment in Kingston outlined above, although considerable, essentially function on top of existing economic injustices, rather than questioning and reforming them.

One possible political lens through which to propose a radical political ecology is Marxism, which proposes class as a basis for collective organisation to change an unjust social system. However, as shown in the discussion of David Harvey's understanding of urban social action above, this has limited practical applicability in the context of Kingston, where the most severe urban environmental problems affect the unemployed, underemployed, unemployable, and those working outside the formal sector. Although trades unions have played an important role in Jamaican civil society (Munroe 1990), they are unable to represent these groups of marginalised people. In fact, the balance of power in the political economy in Jamaica shifted against the trades unions in the 1990s, since when they have become a "less significant factor in civil society" (Munroe 1999: 82).

Yet the more anarchistic belief that people must be able to control their own lives and their own relationships with their surroundings also has serious shortcomings. Under slavery, the plantation system actively sought to diminish the capacity for autonomous organisation, decades of political tribalism have encouraged a mentality of hand-outs and favour-seeking rather than small-scale mobilisation to address issues of local importance, and there has never been a comprehensive effort to restore these abilities to the poor and marginalised in Jamaican society. Despite this, a more anarchistic approach sees existing power relations as the problem, rather than class groups (Pepper 1993). This is a more fitting approach in the context of Kingston, in which there are multiple constraints which

affect the ability of individuals to act freely. This fits in with an approach to environmental justice which recognises that this has inter-generational and intra-generational components, as well as racial-, gender-, ethnic-, and age-based injustices.

Perhaps a radical, yet pragmatic, approach could harness aspects of both of these positions through encouraging a collective approach to improving the urban environment. This has certain similarities to the new structures of urban governance proposed by the Jamaican government and supported by a variety of international organisations, yet certain important differences. Structures such as this help to prevent the abuse of common environmental goods by powerful actors, and environmental improvement benefits the society more broadly as well as the groups targeted by specific projects. Moreover, collective improvements are almost invariably less expensive and more efficient than an uncoordinated set of individual activities.

This collective approach requires a relatively strong and relatively autonomous system of local government. Although frequent and fair elections are a necessary component, these must be accompanied by the real devolution of power from the state, rather than responsibility solely for collecting small amounts of revenue and organising marginal aspects of urban housekeeping as is the case in Kingston and St Andrew today. The role of this authority should be to facilitate the formation of partnerships, rather than to be a partner itself. Rather than being involved as one part of an alliance aimed at improving urban governance, the urban authority (in this case, the KSAC) should remain outside this, mediating the relationship between citizens groups, NGOs and the private sector. These are not relationships between equals as each partner has different strengths and weaknesses, and the local government is in the best position to be the kind of strong but fair umpire necessary to ensure the proper functioning of these partnerships. The process

of consultation, and the practice of contracting out particular environmental and social development projects is not the same as a process of partnership in which a variety of groups contribute their particular abilities and resources to effecting change. This process of collectivisation also recognises the rights of future generations and the rights of those living outside the city.

It has long been recognised that many of the problems facing Kingston are problems of decision-making (Mensah 1974). Improved structures of decision-making are essential if the twin objectives of deepening democracy and improving the urban environment are to be served. These structures should be able to feed the views of individual citizens into the machinery of urban management. The elected local government system is one possible mechanism, as is the proposed network of community, district, and parish committees. Yet whereas the former faces a crisis of trust and a lack of involvement, the latter risks becoming seen as purely a consulting process rather than having potential for real change. Whereas acknowledging the authenticity of voices other than those of the urban elite is of great importance, there is a distinct risk of these being ghettoised into an "opaque otherness" (Harvey 1989a: 117) and seen as just one of multiple inputs into the urban management process.

An alternative system for improving Kingston's environment requires the recognition of both individuals and the city as a whole. The city is discursively and materially constructed by the actions of hundreds of thousands of individual people. Conceiving of the city in these terms irrevocably binds the involvement of people to its management, as the city becomes viewed as inseparable from its inhabitants. Recognising the urban as a space of processes and flows which extend through space and time leads to urban environmental problems being addressed in a way which takes into account the wider

spatial and temporal contexts of these issues. Whereas this perspective privileges the lived experience of the urban residents, it also seeks to change them – although not in the moralising way of the 'culture of poverty' and similar discourses outlined in Chapter 5`.

Indeed, poverty needs to be redefined as being about more than simply a shortage of economic resources. A relational definition of poverty also focuses attention on the role of inequality, and a more holistic definition takes into account access to shared public goods and pleasant surroundings. Improvements in the urban environment can therefore in themselves contribute to the reduction of poverty. Yet there is also a role for more personal and intangible improvements in the quality of urban life. Far from calling for the urban poor to be 'tamed' by participating in the arts, I would suggest that the creation of a distinctly Jamaican cross-class urban culture would improve the quality of life for all the residents of Kingston, would increase pride in the city, and would lead to both small and large-scale improvements to the city's environment. Far too often, visions for the city have been put forward by a small elite, and have thus been unable to capture the imaginations or aspirations of most of its citizens. A new urban culture for Kingston must therefore be formed through the meaningful participation of the majority of the population who live in the spatially constrained and socially marginalised 'downtown' of the city. 'Visions' and 'Dreams' for Kingston appear frequently in the most recent literature about the city, and in the conclusion to this thesis I will put forward a tentative outline of what this new urban culture could aspire to.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: towards a new understanding of equity and ecology

Introduction

The preceding chapters have explored issues of equity, ecology, and governance in Kingston. At the close of this discussion, it is important to note that many of the processes written about are extremely contemporary. The proposal for funding to produce a Kingston and St Andrew Sustainable Development plan (KSAPDC 2001) was only submitted in November 2001, and although the grant has been awarded, the money had not been released to enable this process to commence at the time of final fieldwork (September 2002). Similarly, whereas several government papers on the topic of local government reform have been produced in the past decade, the most comprehensive document outlining the future direction of this was printed in June 2001. This thesis is therefore presented at a time when many of the developments it seeks to assess are still taking place. In one respect, it is therefore at a disadvantage, as any conclusions are necessarily tentative. However, any shortfall in historical perspective is more than compensated for by its relevance to current processes. It has been written at a crucial time in Kingston's history, and has the potential to influence rather than merely document this. It is a time at which ecological issues are finally being brought to the forefront of urban political concerns, and at which individuals and organisations at a variety of scales – from the most local to the most global – are focussing their attention and efforts on improving the urban environment.

At the start of this conclusion, I summarise the main findings and arguments of the preceding chapters, and comment on the efficacy of the methods used to obtain these. I then discuss some definitions of urban environmental problems, before using the source material collected in Kingston to suggest more integrated ways of assessing and addressing these issues. The earlier chapters also provide the raw material for assessing the cultural and political aspects of sustainable urban development, particularly in the context of medium-sized Third World cities, and for proposing a more participatory model of urban management. The final section of this chapter and the thesis moves away from an analysis of the past and present state of the city, and ends by presenting some visions of Kingston's future.

Summary of Findings

In Chapters 1 and 2, I introduced the main aims of the research and the key questions which have been addressed, and provided an outline of the geographical, historical, academic, and personal contexts for this. Chapter 3 outlined the theoretical framework in which the research was conducted, primarily through examining the keywords of nature, power, and participation. Nature is seen to be a combination of discursive and material constructions shaped by people's experiences; whereas power is understood as occurring in flows rather than being possessed, and as being manifested in multiple, different ways rather than simply through oppression or domination. Discourses of participation are an important part of these human-environment interactions as well as having the potential to be manipulated by powerful actors. Despite the many uses of the term, however, participation is understood as being a central tool in improving the management of the city for the benefit of its residents.

Chapters 4 and 5 illuminated a variety of perspectives of the urban environment differentiated according to class, age and gender, thereby exploring the ways in which the city and nature are constructed by these groups. In Chapter 4, these perspectives were displayed in the form of photographs taken by adolescents from a variety of social and academic backgrounds. As well as a quantitative description of the total set of photographs, a more qualitative analysis shows individual images and the texts used by the young photographers to describe these images. Both the locations and the content of the photographs varied according to social background and gender. Poorer participants had the greatest degree of independent mobility within their communities, but had little access to areas outside of this limited spatial area; whereas the most affluent participants paid little attention to their home communities but were able to cover much larger distances in the city and the country, though only when accompanied by adults. Within each of these groups, boys showed more independent patterns of mobility than girls. However, girls and individuals from poorer backgrounds took far more pictures of people actively engaged in addressing environmental problems, whereas boys and more affluent participants focussed more on 'scenic' aspects of their surroundings. None of the participants appeared to have independent access to, or interest in, the parks and gardens of the city and its surroundings, yet representatives of all groups indicated a degree of cultural awareness and national pride.

Chapter 5 reported on data from other methods used to assess the feelings of both adults and young people about environmental problems in their communities and Kingston. After assessing media and popular constructions of the city, the chapter reported the results of a survey utilising semantic differentials to assess the feelings of young people towards their school compounds, the areas around their homes, the city of Kingston, and Jamaica. Whereas the responses to the first two of these locations were overwhelmingly positive,

attitudes towards Kingston were either ambivalent or negative, and it appears that individuals from more affluent backgrounds feel less positive about their city and their country. The second half of the chapter described the major environmental problems in communities and the city from the perspective of individuals, rather than 'experts', as obtained through a series of focus groups. The problems faced, and the perceptions of the urban environment, vary socio-spatially across the Kingston Metropolitan Area. Residents of 'downtown' communities struggle daily with the lack of basic environmental services such as water supply, sanitation, drainage, and solid waste collection at the scale of the household and the community. Citizens from across the socio-economic spectrum shared the perspective of these environmental problems as problems of social organisation, but failed to identify any structural or political forces behind this.

Chapters 6 and 7 linked these environmental problems with power structures and relationships within the city. In Chapter 6, the focus groups that identified the main environmental problems in the city were asked to identify the actors who were or could be involved in addressing them, the amount of power that these actors wielded, and the effectiveness with which they tackled these issues. The state, the private sector, international actors (particularly through structural adjustment programmes), non-government organisations, and grassroots organisations were all identified as actors, and their relevant contributions were assessed. The existing structures of urban governance in Kingston were examined in Chapter 7, as were recent proposals for their modification. These structures were then viewed in conjunction with the potential for urban social movements to effect change in the city, using the writings of David Harvey and Manuel Castells as the theoretical underpinnings for assessing this. It was shown that civil society has made important contributions to social improvement in Jamaica, and suggested that meaningful social and environmental change in the city will require new forms of

governance and citizen action. These chapters also show the ways in which citizens participate in urban governance, and suggest further ways in which this could be facilitated.

Methodological Comments

It is also worth commenting on the efficacy and suitability of the suite of methods used to gather empirical data for this thesis. The more conventional methods of interviews and documentary research (which provided most of the information for Chapter 7) have long been proven to be effective in the urban Caribbean. However, I would suggest that the data gathered in this way become particularly pertinent when viewed in conjunction with the investigations into urban culture reported in Chapters 4 to 6.

In some respects, the focus groups were the least effective of the methods employed. They rely on a conception of community as a place, and assume that spatial proximity is a valid category in which to group individuals for discussions. The more effective group meetings were those that were not based so rigidly on these assumptions, for example those involving separate groups of male and female community college students. These groups had shared experiences which were not place-dependent, and appeared not to be bound by preconceptions of what their spatially-defined 'community' should want. This experience is salutary, as much of the information collected by agencies involved in social and environmental development is based on the focus group model of participation in research. At the same time, these groups did enable access to a large spatial and social cross-section of Kingston which would not otherwise have been possible.

The involvement of children and young people in the research was particularly rewarding on both the personal and the academic level. It is well documented that children occupy a

"special position of exclusion" (Matthews *et al* 1999: 135), and are seldom in a position to enter into a dialogue with adults and decision-makers about their environmental concerns and geographical needs. Research on children "should not just be reported for its own sake, but should lead to outcomes which encourage empowerment, participation and self-determination consistent with levels of competence" (Matthews and Limb, 1999: 83). The involvement of children and young people in this research helped to bring the concerns of the youth in Kingston to the attention of both an academic and, through the exhibition of some aspects of the research, a more general audience. At the same time, exploring "children's intimate relationships to the local landscape, people and place" (Nayak 2003: 304) enabled a better understanding of locally specific social and environmental processes. Whereas the questionnaire survey, in particular the semantic differentials exploring relationships to particular places, provided a general pattern of youth feelings towards their surroundings, the autophotographic study enabled a much richer understanding of individual-environment interactions in Kingston. Of particular importance in both of these was the involvement of young people from across the social spectrum, as much previous research in the geographies of youth has concentrated solely on 'marginalised' groups, whether in deprived areas of the UK (Nayak 2003) or the poorest children of the Third World (Bartlett 1999, Young and Barrett 2001).

Redefining Urban Environmental Problems

Although urban environmental problems have been a central theme of this thesis, I have deliberately waited until the end to define these. Indeed, this term was not defined in the interviews, discussions, and focus groups which have provided the data for this study, but rather was open to the interpretations of the participants. Although policy makers frequently invoke the participation and support of urban residents in improving environmental conditions in the city, the understandings that these groups have of the

urban environment may vary significantly, and by leaving the definition open to negotiation in the course of this research, the conceptual frameworks used by individual citizens can be better understood. In turn, this can lead to a more inclusive understanding of the variety of problems – environmental and otherwise – faced by the people of Kingston. The discussion below incorporates the perspectives of many residents of Kingston, and reflects the analysis of these presented in previous chapters.

Despite the large and growing literature on urban environmental problems, and in spite of the fact that most people accept that "there exists a class of problems which might reasonably be dubbed 'environmental'" (Harvey 1996: 372), there are few clear definitions of what these may be. Urban environmental problems are frequently defined in terms of specific issues, such as "bad water and sanitation, polluted air, poorly managed waste and other localized environmental insults" (McGranahan *et al* 2001: 4-5), though a more general definition could be that "urban environmental problems are threats to people's present or future well-being, resulting from human-induced damage to the physical environment, originating in or borne into urban areas" (IIED 2001: 1/3). There is also a need to distinguish between environmental hazards and environmental degradation, as "there are strong causal links between particular environmental hazards and poverty… but not between poverty and most forms of environmental degradation" (Nunan and Satterthwaite 1999: 4).

Frequently, however, rather than defining the exact scope of the problem, authors identify the goals for successful or sustainable cities, which may include "healthy living and working environments for the inhabitants; water supply, provision for sanitation, rubbish collection and disposal, drains, paved roads and footpaths, and other forms of infrastructural services that are essential for health (and important for a prosperous

economic base) available to all; and an ecologically sustainable relationship between the demands of consumers and businesses and the resources, waste sinks and ecosystems on which they draw" (Hardoy *et al* 2001: 2). A more general ambition of this type is offered by Satterthwaite, who suggests that a sustainable city can be attained by "reducing ecological disruption or damage and protecting natural capital" (1999: 6).

However, the definitions of urban environmental problems outlined above are too narrow yet too vague. The simple definition of "threats to people's present or future well-being, resulting from human-induced damage to the physical environment" contains several words (such as "threats" and "well-being") which are open to a wide variety of interpretations. The use of the word "damage" is particularly problematic, as urban processes such as the construction of new housing developments can be viewed as harmful to the physical environment whereas at the same time improving health and living standards for urban residents. Also, when damage is viewed as being specifically "human-induced", problems caused by inaction on the part of urban authorities become excluded from the definition of specifically environmental issues. Urban environmental problems are frequently problems of neglect of both people living in particular areas and the infrastructure which is supposed to engender healthy surroundings. The definitions above would suggest that, for example, effluent in city streets is a problem because of its production, and is therefore caused by the people from whom it came. In contrast, alternative definitions need to take into account that this is a problem of disposal, for which the urban authorities with responsibility for sewage removal ought to be held accountable. These definitions also do not take into account problems of uneven access to the environmental resources of the city and its surroundings, whether these are clean water, unpolluted air, or facilities for recreation.

This imbalance can only be rectified by the recognition that "environmental problems cannot be understood in isolation from the political and economic contexts within which they are created" (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 28). Whereas conservative discourses stress the role of natural limits in the creation of environmental problems (as documented in Swyngedouw (1997a)), the previous chapters have shown some ways in which the political and economic contexts of Kingston influence the urban environment. The environmental problems facing downtown Kingston are affected by a wide variety of local, national, and international actors, among whom the urban residents are outnumbered and relatively powerless.

On a different level, the ways in which individuals understand and relate to their surroundings is fundamentally related both to the material and discursive construction of urban environmental problems. As David Harvey puts it, "we cannot talk about the world of 'nature' or of 'environment' without simultaneously revealing how space and time are being constituted within such processes" (Harvey 1996: 263). The preceding chapters have shown that space and time in Kingston are understood and controlled in very different ways by different groups within the city. An understanding of urban environmental problems cannot rest only on a single perspective, but must be synthesised from the variety of understandings which co-exist within the city. Furthermore, this is a necessary pre-requisite to facilitating environmental improvement, as this requires the involvement and commitment of a broad cross-section of urban society.

The packaging of urban environmental issues as discrete 'problems' may also conceal their inter-connected nature. As many of the young people in Chapter 4, and the adults in Chapter 5 recognised, problems which originate in one location (such as inadequate garbage collection) may have far-reaching effects (such as air pollution from the burning

of refuse). Furthermore, as explored in Chapter 3, it hides the fact that nature and society are not separate, nor even linked, but rather are integral parts of each other. Indeed, "environmental problems are problems of social organization" (Norgaard 1994: 15), and "all proposals concerning 'the environment' are necessarily and simultaneously proposals for social change" (Harvey 1996: 119).

In keeping with the identification of the urban as a space of flows, a description of urban environmental issues ought also to identify processes occurring outside of the administrative boundaries of the city. The role of international actors in both degrading (for example ships and factories polluting Kingston Harbour) and improving (for example international funding agencies supporting local infrastructural projects) Kingston's environment was noted by the participants in the research. International political and economic forces, including global terms of trade and neo-liberal structural adjustment programmes also affect the environmental and social processes in the city (Chapter 7).

The relationship between the city and its surrounding area was only hinted at in this thesis, for example in referring to the development of suburban housing in the parish of St Catherine. Decisions made within the city can alter its ecological footprint with a profound impact on the rural economy and environment of the surrounding areas (Cronon 1991). The consumption patterns of urban residents can affect agricultural patterns with the possible consequence of rural land degradation. Many of the support mechanisms for city life can affect environmental processes in the city's hinterland, whether this is the extraction of water from rivers, pollution from electricity generating stations, or deforestation to produce charcoal. Although Kingston is clearly the primate city, it is also necessary to view its role in relation to Jamaica's other urban centres. Rather than competing to attract outside investment or scarce national resources, some aspects of

urbanisation in Jamaica need to be managed at the national level, to ensure that social and environmental problems do not merely get moved from one location to another. The impact of urban environmental problems on future generations ought also to be mentioned, as a sustainable city should contribute to broader issues of sustainable development and equity, both across space and through time.

This perspective is generally in accord with the broader understanding of urban environmental problems promoted by the participants in this study. Along with the Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice (1992, cited in Harvey 1996: 391), these participants would appear to redefine the environment to include "the totality of life conditions in our communities – air and water, safe jobs for all at decent wages, housing, education, health care, humane prisons, equity, justice". However, such a broad conception sidelines the view of the many individuals who saw economic hardship as a barrier to environmental improvement, rather than as an environmental problem in itself. As shown in Chapter 5, unemployment and a lack of education were seen not as environmental problems *per se*, but rather as trapping people in situations in which they were unable to address the environmental challenges in their surroundings. This is subtly but importantly different from a perspective which suggests that poverty *causes* environmental degradation; rather, I am proposing that poverty *prevents* autonomous environmental improvement. Although writing primarily about rural environmental problems, Norgaard's injunction still holds true for the urban context: "poverty cannot be solved without better environmental management and better environmental management cannot be attained without the managers of the land receiving a fair return" (Norgaard 1994: 70). Norgaard places the public belief in atomism (the belief that systems are simply the sum of their parts) and mechanism (the belief that it is possible to predict how systems will respond to different stimuli) at the centre of understanding why existing attempts to

deal with social and environmental crises have failed. Atomism "legitimates the position of those who argue that fixing the parts is sufficient" (p70), whereas mechanism fails because ecosystems and societies are not analogous to mechanical systems. In contrast, effective improvement of the urban environment requires a concerted effort to address different aspects of the problem simultaneously in a process of dynamic interaction between the citizens, urban managers, and the material environment of the city itself.

In summary therefore, I would suggest that there is a broad suite of urban problems facing the citizens and the authorities in Kingston. However, to treat them all under the blanket definition of 'environmental problems' is conceptually muddy, and is an inadequate framework for practical action. An unequal society, feeble peripheral capitalism, and a tribalistic democratic system are at the core of Kingston's environmental problems, which are a consequence of uneven power relations and unequal access to environmental resources. These inequities must be addressed through fundamental transformations to the social order, including increased and broadened participation in urban management. Yet structural inadequacies also need to be independently dealt with, such as by the adequate provision of basic environmental and sanitary services to the more deprived areas of the city. For while the problems of poverty preclude better environmental management, the problems of uncomfortable and unhealthy living conditions (as shown in Chapter 6) also hamper educational and economic achievement.

Cultural and Political Aspects of Sustainable Urban Development

The point of this research is not solely to identify or define urban environmental problems, nor even to describe the ways in which these vary spatially and socially across Kingston. Rather, these different perspectives were examined in order to understand better the ways in which the city and its environment can be more appropriately and effectively managed.

Inasmuch as this study can be defined as a piece of political ecology research, it "seeks to explain the topography of a politicised environment, and the role that diverse actors play in the 'moulding' of that environment, so as to better assist those actors in society who are fighting for social justice and environmental conservation" (Bryant and Bailey 1997: 195).

Any quest for social and environmental justice must take account of the local social and environmental situation. In the case of Kingston, these problems are specifically urban, and the solutions to them need also to be urban. They need to take account not only of the economic and political aspects of the city, but also the cultural. Rex Nettleford identifies the trinity of culture, politics and economics as the three main components of Jamaican society, and with regards to this context, suggests that "cultural action is central to effective social change" (2003: xxi). This is rooted in the historical background of slavery and colonisation, in which economic exploitation and cultural subjugation went hand in hand.

Because the environmental and social aspects of life in Kingston are so closely linked, any attempts to deal with them must also address questions of culture and identity. Through exploring Jamaican society, this research therefore enables a better understanding of Jamaican culture. One of the key questions facing scholars of Jamaican and Caribbean society is whether this can best be described by the model of a plural society (as proposed by M.G. Smith) or the model of a creole society (perhaps most famously promoted by Edward Kamau Brathwaite). M.G. Smith identified three distinct social sections in Jamaican society, which exhibited both cultural pluralism (in which these strata could be distinguished through institutional and cultural factors) and the features of a plural society which exhibits "intense cleavages and discontinuity between differentiated segments" and

in which "the community of values or social relations between these sections [is] correspondingly low" (Smith 1965: xi).

In contrast, creolisation "refers to the agonising process of renewal and growth that marks the new order of men and women who came originally from different Old World cultures (whether European, African, Levantine or Oriental) and met in conflict or otherwise on foreign soil" (Nettleford 2003: 3). In practice, this suggests a culture and society that is distinctively Creole, rather than one containing several different cultures interacting in cascading processes of superordination and subordination, a perspective which is now "accepted by many as the leading interpretation of Caribbean and, to a large extent, Atlantic World societies" (Shepherd and Richards 2002: xiv). One of the major contributions of this way of thinking has been the insistence that the common people were and are active historical agents, rather than the passive subjects of imperial domination. In an international context of globalisation, it must also be recognised that Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean are places where "East and West, North and South, Third World and First World, capitalism and communism, global high tech and local poverty, tourists and drug runners, all collide… it becomes increasingly less clear what is inside and what is outside, what is pure and what is impure, what is North and what is South, what is local and what is global" (Sheller 2003: 175).

The attitudes to the environment shown by citizens of Kingston in different social, political, and institutional situations exhibit characteristics which might be seen to support both of these models. As seen in Chapter 4, there are distinct differences in the ways in which adolescents from different schools represent their surroundings, but these appear to exist on a continuum rather than to be in discrete groupings. The plural society's focus on race and (to a slightly lesser extent) class conceals gender and other differences which can

also be seen to affect the power which an individual can exert over space. These other differences were highlighted in the focus groups (Chapters 5 and 6), in which women and men were seen to have different takes on conditions within their own communities. The linking of particular attributes with particular locations in the questionnaire survey (Chapter 5) also showed differences across socio-economic groups, and the generally more positive associations accorded to home and school than to Kingston and Jamaica suggests that allegiances are more towards local places rather than towards the country as a whole. The ability of the citizens to improve their surroundings is affected by a wide variety of constraints, yet individuals exhibit a strong resolve to make whatever changes they can.

Yet at the same time, the photographic study suggested that adolescents from different social backgrounds shared pride in their country and some aspects of national identity. Both political and cultural symbols were photographed: the former including the Jamaican flag and the statue of Alexander Bustamante (Jamaica's first Prime Minister); and the latter including murals of sporting and musical heroes (Figure 8.1). These are the aspects of Jamaican social and cultural life that are genuinely shared throughout the society, and that represent the core of Jamaica's national identity. Although it would be overstating the case to suggest that there is a unified urban culture in Kingston, there were also at least superficial similarities in the perceptions of the environmental problems facing the city, and the possible solutions for these. Indeed, the more affluent urban residents of Kingston appeared to share the concerns of poorer citizens for the 'brown agenda' problems of urban health and sanitation, rather than (as might be expected) to share the more international middle-class preoccupation with 'green agenda' issues of conservation (Chapter 5). Although the membership of more traditional environmental groups is drawn

from the middle classes, this remains a minority interest even within this segment of Jamaican society.

Figure 8.1
National Symbols documented in the autophotographic study.
From left: Alexander Bustamante (female, Camperdown); the Jamaican flag (female, Trench Town); Bob Marley (female, Campion).



Approaches to the urban environment therefore suggest that there is some truth to both the plural and the creole models of Jamaican society. Both, however, have shortfalls. Although the plural society model is perhaps an accurate representation of Jamaica in the post-independence period, it does not provide a framework on which a unified society can be built, but rather appears to support a pessimistic appraisal of the ongoing divisions within the nation. However, discourses of creolisation which suggest shared national interests and identity cutting across socio-economic, gender, and other divides appear utopian in the context of present-day Kingston.

These discourses also have a particularly political role, in that they are "associated with the role of intellectuals in the creation of the images of their societies" (Bolland 2002: 17), and constitute "the ideology of a particular social segment, namely a middle-class intelligentsia that seeks a leading role in an integrated, newly independent society" (Bolland 2002: 18). Bolland suggests that a dualistic view of society has led to the conception of creolisation as "a mixing of cultures that occurs without reference to structural contradictions and social conflicts" (p30). In contrast, he recommends taking a more dialectical approach to creolisation, which can contain all the seemingly contradictory aspects of colonial and post-colonial Caribbean society as differentiated parts of a whole which have no independent existence from each other, but are defined in relation to each other. Creolisation is not a process of hybridisation or blending, but rather a process of contention, and is "not simply about moving and mixing elements, but is more precisely about processes of cultural 'regrounding' following experiences of violent uprooting from one's culture of origin" (Sheller 2003: 189). An analysis which recognises these differences and conflicts within Jamaican society provides a framework from which the negative aspects of these can be addressed.

The promotion of a shared national identity is an inherently political project, and the discourse of creolisation can be seen as an attempt to prevent radical social change. Powerful economic and industrial actors obviously have a vested interest in shaping a peaceful and industrious workforce, all working together for the "national good". However, the "national good" frequently means the economic success of businesses owned by minority social (and ethnic) groups. Yet from the national motto of "Out of Many, One People" to the identification of "We the People" as a potent source for social change by some of the groups involved in this research, this unity of national purpose does appear to exist within Jamaican society. Bolland's dialectical approach incorporates both

plural and creole insights, and as such is a more accurate representation of Jamaican society. Whilst recognising the uniqueness of Jamaican and Caribbean social structures, it also allows for the incorporation of class distinctions and hostilities, many of which can be traced back to the period before emancipation.

Political approaches to managing the city's environment, therefore, need to take account of both the differences and the similarities in the experiences and perceptions of different groups within Kingston. There is the potential for broad-based support for urban renewal, and gaining support for this is perhaps a pre-requisite for putting it into practice. However, power- and class-related divisions mean that the exact nature of urban environmental improvement is bound to be contested. Although there is a clear shortage of housing in the Kingston Metropolitan Area, a plan for a large housing development on the green space adjacent to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Hope met with sufficient resistance (much of it utilising environmental rhetoric) from the middle-class inhabitants of this suburban area of St Andrew to force its abandonment. An alternative scheme on Long Mountain has been built, with the blessing of the National Environment and Planning Agency, but this has also been the subject of public complaints from adjacent high income neighbourhoods.

Some agencies, such as the UNDP-LIFE project (Chapter 5), have used environmental problems as a central point around which communities can organise for autonomous improvement of their infrastructure and physical surroundings. A similar approach may work for Kingston as a whole. One possible rallying point is Kingston Harbour, a body of water with symbolic and recreational significance for a wide cross-section of Kingston's society. Upper class urban residents fondly remember the days when pollution (and urban violence) did not preclude swimming in the harbour. Attorney-at-Law and opposition Member of Parliament, Delroy Chuck, wrote recently in the *Gleaner* of his "happy

reminiscences" of "the 'Cross the Harbour' swimming competitions, of the frolic on the waterfront, the bathing at Gunboat and Buccaneer beaches, and so much more"[1]. People living in downtown Kingston, and on the shores of the Harbour, see its pollution as an extension of the problems of sanitation and solid waste disposal in their own communities. The improvement of Kingston Harbour is just one example of a potential rallying-point for an ecologically oriented urban social movement.

Yet this civil society movement must be accompanied by changes in the structures of urban governance. Political officials are no longer solely drawn from a light-skinned elite – the current Prime Minister as well as many members of the cabinet and shadow cabinet are examples of this. The government ministers who inspire the greatest devotion from the great mass of the population are those who cut their teeth in local government politics[2], and are clearly seen to be representative of the 'grassroots'. Although in practice this frequently results in clientelist tribal politics, the principle of direct dialogue with, and accountability to, the electorate is one which ought to be extended rather than limited.

Too often, Kingston's society has been portrayed as degenerate and representative of a culture of poverty and environmental degradation. Morally loaded discourses blaming the cultural habits of the mass of the population for their own poverty and for the state of the environment serve to hide the role of more powerful groups in the creation of this. However, political and economic systems can only be changed when cultural systems are simultaneously addressed. Instead of spreading the cultural ideals of urban elites, sustainable urban development can be facilitated through the promotion of the positive history of Jamaican cultural identity, civic involvement, and political participation

[1] Delroy Chuck "Developing Downtown Kingston" *Daily Gleaner* 19/2/03.
[2] Such as Portia Simpson-Miller, currently Minister of Local Government in the PNP administration; and Pearnel Charles, cabinet minister in the JLP government in the 1980s.

(Chapter 7). Rather than simply reflecting life, culture should be used as a tool to help shape the Jamaican society.

Much of this needs to be achieved at the scale of the local. To an extent, the more affluent residents of Kingston share a western conception of community which sees community as a place rather than as a process (Norgaard 1994). Indeed, "for the wealthy… 'community' often means securing and enhancing privileges already gained… for the marginalized, it all too often means 'controlling their own slum'… 'Community' must, however, be viewed as a process of coming together not as a thing" (Harvey 2001: 191-2). The Jamaican government and international agencies alike frequently fetishize communities, and view the city as a series of adjoining spatial areas, each of which can be managed independently. In contrast, genuinely sustainable urban development needs to based around the formation and interaction of communities. In some cases, this will require small scale local interventions, but more frequently it will involve facilitating a web of inter-community networks and the development of alliances between interests across spatial and social boundaries.

Visions for Kingston's Future

"What will it take to restore honour and dignity to a once-proud metropolis?" asked a recent editorial in the *Daily Gleaner*[3]. Yet despite the rose-tinted views of the past, it is debatable as to whether Kingston ever fitted this description. In the 1930s future national hero Marcus Garvey described the conditions of the city in graphic terms:

[3] "Crusade for a City" *Daily Gleaner* 8/12/02.

> On the edge of the city of Kingston is a greater city of poor people whom nobody sees except when something unusual happens. In what is called the Spanish Town Road area of Jamaica there are more people living in the most primitive and unfortunate state than can be found in any recognised city of the world (quoted in MLGCD 2001: 13).

This description is echoed by Orlando Patterson, in his description of the 'Dungle' in this area in his 1964 novel *The Children of Sisyphus*. Whereas the commercial heart of downtown Kingston, based on the Parade, may once have been a more 'respectable' location, this belies the miserable conditions in which the majority of Kingston's population have always lived. Over the past 40 years, the urban middle-class have neglected the traditional heart of the city in favour of North American-styled shopping plazas and malls located in the suburbs.

The late 1960s brought an elaborate programme of redevelopment of Kingston's central business district (CBD) and waterfront. The prolonged period of construction ironically hastened the centrifugal distribution of offices and shops to elsewhere in the city. Clarke reports that this was "the first attempt at integrated urban development in the city since it was planned in 1692, and the largest and most important programme of urban renewal to be undertaken anywhere in the Caribbean" (Clarke 1971: 238). It is quite possible that the centre of Kingston before this project was even less suitable for retail and commerce than it is now, and that the shanty town communities of West Kingston – although quantitatively less violent – were even more overcrowded and unpleasant during this longed for 'golden age'. The discourses of the wonders of pre-Independence Kingston therefore represent a thinly-veiled position of class bias, in which the CBD served the purposes of the urban middle class. Whereas it is obviously highly desirable for the poverty and environmental degradation of downtown Kingston to be eliminated, it must be ensured that this does not solely serve to benefit the city's elites.

Kingston undeniably has the potential to be a city that is economically prosperous, pleasant to live in, and enjoyable to visit. In a press release issued in 2002[4], the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce suggested that:

> The time has come for Kingston to experience a renaissance. The citizens of our capital city, the private and public sectors must unite to arrive at a common vision and path to make Kingston what it should be, the proud capital of Jamaica and the cultural capital of the Caribbean.

Another editorial in the *Daily Gleaner*[5] stated that "the Kingston Metropolitan Region has all the advantages to be the jewel of the Caribbean", and identified "the rich tourism potential of Port Royal-City-Mountains waiting to be tapped". Calls for the development of Kingston's tourist potential are not unusual. The Jamaica Chamber of Commerce has suggested that "Kingston must be repackaged, redeveloped and re-energized to make it a prime tourism destination with culture, entertainment, cuisine, history, commerce and location as its underlying strengths", and opposition MP Delroy Chuck proposes that "downtown Kingston can surely become the tourism mecca of the Western Hemisphere" with the potential "to attract five or ten million visitors every year"[6]. Yet this vision of Kingston as a tourism mecca rings hollow in the face of the poverty and environmental degradation in the city, some of which has been documented in the preceding pages, and which are exemplified by a *Gleaner* report describing the conditions of part of Southside in central Kingston:

> A huge pile-up of garbage covered the ground floor of the Bartley Building on Maiden Lane where it is estimated that over 200 persons reside. Most of them occupy the second floor but the garbage is already beginning to reach there as well. The occupants have no sanitary facilities and as a result often defecate in bags which they dispose of within the confines of the building[7].

[4] Document was obtained from Michael Ammar, Chairman of the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, 18/9/02.
[5] "A Corporate Area Vision" *Daily Gleaner* 10/6/03.
[6] Delroy Chuck "Developing Downtown Kingston" *Daily Gleaner* 19/2/03.
[7] "Southside Health Risk: more than 200 living in squalid conditions" *Daily Gleaner* 31/3/03.

A somewhat more promising perspective comes from the results of the Kingston and St Andrew Parish Development Committee's "Visioning Workshop", held in June 2001, in which participants from a wide range of organizations identified a variety of elements required for "social well-being, governance, economic conditions and environment"[8]. Tourism was only mentioned in the context of the desire for "an economically developed city based on industry, tourism, and sustainable employment opportunities in all sectors and at all levels". Although it was not directly incorporated within the frames of the discussion, the role of tourism in improving environmental and economic opportunities in Kingston was not raised in any of the focus groups involved in this research. Yet the inhabitants of the city must be treated as more than a reservoir from which local knowledge and visions for the city can be obtained. Instead, this group must be actively kept informed of the debates about the future of the city which are taking place at all levels. Perhaps a better vision for Kingston is one in which nature is respected, power is decentralised, and there is meaningful participation in urban governance.

A truly sustainable city will involve curtailing the powers and consumption of more affluent groups, yet must also enable the majority of the urban population to enjoy the material benefits of 21st century life. This is by no means incompatible with the aims of conservation and the "green" agenda, indeed "a society richer in the arts, where people eat more varied and cleverly prepared food, use more artfully constructed technology, are more educated… and so on, would likely demand less, rather than more, of earth's carrying capacity" (Pepper 1993: 219-20).

Inherited land in rural Jamaica is often referred to as family land. This land is governed by the principle of inalienability, must therefore be managed with the best interests of the

[8] Unpublished document obtained from KSAPDC secretariat, 17/9/02.

entire family in mind, and can only be sold by their unanimous agreement. As Edith Clarke describes it in *My Mother Who Fathered Me*, first published in 1957, in this context the family "include, beside all living members traceable through the blood or the name, wherever they may be, the generations to come, who can obviously not be consulted… Its sale is also a breach of faith to the dead who left it to the immediate occupiers as trustees for this larger group" (Clarke 1999: 23-4). Although not legally recognised, this traditional concept incorporates the key issues of caring for the land, inter-generational fairness, and intra-generational justice – in short, concerns of ecology and equity – and shows that these are integral to Jamaican understandings of the environment. As always, the challenges to urban sustainability come from both within and without: this concept is alien both to the formal mechanisms of Jamaican society as well as to the processes of capitalism. Yet an achievable although ambitious vision for Kingston can best be obtained through the restoration of the ethos behind this rural principle, and its application to the nation's capital city. This would be reflected by an awareness among all urban residents that their own lives are intertwined with the process of urbanisation, and that their own interests are most effectively served by promoting the best interests of the city.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE: YOUTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN KINGSTON

School =	**Date =**

Questionnaire

Youth and the Environment in Kingston

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in this research. I am interested in finding out the ways that different people relate to their surroundings and environment. The information you give is totally anonymous and there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Please ask me if there are any questions which are unclear or which you do not understand.

Section 1

Yourself...

When were you born? (Please include the year.)
[e.g. *February 21, 1988*]

Where were you born? (Please write the town and hospital that you were born in.)
[e.g. *Kingston, UWI Hospital*]

What is your home address? (There is no need to include the number of your house. If your address is a PO Box, please write down the name of the street that your house is actually on.)
[e.g. *Shortwood Road, Kingston 8*]

Section 2

Your surroundings...

In the following questions tick one box on each line between the pair of 'opposites' to show how you feel about several different places. I will show you an example of this on the blackboard. Please respond quickly on the basis of your first impressions, as that is what I am interested in.

How do you feel about your school compound?

Clean								*Dirty*
Unhealthy								*Healthy*
Good								*Bad*
Ugly								*Pretty*
Happy								*Unhappy*
Safe								*Dangerous*

How do you feel about the area around your home?

Clean								*Dirty*
Unhealthy								*Healthy*
Good								*Bad*
Ugly								*Pretty*
Happy								*Unhappy*
Safe								*Dangerous*

How do you feel about Kingston?

Clean								*Dirty*
Unhealthy								*Healthy*
Good								*Bad*
Ugly								*Pretty*
Happy								*Unhappy*
Safe								*Dangerous*

How do you feel about Jamaica?

Clean								*Dirty*
Unhealthy								*Healthy*
Good								*Bad*
Ugly								*Pretty*
Happy								*Unhappy*
Safe								*Dangerous*

How important is each of the following in making an environment that you would like to live in?

	Not at all important	*A little bit important*	*Important*	*Very important*
Nice buildings				
Trees / Plants				
Personal Safety				
Animals				
Clean air				
Clean water supply				

What other things do you think are necessary to make a pleasant environment?

Does the area in which you live your life (home, school, surroundings) have any of the following?

	None at all	*A Few*	*A Lot*
Nice buildings			
Trees / Plants			
Animals			
Clean air			
Clean water supply			

Section 3

Your environment and you…

What do you think are the most important environmental issues in your community?

Do you think that by participating in environmental activities in your school or community you can make a difference to these problems?

[ ] Not at all [ ] A little [ ] A lot

Who do you think can make the biggest difference in solving these environmental problems?

[ ] Individuals [ ] Government

[ ] School / community groups [ ] Nobody – can't be solved

Approximately how many days of school do you miss each term due to ill-health?

[ ] 0-2 [ ] 3-5 [ ] 6-9 [ ] 10 +

When was the last time you suffered from diarrhoea (running belly)?

[ ] In the last week [ ] In the last month [ ] More than a month ago

Do you suffer from asthma?

[ ] Yes – have inhaler [ ] Yes – but no inhaler [ ] No

Section 4

You and your environment…

Are you a member of any extra-curricular clubs at school?
(Please tick all that apply)

[ ] sports club [ ] service club [ ] subject club

[ ] religious club [ ] environmental club [ ] other (please specify)

_____

Are you a member of any clubs or organisations in your community / neighbourhood?
(Please tick all that apply)

[ ] sports club [ ] service club [ ] subject club

[ ] religious club [ ] environmental club [ ] other (please specify)

_____

Please indicate how often you do each of the following:

	never	very rarely	occasionally	frequently
Buy items with excessive packaging				
Participate in organised clean-ups, tree-planting, or other environmental activities				
Sweep or look after yard at home (e.g. caring for grass, flowers, vegetables)				
Use cars /public transport for journeys which could be walked				
Put plastic drinks bottles in recycling bin				
Drop litter on the ground				
Discuss environmental issues with others				

Thank you very much for answering these questions.
You have just taken part in a real-life geography research project!

APPENDIX 2

DATA TABLES: YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONSTRUCTIONS OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

The tables below show the average semantic differential scores for the different locations investigated. These are arranged by gender, school attended, hospital of birth, and location of home. The scores are the average of each of the six pairs of adjectives examined. Higher scores represent more positive feelings towards the location.

Figure A2.1

Semantic differential scores arranged by gender

		School	Home	Kingston	Jamaica	Total
Female	Mean	5.79	5.86	4.32	5.19	5.24
	N	373	374	357	367	314
	Std. Dev.	1.09	1.30	1.54	1.35	0.86
Male	Mean	5.18	5.91	4.08	5.12	5.02
	N	301	296	289	287	254
	Std. Dev.	1.20	1.22	1.48	1.33	0.88
Total	Mean	5.52	5.88	4.21	5.15	5.14
	N	674	670	646	654	568
	Std. Dev.	1.18	1.27	1.52	1.34	0.88

Figure A2.2
Semantic differential scores arranged by school attended

		School	Home	Kingston	Jamaica	Total
Ardenne	Mean	5.48	5.57	3.62	4.89	4.83
	N	36	34	36	35	32
	Std. Dev.	0.88	1.17	1.24	1.03	0.69
Calabar	Mean	5.00	5.60	3.84	4.89	4.85
	N	37	36	37	38	33
	Std. Dev.	1.19	1.41	1.24	1.47	0.99
Camperdown	Mean	5.99	5.86	3.88	5.73	5.31
	N	36	36	35	36	32
	Std. Dev.	0.93	1.41	1.65	1.33	0.95
Campion	Mean	5.16	6.07	3.62	4.44	4.79
	N	35	34	32	34	31
	Std. Dev.	0.95	1.12	1.13	1.11	0.65
Clan Carthy	Mean	5.77	5.51	5.50	5.80	5.67
	N	38	36	35	35	32
	Std. Dev.	1.04	1.63	1.04	1.12	0.74
Donald Quarrie	Mean	5.50	6.03	4.19	5.62	5.27
	N	32	34	32	34	28
	Std. Dev.	1.57	1.15	1.97	1.59	1.11
Haile Selassie	Mean	5.84	5.82	5.35	5.89	5.36
	N	19	20	16	19	11
	Std. Dev.	1.30	1.49	1.72	1.11	0.94
Immaculate Conception	Mean	6.02	6.02	3.78	4.67	5.12
	N	39	40	40	37	35
	Std. Dev.	0.95	1.16	1.19	1.28	0.90
Meadowbrook	Mean	4.80	6.07	3.99	4.68	4.88
	N	41	39	38	39	37
	Std. Dev.	1.04	0.93	1.38	1.16	0.68
Mona	Mean	5.50	5.72	4.55	5.51	5.25
	N	39	36	36	35	31
	Std. Dev.	1.29	1.39	1.17	1.16	0.88
Queens	Mean	5.74	6.06	4.23	5.16	5.23
	N	41	44	42	41	35
	Std. Dev.	0.94	1.05	1.45	1.21	0.77
St Georges	Mean	4.92	5.85	3.58	4.62	4.74
	N	33	33	34	33	33
	Std. Dev.	1.28	0.99	1.45	1.22	0.83
Trench Town	Mean	5.43	5.42	5.43	6.20	5.59
	N	25	26	22	23	19
	Std. Dev.	1.18	1.83	1.71	1.06	0.88
Vauxhall	Mean	5.59	6.02	4.88	5.65	5.42
	N	30	33	30	33	23
	Std. Dev.	1.30	1.45	1.48	1.16	0.86

Wolmers Boys	Mean	4.58	5.93	3.98	4.99	4.86
	N	32	32	33	32	30
	Std. Dev.	1.15	1.14	1.22	1.03	0.76
Wolmers Girls	Mean	6.11	5.72	4.27	5.05	5.33
	N	34	31	34	34	31
	Std. Dev.	0.63	1.42	1.25	1.15	0.80
Oberlin	Mean	5.87	6.26	3.81	5.17	5.33
	N	37	35	31	33	25
	Std. Dev.	1.07	0.84	1.77	1.49	0.91
Mavis Bank	Mean	6.12	6.63	4.42	5.41	5.50
	N	25	28	22	20	16
	Std. Dev.	1.04	0.52	2.02	1.91	1.08
Jamaica College	Mean	4.93	6.32	4.57	4.96	5.17
	N	33	31	29	28	24
	Std. Dev.	1.25	0.79	1.29	1.20	0.73
Merl Grove	Mean	6.14	5.13	4.19	4.74	5.09
	N	37	36	36	39	33
	Std. Dev.	0.82	1.40	1.51	1.48	0.91
Total	Mean	5.52	5.88	4.22	5.16	5.15
	N	679	674	650	658	571
	Std. Dev.	1.18	1.27	1.52	1.34	0.88

Figure A2.3

Semantic differential scores arranged by hospital of birth

		School	Home	Kingston	Jamaica	Total
Victoria Jubilee Hospital	Mean	5.68	5.79	4.52	5.44	5.31
	N	286	289	270	280	235
	Std. Dev.	1.13	1.36	1.61	1.32	0.89
University Hospital (UHWI)	Mean	5.39	5.85	4.18	4.89	5.04
	N	130	124	128	126	110
	Std. Dev.	1.24	1.27	1.57	1.39	1.03
Other Public	Mean	5.84	5.68	3.98	5.38	5.18
	N	79	78	73	75	64
	Std. Dev.	0.88	1.34	1.40	1.18	0.74
Private	Mean	5.04	6.22	3.90	4.69	4.93
	N	94	90	91	89	85
	Std. Dev.	1.22	0.96	1.23	1.14	0.78
Home	Mean	5.83	5.83	3.45	5.27	5.19
	N	24	23	20	22	17
	Std. Dev.	1.05	1.27	1.42	1.60	0.86
Overseas	Mean	4.89	6.03	3.67	4.69	4.81
	N	22	24	24	24	22
	Std. Dev.	1.12	1.04	1.15	1.10	0.79
Total	Mean	5.52	5.86	4.22	5.18	5.15
	N	635	628	606	616	533
	Std. Dev.	1.17	1.28	1.53	1.33	0.89

Figure A2.4
Semantic differential scores arranged by location of home

		School	Home	Kingston	Jamaica	Total
Kgn CSO	Mean	6.17	5.22	5.38	5.86	5.60
	N	12	12	11	11	11
	Std. Dev.	1.13	1.81	1.31	1.30	0.96
Kgn 2	Mean	5.46	5.36	3.88	4.79	4.78
	N	30	29	29	28	22
	Std. Dev.	1.17	1.55	1.58	1.36	1.12
Kgn 3	Mean	5.46	5.50	4.64	5.11	5.15
	N	18	19	17	18	16
	Std. Dev.	1.15	1.59	1.51	1.48	0.98
Kgn 4	Mean	5.86	6.39	4.76	5.55	5.53
	N	7	9	9	10	7
	Std. Dev.	0.70	0.61	1.14	0.91	0.56
Kgn 5	Mean	5.88	5.90	5.04	5.82	5.58
	N	14	13	14	15	12
	Std. Dev.	0.97	0.94	1.36	0.93	0.62
Kgn 6	Mean	5.18	6.10	4.08	4.76	5.05
	N	31	30	31	29	28
	Std. Dev.	1.17	1.08	1.07	1.14	0.68
Kgn 7	Mean	5.05	5.65	4.33	4.35	4.85
	N	10	10	10	10	10
	Std. Dev.	1.53	1.40	1.75	1.25	1.10
Kgn 8	Mean	5.34	5.93	4.35	4.71	5.08
	N	52	49	53	52	48
	Std. Dev.	0.98	1.07	1.16	1.20	0.86
Kgn 9	Mean	5.88	6.37	4.09	5.17	5.40
	N	13	13	13	12	12
	Std. Dev.	0.83	0.84	1.07	1.67	0.87
Kgn 10	Mean	5.12	6.28	4.07	4.89	5.01
	N	32	31	32	30	28
	Std. Dev.	1.20	0.72	1.42	1.53	0.88
Kgn 11	Mean	5.66	5.32	4.84	5.42	5.18
	N	43	46	44	44	37
	Std. Dev.	1.21	1.56	1.56	1.19	0.92
Kgn 12	Mean	5.60	5.39	5.35	6.08	5.57
	N	28	28	25	26	23
	Std. Dev.	0.89	1.87	1.69	1.23	0.92
Kgn 13	Mean	5.56	5.15	4.70	5.67	5.29
	N	18	21	18	19	16
	Std. Dev.	1.27	1.72	1.18	0.99	0.86

Kgn 14	Mean	6.17	4.67	4.67	5.17	5.17
	N	2	2	2	2	2
	Std. Dev.	1.18	0.24	1.18	1.89	1.00
Kgn 16	Mean	5.74	5.05	5.01	5.88	5.22
	N	18	18	16	16	13
	Std. Dev.	1.04	1.76	1.26	1.03	0.90
Kgn 17	Mean	5.05	6.24	4.80	5.67	5.49
	N	11	13	10	12	10
	Std. Dev.	1.81	1.20	1.45	1.56	1.03
Kgn 19	Mean	5.05	6.40	3.99	4.82	5.05
	N	31	31	30	31	28
	Std. Dev.	1.04	0.63	1.27	1.00	0.63
Kgn 20	Mean	5.18	5.61	4.10	4.89	4.84
	N	50	45	47	49	43
	Std. Dev.	1.19	1.10	1.39	1.24	0.87
rural St Andrew	Mean	5.88	6.32	3.92	5.29	5.33
	N	80	78	71	73	55
	Std. Dev.	1.13	0.84	1.82	1.55	0.85
St Thomas	Mean	5.84	6.18	2.61	5.49	4.88
	N	17	19	15	17	14
	Std. Dev.	1.09	1.08	1.34	1.37	0.85
Portmore	Mean	5.48	6.21	3.75	4.93	5.07
	N	57	57	54	55	50
	Std. Dev.	1.32	1.03	1.41	1.48	0.84
Greater Portmore	Mean	5.90	6.05	3.65	4.99	5.11
	N	31	31	31	31	28
	Std. Dev.	1.06	1.01	1.58	0.98	0.86
Spanish Town	Mean	5.77	5.43	4.21	5.00	5.11
	N	29	27	26	28	22
	Std. Dev.	1.11	1.54	0.99	1.27	0.86
rural St Catherine	Mean	5.81	6.20	4.06	5.20	5.30
	N	18	18	16	15	14
	Std. Dev.	0.75	0.82	1.49	0.96	0.80
elsewhere	Mean	5.60	6.53	2.50	5.96	5.13
	N	5	5	5	4	4
	Std. Dev.	1.21	0.45	1.34	1.42	0.91
Total	Mean	5.54	5.88	4.21	5.15	5.14
	N	657	654	629	637	553
	Std. Dev.	1.16	1.27	1.51	1.33	0.87

APPENDIX 3

DATA TABLES: PAIRWISE RANKING RESULTS

The figures below show the issues identified by each of the focus groups as environmental problems in their community. In the case of Allman Town, the issues were identified as "barriers to community development", and in the cases of Cherry Gardens and the Schools Environment Network the issues were identified as "environmental problems in Kingston". The first table for each location shows which of each pair of problems was seen to be more important, and the second table shows the results of this ranking exercise.

Figure A3.1

Pairwise Ranking in Allman Town

(barriers to community development – data from SDC study)

Housing S'cture										
Street Lights	Housing Structure									
Lack of Employ.	Housing Structure	Lack of Employ.								
Crime & Violence	Housing Structure	Crime & Violence	Lack of Employ.							
Youth n. focussed	Housing Structure	Youth not focussed	Lack of Employ.	Crime & Violence						
Too dpt. on govt.	Housing Structure	Too dept. on govt.	Lack of Employ.	Crime & Violence	Youth not focussed					
Sanitary Facilities	Housing Structure	Sanitary Facilities	Sanitary Facilities	Sanitary Facilities	Sanitary Facilities	Sanitary Facilities				
Self Motiv'n.	Housing Structure	Self Motivation	Lack of Employ.	Crime & Violence	Youth not focussed	Self Motivation	Sanitary Facilities			
Health Clinic	Housing Structure	Health Clinic	Lack of Employ.	Crime & Violence	Youth not focussed	Too dept. on govt.	Sanitary Facilities	Self Motivation		
Garbage C'llection	Housing Structure	Garbage Collection	Garbage Collection	Garbage Collection	Garbage Collection	Garbage Collection	Garbage / Sanitary	Garbage Collection	Garbage Collection	
	Housing S'cture	**Street Lights**	**Lack of Employ.**	**Crime & Violence**	**Youth n. focussed**	**Too dpt. on govt.**	**Sanitary Facilities**	**Self Motiv'n.**	**Health Clinic**	**Garbage C'llection**

Rank	Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 9)
1	Lack of proper housing structures (9)
2	Lack of proper sanitary facilities (7 ½)
2	Inadequate garbage collection procedure (7 ½)
4	Lack of employment (6)
5	Crime and violence (5)
6	Lack of self-motivation (3)
7	Community persons too dependent on government (2)
7	Youth not focussed on what they want out of life (2)
9	Lack of health clinic (1)
10	Malfunctioning street lights (0)

Figure A3.2
Pairwise Ranking in Aylsham

Burning						
Dumping	Dumping					
Mosquitoes	Mosquitoes	Dumping				
Water Supply	Water Supply	Dumping	Mosquitoes			
Stray Animals	Stray Animals	Dumping	Mosquitoes	Stray Animals		
Cars "Racing"	Cars "Racing"	Dumping	Mosquitoes	Cars "Racing"	Stray Animals	
	Burning	**Dumping**	**Mosquitoes**	**Water Supply**	**Stray Animals**	**Cars "Racing"**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 5)**
1	Dumping (5)
2	Mosquitoes (4)
3	Stray Animals (3)
4	Cars 'Racing' (2)
5	Water Supply (1)
6	Burning (0)

Figure A3.3
Pairwise Ranking in Bennett Land

Access to water								
Latrine	Water							
Garbage	Garbage	Latrine						
Housing Standard	Water	Latrine	Garbage					
Over-crowding	Water	Latrine	Garbage	Housing Standard				
Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment			
Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education		
Gang War	Water	Latrine	Garbage	Gang War	Gang War	Gang War	Education	
	Access to Water	**Latrine**	**Garbage**	**Housing Standard**	**Over-crowding**	**Unemp-loyment**	**Education**	**Gang war**

Rank	Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 7)
1	Education (7)
2	Unemployment (5)
3	Access to Water (4)
3	Latrines (4)
3	Garbage (4)
6	Gang War (3)
7	Housing Standard (2)
8	Overcrowding (0)

Figure A3.4
Pairwise Ranking in Bowerbank

Housing									
Conv-eniences	Housing / C'niences								
Light	Housing	Light							
Water	Housing	Water	Water						
Sewage / W'water	Housing	Conv-eniences	Light	Water					
Illiteracy	Housing	Illiteracy	Illiteracy	Illiteracy	Illiteracy				
Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment	Unemp-loyment			
Lack of Skills	Housing	Lack of Skills	Lack of Skills	Lack of Skills	Lack of Skills	Lack of Skills	Unemp-loyment		
Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Lack of C'cation	Unemp-loyment	Lack of C'cation	
	Housing	**Conv-eniences**	**Light**	**Water**	**Sewage / W'water**	**Ill-iteracy**	**Unemp-loyment**	**Lack of Skills**	**Lack of C'cation**

Rank	Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 8)
1	Unemployment (8)
2	Lack of Communication (7)
3	Housing (5 ½)
4	Lack of Skills (5)
5	Illiteracy (4)
6	Water (3)
7	Light (2)
8	Conveniences (1 ½)
9	Sewage / Wastewater (0)

Figure A3.5
Pairwise Ranking in Cherry Gardens
(environmental problems in Kingston)

Garbage								
Drainage / Gullies	Garbage							
Dust	Garbage	Drainage / Gullies						
Sewage	Sewage	Sewage	Sewage					
Kingston Harbour	Garbage	Kingston Harbour	Kingston Harbour	Sewage				
Noise Pollution	Garbage	Drainage / Gullies	Noise Pollution	Sewage	Kingston Harbour			
Security	Security	Security	Security	Security	Security	Security		
Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	Values & Attitudes	
	Garbage	**Drainage / Gullies**	**Dust**	**Sewage**	**Kingston Harbour**	**Noise Pollution**	**Security**	**Values & Attitudes**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 7)**
1	Values and Attitudes (7)
2	Security (6)
3	Sewage (5)
4	Garbage (4)
5	Kingston Harbour (3)
6	Noise Pollution (2)
6	Drainage / Gullies (2)
8	Dust (0)

Figure A3.6
Pairwise Ranking in Edith Dalton James Community College
(female students)

Violence											
Drugs	Violence										
No Rights	Violence/ No Rights	Drugs									
Street Boys	Street Boys	Drugs	Street Boys								
No Jobs	No Jobs	No Jobs	No Jobs	No Jobs							
Garbage	Garbage	Garbage	No Rights	Street Boys	No Jobs						
Poor Policing	Poor Policing	Poor Policing	No Rights	Poor Policing	Poor Policing	Poor Policing					
Pollution	Violence	Drugs	No Rights	Street Boys	No Jobs	Garbage	Poor Policing				
Tr'sport	Violence	Drugs	No Rights	Street Boys	No Jobs	Transport	Poor Policing	Transport			
Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water		
Food	Violence	Food	Food	Food	No Jobs	Food	Food	Food	Food	Water	
	Violence	**Drugs**	**No Rights**	**Street Boys**	**No Jobs**	**Garbage**	**Poor Policing**	**Pollution**	**Tr'sport**	**Water**	**Food**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 10)**
1	Water (10)
2	No jobs (8)
3	Poor policing (7)
3	Food (7)
5	Street boys (5)
6	Violence (4 ½)
6	No human rights (4 ½)
8	Drugs (4)
9	Garbage (3)
10	Transport (2)
11	Pollution (0)

Figure A3.7
Pairwise Ranking in Edith Dalton James Community College
(male students)

Education									
Gunshot	Gunshot								
Garbage	Education	Gunshot							
Housing	Education	Gunshot	Garbage						
Jobs	Education	Jobs	Jobs	Jobs					
Water	Water	Gunshot	Water	Water	Water				
Light	Education	Gunshot	Light	Housing	Jobs	Water			
KPH Smoke	Education	Gunshot	KPH Smoke	Housing	Jobs	Water	Light		
Toilets	Education	Gunshot	Toilets	Housing / Toilets	Jobs	Water	Toilets	Toilets	
	Education	**Gunshot**	**Garbage**	**Housing**	**Jobs**	**Water**	**Light**	**KPH Smoke**	**Toilets**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 8)**
1	Water (7)
2	Gunshot (7)
3	Poor policing (7)
3	Food (7)
5	Street boys (5)
6	Violence (4 ½)
6	No human rights (4 ½)
10	Transport (2)
9	Pollution (0)

Figure A3.8
Pairwise Ranking in Majesty Gardens

Housing							
Conveniences	Housing						
Gully / Drainage	Gully	Gully					
Electricity	Housing	Conveniences	Gully				
Work	Housing	Conveniences	Gully	Work			
Roads	Housing	Conveniences	Gully	Electricity	Roads		
Telephone	Housing	Conveniences	Gully	Electricity	Work	Telephone	
	Housing	**Conveniences**	**Gully / Drainage**	**Electricity**	**Work**	**Roads**	**Telephone**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 6)**
1	Gully / drainage / flooding (6)
2	Housing (5)
3	Conveniences (4)
4	Electricity (2)
4	Work (2)
5	Roads (1)
5	Telephone (1)

Figure A3.9
Pairwise Ranking in Rae Town

Toilet Facilities									
Garbage Disposal	Toilet Facilities								
Employ-ment	Employ-ment	Employment							
Housing	Housing	Housing	Employment						
Pollution of Harbour	Pollution of Harbour	Pollution / Garbage	Employment	Housing					
Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education				
C'mmunity Centre	Community Centre	Community Centre	Community Centre	Housing	Community Centre	Education			
Bigger Boats	Bigger Boats	Bigger Boats	Bigger Boats	Housing	Bigger Boats	Education	Community Centre		
No Love	No Love	No Love	No Love	No Love	No Love	Education	No Love	No Love	
	Toilet Facilities	**Garbage Disposal**	**Employ-ment**	**Housing**	**Pollution of Harbour**	**Education**	**C'mmunity Centre**	**Bigger Boats**	**No Love**

Rank	Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 8)
1	Education (8)
2	No Love in the Youth (7)
3	Housing (5)
3	Community Centre (5)
5	Bigger Boats (4)
5	Employment (4)
7	Pollution of Harbour (1 ½)
8	Toilet Facilities (1)
9	Garbage disposal (½)

Figure A3.10
Pairwise Ranking in Schools Environment Network
(environmental problems in Kingston)

Sewage Treatment						
Solid Waste Management	Solid Waste Management					
Air Pollution	Sewage Treatment	Solid Waste Management				
CFCs	Sewage Treatment	Solid Waste Management	Air Pollution			
Hazardous Materials	Sewage Treatment	Solid Waste Management	Air Pollution	Hazardous Materials		
Kingston Harbour	Kingston Harbour	Kingston Harbour	Air Pollution	Kingston Harbour	Kingston Harbour	
	Sewage Treatment	**Solid Waste Management**	**Air Pollution**	**CFCs**	**Hazardous Materials**	**Kingston Harbour**

Rank	**Issue (number of times it was identified as more important – out of 5)**
1	Solid Waste Management (4)
1	Kingston Harbour (4)
3	Sewage Treatment (3)
3	Air Pollution (3)
5	Hazardous Waste (1)
6	CFCs (0)

APPENDIX 4

'DUMPLING DIAGRAMS'

The following figures show the 'dumpling diagrams' produced by the focus groups. These show the actors identified by each group as having the potential to act to improve the environmental problems discussed in the pairwise ranking exercise. Where shown, the size of the 'dumpling' for each actor represents the relative amount of power the group decided the actor had; and the proximity of the actor's 'dumpling' to the centre of the diagram represents the effectiveness with which they use this power.

(DIAGRAMS NOT INCLUDED IN PDF FILE)

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