


2011

## Occam's Razor Vol. 1 - Full (2011)

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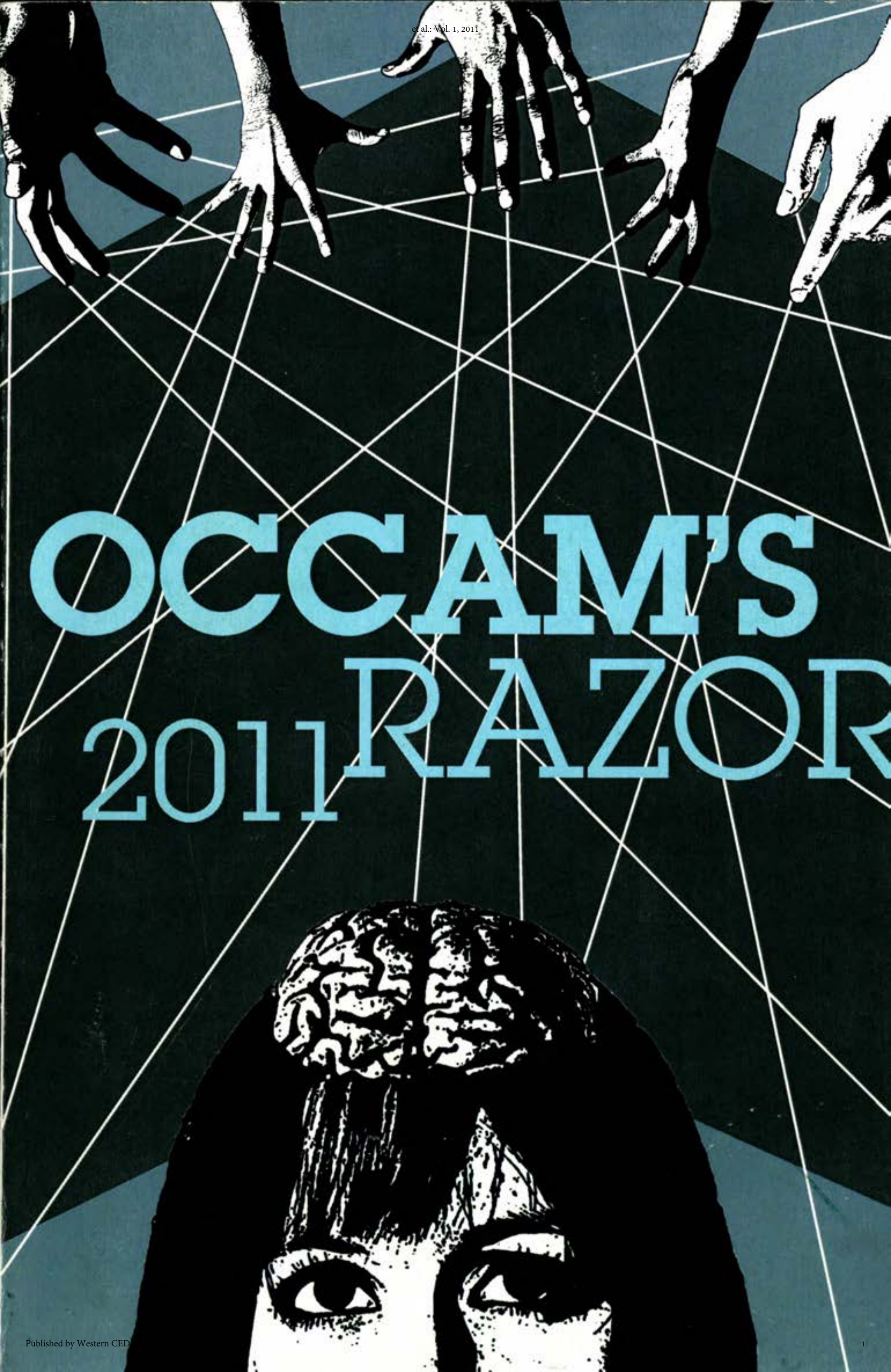
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### Recommended Citation

(2011) "Occam's Razor Vol. 1 - Full (2011)," *Occam's Razor*: Vol. 1 , Article 1.  
Available at: <https://cedar.wwu.edu/orwwu/vol1/iss1/1>

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# OCCAM'S 2011 RAZOR

# Occam's Razor

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A publication of the Associated Students  
Western Washington University  
Bellingham, WA

# OCCAM'S RAZOR

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*A Selection of Western's Finest Scholarship*

**Edited by: Chris Crow and Cameron Adams**

*Spring 2011  
Volume 1, Number 1*

**With contributions by:**

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# Preface

## *An Introduction to the Publication*

In winter quarter of 2009, I wrote a paper that I was really proud of for the first time. Never before had I become so absorbed in a writing assignment that I went well beyond the Professor's requirements for research, length, and quality. When it was finished, I would have liked to share it with a broader audience, but I quickly realized that no appropriate publication for that type of work existed on campus. Out of the frustration of watching my painstakingly crafted study resigned to gathering dust in my room came the inspiration for Occam's Razor—a publication that would offer future students three key opportunities: to have their own papers published, to read the best work of their peers, and to participate in the mechanics of making it all happen.

At the time, a friend of mine was in the habit of punctuating our discussions with the phrase, "let's use Occam's razor," when he meant, more or less, "let's try to get at what's really important." When I asked him what the phrase literally meant, he told me of a 14th Century English scientist named William of Occam, who put forth the tenet that, when evaluating competing hypotheses, those with the fewest assumptions should be favored over others which explain the same phenomena. The idea has been paraphrased as "the law of succinctness," and it was a preference for clear, succinct prose that inspired the choice of name.

In the two years since then, the vision of the publication has slowly become a reality. This could never have taken place without the counsel and support of many students and faculty. I would especially like to thank Dr. David Curley and Dr. Jonathan Miran of the Liberal Studies department, Dr. George Mariz of the History department, Dean Brent Carbajal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Dr. Kathryn Trueblood of the English department for their support and encouragement early in the process. I am also indebted to Dr. Jason Kanov, who has guided me through the difficult process of institution building, Esme Dutcher, whose perspective as a student editor of Ink-speak and Jeopardy was invaluable, Associated Students Vice President for Academics Ramon Rinonos-Diaz, who helped initiate me into the mysterious workings of the AS, and Alex Kelly, a Western Alumni, intern at Harper's magazine in New York, and now editor at truthdig.org, who helped develop the idea at its inception and whose creative speech

habits gave rise to the name, as described above. Lastly, I would like to thank the students, named elsewhere, whose writing, editing, and designing comprise this volume. Without them this would still be just a nice idea.

Over the course of this two-year gestation period, the vision of what Occam's Razor can be has expanded beyond the recognition and encouragement of good student research and writing at Western. Aside from the product itself, a new organization has emerged. The talented and hardworking students who will continue to produce Occam's Razor in coming years represent the completion of the OR vision: the continuous quest to develop productive and mutually beneficial collaboration between the different colleges, departments, clubs, and organizations across the University. In a time when intensifying job competition is inspiring many students to look for relevant experience outside the classroom during their college years, the long-term rewards awaiting students who work and volunteer across institutional boundaries are only compounding. This leads me to the final piece of the puzzle: you, the student who picked this volume up and read it. If you find the story you've just read at all inspiring, if you see a role for yourself among those described above, we want to hear from you (more on this in Managing Editor Cameron Adams' section on how to get involved). It takes fresh talent every single year to keep an outfit like this one alive, and whether it be as a contributor, an editor, a manager, a graphic designer, or something we haven't thought of yet, I want to encourage you to take this chance to put your energy and creativity at the service of your school and your community.

Sincerely,

**Chris Crow**

Founder, Editor-in-Chief

## Forward

Ever wonder what we are all doing in the library? Have you ever written something you are proud of, but never got to share it? Do you ever wonder what your peers are writing and learning in their classes?

Every quarter, Western students produce an abundance of wonderful papers, but as of now the majority of them never make it past professors' desks. This denies campus and its members the richness of its own knowledge and creativity. Occam's Razor, we hope, can begin to fill this void and facilitate the sharing of students' academic writing. By providing a wider audience for students' work, Occam's Razor will offer students and community members a glimpse into the intellectual activities taking place on campus, as well as opportunities to learn from the essays themselves.

Through publishing a sampling of Western's student academic writing, Occam's Razor will show the student body its own potential, and share it with the community. Reading it will expand our knowledge of disciplines with which we are familiar, as well as expose us to disciplines we might have otherwise overlooked.

As a student and founder of the independent publication Readthedirt.org, I am excited for the chance to support the launch of Occam's Razor. Readthedirt.org is founded, among other things, on the principle that there is knowledge out there that people have a right to know, and that experts who possess this knowledge have a duty to share. Occam's Razor similarly places great value on making creative thoughts and academic achievements accessible to a wide audience.

Thank you for Reading!

**Simon Davis-Cohen**

Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Readthedirt.org

and

**Anna Baker**

Consulting Editor



# **When Gay was not Okay with the APA**

A Historical Overview of Homosexuality and  
its Status as Mental Disorder

Sarah Baughey-Gill  
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## HISTORY OF HOMOSEXUALITY AS A MENTAL DISORDER

### When Gay was not Okay with the APA

#### A Historical Overview of Homosexuality and its Status as Mental Disorder

##### **Introduction**

While homosexuals have historically experienced many different forms and types of intolerance, perhaps some of the most harmful discrimination in recent decades can be said to have come from mental health and medical professionals. These professionals have labeled homosexuals as abnormal, pathological, and deviant. In the 1950s, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) made this discrimination against homosexuals official when it classified homosexuality as a mental disorder. This label had a huge impact on the homosexual community, which was just then beginning its fight for acceptance in mainstream society. Thus the fight for the reversal of the APA diagnosis became a focus of the gay rights movement. Although it would take over two decades, the APA eventually made the decision to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders and began to move toward the acceptance of homosexuality as normal behavior. This paper will examine the history of how homosexuality has been viewed throughout the history of psychology, focusing on early research as well as the events that led up to the APA's eventual decision to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

##### **Early Views of Homosexuality: From Sin to Crime to Sickness**

Early attitudes towards homosexuality in the Western world were rooted in Christian ideals. According to many popular takes on Christianity, sex was intended for procreation only; thus, homosexual acts were considered sinful since they could not result in reproduction. These religious attitudes carried over into secular law: by the 16th century homosexuality had become a felony punishable by death in England (Morgan & Nerison, 1993). Laws criminalizing homosexual acts later appeared in the United States as well, continuing to legitimize these views into the 20th century.

A similarly negative view of homosexuality existed in the 19th century medical community as well. As Morgan and Nerison (1993) note, during this era homosexuality was viewed as a vice, since homosexuals were choosing to "sin." In an effort to eradicate this vice, medical

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professionals were focused on finding and curing the cause of homosexual behavior. One such professional, neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, suggested in the 1860s that homosexuality was entirely inherited rather than acquired from the environment. He based his opinion on his own observations that homosexuality did not respond to hypnotic treatment. There were other researchers, however, who did not agree with Charcot's views. Among them was Richard von Krafft-Ebing, a German psychiatrist who was one of the first scientists to study sexual deviance. He believed that all sexual perversions, including homosexuality, were the result of a combination of environmental and inherited factors (Morgan & Nerison, 1993; Drescher, 2009). As Drescher (2009) notes, Krafft-Ebing viewed sexual behaviors through the lens of 19th century Darwinian theory; he and many other scientists felt that all non-procreative sexual behaviors should be regarded as forms of psychopathology since they were not evolutionarily adaptive.

Although those who viewed homosexuality as deviant were in the majority in the 19th century, Drescher (2009) points to a few researchers of this era who regarded homosexuality as normal. Among them were Havelock Ellis, a British sexologist who considered homosexuality a normal variant of sexuality, and Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld, a homosexual physician and sex researcher who led the German homosexual rights movement in the early part of the 20th century. Although their research is sparse, they made important contributions to the field by being among the first scientists to suggest that homosexuality was not pathological. However, those opposed to a pathological view of homosexuality were indeed the minority. Their position was further weakened in 1952 when the APA published the first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). As Rubin (1993) notes, because of its classification of certain types of sexual behaviors as mental disorders, the DSM became a "fairly reliable map of the current moral hierarchy of sexual activities" (p. 12). Reflecting the popular moral views of the time, the first edition of the manual classified homosexuality as a "sociopathic personality disturbance." In the second edition, published in 1968, it reclassified homosexuality as a sexual deviation, continuing to label these types of sexual behaviors as abnormal (Drescher, 2009).

The classification of homosexuality as a mental disorder by the APA had a huge impact on the homosexual community as well as on the general public's view of homosexuality. As Marcus (2002) describes it, one of the major issues that emerged due to the APA classification was that, because it was supposedly based on scientific findings, it was

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difficult for homosexuals to dispute views which held them as deviant. Their opponents could simply dismiss any of their arguments based on the notion that they were “sick.” The classification also further stigmatized the homosexual community and gave “scientific” weight to those opposed to homosexuality. Thus, gays and lesbians were further burdened in their fight to be accepted as normal in mainstream society by a medical diagnosis that suggested that they were somehow deviant and abnormal.

### ***The Impact of the Psychoanalytic Views of Homosexuality***

It is interesting to note that Freud’s beliefs about homosexuality were also in the minority during his lifetime, although as Morgan and Nerison (1993) indicate, his ideas were often misrepresented by other psychoanalysts after his death. Freud believed that all humans are bisexual by nature and that exclusive homosexuality represents an arrest in normal sexual development. However, this did not mean that he felt homosexuality was a mental disorder. In 1935, in a letter to an American woman who had written to him in distress about her gay son, Freud succinctly expressed his view that homosexuality was “assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation; it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function, produced by a certain arrest of sexual development” (Abelove, 1993, p. 381). In addition, he did not believe that homosexuality was curable or that it even necessitated a cure and as a clinician he refused to treat homosexuals unless the treatment was for some disorder unrelated to the patient’s sexuality. In that same letter written in 1935, Freud noted that if the woman’s son was “unhappy, neurotic, torn by conflicts, inhibited in his social life” then psychoanalysis may be able to help him “whether he remains a homosexual or gets changed” (Abelove, 1993, p. 382). However, he also stated that he would not advise psychoanalysis as a method to cure her son’s, or anyone else’s, homosexuality. Freud also saw no reason why sexual orientation should be the basis to refuse someone permission to become a psychoanalyst (Abelove, 1993; Morgan & Nerison, 1993). However, there were many psychoanalysts who did not share his views.

Almost immediately after Freud’s death in 1939, most psychoanalysts publicly rejected his views. This rejection was especially prominent in the United States (Abelove, 1993). As Morgan and Nerison (1993) note, these post-Freudian psychoanalysts viewed homosexuality as a “reparative attempt on the part of human beings to achieve sexual

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pleasure when the normal heterosexual outlet proved too threatening” (p. 134). They viewed homosexuality as a symptom of an underlying disorder that required treatment. For example, a prominent psychoanalyst in the 1950s and 60s named Irving Bieber believed that homosexuality was caused by pathological relationships between parents and children. Ignoring lesbianism entirely, he claimed that gay men came from binding, seductive mothers and distant, hostile fathers. He also felt that “pre-homosexual” boys were easily identifiable and should be treated early on to eradicate any signs of homosexuality. Lastly, Bieber believed that there was an inherent psychological pain experienced because of homosexuality, and he considered this pain his impetus for treating and curing homosexuality (Marmor, Bieber, & Gold, 1999).

In 1962, with the goal of treating homosexuality in mind, Bieber published what he alleged to be a scientific study of a group of gay males in psychoanalysis. He claimed to have found a “cure” rate of 27% among the participants as a result of his psychoanalytic intervention, although as Drescher and Merlino (2007) note, Bieber and his fellow researchers later could not reproduce these same results. The study was never reviewed or critiqued by anyone in the field, although gay rights activists produced a number of responses to Bieber’s findings.

In addition to psychoanalysis, there were a number of treatments for homosexuality that were advocated throughout the 19th and early 20th century. Researchers note the use of hypnosis, electroshock therapy, lobotomy, and various behavioral treatments, such as abstinence and aversion therapy, to treat and cure homosexuality (Morgan & Nerison, 1993; Drescher & Merlino, 2007). As Drescher (2009) indicates, 1960s practitioners of these “cure” therapies often claimed high success rates, but by the 1970s many of these therapists were admitting that few of their patients actually stayed “cured” for very long.

Psychoanalysts were one of the last groups of medical professionals to openly view homosexuality as a curable mental disorder, holding onto this view even after the diagnosis was removed from the DSM in 1973. It wasn’t until 1991 that the American Psychoanalytic Association passed a resolution opposing public and private discrimination against homosexuals. Interestingly, it wasn’t until a year later that the words “including [discrimination while] training and supervising analysts” were added to this resolution, perhaps in an effort to quell the discrimination felt by some gay applicants to psychoanalytic training programs and institutions. As Lamberg (1998) suggests, this delay may have indicated that even in the 1990s there was still lingering opposition to the

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admission of openly homosexual psychoanalysts into the association.

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### ***Early Empirical Studies of Homosexuality***

Due to the taboos that surrounded the study of homosexuality (and sexuality in general), there were few empirical studies conducted on these topics in the 19th and early 20th century. Some of the first to emerge were the Kinsey studies of sexuality, conducted in the 1940s and 50s at the Institute of Sex Research. The Kinsey studies were pivotal in initiating a change in popular attitudes towards homosexuals. They found that homosexuality was much more common than had previously been thought, citing a prevalence rate of around 10% in the adult population (Morgan & Nerison, 1993). The Kinsey studies also proposed that homosexuality could be viewed along a continuum, with pure homosexuality and pure heterosexuality on either end and bisexuality in the middle. Although these studies were pivotal in the psychological history of homosexuality, they were also very controversial; as a result their funding was revoked in the 1950s.

The next study that questioned the belief that homosexuality was unnatural was conducted by Ford and Beach in 1951. They found that homosexuality not only occurs in all human societies but also in almost all animal species (Morgan & Nerison, 1993; Marmor et al., 1999). Advocate groups would later cite this study as evidence that homosexuality is, in fact, natural.

The first researcher to empirically study homosexuals was Dr. Evelyn Hooker, a psychologist. In a first-hand oral account recorded by Marcus (2002), Dr. Hooker describes how she was persuaded to study homosexuals in an era when this subject was taboo. A gay student with whom she had a close personal relationship approached her and asked

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her to conduct a study on homosexuals that did not classify them as pathological in some way. Despite her initial objections based on the stigmas associated with homosexuality, she eventually agreed. However, she refused entirely to study lesbians because she felt a woman studying gay women would be further ostracized. Hooker applied for grant in 1953 from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), a newly formed organization. Her request was so unusual that the chief of the grants division personally flew out to California to meet her and inquire about her proposed study. He told her she might not receive the grant due to the political climate at the time and she learned later that Senator Joseph McCarthy's henchmen were indeed keeping an eye on her because of the topic of her study. However, Hooker did receive the grant, although she later noted that she had to conduct her studies in her garage because of the stigmas surrounding homosexuality at the time—many of her colleagues at UCLA, where she taught, knew that she was conducting a study with homosexual subjects, and she was afraid that if she had interviewed them at the university, they might have been harassed or harmed in some way.

In 1957, despite these and other difficulties, Hooker published her study entitled "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual," which addressed the issue of whether homosexuality was indicative of psychopathology. Her study was a pioneer study in many ways, but as she notes in her paper, it was revolutionary in great part because no previous research involving homosexuals had included subjects who didn't come from clinical practices, the Army (as a disciplinary measure), prisons, or mental hospitals. In this article, she describes how she matched 30 homosexual subjects with 30 heterosexual subjects based on age, IQ, and education level. She then had two expert clinicians assess various personality and adjustment measures from all the subjects and had them attempt to differentiate who was gay and who was straight in each of the 30 subject pairs based on these tests alone. Neither of the judges could differentiate between the homosexual and heterosexual men. One of the judges, Bruno Klopfer, was an expert on the Rorschach personality test, and was very surprised that he was not able to differentiate based on this test alone, as he had previously claimed he was able to do. Based on her results, Hooker made the controversial conclusion that homosexuality was not a clinical disorder but that it was instead a deviation within the normal range of sexuality. She also stated that the role of sexuality in personality structure and adjustment was much less important than previously assumed. Her findings would become pivotal in the

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years that followed her study, as the desire for change and acceptance in the homosexual community continued to grow.

### ***The Beginnings of the Gay Rights Movement***

The gay rights movement officially began in 1969, following the violent Stonewall riots in New York that broke out after an infamous police raid on a gay bar. However, there were beginnings of unrest long before these riots took place. In 1964 Frank Kameny, a gay rights activist, began a movement to put the burden on the medical community to prove that homosexuality was in fact a disease. This sparked a debate among gay rights activists, with one side advocating for participation in research to prove that homosexuality was not a disease and the other side proclaiming that homosexuals should refuse to be studied and instead stand up for themselves. This debate, and many others, continued as unrest began to grow within the gay rights movement. One focus of this movement would become the DSM and its listing of homosexuality as a mental disorder.

In 1970, gay rights activists took action and disrupted an APA convention in San Francisco, demanding to be allowed to voice their opinions. As the medical director of the APA at the time, Melvin Sabshin, recalls, there were lots of “hard words” exchanged between protestors and APA members, and it was so disruptive that the APA hired security to ensure order at future meetings (Lamberg, 1998). These protests were not ignored, and gay rights activists were allowed to have a gay-focused panel at the 1971 convention in Washington DC. This panel asked that homosexuality be removed from the DSM, and tried to explain the stigma caused by the DSM diagnosis. However, although their presence caused a lot of controversy and sparked many debates, the diagnosis remained. Activists were forced to return again the next year to plead their case to the APA once more.

At the 1972 APA convention, a panel again asked that homosexuality be removed from the DSM. Barbara Gittings, a gay rights activist who later called herself the “fairy godmother of the gay group in the American Psychiatric Association,” and Frank Kameny, who had sparked the initial debate in the homosexual community about participation in psychological research, were asked to be on the panel (Marcus, 2002, p. 179). Dr. Judd Marmor, a heterosexual psychiatrist who had studied homosexuality, was also invited to be on the panel. As Barbara Gittings later noted, the panel had homosexuals and psychiatrists but it did not have a speaker who was both. The activists had difficulty finding



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a gay psychiatrist who was willing to be on the panel, risking stigma and career damage, but they were finally able to convince Dr. John Fryer to participate (Drescher & Merlino, 2007). However, Fryer was still reluctant to come out to his colleagues, so calling himself Dr. H. Anonymous, he wore a wig and a mask to disguise his face and used a microphone to distort his voice. Although the panel in 1972 was more successful than the previous one, their request to remove homosexuality from the DSM was once again denied.

### **The Decision**

At the 1973 APA convention, the diagnosis of homosexuality was once again debated. However, at this convention, the Nomenclature Committee of the APA would be the ones to break the deadlock, by setting out to decide what exactly constituted a mental disorder. They determined that mental disorders should be defined as having “regularly caused subjective distress or were associated with generalized impairment in social effectiveness of functioning” (Drescher, 2009). Thus, they concluded that homosexuality was not a mental disorder according to their definition of the term, as it did not by itself cause homosexuals distress and had not been shown to impair social functioning. So, on December 15, 1973, the APA’s Board of Trustees officially removed homosexuality from the DSM.

This decision was widely heralded across the United States. Newspapers ran headlines like “Twenty Million Homosexuals Gain Instant Cure,” and “Doctors Rule Homosexuality Not Abnormal” (Marcus, 2002; Lamberg, 1998). However, despite these optimistic headlines, the APA’s decision did not instantly change the popular views of homosexuality. As historians note, in 1973, homosexual acts were still illegal in many states, gay military members were still dishonorably discharged for homosexuality, gay people could still be legally fired if their orientation was discovered, and violence towards gays and lesbians persisted (Marcus, 2002).

### **The Aftermath**

Although many members of the APA supported the decision to remove homosexuality from the DSM, there were also those who felt it was a hasty political decision that was not founded on research. Even Barbara Gittings, a proponent of the decision and member of the 1972 panel, noted that “it was never a medical decision... that’s why I think the action came so fast” (Marcus, 2002, p. 179). However, she felt that

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the inclusion of homosexuality in the DSM in the first place was also a political decision, and lacked evidence based on sound research.

In response to some of these protests, the APA sent out a ballot to its members in 1974, asking them to vote on the removal of homosexuality from the DSM. A total of 58% voted to uphold the 1973 decision; homosexuality remained absent from the DSM as a separate clinical disorder. Despite continuing controversy, the APA stood behind its decision and began to slowly build support for the acceptance of homosexuality as normal. In 1978, the APA created a gay and lesbian task force and the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists was established (Lamberg, 1998).

Perhaps as a concession to those against the 1973 decision, a new revision of the DSM, called DSM II, was published in 1974 and replaced homosexuality with Sexual Orientation Disturbance, which regarded homosexuality as an illness only if the person was “disturbed by, in conflict with, or wished to change their sexual orientation” (APA DSM II). The DSM II noted that homosexuality by itself did not constitute a psychiatric disorder. A later edition of the manual published in 1980, the DSM-III, renamed Sexual Orientation Disturbance as Ego Dystonic Homosexuality, but that too was removed in a revision in 1987 (Drescher, 2009). Thus, although some saw the decision to remove homosexuality from the DSM as a hasty one, it wasn’t until over 14 years after the initial ruling that homosexuality was fully eradicated from the manual.

The literature published after the 1973 decision shows that homosexuals continued to be marginalized. In the 1980s, a study of mental health professionals found that up to one third of them had negative attitudes about homosexuals (Morgan, 2002). As Morgan (2002) suggests, this negativity may have been augmented by the AIDS crisis, which was at its peak during this decade. A study done by Lee and Crawford (2007) found that from 1975 to 2001, homosexuals were included as subjects in less than 1% of published research. Although they note that there was a decline in the study of homosexuality as pathological, overall there was a distinct lack of any type of literature about homosexuality. Furthermore, it would seem that the rest of the world was slow to follow the APA’s decision in the 1970s. It wasn’t until 1992 that the World Health Organization finally removed homosexuality from its International Classification of Diseases (Drescher & Merlino, 2007).

### **Current Issues**

Although homosexuality has long been eradicated from the

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DSM, and society as a whole is moving towards the full acceptance of homosexuality, there has been a recent controversy within the APA regarding the new edition of the DSM, scheduled to be published in 2012, which has interesting parallels to the events of the 1970s (Drescher, 2009). This new controversy concerns the inclusion of Sexual and Gender Identity Disorder (SGID) in the DSM. Some argue that SGID should be removed because, as in the case of homosexuality, it is wrong for mental health professionals to label different expressions of gender as disorders, and because this label causes stigma and trauma to transgendered individuals. However, among those in favor of keeping SGID in the DSM include proponents who are afraid that removing it would prevent transgendered individuals from getting the insurance coverage they need for their surgeries and medical care. The debate continues.

Despite this new controversy and a few others like it, the APA has helped make tremendous advances towards the recognition of homosexuality as normal since its 1973 decision. In part because of the APA's decision, the United States will continue to see more research in the 21st century that includes subjects of all sexual and gender orientations as well as the increased acceptance of homosexuality by society as a whole. As for now, being gay is finally okay with the APA.

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# **Preservation and Use of Natural Resources in the Developing World:**

A case study of the Can Gio Biosphere Reserve,  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Emily Green  
*Western Washington University*

## PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN VIETNAM

*My thanks to the other students who participated in the "Vietnam and America" study abroad course offered through Western Washington University in December 2010 for their support, and to Professor Mart Stewart for his assistance with research and guidance throughout this project.*

### **Preservation and Use of Natural Resources in the Developing World**

A case study of the Can Gio Biosphere Reserve, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

#### **Introduction**

Developing nations often overlook the environmental effects of industrialization. However, these nations need healthy, sustainable resources in order to become prosperous and stable countries. Additionally, developed nations depend upon the natural resources of developing nations as raw materials. Loss of natural resources in developing nations therefore has effects at both national and global levels. A key challenge across the globe is balancing the human need for development with the necessity of the sustainable use and protection of natural resources. In the process of finding this balance, developing nations are revising both their national definition of conservation as well as the global definition.

The purpose of my study is to use the Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, as a microcosm of the global relationship between natural resource use for development and natural resource preservation. Can Gio is also a unique space in which to analyze the evolving concepts of environment and conservation in Vietnam. The site spans gradients that are both natural and cultural: from the marine ecosystem to the terrestrial ecosystem, from urban space to rural space, and from local to global conservation efforts. The history of Can Gio has been shaped by war, by the demands of economic development, and by modern ideas about environmental conservation. The efforts to balance development while maintaining a productive environment in Can Gio are a reflection of the worldwide efforts to conserve natural resources and foster development. I will begin with a general discussion of the recent changes in conservation management from an exclusionary protected model to one rooted in community-based conservation, and follow this with a short discussion of the goals

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of the Biosphere Reserve Program and the conservation approach the program promotes. I will then provide an introduction to mangrove ecology, including the adaptations that allow mangroves to persist in high stress environments as well as the ecological services that mangrove forests provide to organisms and to surrounding environments. Next I will discuss the history of what is now the Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere, from the time of the Vietnam-American War to the creation of the biosphere in 2000. Finally, I will review the current state of the biosphere, describing the tensions that arise in a space that is at the same time a threatened environment, the source of economic stability for hundreds of people, an attractive tourist site, and a part of a global network committed to conservation.

### **Overview of Modern Conservation Strategies**

The motivations behind conservation vary from individual to individual. Some arguments are based upon a utilitarian worldview: resources are finite, so efforts must be made to conserve the natural space that supports resources we value. Other arguments are aesthetic: green space and natural vistas are beautiful and should be conserved for human enjoyment. Spiritual arguments question the morality of driving other species to extinction. Throughout the history of the conservation movement, different arguments have held prominence at different times and have shaped contemporary conservation models and philosophy.

The dominant environmental conservation paradigm up until the 1980's was the exclusionary protected areas model. This model originated in the 1800's, with the development of the national parks program in the United States and grew with the creation of additional protected areas such as wilderness areas. The exclusionary paradigm conceives of nature and culture as separate entities.<sup>1</sup> A classic example of this position is found in the 1964 US Congressional Act establishing the Wilderness Preservation System. In this document, wilderness is defined as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain".<sup>2</sup> These two spheres, man and nature, are clearly defined as separate, ideally non-overlapping entities. In this paradigm, man has a negative impact

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<sup>1</sup>Fikret Berkes, "Rethinking Community-Based Conservation," *Conservation Biology* 18, no. 3 (2004): 621

<sup>2</sup>"Wilderness Act of 1964," *Wilderness.net*. Accessed April 3, 2011, <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=legisAc>

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on wilderness and therefore natural space must be protected from human influence. Consequently, establishment of exclusionary protected areas almost always involves the forced removal of local populations and a management philosophy that is built around limiting human activities within protected areas.<sup>3</sup>

Exclusionary management developed in the United States; a country with an environmental and social history that is very different from the majority of the world's nations. When the United States began establishing protected areas, the country still had vast tracts of unsettled or sparsely settled land which could be set aside without displacing a large population or restricting future population growth. The United States was, and has remained, an affluent nation and can afford to leave resources unutilized and enforce laws protecting natural sites.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the United States has a unique cultural conception of natural space and "wilderness" that stems from the experiences of European colonialists and their descendants with the relatively untouched natural resources of North America.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, many nations, particularly developing nations, lack the luxury of unutilized space, affluence, or both, as well as a cultural worldview that separates people from the environment. As a result of these differences, exclusionary management has had mixed results across the globe. The challenges and failures of exclusionary management in the developing world over the last thirty years have led to the development of a new model called Community-Based Conservation (CBC).

CBC (also known as participatory management) emerged in the mid-1990's in response to a number of critiques of exclusionary management.<sup>6</sup> The first had to do with the ethical consideration of forcibly removing inhabitants from protected sites. Second was the restriction of local use of a site, particularly of poor communities who could benefit from a site's resources. Third, some human activities, such as controlled burning, do have positive effects on environments, and in some cases restricting humans from a site has contributed to a decline in biodiversity.<sup>7</sup> CBC seeks to foster biodiversity conservation through

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<sup>3</sup>Sharachchandra Lele, Peter Wilshusen, Dan Brockington, Reinmar Seidler, and Kamaljit Bawa, "Beyond exclusion: alternative approaches to biodiversity conservation in the developing tropics," *Current opinion in environmental sustainability* 2, iss.1-2, 94 (2010): 2. DOI 10.1016/j.cosust.2010.03.006

<sup>4</sup>Roderick Nash, "The American Invention of National Parks," *American Quarterly* 22, no.3 (1970): 733.

<sup>5</sup>Nash, "The American Invention," 728.

<sup>6</sup>Lele, "Beyond Exclusion," 1.

<sup>7</sup>Lele, "Beyond Exclusion," 1.



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community involvement and emphasizes a decentralized, bottom-up approach to management.<sup>8</sup> The guiding philosophy behind CBC states that by giving communities a stake in a site—through economic rewards, social development, or by simply providing a place for community input in site management—sites will be better protected.

CBC is a developing model. Some projects have been successful in protecting biodiversity and encouraging community growth, while other projects have failed. Opinion is divided as to why CBC has not succeeded universally. Some experts contend that by linking conservation to development, both efforts are undermined, while others say that failures are due to improper implementation and community involvement.<sup>9</sup> However there is a general acknowledgement among many organizations and individuals involved in conservation that in an increasingly human dominated world and given the needs of developing nations, exclusion of people from natural preserves is not a viable model. Community-Based Conservation will therefore remain a relevant conservation model in the coming decades.

The ideas that produced CBC have their roots in the 1970's, when the environmental movement expanded beyond the national level to become a global movement. It was during this time that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB) was founded. The MAB program strives to address "the economic, educational, scientific, cultural, and recreational needs of humankind."<sup>10</sup> An integral part of this program is the biosphere reserves, which act as 'living laboratories' for research and education. The goals of biosphere reserves are to conserve ecological and genetic biodiversity, foster socio-ecologically sustainable development, and support research, education, and information exchange relating to local, national, and global issues of conservation and development.<sup>11</sup> While the MAB program does not require biosphere reserves to follow a specific management strategy, it does encourage them to consider what is known as the ecosystem approach when developing

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<sup>8</sup>Lele, "Beyond Exclusion," 4.

<sup>9</sup>Berkes, "Rethinking CBC," 625

<sup>10</sup>The MAB program United States of America, "Background – MAB United States of America." Accessed October 11, 2010. <http://www.rmrs.nau.edu/usamab/What%20is%20MAB.htm>

<sup>11</sup>UNESCO, "Man and Biosphere Programme FAQs: Frequently asked Questions on Biosphere reserves." Accessed October 11, 2010. <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/wno/status-report/fa-8.19.pdf>

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their individual management strategies. This approach calls for decentralization of management, consideration of ecosystems within an economic context, and the involvement of scientists, businesses, organizations, and communities in flexible long-term planning.<sup>12</sup>

The MAB Reserve Program and community-based conservation are part of a wider paradigm shift in ecology and conservation towards a systems view of the world. As the human population continues to grow, greater demand is placed on natural resources, and old models and answers become less relevant. This is particularly true in developing countries like Vietnam, where environmental protection laws are weakest and where impoverished communities need the natural resources found in preserves like the mangrove forests of Can Gio. To understand the value of the natural wealth that is Can Gio requires a discussion of mangrove ecology, its relationship to marine and terrestrial ecosystems, and the benefits mangrove forests provide to humans.

### **Mangrove Ecology**

'Mangrove' refers to an evolutionarily diverse group of trees that share similar physiological adaptations as a result of living in areas with similar environmental conditions, rather than sharing a common ancestor.<sup>13</sup> To define a mangrove therefore is to define the environment in which mangroves are found and the adaptive traits that allow them to thrive. Mangroves grow in sheltered coastal intertidal areas in the tropics and sub-tropics, in the transition zone between the marine and terrestrial ecosystems.<sup>14</sup> This is a high stress, dynamic environment, with widely varying conditions. Salinity ranges from that of saltwater during high tide to almost freshwater during heavy rain. Daily tides submerge roots and trunks while wave action buffets trees. Soil in these areas is generally low in dissolved oxygen, high in salts, and acidic.<sup>15</sup> Despite all these challenges, mangroves persist and survive in an environment most plants find uninhabitable. The key to mangrove survival is their adaptations.

Mangroves face four major challenges living in the intertidal environment: high soil salinity, water loss, soil instability, and low levels of dissolved oxygen in the soil. High soil salinity poses two main threats

<sup>12</sup>UNESCO, "Solving the Puzzle: The Ecosystem Approach and Biosphere Reserves," Unesco, Paris (2000): 4.

<sup>13</sup>William J. Mitsch and James G. Gosselink, *Mangroves*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1986), 231.

<sup>14</sup>Mitsch, *Mangroves*, 232.

<sup>15</sup>Mitsch, *Mangroves*, 238-240

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to mangroves: high external salt concentration draws water from the plant roots into the soil, thereby desiccating the plant, while a high internal salt concentration will eventually poison the plant. Mangroves therefore actively regulate the amount of salt in their system by either excluding salt at their roots, excreting excess salt from specialized glands in their leaves, or storing salt in leaves before the leaves fall.<sup>16</sup> The high salinity of the environment coupled with the warm temperatures makes it difficult for mangroves to acquire and retain fresh water. Because of this, mangroves have many adaptations similar to those of desert plants that allow them to conserve water, including hairy or waxy leaves that reduce evaporation, fleshy leaves in which to store water, and thorns or toxins to discourage herbivory.<sup>17</sup>

**Dessication:**

The harmful removal of moisture from a plant

The soil of mangrove swamps is often more water than earth. This, coupled with the tidal waves that inundate forests, makes it difficult for a tree to remain stable. To stay upright, some species like the black mangrove, *Avicennia*, use a wide, shallow root system to anchor themselves, while others such as the red mangrove, *Rhizophora*, grow above-ground prop roots from their trunks and branches that provide extra stability. Root adaptations play an additional role in mangrove survival by combating the problem of low dissolved oxygen in the soil. Plants require oxygen for respiration, the process by which sugars are broken down to release energy. While oxygen is always plentiful in the air, the soil in intertidal zones is low in dissolved oxygen. Mangroves use above-ground roots to supply oxygen to the below-ground root system. The prop roots of *Rhizophora* are covered in small pores called lenticels which absorb oxygen, while *Avicennia* sends up pneumatophores, small hollow roots, which function like a diver's snorkel to take in oxygen.<sup>18</sup> The absorbed oxygen is released into the soil and creates an aerobic layer around the entire root system.

These adaptations—prop roots, salt glands, etc.—increase the mangroves' chances of survival in the intertidal zone and of successful reproduction. Mangrove reproduction is another defining adaptation of

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<sup>16</sup>Mitsch, *Mangroves*, 243-245

<sup>17</sup>Mitsch, *Mangroves*, 243-245

<sup>18</sup> Mitch, *Mangroves*, 243-245

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this group. Mangroves are part of a non-phylogenetically related group of viviparous plants. The offspring of viviparous organisms develop on or in the parent, as opposed to emerging from eggs or seeds after leaving the parent. In the case of mangroves, the seed germinates while still on the parent plant, which will often provide its offspring with nutrients while it grows.<sup>19</sup> Eventually, the seedling or fruit drops off the tree and floats in the water until it finds a site, sometimes traveling in ocean currents for hundreds of miles. Some mangrove seedlings can survive at sea for up to a year, while others can sprout and grow underwater, relying on embryonic food stores until they break the water's surface.<sup>20</sup> Vivipary allows mangroves to increase their offspring's chance at surviving in this harsh environment, as well as colonize sites many miles away.

The presence of mangroves along the shoreline enhances the ecology of the intertidal zone and the surrounding ecosystems. Like other *ecotones*, mangrove forests act as a buffer for surrounding ecosystems. The roots of mangroves trap and hold soil, thereby preventing coastal erosion, as well as filtering sediments from water flowing into the ocean. Mangrove forests provide food and habitat for many marine and terrestrial species, including juvenile fish, amphibians, and birds. They also protect inland regions from tidal surges and tsunamis. A study published in 2009 found that a mangrove forest with a density of 0.2 trees per square meter could reduce tsunami inundation depth by 30%. Another study in 2005 reported a significant correlation between the increased presence of coastal mangroves and decreased storm damage during the 2004 tsunami in Thailand.<sup>21,22</sup> In addition to benefiting from these ecological services, Humans also use mangrove forests as sources of timber, charcoal, and medicine. Mangrove forests therefore enhance both the health of surrounding ecosystems and the quality of life for humans living in and around these forests. So far I have discussed the general background knowledge that shapes the Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve: the

**Ecotones:** A transition zone between two major ecological communities

<sup>19</sup>Ria Tan, "Mangrove Trees," Accessed October 27, 2010. [http://www.naturia.per.sg/buloh/plants/mangrove\\_trees.htm](http://www.naturia.per.sg/buloh/plants/mangrove_trees.htm)

<sup>20</sup>Ria Tan, "Mangrove Trees," Accessed October 27, 2010. [http://www.naturia.per.sg/buloh/plants/mangrove\\_trees.htm](http://www.naturia.per.sg/buloh/plants/mangrove_trees.htm)

<sup>21</sup>Hideaki Yanagisawa et al., "The reduction effects of mangrove forest on a tsunami based on field surveys at Pakarang Cape, Thailand and numerical analysis," *Estuarine, Coastal, and Shelf Science* 81, iss. 1 (2009): 32.

<sup>22</sup>T. J. Oyana, W. Sun, and P. Sirikulchayanon, "Buffering functions of mangroves in the 2004 tsunami," *International Journal of Digital Earth* 2, no. 3 (2009): 270.

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shifting relationship between man and nature and the complexities of mangrove ecology. I now turn to the specific case of Can Gio: its history, the emergence of a CBC management model, and the relationship—both negative and positive—between the Vietnamese and the mangrove ecosystem.

### **History of Can Gio**

The Can Gio mangrove forest is situated about 65 km southeast of downtown Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), on soil deposition from the Saigon-Dong Nai River system. During the Vietnam-American War, the forest, then called Rung Sat, was the home of a North Vietnamese base. From this base the North Vietnamese soldiers would attack ships carrying supplies and troops up and down the Saigon River to Saigon. Early in the war this was a 'safe zone' for the North Vietnamese. They were protected by the mangrove forest, which was, in the words of a 1962 army report, "practically impenetrable and therefore not feasible for ground operations."<sup>23</sup> The mangrove forest was a tactical nightmare for American troops; soldiers and vehicles sank as much as three feet into the soft mud, movement was hampered by prop roots, and troops traveling in mangrove forests risked finding themselves flooded at high tide.

The solution to the tactical problem of Rung Sat came in 1962, when the United States began using herbicides such as Agent Orange and Agent Blue to destroy plant cover and agricultural crops in Vietnam.<sup>24</sup> The goal of this deforestation campaign was to deprive the enemy of forest cover, food, and a peasant support base.<sup>25</sup> From 1965-1970 approximately 300 herbicide missions were flown in Rung Sat, dispersing around 900,000 gallons of herbicides; 35% of the total amount sprayed on all of South Vietnam's mangrove forests.<sup>26</sup> Estimates of the extent of defoliation range from 50-70% of the forest area.<sup>27</sup> These dead and dying trees were collected by local Vietnamese for fire-wood, further contributing to the deforestation and leaving behind barren ground.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup>"Rung Sat Special Zone Intelligence Study." Accessed November 11, 2010. <http://www.mrfa.org/rungsat.htm>

<sup>24</sup>Phan Nguyen Hong, "The Severe Impact of Herbicides on Mangroves in the Vietnam War and the Ecological Effects of Restoration," in *Ecological Destruction, Health, and Development: Advancing Asian Paradigms*, ed. Hisao Furukawa (Japan: Kyoto University Press and Trans Pacific Press, 2004): 177.

<sup>25</sup>Maj. A. Buckingham Jr., "Operation Ranch Hand: Herbicides in Southeast Asia." Accessed October 23, 2010. <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1983/Jul-Aug/buckingham.html>

<sup>26</sup>Hong, "The Severe Impact," 179

<sup>27</sup>IMABE Project, "Cangio Mangrove." Accessed October 17, 2010. <http://www.donimabe.org.vn/index.php?mod=content&id=77>

<sup>28</sup>Le Duc Tuan et al., *Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve* (Oxfam, 2002), 21

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After the war ended in 1975, the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City issued a reforestation policy to rehabilitate the defoliated areas of Can Gio, in part of a larger effort to restore the greenbelt around the city.<sup>29</sup> The reforestation was primarily done by volunteer and re-educated youths, who had little training and poor technique. As a result seedling survival was low, but eventually approximately 60% of the defoliated areas in Can Gio were replanted.<sup>30</sup> Initially, the forest was classified as a productive forest and put under the management of Duyen Hai Forestry Enterprise.<sup>31</sup> Duyen Hai management was based on what we would now call exclusionary management and was focused on supplying food and forest products to Ho Chi Minh City.<sup>32</sup> However, this management model proved to be unsustainable and unproductive. The soils were too acidic and salty to support high crop yields and transportation to and from the city was difficult. Additionally, the poor inhabitants in and around the forest harvested mangroves illegally for fuel and to build shrimp ponds, contributing to deforestation and bringing the local people into conflict with Duyen Hai and the People's Committee.<sup>33</sup>

This was a problem across Vietnam, as unsustainable forestry practices coupled with illegal forest harvest by disenfranchised citizens devastated all types of forests. In response, Committees turned to a new management model based on community-based conservation, which had started to emerge by this time. The goals of the community-based conservation in Vietnam are to "[empower] impoverished local people...to manage forest areas...[capitalize] on traditional knowledge... [and provide] a transparent means of support through the state-funded Management Board."<sup>34</sup> This new model was instituted in 1991 in Can Gio, when the People's Committee re-designated the forest as a productive forest and Duyen Hai Forestry Enterprise became the management board of the new park.<sup>35</sup> Under this management strategy, areas within the forest (an average of 100 ha) are allocated to a household for

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<sup>29</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 25

<sup>30</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 25

<sup>31</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 25.

<sup>32</sup>Ngoc Nam, "The role of households in mangrove management at Can Gio District, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam," in *Community Participation in Conservation, Sustainable use and rehabilitation of mangroves in Southeast Asia* (UNESCO 1996): 105.

<sup>33</sup>Vien, "The role of households," 105.

<sup>34</sup>Phan Nguyen Hong, "Can Gio: Turning Mangroves into Riches," in *In Search of Excellence: Exemplary Forest Management in Asian and the Pacific*, ed. Patrick B. Durst, Chris Brown, Henrylito D. Tacio, and Miyuki Ishikawa

<sup>35</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 33.

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a minimum of 30 years.<sup>36</sup> Each household receives a monthly stipend of \$20 per hectare (USD) for protecting the forest by patrolling their plot, noting any disturbances or illegal activities, and then informing the park

management.<sup>37</sup> The households are allowed to supplement their income through approved activities such as thinning and aquaculture.<sup>38</sup> Today, the average farmer living in Can Gio earns 60 million Vietnamese Dong (approximately \$280 USD) each year from these activities, in addition to the protection stipend.

One **hectare(ha)** is equal to **10.000 square meters**.

100 ha is 1 square kilometer.

The results of the adoption of community-based conservation were positive; deforestation was dramatically reduced and many deforested areas were successfully replanted.<sup>39</sup> The healthy forest provided ecological benefits to Ho Chi Minh City and the surrounding area by preventing coastal erosion, filtering water flowing from the densely-populated and industrial Saigon-Dong Nai watershed, and protecting inland areas from storms and waves. Additionally, the monthly stipend stabilized the living standards of households involved in the new management model. This was an important development in a region that is still one of the poorest and least developed districts in Ho Chi Minh City.<sup>40</sup>

The third and final re-definition of Can Gio came in 2000, when UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program designated Can Gio as Vietnam's first biosphere reserve.<sup>41</sup> As a biosphere, Can Gio represents a unique and ecologically important landscape, with a management model that incorporates the participation of the local community. It contains a continuum of habitat from sea to forest to urban space that provides opportunities for research and education. Additionally, the biosphere designation strengthens the commitment of the national government to support and preserve this area and provides opportunity for the growth of environmental education in Ho Chi Minh City. Finally, the biosphere designation raises the international profile of Can Gio and connects it to

<sup>36</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 35.

<sup>37</sup>Hong, "Can Gio: Turning Mangroves," 54.

<sup>38</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 35.

<sup>39</sup>Phan Nguyen Hong, "Reforestation of mangroves after severe impacts of herbicides during the Viet Nam War: the case of Can Gio," Accessed November 12, 2010. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/y2795e/y2795e11.htm>.

<sup>40</sup>Thoa Kim Le, "Final Report: Economic distribution and institutions in the recreation and tourism of mangrove biosphere reserve: case study of Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve, Vietnam." MAB Young Scientist Award Program. (2010): 8

<sup>41</sup>The MAB Program, "Biosphere Reserve Information: Can Gio." Accessed October 11, 2010. <http://www.unesco.org/mabdb/br/brdir/directory/biores.asp?mode=all&code=VIE+01>

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a global network of reserves.

### **The Current State of Can Gio**

Currently, the Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere reserve covers 75,740 ha.<sup>42</sup> Of that, 15.39% is made up of natural mangrove forest, 26.75% is plantation forest, and 30.9% is covered by water.<sup>43</sup> The remaining space is used for human activities. The forest that grows on the site today is much more diverse than the pre-war forest. The goal of restoration was never to recreate the forest as it was before the war. Managers planted a variety of indigenous mangrove species in order to preserve mangrove diversity and retain the ecological benefits of a mangrove forest.<sup>44</sup> Like other biosphere reserves, Can Gio is divided into three zones: a core area, a buffer zone, and a transition zone. Land within the core and buffer areas is owned by the government and used for conservation and low impact activities such as research, sustainable aquaculture, and ecotourism. The government also owns the transition zone, but leases the land to private users. The transition area of Can Gio is therefore the most developed and it is here that much of the economic activity that sustains the district occurs. The economy of Can Gio District is closely aligned with the health of the mangrove forest and its status as a biosphere reserve. The primary industries in the district are tourism, forestry products, salt-making, and aquaculture and fisheries activities. Of these, tourism and shrimp farming have the greatest impact on the mangrove forest.

Tourism began in Can Gio in the 1980's, when residents of other districts of Ho Chi Minh City began making day trips to the site. There are three main tourist sites in Can Gio. Within the forest are Forest Park and Vam Sat Nature Park. Forest Park features a historical museum, a restored model of the Rung Sat army base, and a monkey troupe.<sup>45</sup> Vam Sat Nature Park, established in 1998, contains a crocodile pool, a bat and bird reserve, and saltwater baths.<sup>46</sup> To the south, the April 30th Beach offers tourists beaches, restaurants, hotels, shops, and seafood.<sup>47</sup> There are also plans to add additional tourist sites to attract more

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<sup>42</sup>The MAB Programme, "Biosphere Reserve Information: Can Gio." Accessed October 11, 2010. <http://www.unesco.org/mabdb/br/brdir/directory/biores.asp?mode=all&code=VIE+01>

<sup>43</sup>IMABE Project. "Cangio Mangrove." Accessed October 17, 2010. <http://www.donimabe.org.vn/index.php?mod=content&id=77>

<sup>44</sup>Le Duc Tuan. Personal Interview. December 17, 2010.

<sup>45</sup>Le, "Final Report," 9.

<sup>46</sup>VNA, "Can Gio – attractive tourist destination," Accessed November 17, 2010. <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/travel/2007/02/665889/>

<sup>47</sup>Le, "Final Report," 11.



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tourists, particularly sites that will be attractive to international visitors.<sup>48</sup>

Today, Visitors from Ho Chi Minh City account for over 70% of all the tourists who visit Can Gio, while international tourists make up only 1%.<sup>49</sup> The focus of the government and managers of Can Gio is currently on attracting more international tourists to Can Gio, primarily through the development of green tourism. This is part of a country-wide effort to re-brand Vietnam as an ecotourism vacation site.<sup>50</sup> Tourism is the economic sector with the most potential to grow in Can Gio, and also the sector that can be the least disruptive to the mangrove forest, provided that the management board builds consideration for the health of the ecosystem into their development plans.<sup>51</sup>

In contrast to tourism, shrimp farming in Can Gio is primarily a destructive economic activity, though no less important to Vietnam's economy. In 2001, fisheries and shrimp products were the country's third largest export, earning approximately \$1.76 billion (US).<sup>52</sup> Conditions in Can Gio support shrimp farming; the soft soils permeated by water are ideal for shrimp ponds. In 2005 approximately 5,264 ha of Can Gio was devoted to shrimp farming operations.<sup>53</sup> The reserve regulations restrict most shrimp farming activities to the transition zone, aside from the non-disruptive organic shrimp farming practiced by locals involved in community-based conservation. Shrimp farmers therefore have a limited area in which to farm, which results in the use of intensive farming practices in order to maximize production.<sup>54</sup> Intensive shrimp farming is the most environmentally destructive form of shrimp aquaculture, generating massive amounts of water pollution.<sup>55</sup> The water in the shrimp ponds must be constantly refreshed, and the effluent, which is released directly into the rivers, has a high concentration of fecal matter, uneaten feed, bacteria, and antibiotics, and is low in dissolved oxygen.<sup>56</sup> These conditions kill many organisms living in the river systems and also

<sup>48</sup>Le, "Final Report," 12.

<sup>49</sup>Le, "Final Report," 14.

<sup>50</sup>Phan Nguyen Hong, Quan Thi Quynh Dao, and Le Kim Thoa, "Ecotourism in Vietnam: Potential and Reality," *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, October 2002, [http://kyotoreview.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/issue/issue1/article\\_167.html](http://kyotoreview.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/issue/issue1/article_167.html)

<sup>51</sup>Le, "Final Report," 37-38.

<sup>52</sup>Xuan Tuan Le et al., "Environmental management in mangrove areas," *Environmental Informatics Archives* 1 (2003): 46.

<sup>53</sup>Van Trai Nguyen, "The Influences of Shrimp Farming and Fishing Practices on Natural Fish Conservation in Can Gio, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam." (PhD diss., University of Newcastle, 2008): 5

<sup>54</sup>Pham Thi Anh et al., "Water pollution by intensive brackish shrimp farming in south-east Vietnam: Causes and options for control," *Agricultural Water Management* 97 (2010): 874.

<sup>55</sup>Nguyen, "Influences of Shrimp Farming," 36-37.

<sup>56</sup>Xuan, "Environmental Management," 43.

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contribute to the spread of diseases to shrimp ponds downstream. However, proper sediment and wastewater treatment costs between 4-5 million dong (300 USD) for a 5000 m<sup>2</sup> pond, which is more than the cost of losing a crop to disease.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, it is not immediately economically viable for farmers to treat their water, even though the long term costs of water pollution and lost shrimp yields is high.

Aside from tourism and shrimp farming, salt-making is another significant economic activity in Can Gio. To make salt, sea water is allowed to flood shallow fields which are then edged off to prevent the water from leaving. The water evaporates in the sun, leaving behind salt. In 2007, the Sub-department of Agricultural Development and the Can Gio District Agriculture and Rural Development Board introduced plastic covers to the salt making process, which prevents salt from depositing directly on the soil and produces cleaner salt. This has increased salt production revenue by 20% in the district.<sup>58</sup> Currently, approximately 1,500 ha are used for salt making in Can Gio. Unlike shrimp farming, salt making does not produce large amounts of environmental pollutants and is less environmentally destructive. However, construction of the salt ponds does require clearing land, including mangrove forest.

The remainder of Can Gio's economy is made up of forestry products and agriculture. Most of the forestry products generated by the district come from plantations of mangroves, eucalyptus, and nipa palm, which are used for charcoal, construction, and thatching.<sup>59</sup> A small amount comes from management thinning, which is used to maintain "optimum nutritional area" around trees.<sup>60</sup> Some rice is grown in the north of Can Gio District, but yields are very low because of the salty soils.<sup>61</sup> As a result of reserve policy and the environmental conditions of the site, agriculture and forestry makes up only a small percentage of Can Gio's economy.

The negative effects of human economic activities do not come

<sup>57</sup>Anh, "Water pollution by intensive shrimp," 878.

<sup>58</sup>Viet Nam Net, "Cleaner salt gives Can Gio farmers higher earnings." Vietnam News Network June 7, 200. <http://www.vietnammarkets.com/vietnamnews.php?nid=3645>

<sup>59</sup>IMABE Project. "Cangio Mangrove." Accessed October 17, 2010. <http://www.donimabe.org.vn/index.php?mod=content&id=77>

<sup>60</sup>Tuan, Can Gio, 29

<sup>61</sup>IMABE Project. "Cangio Mangrove," Accessed October 17, 2010. <http://www.donimabe.org.vn/index.php?mod=content&id=77>

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exclusively from inside the district; the industrialization and urbanization of Ho Chi Minh City has an enormous impact on Can Gio. As the ecosystem model of biosphere management emphasizes, an ecosystem is affected by activities in surrounding ecosystems. In the case of Can Gio, the surrounding ecosystem is the urban/industrial area of Ho Chi Minh City. Can Gio is connected to Ho Chi Minh City through tourism, economy, and management, as well as through the watershed of the Saigon-Dong Nai Rivers. The rapid urbanization of Ho Chi Minh City has produced major environmental problems, particularly air and water pollution. These problems are partially mitigated by the presence of Can Gio, the “lungs and kidneys” of Ho Chi Minh City.

The link between plants and clean air is unambiguous—plants take in carbon dioxide, the major product of combustion, and produce oxygen. Can Gio makes up over 50% of the green space of Ho Chi Minh City and therefore is the principle offset for the carbon emissions from the city’s industries and transportation needs, the ‘lungs’ of the city. However, the levels of air pollution in Ho Chi Minh City are currently beyond the capacity of the forest. Air pollution in Ho Chi Minh City comes primarily from transportation. In 2006, there were approximately 3 million motorcycles in the city, emitting pollutants such as ozone and carbon monoxide.<sup>62</sup> This increase in air pollution has contributed to a decline in the health of residents, particularly the increase of cases of respiratory diseases like asthma. The government of Ho Chi Minh City has recognized the problem of air pollution, particularly in relation to human health, and committed to reduce air pollution, primarily through better emissions control of factories and increased access to public transportation.<sup>63</sup> While air pollution does not have a large impact on the health of Can Gio, the relationship between plants and clean air ties the forest to the air quality problems of the city, and reinforces the importance of a healthy mangrove ecosystem.

Not only is Can Gio the metaphorical lungs of Ho Chi Minh City but it is also its kidneys. In 2003 Ho Chi Minh City was releasing 700,000 m<sup>3</sup> of raw sewage and 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> of industrial effluent per day into the Saigon River.<sup>64</sup> This pollution has earned the Saigon River the

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<sup>62</sup>Bang Quoc Ho, Alain Clappier, and Golay François, “Air pollution forecast for Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam in 2015 and 2020,” *Air Quality, Atmosphere, and Health* (2010): 1. DOI 10.1007/s11869-010-0087-2

<sup>63</sup>Bang Quoc Ho, “Air pollution,” 9.

<sup>64</sup>Tran Dinh Thanh Lam, “Polluted River Plagues Ho Chi Minh City,” *The Irrawaddy*, January 8, 2003. [http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art\\_id=122](http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=122) .

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nickname “the stinking canal”.<sup>65</sup> Efforts to curb water pollution have been largely unsuccessful in Ho Chi Minh City, due to lack of infrastructure and the inability of government officials to enforce standards. This pollution flows with the Saigon River through and around Can Gio, where the dense mangrove roots trap and hold sediments. In this way, Can Gio filters the waste water of Ho Chi Minh City. However, much of this pollution is high in heavy metals, pesticides, and other pollutants which are incorporated into the food chain of the system, impacting the health of all the organisms that use the forest for food, including humans.

An overview of the current state of Can Gio reinforces the tension between conservation and development seen in the history of the site. Without the livelihoods provided by the shrimp industry, forestry, tourism, and the other economic activities of Can Gio, the people living in and around the site would not be able to survive. Similarly, the industries that generate the massive amounts of air and water pollution of Ho Chi Minh City support the city residents. Can Gio cannot insulate itself from the by-products of development; it is connected to these systems by air, water, and visitors. However, the presence of a biosphere reserve near Ho Chi Minh City serves as a reminder to the city of the cost of uncontrolled and unlimited development. The reserve’s conservation model also provides a model of how people can live within nature without destroying it.

### **Conclusion**

The space humans choose to conserve and the methods employed for conservation reflect the values a society places on natural space and the relationship between humans and nature in the society. Can Gio mangrove forest is a unique ecosystem that provides many benefits to humans: prevention of coastal erosion, nursery grounds for fish, and buffering from tropical storms, to name a few. Throughout its history, these forests have been demolished by war and harvested for industry. The management of the forest has changed with the development of Vietnam. Initially an exclusionary protected area emphasizing the production of industrial raw materials, Can Gio now uses a community-based approach to incorporate species conservation and sustainable development. Its status as a biosphere reserve recognizes the

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<sup>65</sup>Tran Dinh Thanh Lam, “Polluted River Plagues Ho Chi Minh City.” *The Irrawaddy*. January 8, 2003. [http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art\\_id=122](http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=122)

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unique space this site fills within the history and ecology of Vietnam, and connects Can Gio to the global discussion about conservation and sustainability.

The story of Can Gio paints the picture of a resilient site, a site that “proves that the Vietnamese people—together with the government—can put tremendous energy into reforestation work for the protection of their environment.”<sup>66</sup> However, the future of the site and the commitment of the Vietnamese to the environment are not as certain as these optimistic words might suggest. Vietnam is a developing nation, with a young, large and energetic population eager to enjoy the economic benefits of a strong, modern economy.<sup>67</sup> Development and environment are closely linked: rapid, unrestricted development, experts observe, has “adverse impacts on the environment and environmental pollution...[and] may become a major obstacle for...development.”<sup>68</sup> The ongoing challenge of sites like Can Gio is to continue to prove that conservation and development can be incorporated into a successful management program—one that connects the people who live in Can Gio, the people who live around it, and the people who visit it.

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<sup>66</sup>Tuan, Can Gio., 3

<sup>67</sup>Kinh, Bui Duc. Personal Interview. December 24, 2010.

<sup>68</sup>Truyet, T. Mai, and Quang M. Nguyen. “Development and Environment in Vietnam.” Conference on Sustainable Development in Vietnam. University of Maryland. Adele H. Stamp Student Union Bldg, College Park, Maryland. November 13, 2003.

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# **Effects of Normative Messages on Pro-Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors**

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## **Effects of Normative Messages on Pro-Environmental Attitudes and Behaviors**

### **Introduction**

As stated in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the planet's climate is warming at an unprecedented rate, and humans are responsible for the large majority of causes creating this situation. If humans are to repair the balance between themselves and nature, then a global environmental movement that includes widespread behavior and attitude reconstruction will have to occur. The current study seeks to build upon past research attempting to promote pro-environmental behavior change in individuals. The author examines the ability of modeling and norms presented in a video format to motivate individuals to change their behavior to become more environmentally sustainable.

Research shows that normative information can promote behaviors that are either harmful or beneficial to the environment (Cialdini, 2003; Stern, 2000; Stern et al, 1999). For purposes of this study, a norm is defined as any behavior perceived to be typical or normal by the participants. This study examines the influence of injunctive and descriptive norms on environmental attitudes and commitment to engage in pro-environmental behaviors. An injunctive norm is defined as a request to act in a pro-social manner. Injunctive norms usually target behaviors that are desired but not typical, such as asking someone to give up all use of their automobile. A descriptive norm on the other hand describes the desired behavior as typical and expected.

Based on previous research, we created two videos that presented descriptive information to create one of two norms: actions taken to protect the environment such as driving efficient vehicles, using less electricity, and recycling, or actions taken that harm the environment such as driving inefficient vehicles, using more electricity, not recycling, etc. (Cialdini, 2003; Bator & Cialdini, 2000). Both videos also presented injunctive norm information asking participants to engage in pro-environmental behaviors. The first video asks participants to behave in a way that is consistent with the descriptive norm. This will be called the combined norm condition. The second video asks participants to oppose the described norm because the norm in this condition is undesirable. This will be called the contrasting norm condition. The author hypothesized that the combined norm video would promote more

positive reactions and an increased willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors than would the contrasting norm video. The author also hypothesized that the contrasting norm condition would be ineffective, reasoning that people rarely act against the norm, even if the norm is presented as negative or undesirable (Cialdini, 2003; Bator & Cialdini, 2000; Gardner & Stern, 2002).

## **Method**

The participants were 54 (16 men, 38 women) undergraduate (mean age = 21 years) students. Each participant viewed either the combined norm video, or the contrasting norm video. Both videos were exactly seven minutes and ten seconds long. The videos were broken up into several parts that described particular behaviors. The videos discussed similar but opposing behaviors in each section. To control for this, both videos spent the same amount of time (within 1 second) on each section. Both videos conclude by asking participants to increase their conservation efforts. All of the information presented in the clips described real behaviors that people do, but the proposed frequency with which some of these behaviors occur was exaggerated in order to portray them as norms.

As dependent variables, participants filled out demographic information, several emotional responses, and completed Dunlap's (2000) New Ecological Paradigm scale as well as other items pertaining to responsibility, self-efficacy, and saliency of norms. However, the primary measure of conservation behaviors was a modified version of Western Washington University's sustainability pledge. The pledge consisted of 34 behaviors that participants could be or were already doing. The behaviors were broken up into six categories, which are: energy, waste, food, water, transportation, and education. Participants were asked to rank from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much) how often they currently did each behavior, and given the opportunity to commit to increasing that behavior on the same 1 to 5 scale.

## **Results**

Statistical testing found that participants in the combined norm condition expressed greater happiness, more encouragement, and higher levels of optimism than those in the contrasting norm condition. It also found that participants in the contrasting norm condition expressed greater sadness, more discouragement, higher levels of pessimism, and

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marginally more worry than those in the combined norm condition.

A similar test was also used to examine whether or not participants committed to increase their conservation behaviors. Participants in the combined norm condition and participants in the contrasting norm condition committed to increase their current environmental behaviors. Upon closer examination, testing showed that participants in the combined norm condition committed to significantly increase their current conservation behaviors on 24 of the 34 possible items. Those in the contrasting norm condition committed to significantly increase their behavior on only 13 of the 34 items.

The authors also measured the difference between participant scores on the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) scale after the movies. The scores were significantly different between groups on two items in the measure. In regard to item 6 on the NEP, which states that the earth has plenty of natural resources if we learn how to use them, participants in the combined norm condition ranked this statement as more true than participants in the contrasting norm condition. In regard to item 10, which states that the current ecological crisis has been greatly exaggerated; participants in the combined norm condition marginally agreed more with this statement than participants in the contrast condition.

**Discussion**

The results support the first hypothesis that the combined norm video would promote positive emotional responses, while the contrasting norm video would promote negative emotional responses. These results support the second hypothesis in part. The author hypothesized that the combined norm video would cause participants to commit to increasing their conservation behaviors but that the contrasting norm video would not. Participants in the combined norm condition significantly committed to increase their behaviors on 24 of the 34 items, but those in the contrast condition also committed to increase 13 of the 34 items. Because of this difference, it is appropriate to say that the combined norm video was more effective at promoting commitments to increased conservation behaviors. However, based on the literature, the author did not expect participants in the contrasting norm condition to commit to increase their environmental behaviors at all. When people are distressed and feel that they have no power to control a situation, they often deny that the problem exists (Gardner & Stern, 2002; Kates, 1962; and Lehman & Taylor, 1987). However, people who adopt the core beliefs of environmental movements accept that environmental

problems are real, and that they have the potential to disrupt their lives (Dunlap, 2000; Gardner & Stern, 2002; Stern et al. 1999). Participants in both the combined norm (Mean = 3.64) and the contrasting norm (Mean = 3.82) ranked relatively higher on the NEP than the average endorsement of the NEP in the United States (Mean = 3.42) (Shultz, 2000). This indicates that compared to most Americans, WWU students may be more likely to identify themselves with the environmental movement.

In the case of environmentalists, it may therefore be possible that instead of denying the problem when presented with information that increases perceived threat, they prepare more for the potential disaster because they have already accepted that the problem is real. Stern et al. (1999) theorized that three essential concepts are necessary for individuals to begin acting in environmentally friendly ways. The Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory states that if an individual values a particular object, believes that it is in danger, and develops a personal norm for action, they will engage themselves in behaving consistently with that belief. If WWU students have already endorsed the first component of Stern et al.'s (1999) VBN theory, then when presented with the threat, they may endorse a personal norm for participating in more environmentally significant behaviors. However, further research is necessary to see if environmentalists are more likely to be positively influenced by contrasting norms than non-environmentalists.

One shortcoming of the current experiment is that it was not possible to include a control group for comparison. This is a critical contrast that this study failed to address. Because the author considered this a pilot study, it was not of primary concern. However, because the videos have shown to produce the intended emotional responses and to promote commitments to increase conservation behaviors, future related studies should include a control group as well as slight adjustments to the videos.

The complexities surrounding sustainable behavior promotion are many and challenging. However, significant achievements have occurred in the last twenty years that are helping to increase sustainability efforts around the world. The problems surrounding issues like global warming, toxic hazards, and other global health risks require participation from the majority of citizens from the majority of countries all around the world. For these reasons it is imperative that we encourage sustainable behaviors of all types and at all levels of society if we hope to preserve a healthy planet for future generations to inhabit.

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# **Between: Place & Sovereign**

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## **Between: Place & Sovereign**

### **Preface**

This essay comes from reading and studying works and authors of the literary tradition called “continental philosophy,” a school of critical thought as artistic as it is academic. Never limiting itself to a particular body of writing, continental philosophy allows the thinker to liberally address issues of morality, sociology, psychology, and ontology across texts, from literary fiction to political theory. The mythology and philosophy of the West’s antiquity, studies of the Bible, and early modern human analyses (anthropology, psychoanalysis, etc.) are of particular interest to this school. The purpose of this interdisciplinary and often baffling pursuit: to question what we think and how we think. In this mode of thought, questioning what we believe to be true is always more important than positing some new claim to truth.

Like much of philosophy, the continental school spends as much effort revisiting and critiquing itself and its own thinkers as it does developing new branches of thought. Critique is a way of expanding a thought and taking it in new directions, introducing new themes and possibilities to test against and make trial of the old. This form of argument can be a disagreement between one author or idea and another, but often critique is more an academic attempt to expand an idea beyond where it has been taken thus far—to create new meanings and questions. Critique makes philosophical thought inexhaustible, always refining and exploring.

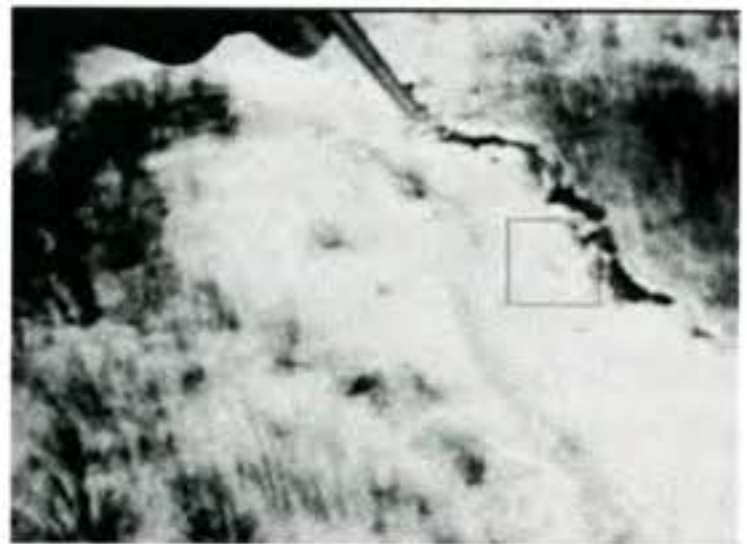
Jacques Derrida is the subject of the present essay’s critique. He is a French thinker prominent in what is called Deconstruction, a sub-school that refines ideas by taking apart the use, choice, and meaning of language used to express them (Lévinas was Derrida’s contemporary, and both French Jews). The essay reflexively adopts some of his style. It is further influenced by the Italian philologist Giorgio Agamben, who observes the historical issues of politics, philosophy, and theology. Both are already concerned with the political theorists Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Carl Schmitt, whose thought on power and legality played a role in the philosophy of the Nazi party. Ovid, the Roman poet and cataloguer of so many stories that have informed Western thought, and Herman Melville are also common interests in critical theory, but I have taken the liberty of introducing Mr. Stewart and Dr. Anthony whose honest observations and academic research, respectively, of the ancient

cultures of the old world easily find their place in this question human identity and power.

Topically, this essay is about exploring human power by questioning some of its underlying human mechanisms, thus calling into question non-human (animal) elements, all while having a little fun. Key in the opening of this discourse is the French *bête*, which means “animal” and “stupid,” from the Latin *brutus*, whose English sister is the word “brutal” or “brute.” The scope of the project leaves out so many considerations, which is why it is limited to an experimental critique of a particular passage posed by Derrida. In spirit, however, this text is a kind of game at language and ideas that, nevertheless, should be taken a bit seriously.

### **§1 Loomings**

David Attenborough selects a hauntingly violent series of stock footage to include in his special documentary on wolves, depicting their slaughter in the wild. A pair of hunters looms by helicopter over one animal trailing through a thin wood (fig. 1). When the marksman makes his shot, the wolf turns instinctively to confront its backbiter, and finding nothing there, instead flails and howls in the snow, gnawing its own leg in its death throes (fig. 2). The rifleman, several hundred feet in the air, unseen, untouched, barely heard, looms omnipresently and terrifyingly in such a way Derrida might call *à pas de loup*, stealthily. ‘Walking like the wolf’ is, to Derrida, proper to the sovereign who causes great anxiety—we never know what/who it is, how many there are, and where it lies. Spreading open the language of *à pas de loup* (that, with minute shifts in wording, can suddenly take on drastic new meanings), we begin to see the fundamentals of sovereignty with which Derrida sets up his explorations in *The Beast & The Sovereign*. Really, “there is no wolf [*pas de loup*] yet where things are looming *à pas de loup*, the wolf is not there yet [*le loup n’y est pas*]... there is only a word... a fable, a fable-wolf, a fabulous animal” (5). Just how real can we allow this fabulous animal-sovereign to be? Derrida



**Fig. 1: Hunters looming; wolf below.**

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places the sovereign, and in doing so also characterizes it, saying,

Like God, the sovereign is above the law and above humanity, above everything, and he looks a bit stupid [bête], he looks like the beast, and even like the death he carries with him, that death that Lévinas says is not nothingness, nonbeing, but nonresponse. (57)



**Fig. 2: A wolf, shot.**

Looming over us, hovering above law, Derrida's sovereign is derived from Carl Schmitt's "decisive entity, [that] is sovereign in the sense that the decision about the critical situation, even if it is the exception, must always necessarily reside there [i.e. in sovereignty alone]" (Schmitt, 38), but it is also always a wolf, a

werewolf. At some point, we realize that we must discover where this fabular monster came from and we must know if Derrida's sovereign or if something else entirely is what is really looming in a position of power over man. All the while, we will be haunted by the fact that this wolf may in fact be no wolf, or, more precisely, it is "the insensible wolf" (Derrida, 6). Insensibility is 'without sense' but also is 'not sensed:' not being seen and not being heard (stealthy). When we call for it or name it, it does not respond, and its silence is what looms and gives it mystical properties. The nonresponse, to eyes or ears, engenders fear and fable. We must ask why the sovereign is response-less and what it means in not responding. To critique this sovereign is to open up its nonresponsivity, to find out why it is so stupid (brutal, cruel, and mute), to track it back to where it originates, and to discover if the exceptional position Derrida has assigned sovereignty seems proper to the sovereign and acceptable to the humanity over which it has authority.

## **§2 A Historical Dignity**

History is the study of signs or traces by which a hunter can follow a trail (or genealogy) back to the origins of his subject's purpose or nature. Tracking this stealthy wolf, Derrida invents the genelycology "to know how to deal with the wolf," to appropriately address and trace

(or outline) these wolf-men and wolf-sovereigns that lurk in his “book of wolves” (64). Derrida’s anthropology, of men and wolves, is like Carl Schmitt’s very anthropological real politik, a political theory preoccupied with the history of man, his original evil, and how his politics must be defined by his sinful propensity (Derrida 44). Derrida is preoccupied with the history of man and his original wolfishness. Perhaps, since Hobbes (to whose tradition Schmitt belongs) and Rousseau (who vigorously and critically responds to Hobbes’s *Leviathan* with *The Social Contract*) alike have defined the sovereign as the corporate body politic of men made by men, our historicity of the sovereign should be concerned with how man fundamentally defines himself. Setting aside the origins of sin and its extensive body of Christian theology, let us concern ourselves with this original wolfishness and how the animal involves itself in man’s self-identity, his own body, and his political body.

Taxonomy is always a genealogical system of classification that wants to trace connections and give names to otherwise mysterious subjects in an effort to make them understandable and, necessarily, demystified. Such an effort is always dubious. A tradition of understanding by the violence of designation, dissecting, and removing environmental contexts can only make its subject known by the language (name, genus, kingdom, type, etc.) that the observer forces upon it. Whether or not this institutionalization and categorization is a true revealing or making known of the subject’s nature (if this is even possible), and whether or not these taxonomically fabricated creatures with names are real is always debatable. Exploring early developments in this accounting and science of origins, Giorgio Agamben plies into the problem that the human taxonomic designation, *Homo sapiens*, is the ape without specific identification. Traditionally, man is the animal with the sole characteristic that he is man only when he recognizes himself as such [*nosce te ipsum*], and Agamben calls this self-identifying formula ‘the anthropological machine’ in *The Open: Man and Animal*. Beginning §8, titled ‘Without Rank,’ he says,

The anthropological machine of humanism is an ironic apparatus that verifies the absence of a nature proper to *Homo*, holding him suspended between a celestial and a terrestrial nature, between animal and human—and, thus, his being always less and more than himself. (29; my emphasis)

Suspending the terms “human” and “inhuman” in the anthropological

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machine, man seeks to define himself by a separating of man and animal, perhaps in fear of the possibility of a werewolf, the monster that is both. Agamben addresses, here in this discourse on proper to, the matter of dignity, "which [he says] simply means 'rank,' and could not in any case refer to man." This man without rank, who has no rank to fall into, is a man without place whose betweenness leaves him stranded in the Animal Kingdom, yet stricken by God's image. Perhaps 'dignity' refers to this unranked betweenness between men, and, more importantly, the authority that facilitates it. The Latin dignus, i.e. "worth, worthy, proper, fitting," might suggest such an authority. The word originates in the Proto-Indo-European root \*dek- "to take, [and] to accept" (Harper). At the foundation of this facilitation of the authority that betweenness carries will be the facilitation of taking and accepting, which does not refer to men, but what is between them.

Borges reminds us in his bestiary that Siddhartha Gautama was prophesied by a mystical white elephant to either save men as the greatest of souls, or rule men as the greatest of lords. The Buddha chose the former, and by fasting and eschewing earthliness did he transcend. The temptation of Christ may not have had such similar results had this diabolic debate on self-identity not taken place in the emptiness of a desert between places, or, more importantly, while he was neither taking nor accepting food. These saviors of men, in their emptiness, neither take nor accept.

**§3 The Orality of Fear**

Derrida horribly imagines, "it is as though, through the maw of the untamable beast, a figure of the sovereign were to appear" (18), as he begins to approach, in *The Beast & the Sovereign*, the issues of both roguishness and orality. The oral, for Derrida, is a colossal subject of love, words, breath, and spirit or animus. Politically, the mouth is the organ of the body's passage that can open to speak, a sending forth; or to devour, a taking in. Orality is the feral jaws of a starving wolf and it is the source of sovereign pronouncement and policy. The lips can be open in gesticulation, or sealed in non-response. The sovereign that is silent but wolfish will always find its nature in orality: how it rules and where it comes from. The issue is as deep as the abyssal gut into which it leads. Greeks imagined the time before order, vast and empty, as chaos or khaino, the yawn (Harper). This is the unknown and irrational region from which Derrida's sovereign springs, and with his own mouth irresponsibly gluts himself like some swine or wolf or other animal. Conceptualize a

king that has, through his lips, drank too much—he is blind-drunk and less responsible in his stupor. His actions will be random and potentially terrible. His subjects might prefer him dead, yet he must still be obeyed for the void of his absence will bring upheaval and disorder. An oral sovereign is, in Derrida's book of wolves, animalistic and wild, who knows that:

One must show oneself to be blind, make it known that one can be blind and stupid [bête] in the choice of targets, just so as to be frightening and have the enemy believe that one is acting at random, that one goes crazy when vital interests are affected. (89)

The not-knowing of the sovereign's intentions is just as frightening as not knowing his shape or his location (or if he is actually there). This particular passage arises in Derrida's commentary on U.S. foreign policy. Every possibility looms in and preoccupies the minds of the enemies and the subjects of the sovereign, and anxiety ensues. Derrida believes that the intelligence of US Strategic Command (Stratcom) is the directive to prevent the sovereignty that it represents from ever seeming too rational to its enemies, to make an "image of an adversary", he says, "who always might do just anything" (89).

'Loomings' is also Melville's title for the first chapter of his *Moby-Dick*. It is always the whale, "withholding from sight the full terrors of his submerged trunk, entirely hiding the wrenched hideousness of his jaw" (409), that preoccupies the whale hunters—Ahab most of all. Thousands of words can be said of jaws and of sovereignty in this leviathanic tome (e.g. sailors must pass through a pair of whale's jaws to reach the barroom in New Bedford to get their first shoreside drink), but it is clear that the colossal mouth of the whale, like the bared fangs of a wolf, is an item of the concealed, of the insatiable, of the greatest fear. Subjects of this orality of fear never know when they will be eaten nor when some impossible edict will be uttered. Like the outlaw or rogue that, outside the law, takes what he pleases, like the brutal wolf that thieves the shepherd's flock, Derrida's sovereign is excluded from civil society because he is cruel and hungry, and is cruel and hungry because he is outside of the city. This sovereign transgresses the laws (those political boundaries) and, disregarding them, crosses, as a wolf crosses fences. Doing so, according to Schmitt, the sovereign creates a sovereign law. This is an exclusive sovereign that takes without accepting (as a gift) by means

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of its powerful anxiety.

Protego ergo obligo [protection therefore obedience] is at the foundation Schmitt's state that is served so as to protect. It "is the cogito ergo sum [I think, therefore I am] of the state" (Schmitt, 52). The constituent's obligation to his body politic (the state) is at once a reflexive gratitude for being protected, but more importantly a fear of being vulnerable. For Derrida, fear of no-state and fear of state is the doubled fear of this obligation. The subjects cannot imagine how to protect themselves without the state or from the state itself. The horrific Leviathan of the Hobbes-Schmitt-Derridian legacy is the man-made and sovereign "Artificial Soul... giving life and motion to the body [politic]" (Derrida, 28). The very spirit or animus [animal] of that artificial soul is this: "Sovereignty causes fear, and fear makes the sovereign" (40). At first, this appears remarkably similar to Rousseau's *persona ficta* (a fiction of or formulation by the collective or "general" will of the subjects of the state) that demands "an obligation to something of which one is a member" (62). Indeed, the sovereign "General Will" within his Social Contract has the right to grant life and death to members of the assemblage: "Whoever wishes to preserve his own life at the expense of others must give his life for them when it is necessary" (78). However, Rousseau's sovereign requires an additional identification in that it is an entity that "can act only when the people are assembled" (136). Only in an assembly of men can this sovereign be readily and repeatedly re-affirmed. In between each who has gathered is an argument or an agreement, and out of this a state is conjured and made real.

This sovereign that springs from the orality of the collective agreement, between each mouth, that Rousseau initiates for us seems so fragile without that bestial authority that Derrida relies upon so heavily. Yet, its strength lies in reciprocal obligation instead of a doubled fear. Unlike the sovereign that springs from the orality of fear, this sovereignty obliges its subjects to its protection, but it is obliged to its subjects for substantiation and reality, and in this relation the *persona ficta* facilitates the responsibility of one speaker to another, proposing and agreeing, calling and responding, even in its own nonresponse. The *persona ficta* facilitates the authority of the betweenness found among the men who make it. If that authority is not found in the bestial exclusion that it seems to oppose, it must be found and related to the dignity of taking and accepting.

**§4 Lycaon**

By exception, by bestiality, by being exceptional, becoming-animal, becoming-exceptional, the exceptional sovereign is like the outlaw and like the wolf as it looms outside the law and is above the law (and thus, Schmitt would assert, is making law). Like God, like the wolf, it does not speak our language and will respond to us neither when we inquire after it (“what are you? where are you? how many of you are there?”) nor when we wish to enter into covenant with it, i.e. hold it accountable. As such, it can make decisions and be ‘the Decider’ for itself and its subjects with impunity, even if illegally, only because it has no capacity for an exchange. “If one cannot make a convention with the beast,” Derrida submits,

any more than with God, it is for a reason of language. The beast does not understand our language, and God cannot respond to us, that is cannot make known to us, and so we cannot know in turn if our convention is or is not accepted by him. (55)

This irresponsibility is, according to Derrida, the direct consequence of the inability of the theo-therianthropic [god-beast-person-like] sovereign to communicate between subject and sovereign, to take in and send out, to both call and respond. The exceptional sovereign cannot respond, and this form of responselessness does not allow for responsibility between subjects.

Melville, perplexed and consumed by this beast-sovereign, attempted to divest it, reveal it and strip it of its mystery in his own ‘book of whales.’ *Moby-Dick* is more cetological (the study of whales) commentary than narrative. It is a treatise on the slaughter and dissection of the whale: man’s attempt at attaining mastery over the leviathan. Like genelycology, like anthropology, cetology is a dubious historical tracking back—historical in its taxonomic tradition and its attempt to disconceal origins, and dubious in that these tracings are always inferred, if not simply fables. [Agamben provides us with an interesting moment in nautical taxonomy: “A serious scientific work such as Peter Artedi’s *Ichthiologica* (1738) still listed sirens next to seals and lions, and Linnaeus himself, in his *Pan Europaeus*, classifies sirens—which the Danish anatomist Caspar Bartholin called *Homo marinus*—together with man and apes” (Agamben, 24)]. In modern archaeology, whales and wolves even have common origins in an ancestor called therosephalian,



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'beast-head.' Melville's most rigorous (though inept) attack on the leviathan that looms over him was the development of the cetological library of Chapter 32. Here, folios and octavos become analogues for whales and their cousins—little clinical articles to flip through—and their terror is shown to be nothing but a common human irrationality, easily diagnosed and set aside in the stack.

To Melville, merely showing is a revealing that can dispel that fear of the jaws, the orality of fear. *The Beast & the Sovereign* begins with the assurance "we're shortly going to show it," which is the epigraph that begins La Fontaine's poem, *The Wolf & the Lamb*. This poem predicates Derrida's 'book of wolves' (and Derrida's *Rogues* as well, for which the entire poem itself serves as an epigraph), and really does show the origins of this wolfish sovereignty. This epigraph within an epigraph on showing will serve as our taxonomy for Derrida's wolf, both as a matter of the wolf's nature and how we see it (if we can see it, if it can be revealed).

The hungry wolf comes to the river to drink and finds a lamb taking his space. The wolf accuses the lamb of drinking his water, of hating him, and of being protected by the dogs and shepherds that try to kill him. The lamb's gentle and adroit reproaches to the wolf's fury do not spare the child from being consumed.

La Fontaine's wolf is always a respectful 'Your Majesty' to the lamb. The "cruel beast... attracted by hunger" is completely insensitive to the lamb's innocence—both its new-born purity, and its guiltlessness in each accusation that leads to its devourment—and to the rationality of the lamb's own defense, its logical argument. Derrida's preferred English translation concludes: "Deep into the wood, the wolf dragged his midday snack. So trial and judgment stood." Another translation (Eli Siegel's) provides a textually different conclusion that is exactly the same: "Into the woods, the wolf carries the lamb, and then eats him without any other why or wherefore." The absence of logic is the juridical law appropriate to the wolf. La Fontaine thus finds his parable successful in its epigraphic purpose: "The reason of those best able to have their way is always the best [The strong are always best at proving they're right]: We now show how this is true [As we're shortly going to show]." But the wolf must always retreat into the woods, back into its wilderness of exception and exile, to carry out its judgment that provides no reason and no responsibility. This is where Derrida's sovereign belongs. Above the company of men, outside the city walls (those boundaries of law and ordinance), the exceptional sovereign originates from where it acquires its strength, suspended between beast and God.

The genealogical process of showing origins doubles in importance for Derrida when he proclaims the “very definition, vocation, or essential claim of sovereignty. [That is:] the sovereign always says or implies: even if I am not the first to do or say so, I am the first or only one to know and to recognize who will have been the first” (92). To afford the sovereign a mastered position by exclusion, the sovereign declares its preemptive originality, a first above firsts. Not doing, not saying, and never responding, the sovereign we are reaching for via the taxonomic, genealogical method (that we attempt to name and show to gain power over) is consistently elusive. Though we know where it is, or at least to where it must retreat, what do we know about this looming fable? Perhaps we need take only one step further to the poet who informed the West of origins and transformations, Ovid, and his first wolf: King Lycaon.

Before Jove/Jupiter/Zeus even begins to groaningly recount “the wicked revels of Lycaon’s table” (Ovid, 8) and the guilt for which the Father of the Gods has held his host accountable, Lycaon-turned-wolf has already “fled in terror, reaching the silent fields” (10). Zeus is the god of hospitality and must test that quality in men always, coming to their doors in disguise and then revealing himself after that moment of either welcome or hostility (that moment Derrida calls ‘hostipitality’). Upon receiving the divine guest, King Lycaon decides upon hostility, and it is never clear why (‘without any other why or wherefore’). Even after Jove reveals himself, his royal host attacks and abuses his divine guest, mirroring that test of hostipitality by fruitlessly testing the mortality of Jove. Enraged, the Thunderer transforms King Lycaon’s arms into legs, and robes into fur, “yet he is still Lycaon, the same grayness, the same fierce face... a picture of bestial savagery” (10; emphasis mine). Lycaon’s metamorphosis reveals what will always be consistent: the sovereignty that befits the man and the wolf, with the same face and thus the same mouth (he does not forget to slaughter some sheep before his departure into the field!). Lycaon’s primary affront to Jove is the meal he is served: a hostage of Lycaon’s, boiled alive. This feeding a guest to a guest, this slaughter of a political hostage, who should always be protected by his host, is what really reveals our first wolf. The sovereign that is indistinguishable from the wolf has its strength in exception, but it will always fail the divinely-necessitated duty of hospitality in its insensibility. We have tracked him down and it seems that without dignity (taking-in and accepting guests), unworthy of God’s respect or ours, and always going

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back to that place of wolves, those woods, this first-wolf-king is the original sovereign of just that: wolves, not men. Wolves make as terrible hosts as they seem to do guests.

**§5 The Feast-Gift**

Jove's test of hospitality, which Lycaon failed, calls into question the acceptability and divinity of the exceptional sovereign. It follows that the constitution of acceptability may be found in those who pass the test. Keep in mind that Jove, the patron of hospitality, was also the deity of law, public places (fountains), and sanctuary. Outlaws who invoked the name of Jove could afford protection under the law. In one of his most memorable tests of hospitality, Ovid tells us in Book 8 of the *Metamorphoses*, Jove disguises himself as a wayward mortal and approaches the doors of home after mortal home. With him he takes his son, Hermes. The Winged God is both the shepherd and the thief of herds, and notably the deity of reports, messages, lies, orators, and boundaries. Father and son find welcome only in the home of Baucis and Philemon, the poorest and final destination of these vagrant deities. The aged husband and wife feed their veiled guests (having possibly already recognized their divinity) their last and only goose. Their reward of shared eternal life as trees intertwined makes their story one of the most touching and rhetorical fables of hospitality in classical literature.

Abrahamic and Medieval Christianity is also concerned with any possible arrival of visitors who could be divine (e.g. Abraham's visitation in Genesis 18, or Flaubert's *The Legend of St. Julian the Hospitator*). "Love thy neighbor" should prepare the host to receive Christ at any moment, no matter his shape. Looming here is another kind of orality that has to do with reports, the meal (Christ, who is eaten of each week, is a real Host), and boundaries. Perhaps we may find here the sovereign that is acceptable to us, one that allows for both taking and giving in an orality of hospitality. Even in nonresponse, what kind of sovereign can facilitate a responsibility in men that provides hospitality between them?

Genealogy (genelycology), tracking back, tracing back, and finding origins was crucial to placing Derrida's exceptional sovereign, so it is proper to take a similar historical route in the search of this acceptable sovereign. Archaeologist David W. Anthony specializes in the postulated Proto-Indo-European culture of the Caucasus which he reveals and defends in his work *The Horse, Wheel, and Language*. This is the culture that mothered our language and all of its cousins and siblings, to which

the West believes it is indebted for its cultural origins and teleologies (read: 'Caucasian'). Using archaeological rigor and this reconstructed maternal language, thousands of years older than ours, Anthony emphasizes the importance of the haunting root \*ghos-ti-, the doubled guest-host, in that culture. He says:

Guest-host relationships would have been very useful for a mobile herding economy, as a way of separating people who were moving through your territory with your assent from those who were unwelcome, unregulated, and therefore unprotected. (303)

Humanity in grasslands and deserts requires hospitality both for survival and to define borders. Over and over, Anthony repeats the significance of the guest-host and also the gift. Gifts

were not only signs of acceptance and a display of wealth—they were obligations of the host/lord. With the invention of significant mobile property (i.e. herded livestock) came “new rituals and a new kind of leadership, one that threw big feasts and shared food when the deferred investment paid off” (155).

Those with the most food or property represented the institution of chiefdom, and it was always their role to feast. Unless they gave in their taking, their subjects would not accept them. Without the feast-meal, there was no sovereign lord. Soon, feasting became a ritual of establishing authority, and may have, in later times, turned from a feasting of the people into a feasting on the people and their resources.

**Teleologies:** A final cause, ultimate design, or overriding value.  
*E.g. The idea that happiness should be maximized*

## §6 *Betweenness*

Not far southeast of the Caucuses lies Afghanistan. A Scotsman named Rory Stewart walked the West-East breadth of that country in 2002, going from village to snowy village and quietly crossing ethnic and political boundaries. In desert-like Afghanistan's winter, Stewart found himself so often alone in great between-places: between civilization (Herat to Kabul), between one village and the next, between life and death, and between one encounter with men and another. Surviving on

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the hospitality of villagers and warlords he found that walking forward was always a matter of relating what is behind.

Everyone had memorized a chant of names [of hosts, usually warlords] and villages along footpaths in every direction... I recited and followed this song-of-the-places-in-between as a map. I chanted it even after I had left the villages, using the list as a credential. Almost everyone recognized the names, even from a hundred kilometers away. Being able to chant them made me half-belong—reassuring hosts who were not sure whether to take me in, and suggesting to anyone who thought of attacking me that I was linked to powerful names. (190)

Without recalling, remembering, and reaffirming that which is behind him with names, chants, and letters of vouching, Stewart would not have made the journey. This betweenness is power and protection in the oral society, the society of the orality of hospitality. From wherever Stewart had been came the authority he brought with his arrival, an authority recognized by and between those who spoke it, originating not out of a sovereignty of fear but one of obligation. Fear was not without place in this place-between-places, but when Stewart found welcome he was, of course, fed. Then he was out of danger. Stewart shared gifts and accepted shelter. At times, Stewart must invoke Muslim law to persuade those he encountered not to attack him, or to aid him—in doing so he obliquely reminded them of God's edict of hospitality. The 'powerful names' that loomed over could be said to loom *à pas de loup* ("there is no wolf... only a word"), held in suspension until sprung or spoken to the next prospective host; however, the names were not sources of original authority. He never names a king, only peers—fellow hosts who are also fellow warlords. The naming of names invokes a cultural authority, a sovereignty between men who are between places (in the desert) and who seem beholden to nothing except what is between them, and to God, the arbiter of hospitality.

To returning to the right of life and death possessed by Rousseau's *persona ficta*, the subject becomes bound to the sovereign not because of fear but "because his life is no longer the bounty of nature but a gift he has received conditionally from the state" (79). In a sense, the sovereign of the Social Contract takes life and can give it again because it is given life by a constant reaffirmation by its corporate

constituents, and they accept what they fabricate because it arises from between them. The artificial leviathan ceases being the mysticetus, the whale that terrifyingly haunts with gaping mouth just beneath dark waves, and becomes a body that feeds itself [“In the days of the Messiah the righteous... will feast on the meat of Leviathan and Behemoth” (Agamben, 1)]. Between each of these people who meet and assemble to speak and share meals and report of what is behind and what is to come is a betweenness that has sovereignty. Said sovereign is not a fellow citizen, but is between-fellows.

Taxonomically, the anthropological machine serves as a mode for differentiating man from wolf, subject from sovereign, human from inhuman. The exclusive sovereign relies on this differentiation for power. To function, Agamben says, the machine must suspend two terms to be formulated: human and inhuman. In doing so, it differentiates and separates. Agamben’s intention is to grind the “ironic apparatus” to a halt by bringing that suspension into suspension. The result is an undifferentiated relation that carries with it power, or mastery:

In the reciprocal suspension of these two terms [human & inhuman], something for which we perhaps have no name and which is neither animal nor man settles in between nature and humanity and holds itself in the mastered relation. (83)

Most importantly for us, Agamben has, in this issue of what is human and what is inhuman (not our subject, though closely related in the overlapping issues of power and taxonomic identification), revealed that, “what is decisive here is only the ‘between,’ the interval, or we might say, the play between the two terms” (83). For Derrida, the sovereign is the first of firsts, and thus it holds a mastered position. But Agamben informs us how betweenness is the mastered relation which it is between and undifferentiates man and animal, God and man, or man and man. A bestial sovereign is suspended and fails when the terms of it being-beast versus being-man or being-God are, themselves, suspended. This sovereign of betweenness does not need a position from which to exercise power because it’s “where” is always wherever its power is relevant, when there is a relationship of terms or subjects.

### **§7 Acceptable**

Held in suspension, in betweenness, the acceptable sovereign

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looms because it is an insensible sovereign, but not quite “the insensible wolf.” We have tracked it back to its place and it is not the woods outside the city but it is a no-place, a place-in-between, like an agreement between two people. It is before and after, around and within, it is very concerned with borders and boundaries because it must always be relative to those delineations. Derrida’s wolf passes over borders, wantonly ignoring in its illicit movements. The acceptable sovereign crosses borders but in doing so generates energy across them, like the semi-permeable cell membrane over which ions and charges exchange. This is the sovereign to which dignity refers, absolutely silent in its nonresponse (not even a grunt, not even a sign). Taking and accepting are proper to it because it bestows that exchange upon its subjects over whom it has authority.

Derrida’s sovereign, with a wolfish head, cannot respond to us. The acceptable sovereign simply is without a response, especially to such inquiries as: ‘What are you?’ ‘Where are you?’ ‘How many of you are there?’ Making between is the business of this sovereign—setting up borders of propriety and of law through an orality of collective agreement. Not in mediating with God or sleeping with wolves, but in mediating between men and gods and wolves and mastering their relativity does it have power over them and under them.

The savior, as we have seen, neither takes nor accepts, and in so doing transcends. The exceptional sovereign takes and accepts, but accepts only for itself—taking and accepting-as-taking. This is a one-way relationship, removing the sovereign from being relative to others: excluding it and rendering it without a between to go to, so it can only flee to the woods and fields. The acceptable sovereign takes and accepts by virtue of allowing its subjects the opportunity for hospitable exchange. A proper host treats and feasts his hostages well. Worthy of men by making men worthy, this sovereign falls into rank between ranks and as such is still unranked but among the ranks (place that is no-place). Looming because it is always there and not there and cannot be shown, it is without proper origin.

Maybe our first acceptable sovereign would be Gilgamesh, the king who goes between life and death and returns to his city to accept his place with some hard-learned dignity and some pride. Impossibly one-third divine, of cow and man, once wild and sexual but conclusively a sovereign of men who is everywhere: “he [simultaneously] leads the way in the vanguard, / [and] he marches at the rear, defender of his

comrades” (4). He built the walls of Uruk, that place between Uruk and not-Uruk, which he shows to Ur-Shanabi with satisfaction upon his return from the world between death and life.

As Derrida says, let’s not forget the wolves, that “there is no wolf [pas de loup] yet where things are looming á pas de loup.” It may appear as though the sovereign were a wolf because its shadow may be misconstrued as four-legged, and some fabulous bugbear is invented. But really, we never see nor hear what is truly stealthy. Like the lack of echo in the desert, there is absolutely no response. The critique is that the sovereign is only misconceived to be above the law and humanity. Instead it is between law and humanity, between laws and between men. This betweenness is where the absolute sovereignty originates without origin, and where it can be found though it is entirely insensible. The purpose of its nonresponse is to facilitate the necessary, and divinely ordained, hospitality between its subjects.



**Fig. 3: “Day seven, from right: Abdul Haq, the author, Mullah Mustafa (commandant of Obey) shortly after he shot at us and just before Abdul Haq’s departure.” (Stewart)**



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**Fig. 4: Places in between: Rory Stewart & host Aziz. (Stewart)**

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## Afterward

Thank you for reading the first edition of Occam's Razor. I hope you have enjoyed reading these outstanding essays as much as I have. This has been an exciting and informative journey from its seedling of an idea to the publication that it has become. I am so proud to have been a part of this new outlet for scholarly student writing. I cannot wait to see what comes next in Occam's Razor's growth as a student organized and run publication and club. We plan to evolve from a yearly journal to a quarterly exposé of exceptional student work.

Occam's Razor is about bridging departments together to create a cohesive showcase of what students at Western Washington University are capable of. This means that we want submissions from multiple departments and colleges. We want work that goes above and beyond expectations. We want writing that makes this community think, that shows us a new perspectives or gives us history on something new. Are you interested in being showcased in Occam's Razor? The best way is to keep up the great work and spread the word about the publication. Talk to your professors. Tell them about it and ask them to keep you in mind when grading your work. They read it first and they are the surest way for you to be acknowledged, as you should be.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Occam's Razor editing team please contact us at [occam.wwu@gmail.com](mailto:occam.wwu@gmail.com) or check us out on Facebook, Occam's Razor WWU. Next year there will be many opportunities for you to get work experience within the world of publication. Jobs will include: editing, publishing, marketing/networking, graphic design, submission coordination, web development, management/organizational development, as well as fundraising. This year there were few of us but the following school year I hope to see more and more student involvement. Be sure to check us out this fall at Info Fair in red square.

Until next year,

**Cameron Adams**

Managing Editor/ Budget Authority

**90%** of the writing  
produced by **Western**  
**students** is academic.\*

**Isn't it time we  
had a venue to  
recognize it?**

