Sport and the Environment: Philosophical Dimensions

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Different Kinds of Perfect: The Pursuit of Excellence in Nature Based Sports

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ABSTRACT:

In urban based sports, excellence in performance is normally taken to be a matter of superior performance of a more or less constrained set of physical movements or outcomes of movements. It can be argued, however, that sport excellence is a complex achievement, one that extends beyond the quantifiable alone and that can be assessed not only in terms of results and technical skill. In this paper, I consider the interplay between the technical and the aesthetic in nature sport, how this affects the pursuit of excellence, and how nature-oriented sport, in particular, can contribute to an understanding of environmental aesthetics in terms of active engagement.

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Nature Sport and Wilderness Experience

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This is a very typical philosophy paper in the sense that what I do is draw a distinction that has been largely overlooked, show that overlooking the distinction leads to confusion, then show that attending to the distinction clarifies matters and even sheds a bit of light on new topics. This paper is atypical of philosophy papers in the sense that the distinction I draw is not minute or technical, but broad and fairly obvious. Within the category of active outdoor pursuits, I point to significant differences between what I will call "nature sports" and "wilderness experiences." In most cases, it is easy to distinguish between the two. Activities such as ice climbing and surfing are easily recognizable as sports, and activities such as hiking and camping are more aptly referred to as wilderness experiences. One look at the cultures surrounding those who describe themselves as ice climbers and those who describe themselves as backpackers will reveal a very different set of attitudes and values. In this paper, I describe the two types of activities and explain the most important differences between them. While I think the distinction between nature sports and wilderness experiences is fairly obvious once it has been pointed out, it has been largely overlooked by philosophers, popular media, and the outdoor community.

People tend to think that climbers, skiers, surfers and the like share commitments, goals, and values with people interested in camping, hiking, and other wilderness experiences. This can be expected given that both groups interact with the natural world in intimate ways. But it misrepresents the character of those relationships. Before trying to say exactly what the difference between wilderness experiences and outdoor sports is, I will talk a bit about the history of each type of activity. I should point out that I am not a historian, and the account I am going to give will be very brief. However, I think that it will provide enough background to do the work that I need it to do. The important point that I want to make is that the pursuit of wilderness experience is the product of a different historical tradition than nature sport.

The wilderness tradition in North America finds perhaps its best early formulation in the work of Henry David Thoreau. Throughout the 18th century, the idea that nature could be attractive and compelling had been gaining prominence. We see this demonstrated in Kant's work on the sublime[1] and Rousseau's arguments that we can learn from and grow strong through our interactions with nature.[2] We also see it in the increased tourism to picturesque spots in the Alps from which mountain peaks and glaciers were praised.

But, unlike Kant and Rousseau before him, Thoreau seriously pursued the idea of spending significant time living in and studying nature. His record of his time at Walden

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[1] Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime.* (trans. John T. Goldthwaite) University of California Press. 2004. (First Published 1764).
[2] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile.* (trans. Alan Bloom) Basic Books. 1979 (First Published 1762).

Pond has been incredibly influential in the way we think about how we should relate to nature. Thoreau's *Walden* serves not just as a personal journal, but also as a model of how we should understand and relate to the natural world. Thoreau's appreciation of nature involves careful observation and attempts to understand both its strength and delicacy. According to Thoreau, the experience of nature is deeply important for all human beings. As he explains in *Walden*:

> The village life would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows that surround it. We need the tonic of wildness, — to wade sometimes in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk, and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the whispering sedge where only some wilder and more solitary fowl builds her nest and the mink crawls with its belly close to the ground. (298)

For Thoreau, it is not only the existence of wild places that is important. On his view, humans benefit spiritually and morally from contact with, and attention to, nature.

While Thoreau spent time in the natural settings of the Northeast United States, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries John Muir took the practice of spending time in wild places to the extreme. He spent long periods of time in the Sierras and in Alaska, writing about his experiences and working to defend wild places in the US. He was a driving force in popularizing the idea of wilderness experiences. He founded the Sierra Club, advocated for the park system and influenced politicians and the general public. Like Thoreau's, Muir's ideal attitude toward nature included not only being in natural settings but studying what one encounters there and paying close attention to it. In "A Near View from the High Sierra", Muir describes an experience on the summit of Mt. Ritter during one of his solo adventures in the 1870s:

> Standing here in the deep, brooding silence all the wilderness seems motionless, as if the work of creation were done. But in the midst of this outer steadfastness we know there is incessant motion and change. Ever and anon, avalanches are falling from yonder peaks. These cliff-bound glaciers, seemingly fixed and immovable, are flowing like water and grinding rocks beneath them. The lakes are lapping their granite shores and wearing them away, and every one of these rills and young rivers is fretting the air into music, and carrying the mountains to the plains. Here are the roots of all the life of the valleys, and here more simply than elsewhere is the eternal flux of nature manifested (69).[3]

Muir was clearly fascinated by climbing mountains, had tremendous physical stamina, and very impressive wilderness skills. But one does not get the impression that he was participating in a sport. Clearly, what he really wanted was a direct experience of nature.

From thinkers like Thoreau and Muir, a way of approaching interactions with nature developed. It is this tradition that gave birth to the wilderness experience activities I have been describing. Americans see hiking and canoeing as leisure activities because of what they understand nature to be and that is a result of the wilderness tradition. By 1901, Muir could write:

> The tendency nowadays to wander in wildernesses is delightful to see. Thousands of tired, nerveshaken, overcivilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain

[3] John Muir, *The Mountains of California*. Century Co., 1894. (p69).

> parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life…Briskly venturing and roaming, some are washing off sins and cobweb cares of the devil's spinning in all-day storms on mountains; sauntering in rosiny pinewoods or in gentian meadows, brushing through chaparral, bending down and parting sweet, flowery sprays; tracing rivers to their sources, getting in touch with the nerves of Mother Earth…(1-2).[4]

Throughout the 20th century, the idea that direct experience of nature is beneficial has continued to influence our understanding of what our proper attitude toward nature should be. It has changed and developed, but remained part of the wilderness tradition.

Compare this, on the other hand, to the history of various outdoor sports. Skiing for example, has existed not only for utilitarian purposes, but also as a leisure activity from long before the time when wilderness experience was seen as attractive. Skis have existed since ancient times. Evidence of skiing in Scandinavia dates to 3200 B.C.E. Skiing played a role in Norse epics of the Middle Ages, in which skiing skill was greatly admired. References to skiing can be seen in European literature dating from the early Renaissance. By the mid 19th century there were both organized races and tours.[5] The development of the sport has taken place, for the most part, with very little connection to the wilderness tradition.

We find the same thing with surfing. As an activity participated in for pleasure, it predates the European valuing of wilderness and comes out of a very different cultural context. Although surfing was an ancient Polynesian activity, it was discouraged by missionaries in the 19th century and by the beginning of the 20th century had nearly died out. In the early 20th century however, the sport experienced a revival and increased in popularity. In the 1960s contests became commonplace. Surfing is clearly centered around people interacting with the ocean; as much as any sport, it is about humans interacting with natural features. But even as we look at surfing's ever increasing popularity, it is still not overly influenced by the idea of wilderness.

In both skiing and surfing, the joy of movement and the challenge of developing technique pre-date the philosophical interest in the sublime and the primitive naturism of Kant and Rousseau and their North American developments. This brief look at a few examples does more than just show that distinct historical traditions exist in these cases. It also helps to clarify what it is that distinguishes wilderness experiences from nature sports. Simply put, wilderness experiences are primarily about experiencing nature, while nature sports are about particular kinds of skillful interaction with features of the natural world.

It will be useful to say more about the ideas underlying these different traditions as they are currently embodied. After looking at explanations of what is valuable in wilderness experience, I will say more about nature sports. Many reasons have been given, within the wilderness tradition, to support the claim that interaction with nature is a positive thing. Here, I will touch on three of the most common of these.

The first is that such contact can lead to a deep, meaningful experience, often described in spiritual terms. For the American Transcendentalists, like Emerson and Thoreau and their descendants like Muir, this took the form of better knowledge of God

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[4] John Muir, *Our National Parks*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1981 (first published 1901). (p1).

[5] For historical information on skiing, I have relied on Roland Huntford's excellent account of the sport's past in, *Two Planks and a Passion: The Dramatic History of Skiing*. Continuum. 2008.

through the most direct access we could have, God's creation—somewhat like we might think that we know an artist by experiencing his or her work. In more contemporary terms, both outdoor educators and nature writers often seem to be at least gesturing toward the spiritual if not pointing directly at it.

A second product of interaction with nature is a kind of self-knowledge. In part, this is found simply by being in a place in which one has time for self-examination. But it is also often argued by wilderness enthusiasts that because we evolved to be in a natural setting, that is where our true selves come out or that it is only in wilderness that we experience our true nature and really come to know ourselves.

Finally, there is the claim that simply being in a wilderness setting presents us with challenges and therefore, by spending time in the woods, we become stronger, better people. This idea is explicit in Rousseau and can be found in Thoreau and Muir's work. It is commonly part of the motivation behind personal wilderness excursions and formal wilderness programs.

These three personal development goals overlap in many ways and I do not want to claim that they are completely distinct or that they are the only goals of wilderness experience, but they are some of the most commonly referenced justifications of wilderness experience. In each case, it is the interaction with wild nature that leads to the kind of personal experience that is said to be valuable.

On the other hand, if we look at outdoor sports, the picture does not have to do with the experience of nature, but a very particular type of interaction with nature. I have argued in several places that nature sports are those sports in which a particular natural feature, or combination of natural features, plays at least one of the primary roles that human opponents or partners play in traditional or standard sports.[6] For example, surfers interact with waves, and climbers with rock faces, frozen waterfalls, or whole mountains. The goal of nature sports then is not to experience nature, but to interact with nature in a very specific way depending on the particular sport. Hence, the point of surfing is to surf, the point of skiing is to ski, and so on. A nature sport event is successful when interaction with the natural world brings out the best in an athlete by providing challenges that facilitate the demonstration of skills. The fact that such sports involve natural features is not incidental to them but is important because it increases their value qua sports.

Nature sport contexts are very well-suited to produce the type of dramatic interaction we value in sport. Mountains and waves can be much more powerful than any human competitor. Given the inequalities in strength and size between human competitors and natural features, combined with the fact that such sports isolate skill sets that allow athletes to play with such features, nature sports provide opportunities for athletes to challenge themselves. But, rather than being the general challenges that face one in wilderness experience, these challenges are defined by the customs and practices of the sports in which they occur. They are centered on athletic skills that are usually specific to the sport – edging skis on an icy slope or turning in deep powder, for example.

What distinguishes those seeking wilderness experience from nature sports athletes is the goal behind the activities of each. While the primary goal of the climber is to climb, the point of hiking is to not walk with a heavy pack — it seems to be more

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[6] See Kevin Krein, "Nature and Risk in Adventure Sports." In Mike McNamee (ed) *Philosophy, Risk, and Adventure Sports.* Routledge. 2007 (pp. 80-93). Or Kevin Krein, "Nature Sports" Forthcoming (*May 2013)* in *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport.*

about getting oneself into a natural setting in order to have a type of wilderness experience. In a certain sense, whether one is sea kayaking or hiking is often not important to a wilderness trekker. But it is always important to the surfer that he or she is surfing and not skiing. While sports have athletic goals that exist internal to them, the wilderness experiencer desires the type of goods that come from being in nature.

This makes the distinction between wilderness experience and nature sports clear. Into the former category fall camping, backpacking, snorkeling, and similar activities designed primarily to get one to, and allow one to remain in settings in which one might interact with, or directly observe wild nature. In the latter we find surfing, backcountry skiing, and climbing. These take place in wilderness settings, but nature is there, like a partner in a sport. Whether or not they take place in wilderness is at best a secondary concern. The distinction will not be absolute in the sense that some hikers are more concerned hiking (covering distance on foot) than experiencing nature and some skiers care less about skiing than being in nature. However, this will allow us, in almost all cases, to determine whether or not a person is participating in a sport.

The description I gave above shows that nature sport and wilderness experience develop from separate traditions, and have their own types of goals and values. If I have done a good job of explaining the distinction it may seem difficult to believe that there could be confusion on the matter; it may seem so obvious that nature sports and wilderness experience are different, that nobody would ever confuse the two. As a matter of fact, however, confusion on the issue is surprisingly common.

To be more clear, it is not so much that people confuse the two, but more that they talk and write about wilderness experiences and nature sports as if they were one category of activity and that the same claims apply to each of them. What I am going to do now is turn to a few examples, show how the distinction is overlooked, and show how keeping it in mind would help avoid confusion.

Consider Mike Atherton's chapter "Philosophy Outdoors: First Person Physical."[7] in *Philosophy, Risk, and Adventure Sport*, edited by Mike McNamee. Atherton argues that what he call OKE's (Outdoor Kinetic Experiences), "directly affect our knowledge (i.e. our epistemological outlook) and our feeling of the sublime and sense of wonder (i.e. our aesthetic appreciation)" (43). He cites Rousseau, explaining how learning takes place in natural settings in which we encounter real consequences. In addition, he claims that natural settings are unpredictable, forcing one to pay attention. This unpredictability, Atherton argues, "...offers new perspectives, challenges old ways of thinking, and demands quick reevaluation of things we need to survive and flourish" (46). The combination of real consequences and unpredictability encountered during outdoor kinetic experiences leads, according to Atherton, to self development and self knowledge. In addition to the real consequences and unpredictability, Atherton argues, "OKEs can be the media through which we feel the safe fear of the sublime as well as an uplifting sense of wonder"(51). Atherton concludes that:

> Movement in OKEs must conform to nature's externalities that offer new vistas where we can link thought and perception and, in a sense, unite with them, make them part of our on-going life experience, and integrate the wonder of the OKE with our self (53).

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[7] John (Michael) Atherton, "Philosophy Outdoors: First Person Physical." In Mike McNamee (ed) *Philosophy, Risk, and Adventure Sports.* Routledge. 2007 (pp43-55).

Atherton's justification of outdoor activities is carefully and intelligently presented. However, while the emphasis is on outdoor sports, no distinction between them and wilderness experiences is recognized. Thus, the explanation of the value of white-water canoeing is the same as that given for backcountry trekking. The problem is that while it applies very well to wilderness experiences, much of what he says is neither specific to the experiences of nature sports nor fits our experiences of them.

Atherton is right when he says that the path, river, or rock face demand attention as we mountain bike, canoe, or climb. But this is no truer of rocks encountered while mountain biking than it is hurdles on a track or other players on a basketball court. Sports require attentiveness. In fact, while engaged in any sport, one is generally better off when focused on the immediate task at hand, whether it is putting the ball in the net or avoiding large rocks while mountain biking. Atherton considers this and replies that often reflection, learning, and wonder come after the activity. This after-the-fact reflection is generally conducted formally in outdoor education programming and often includes environmental ethics related questions. But in the case of nature sports, if it happens at all, it is often more about strategy and future success, as a post game discussion in a traditional sport may be. Here, treating wilderness experiences and nature sports as if they are the same type of activity misses an obvious distinction.

As well, the real consequences encountered in nature sports are also found in other sports. Atherton is right in saying that nature sports may lead to self-knowledge. But again, all sports have this potential – and it is only a potential. Many traditional sport athletes show very little in the way of depth of self-knowledge. The same is true of athletes in nature sports.

The only thing then that could distinguish OKEs from other activities on Atherton's account is the aesthetic experience of the participants. Atherton begins his discussion of this aspect of OKEs with Kant and claims that nature invokes sublime experiences. Then he moves to a discussion of outdoor environments producing "wonder." He explains, "Outdoor Kinetic Experiences allow us to temporarily leave behind the ordinary and move out toward those activities that may well be inexplicable…" But here, it is not clear why movement is necessary at all. In fact, the foundational thinkers Atherton relies on (Kant, Rousseau, Muir, etc.) were more interested in contemplation than sport. Nature can be the source of sublime experiences and arouse a sense of wonder, but often movement, especially fast movement such as mountain biking, takes away from this. The use of these particular aesthetic responses fits wilderness experience well, but when applied to nature sports, seems forced at best.

On the other hand, if we pay attention to the distinction between nature sports and wilderness experience, a clear picture comes into view. What is interesting about nature sports is not that difficult to explain. It is that they are great sports. There is beauty, dramatic build-up, there are opportunities to employ highly trained athletic skills, and sometimes chances to perform heroically. Do we really need more than that?

On the wilderness experience side, there is the whole wilderness tradition to employ. Again, I think that tradition pretty much covers it. Ignoring the distinction however, leads to confusion. If we separate OKEs into nature sports and wilderness experiences, the nature sport explanation can explain the former and the wilderness explanation the latter.

Consider as well Alan Dougherty's chapter in the same book, "Aesthetic and Ethical Issues Concerning Sport in Wilder Places."[8] He argues that nature sports are best experienced if we approach them in an authentic way, that is, if we practice them in a way that meets nature on its own terms rather than altering it (in particular, altering it in order to make the activities accessible to those who are less skilled or less able). He claims, for instance that when climbing high altitude peaks not using supplemental oxygen is more authentic than using it and he claims that it is more authentic to ski in the backcountry than to ski in a resort.[9] Dougherty's main concern seems to be that when we change the natural settings of our sports, we create a sort of artificial sport world, a sanitized world, but we miss out on authentic interaction with nature.

While I generally agree with Dougherty's ideas about which sports are to be respected more, it is not clear to me that the more hypoxic one is at altitude, the more authentic one's experience is. Mountaineering is an equipment intensive sport. The elimination of equipment in many cases means that one will be less mentally and emotionally present. Supporting any particular idea of authenticity is difficult. But, if we want to explain our intuition that ascents without supplemental oxygen are better, we don't need to rely on trying to determine what an authentic interaction with nature is. We are impressed by Reinhold Messner's ascents of 8,000 meter peaks without supplemental oxygen because they were incredible human achievements, not because we think he was closer to nature.

As well, it is unclear that one's ski experience is more authentic for the hiking. It seems to me that the reason to backcountry ski, if one is a serious skier, is to access better snow and better runs.

Because Dougherty does not recognize the distinction between nature sports and wilderness experience, he attempts to explain the goals of particular sports, such as climbing routes in a more difficult fashion or skiing untracked snow on high quality terrain, with an understanding of nature that is heavily influenced by the wilderness tradition. Trying to explain athletic value with reference to authentic experiences of nature misses the point in a way that forgets that nature sports are primarily sports. But if we keep in mind that there is a distinction between nature sports and wilderness experience, a clear and simple explanation presents itself.

Before concluding, I will consider one more example. Jeffery McCarthy, in a recent article "Why Climbing Matters,"[10] points to the fact that if humans are going to do better environmentally, they will have to change the way they understand and relate to nature. Here he quotes Aldo Leopold' s claim that, "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect" (160, ix). He then argues that climbing might offer a way for humans to reconceptualize nature.

For McCarthy, this new conceptualization developed through climbing results from connecting to the environment, from climbers having experiences during which they

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[8] Alan Dougherty, "Aesthetic and Ethical Issues Concerning Sport in Wilder Places." In Mike McNamee (ed) *Philosophy, Risk and Adventure Sports.* Routledge. 2007 (pp95-105).

[9] Dougherty also argues that, in rock climbing, it is more authentic to place trad gear than to rely on bolts. I will not comment on his argument here.

[10] Jeffery Mathes McCarthy, "Why Climbing Matters," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment.* Vol. 15, Issue 2. Summer 2008 (pp157-74).

feel that they are part of nature. He quotes Thoreau who asks rhetorically in *Walden*, 'should I not have intelligence with this earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetation myself?'" (170).

Finally, McCarthy says of climbing that, "Mountaineering can be an activity that enforces a connection to nature and eventually overcomes the established mode of perception that treats nature as other" (172). Here again I think that we run into a problem in thinking that nature sports are wilderness experiences. McCarthy begins with the claim that we need a new way to conceptualize the natural world, but he ends up going no further than Thoreau in explaining what that might look like. Because McCarthy thinks of climbing in terms of the wilderness tradition, he does not see the other possibilities it presents. As in the other examples I discuss above, what suffers is our understanding of nature sports. In particular, locating them in the wilderness tradition limits our understanding of their strength and potential.

Here I am going to say something bold about nature sports. I have argued elsewhere that nature sports, like art and theater, give us a place to explore possible value systems, cultural organizations, and ways that things could be.[11] Within nature sports there are opportunities to think about competition, cooperation, and nature. Within their subcultures, there are spaces to consider consumerism, and our relationship to the natural world. They provide one of the few places where one can opt out of mainstream culture and creatively adopt a different value system that can grow, change, and develop. This is not provided by mainstream sports. Nor is it provided by wilderness experience.

Many thinkers who consider active outdoor recreation are so wrapped up in post wilderness environmental discourse that they can't see activities that take place in natural settings through any other framework. Thus, they completely overlook the fact that nature sports are operating very differently from wilderness activities. What is interesting about nature sports is that that provide an escape from the wilderness tradition. They don't stand opposed to post wilderness environmental thought, but are not part of it either. The genius of nature sports is that they create a context and framework in which a human can intimately and meaningfully interact intensely powerful natural features. If we care about this, climbing, and other nature sports, matter.

But I want to add something as well that I think gets overlooked in these discussions. Contributions to traditional environmentalism are not the only way to justify nature sports. Climbing might matter even if it does not directly solve any environmental issues. When sports are successful they are about human excellence.[12] If nature sports provide a path to achieve a kind of excellence, that alone could justify their existence and the resources we put into them. If, through nature sports, athletes find beauty and meaning, this can explain and justify their existence as well.

It is worth remembering that not all important relationships with the natural world have to take place within the wilderness model. There is a kind of intimate interaction with natural features that occurs in nature sports. Such an interaction may not lead one to have a better understanding of oneself, natural history, or ecological relationships. Its value can be found in its effectiveness as sport.

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[11] Kevin Krein, "Sport, Nature, and Worldmaking." *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*. 2-3, 2008 (285-301).
[12] Here, I follow the claims made by Leslie Howe in her paper at this conference.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Shades of Hegemony in Surfing: Resistance and Compliance in a Commodified Subculture

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Prior theories have suggested that subcultures arise in response to some problem, deprivation or opportunity that is common to a group of people or when a shared frame of reference and group action emerges (1). Subcultures may thus become stable over time, be subsumed by the mainstream cultural apparatus that it has resisted or splinter off in derivative or *liminal* subcultures catalyzed by a resistance to ideological shifts. Central to the formation of a subculture is the notion that it arises within a unique social situation where a number of individuals who may or may not interact with each other, retain values and ways of interpretive meaning that exist outside the normative of mainstream culture.

Since the transmigration of the sport of surfing from its Polynesian roots to a post-war Southern California subculture, constituted variously by devoted watermen and women, irreverent nihilists, adventurous ex-servicemen and middle class slackers, surfing has both affected and been affected by hegemonic influences of mass media and its corporate structural partners. Perhaps more than most other iconic sporting subcultures, surfing is still fluidly constituted in the ongoing resistance and its specific level of variation from the norms of both mainstream sport and society, and by virtue of external address. It is important to note that the hegemonic resistance is not simply to the dominant cultural forms of traditional athleticism and its correlating ideology of western sport but, as Williams helps us to understand, in the process of hegemony the influence and control always exists in relation to alternative or oppositional ideas and actions (17). These resistant practices themselves may eventually assume the dominant form. Southern California surfing exemplifies this ongoing relational paradigm well.

It is in this Foucauldian notion that without resistance power becomes impossible and the concept that authentic resistance to the inherent power in hegemony, that this project was catalyzed. Surfing in Southern California since the mid 1950s has been subject to an ideological identity crisis steeped in the chasm that exists between the idyllic images of its origins and post-war capitalism that appropriated these imagistic visuals of sun, surf and sex. Though the ongoing discourse of sport subcultures has included an examination of such diverse issues as identity, rebellion and alternative choice, mostly they have been ideologically linked to an expression of resistance to the dominant cultural normative found in traditional and paternalistic sporting practices. This research and theoretical work in the area of cultural studies, as Donnelly (4: p. 73) asserts, "Has taken this dialectic of homogeneity and heterogeneity as its focus." And in the use of popular culture, "cultural forms are seen less as a totally incorporated aspect of the dominant culture and more as a field in which values, ideologies and meanings may be contested." This reflects the work of Arnold and Cohen (3) who both have stressed the need for face-to-face interaction as opposed to others (15) who favor a symbolic interactionist perspective, arguing that, "the essential component for the development and continuation of a social world is a formal communication network such as that is found in occupational subcultures" (11: p. 185). The value formations often discussed within alternative or non-mainstream sports has been linked by

Jarvie (7: p. 273) to "notions of individualism, lifestyle, risk, freedom, alienation, excitement, voluntarism, and invoking a high degree of agency." Yet, as I found both within my own thirty five-year agency as an active participant in the subculture of surfing and having considered the discursive ambiguities that constitute the resistance:compliance ratios of hegemonic denial and/or acceptance of the commodification of surfing, these value formations and resultant alterations to participatory efforts in surfing's commercialization are affected variously by factors often beyond the close consideration of meaning by the individual surfer.

Surfing, like most sport subcultures, might be further defined as an area separate from the cultural institution of normative sport. It is replete with its own set of codes, styles, symbols, rituals and ideology. Subcultures *in general*, can be made distinct by such factors as class, gender, age, ethnicity and the qualities that help to define them and may relate to political or aesthetic engagement.

The goals of this research project were to 1) identify the specific means of commodification by for-profit media and various corporate entities; 2) identify the ways in which surfers either resisted or accepted the commodification and, 3) identify any internal and external factors influencing the participatory surfer's decisions regarding their "place" on some imaginary resistance/compliance to commodification scale.

With the assumption that there is often a symbolic use of style and semiotic codes to illustrate membership in any subculture, this site (surfing as subculture) was chosen partially in an effort to associate the *bricolage* of surfing style as a link to kinds of appearance and behavioral practices (10). For the sporting subculture, as with most subcultures, the formation allows both a self and societal recognition and expression of diversity and counter-hegemonic agency. Currently, there is a false utopian or escapist aura surrounding sport subcultures (7). In particular this phenomenon is well documented in popular culture's appropriation of surfing's image through mainstream films such as *Gidget, Beach Blanket Bingo* and *Ride the Wild Surf.* Additionally, the use (and misuse) of the term *lifestyle* when semantically applied to sport subcultures has challenged sport subculture research.

"Each time a new symbol of rebellion gets co-opted by the system," Heath and Potter suggest, "counterculture rebels are forced to go further and further to prove their alternative credentials, to set themselves apart from the despised masses," (9: p. 135). My research explored the liminal subculture of surfers who have chosen ways to resist such co-optation in hopes of understanding how and why one group or individual would resist the dominant ideology while another would either allow or embrace the commercial aspects of an activity that began either as cultural ceremony, methods of stress reduction, a desire to commune with nature or forms of essential games and play.

Least we forget though, all sport has some degree of structure and negotiation. It is a matter of degrees and sites of ongoing political struggle. As noted, hegemony theory would enable the definition and subsequent style, codes and meanings of a resistant subculture in relation to the opposing culture (5). The dominant sport culture in the U.S. involves success themes, materialism, protestant work ethic, meritocracy and a redefining of the Hero. Traditional team sports such as baseball, basketball, football and ice hockey are aligned with extrinsic awards, aggression, skill acquisition, scientization and specialization. Thus, for those seeking meaning through alternative sport subcultures, which oppose these dominant valuations, the goal of foregrounding freedom, creative expression and participation, surfing as an alternative sport subculture is constituted in the tension between the dominant and emerging ideology.

Not every subculture may rightfully be designated a counter culture though, unless it includes a systematic and practical opposition to the dominant culture it opposes. I hope this research project might help define lines of intersection between subculture and counter culture as it investigates hegemonic resistance in surfing. Along with the utopian image of alternative sport subculture there is a presupposition in place that most sporting subcultures are in opposition to the dominant ideology (14). The root of this fallacy is media's use of the rebel image. While there is a separate and distinct history of social rebellion in sport (14), it should not be confused with sport subcultures that may or may not take up the resistant practices found in counter cultures.

Many of the sporting activities that catalyze and constitute a sport subculture exist in early stages of growth and logistical development (7). These emergent subcultures, while sometimes taking on structures and action traits of other traditional or dominant sports, are mostly catalyzed in the members seeking meaning through the formation of new sporting practices. Part of the attraction, as participants have reported, is in the act of contributing to and creating various athletic moves and feats that did not carry "the baggage" of historical connotations. This physical democracy, or ability to retain agency when making personal somatic choices is usually considered unavailable in sports with long and storied traditions. Surfing's roots are both in the South Pacific and 20th Century California—vastly different from what we think of the sport in its current modern form. The dominant ideology of the sport has changed (and continues to change) as the hegemonic relationships create new conflicting or counter codes of meaning at opposition to the original. As Williams explains, "The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past but it is still active in the cultural process…as an effective element of the present" (17: p. 109). Each has taken on new specific stylistic innovations through *bricolage*, "the creative construction of an ensemble to carry new meanings," (13: p. 34). While the practice of *bricolage* has historically and primarily referred to physical appearances and the appropriation of physical objects to create new meaning within the subculture (referring to the etymology of the French verb, *bricoleur* or *to do it or create it yourself*), by extension the reader may use the term to refer to the acts within sport subcultures as they create new meanings out of similar or related sporting activities.

The *bricolage* found in surfing as subculture has variously been appropriated by the surf industry manufacturers, mediated, homogenized and re-sold to the larger population of surfers or those desiring the image of the surfer. At one point in the early 1990s, surfers looking to distance themselves from the established style codes of aloha print shirts, board shorts, and baggy flannel jackets, took on a much more aggressive *street look* inclusive of dark, tight-fitting shapes, hats worn backwards and tattoos. In less than one year, clothing manufacturers had homogenized the pseudo-gang style and was offering such items as t-shirts with graffiti-style graphics and fonts.

There is a tendency to prematurely align sporting subcultures with countercultures, to connect engagement in alternate forms of recreation with authentic intellectual resistance. The issue becomes complicated not only by the origins of a group and the amount of differentiation from their "parent sport," should they be a derivative or *residue*, but the fact that the *perception of resistance* itself has been used to sell the sport of surfing and its imaginary image of rebellion on a free market basis is noteworthy. "No matter what the style," Heath and Potter claim, "there will always be merchants lined up to sell it…and any successful rebel style, because it confers distinction will automatically attract imitators" (9: p. 137). Much of this image re-presentation is dictated by media who require desirable content and manufacturers who create the markets by manipulating the demand. For example, by the time surfing was imported from Hawaii in the

1920s it had taken on an image of the under-motivated, unemployed "beach bum" whose values and life choices were in direct opposition to any notion of Protestant work ethic. The "Gidget" series of films (based on the 1957 same-titled novel by Frederick Kohner) that ran between 1957 and 1963 helped to cement the image of under-achieving surfer. Thus, propelled by media images, the sport of surfing and the current subculture have both been managed by and assumed the perception of resistance to the code of meritocracy inherent in traditional sports. While the stereotype may or may not reflect the period surfer, then or now, the net effect is a disparity within the subculture, a palpable gap between those who are obligated to the system-imputed ideology and codes of the subculture, those who engage in the activity and retain the authentic practices and ideology of the subculture as derived from Polynesian decent and those who carry traits from both. But we cannot place such blame or fragmentation within subcultures only on media's appropriation and distortion. In discussing subculture resistance to media and commercial incorporation, Muggleton says, "It is not media influence…in themselves that have negative connotations for authenticity, but their imputation that these have produced a tightly bonded, homogeneous group identity" (13: p. 36).

Further complicating the issue, Jarvie reminds us in the sport subculture discourse that there is not only the "emergence of a diverse range of sports but [also one] by genre and geographical location. The evolution of the non-mainstream sports is not simple youthful rebellion against the sporting choices of parents or elders" (7: p. 273). In the U.S. and abroad surfing continues to grow partially due to media exposure and a decline in its resistant image and as a result of increased population bases to desirable coastal towns. More and more its image has been legitimated through the addition of traditional practices found in dominant sport ideology; competition, compensation, corporate partners and success themes have all been transferred to what was once considered "lifestyle" and "art form." This research project will help to suggest those forms of dominant ideology as they are constituted in specific for-profit corporate endeavors.

Significance, Positionality and Limitations

Perhaps the connection between surfing as sport subculture and its association with the notion of resistant counter cultures can be explained through the larger lens of sport as agency or as vehicle of expression. Traditionally, organized team sports offered few opportunities for youth to resist the politics of state involvement in the form of how their teams and leagues should be structured and run. Dominant sport culture is, "one in which competition, extrinsic rewards, and elitism based on skill, and specialization are central components" (2: p. 48). Traditional sport has been structured by bureaucratic social relations, and the "promoting [of] and legitimizing the values and norms that underlie capitalism" (2: p. 48). Thus, emergent sport subcultures were framed as a site for both issues of internal identity formation, popular resistance to the hegemonic messages transferred through the institution of organized sport. These issues, collectively and individually are constituted in their relationship to the normative values of mainstream sport. With increasing pressures toward the homogenization of cultural practices as a byproduct of globalization, youth sought out and/or created activities that allowed them agency in the particular meaning and style. These newly formed subcultures helped to disassociate its constituents from the perceived oppression of traditional athletic practices and the coded meanings inherent in their dominant form. Regardless of whether sport subcultures are able or willing to provide and/or act on intellectual justification for their resistance, the identification of

additional external factors of influence would help to support and determine accurate levels of true counter-hegemony. The greater risk if alternative sports are absorbed, commodified and stripped of their ability to function as subculture is in the loss of a deliberate search for authenticity of meaning through sport, a loss of the freedom in agency (and the individual sense of power and control it offers). What may be left is what Jameson calls a world, "in which all that is left is to imitate dead styles, to speak through the masks and with the voices of the styles in the imaginary museum" (6: p. 45). Sport as a social construct and subculture sport as a necessary vehicle for expression and meaning in sport when traditional sport fails to offer the sought experience, would yet be another indication that the vicissitudes of modernity, the Habermasian *reification of the lifeworld* (8) and the further objectification of things that offer meaning to our world has made a victim of the simplest of human quests: play.

The position of this researcher is a conflicted one as I have experienced the commodification of surfing as a thirty five-year participant and a member of that subculture whose relational connection to the commercial appropriation has fluctuated from staunch resistance to partial selective acceptance. It was the challenge of this project to retain objectivity throughout all methodologies including ethnographic observations, interview processes, data analysis and conclusions.

The limitations of this project include but are not limited to: a) a small sample size in numbers of interviewees, b) a focus on four sections of north San Diego County beaches, c) a ninety day observation and interview period d) the above-noted researcher subjectivity and e) the lack of triangulation in codifying the data through co-researcher analysis.

Site(s) Description, Methodology and Raw Data

The sites chosen for this project were done so in correlation to the three areas of inquiry for this study. The research questions were: a) How (and by whom) is surfing commodified? b) How are surfers either resistant to or compliant with this commercial influence and c) What are the correlatives (internal and external) between the surfers and their resistance/compliance? The methods of data collection also corresponded with the three primary areas of inquiry. We begin with inquiry (A): *How (and by whom) is surfing commodified?*

My methods of identification in this area included variously a perusal of sport-specific media, site visits to four different "surf shops" (identified as such by selling new and used surfboards along with accessories for the sport), observation of commercial activities on or near the beaches of four different locales within the North San Diego Coastal region and brief conversations with fourteen random surfers at these three particular surfing areas. The primary line of unstructured questioning that I used included such inquiry that would indicate the surfer's uses of commercial aspects of the sport. After creating my list of what might constitute the commercial entities that have appropriated surfing for their own commercial means, in an effort to increase reliability I then showed the list to three surf industry personnel (one a former editor of a surf periodical, another the current publisher of a magazine, and the third a VP of marketing at a large wetsuit manufacturer) for their comments. All agreed that it was fairly complete given their knowledge of the industry.

The second area of research inquiry (B) was: "How do surfers resist the (commodification) commercial interests of surfing?" While not a specific part of this area of inquiry in my research, for purposes of clarification, it is important to note here that the subsequent semi-structured interviews with subculture participants confirmed that the great

majority of those resisting the commercial interests did so because they aligned the commerciality with the hegemony of the dominant ideology appropriating surfing for their own purpose and profit. This resulted in an increased number of surfers and competition for waves. In other words, several surfers blamed the crowds on the "surf industry" as listed in the ten items above.

The methods for this data acquisition were a combination of three general areas: a) site observation b) unstructured interviews and conversations with surfers at the various sites and c) semi-structured interviews. The sites included: a) the beach and the water where the waves were breaking, b) nearby surf shops and a place where surfers normally collected, c) the garage of a local surfer and d) (in three cases of the 9 semi-structured interviews) over the phone.

I made multiple visits to four places in north San Diego County coastal with varied reputations for surf. Two are considered a beginner to intermediate spot with gentle waves, lifeguards present and a non-threatening environment. Another is considered a more advanced spot with challenging surf and certain codes and unwritten rules about acceptability in the line up. The final sport varies in its "attitude" and participant skill level depending on conditions.

My rationale was to randomize my data collection and possibly determine at some point if there was a general difference in both resistance and acceptance of the commercial aspects of surfing dependant on the actual site. I also wanted to see how my own self-reflexivity might affect my observations, interviews or the study in general based on the site.

The Semi-structured Interviews

For the semi-structured interview portion of my data collection, I developed eight questions that would hopefully illicit responses for the final two primary areas of inquiry: a) How are surfers either resistant to or compliant with this commercial influence and b) What are the correlatives (internal and external) between the surfers and their resistance/compliance? (My 1st question, "How (and by whom) is surfing commodified?" was addressed through the methodology designed to illicit that information.

I was able to complete eight interviews chosen randomly among those who fit the inclusion criteria. These included: a) they were an active surfer (defined by an assumption and claim that they surfed at least twice per month), b) they were between twelve and sixty five years old, (I de-randomized at times in order to cover several age groups and demographic strata within a limited sample size) c) they were willing to spend at least twenty minutes answering my questions honestly.

Results

Results in my first area of inquiry—*How is surfing commodified?*—revealed ten specific areas where there is a direct correlation between the product sold and either the act of surfing, the experience of it, its image or a combination of all three. While the breath and scope of these areas of production and consumption were somewhat revealing (the amount of well-to-do surfers buying real estate ONLY due to its close proximity to good, uncrowded surf sports is interesting as is the great number of surfers embracing online technology that enables them to purchase reasonable forecasts of when the surf will be good), applied to Marxist theory, it should not be considered unique. "As individuals express their life," Marx claims in *The German Ideology*, "What they *are*, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and how

they produce" (my italics) (12). Surf schools and surf camps, for example, are popular in higher income areas where they are used as "babysitting tools" by working parents during summer months. Similarly, businessmen with little time but discretionary income will gladly pay for services that will email them or ring their cell phones when the surf is supposed to be good. Anther interesting results that come from this section was the level of female-directed product finding its way into surf retailers. I suggest that manufacturers are both reacting to the surge in female surfers but also creating new markets by focusing advertising efforts in that gender direction.

Drawing primarily on my interviews, both unstructured and semi-structured, I developed twenty one raw data themes which I chose to combine with additional raw data themes from the final research question. It appeared that there was significant overlap in the *means* of resistance/compliance and the *influencing factors*. Thus, I combined the raw data themes from both questions (in most of the interviews the responses to both questions overlapped as well) and collapsed them into second and third order themes to determine my final results. The raw data themes from research questions two and three--how surfers resisted or complied to commodification and what factors influenced them--were then collapsed into 2nd order themes under the correlating third order themes:

Discussion of results

The results that inform answers to questions two and three are best discussed in the twenty three 2nd order themes as they are listed under the third order themes. I begin with the notion of *Agency* or an individual's sense of "self-ownership." Several surfers spoke about "being committed" to surfing, sometimes noting that they had made career choices that offered flexible schedules to surf when the conditions were good. Other career choices were made based upon the surfer's desire to work in the growing surf industry. There appeared a polarizing affect here—those so-called, "soul surfers" desiring a non-commercial experience on one hand and on the other hand, the surfer who, regardless if he equated his involvement in the commercial side of the sport, wanted to embrace it as a form of employment. None of the participants showed any animosity toward the other and both groups appeared to have high level of *personal confidence* in their skill as well as their life choices regarding surfing. The theme of *mobility* or the desire and willingness to travel to find good uncrowded surf was aligned with agency. At the same time, several surfers spoke about "earning their place in the line up," which would indicate that they surfed at the same place quite often. In general, the degree of agency affected resistance/compliance in that surfers with high degrees of confidence knew what they wanted and acted upon it, sending them towards the ends of some imagined resistance/compliance scale.

Demographics affected both how and why a surfer resisted or complied. The younger participant surfers I interviewed appeared to embrace the commercial aspects of surfing at a substantially higher rate than the older ones. Perhaps this is a result of them being targeting by industry manufacturers or that they had not known surfing before it had a strong commercial aspect. This would require further research to determine. Education level also was noted as a factor since several comments such as, "I know I'm being sold something," or "I looked at advertising strategies in college," suggested that there was perhaps a correlation between knowledge of hegemonic forces and ability or desire to resist them. Occupation, as noted above, indicated some correlation. Surfers who had made life decisions in order to be able to find uncrowded surf spoke about resisting the commercial part of the sport that had "ruined it for

them by telling the world you aren't cool unless you surf." This is in marked difference to those who willingly made choices to work for a surf-aligned company. It should also be noted here that occupation plays a role in resistance/compliance based on compensation levels. As one surfer noted, "*I was anti-materialistic because I couldn't afford new shit to wear.*"

Ideology and its four 2nd order themes—*valuation, gratitude, socialization/roots and attitudes toward technology*—appeared to have a significant affect on resistance/compliance to commodification. Surfers spoke about "valuing" their experience ("I appreciate the waves that I do get" and "I like working for a surf company") as a form of creating meaning in their relationship to surfing. Those that felt grateful for the waves they had surfed (mostly the older surfers) appeared less inclined to be swayed by any changing surf fashion. This notion ties into *socialization/roots* as a theme as several surfers spoke about "being taught not to follow the crowd" and "I'm alone but in a crowd." Further research would be required to tease out the connection between personal history and valuation but there were enough comments to suggest this as contributory. Younger surfers who had been socialized with modern technological applications abounding, were more inclined to feel a "need" for the online fee-based services that signified the surf industries move into technology. As one young surfer claimed, "I just *have to know* how the surf is and the internet is the best way."

There are four areas that I assigned 2nd order themes to two or three third order themes. The first, *Agency and Ideology*, was constituted by what I called survivorship, reaction to conflict, self-esteem and maturity. Raw data themes that were assigned to these areas include, "*I developed this cowboy mentality and I just didn't give a &%$#t anymore,*" and *"There's a hierarchy out there that has nothing to do with the commercial stuff."* The short narrative responses that came from the interviewed surfers appeared to suggest that if a surfer had earned a kind of "ownership" at a certain spot (often associated with the concept of "localism"); they felt less pressure from the crowded conditions created by the "commerciality" of surfing. This notion of a connection between commodification, crowds and the individual surfing experience will be discussed in subsequent observations below. How a surfer "reacted to conflict" in a certain way, either if the conflict was for waves to be ridden or in their own self-placement on some resistance/compliance scale seemed to be related to their self-esteem and ultimately their participation in any hegemonic action.

Second order themes that collapsed into *Agency and Demographics* were region and wealth. The surfers that had the financial means to afford the latest or best surf-related items did not always consume them. Some surfers spoke about being able to travel to good waves as an asset and one even suggested that he was looking to buy property only because it was close to a good uncrowded spot. Others realized that Southern California has substantially more commercial influences on surfing than other places. As one surfer claimed, "*So Cal is ground zero for the surf industry.*" Another surfer told me, "*Where I travel to surf, there are no contests or surf schools,*" suggesting that the region one chose to surf had a bearing on resistance/compliance. Of course this may be that if the region traveled to was highly rural or undeveloped there would simply be less commercial influence due to a non-existent immediate market. However, the growing concept of surf tourism has landed many new surfers in areas around the world, essentially creating new markets at places that heretofore had primitive means of trade. These chartered trips are expensive and are often constituted by the older wealthier surfer of the corporate-sponsored professional who has his photographer from the surf magazine in tow. This "neo-colonialism of recreation" is an area ripe for research.

Second order themes that collapsed into *Demographics and Ideology* were gender and years surfed. Years surfed has been noted above, primarily as it relates to age—older surfers that I interviewed were less inclined to comply to hegemonic influences of the dominate corporate ideology. As a rule, the older surfers had more experience and years surfed, had traveled more and for those who had been surfing for several decades, had done so in a period that saw less surfers and smaller corporate and commercial interests. The interview narratives suggest that their feelings toward the surfing experience and their ideology were informed by a memory of an earlier time. Perhaps this is simply nostalgia, I don't know. Gender was a factor in that my observations of and interviews with female surfers indicated a different approach to the surfing experience and subsequent resistance/compliance. Surfing, until recent years, has been fraught with a patriarchal discrimination of females. But with the advent of market-driven desire by females to surf, as well as a skill level not collectively attained previously, women are both a presence in the water as well as on the commercial focuses. With comments from the female surfers such as, "*Yeah, I'm a woman but I don't put up with the guys' crap anymore any more. I surf well,"* and, *"There are more girls in the water because of Roxy and Blue Crush,"* as well as, *"I dress like a surf chick because I've earned the right."* it seems the female surfer is affected by factors unique to the gender. As a group, their tenure in the subculture of surfing is relatively new. They are highly-targeted by the surf-clothing manufacturers and there is the assumption by some female surfers that I spoke to that there is often a need by the female to "look the part." An expansion of this theory would require additional interviewing and a larger sample size to support.

The final second order themes that simultaneously collapsed into *Agency, Demographics and Ideology* were knowledge of the paradigm (the commodification of surfing), alternative choice of experience and fratriarchy or acceptance of the hierarchical "communiality" of surfing. Several surfers spoke about "knowing that surfing's image was being sold and marketed," and that this helped them to make informed decisions about how much or little of the industry they would consume. Some of the surfers work for the industry and one surfer in his mid-forties claimed, "*I've worked in the surf industry. I know how it all works*." Another claimed, "*The whole idea of work-as-play is all we want,"* suggesting that those who had landed jobs or careers in the surf industry felt fortunate. One older surfer wanted to keep the separation between his career and his surfing:

> *I have had many various connectors from the tall tree of surfing. Some of the branches I crept delicately into were clothing, board manufacturing and events. The conundrum for me was that in order to go further out on the branch and peruse those opportunities as an entrepreneur it meant that I would commingle my love for the thing I enjoy doing the most with a commercial or (need for profit motive) thus diluting my surfing experience.*

Other surfers spoke about having lost what surfing gave to them due to crowds and other factors and found that experience in another sporting activity. These surfers were older, grateful for their time in the sport and did not want to "battle for waves" with crowds. This search for an alternative experience because, as one person said, "*There are just too many surfers out there to have any fun anymore,"* suggested that the surfer was confident in their choice, possessed agency and their ideology toward the outdoor recreation experience had now informed that choice for new activities. The surfers contributing to this theme mentioned their "new outlet" as falling into

another extreme sport category such as rock climbing, paddling and snowboarding. The final theme of "fratriarchy" was informed by *Agency, Demographics* and *Ideology*. Several of the older surfers spoke about the crowds and commercial side of the sport in a mature and well-considered voice. In was not so much a "circling of the wagons" but an acceptance that lots of people surf and if they were to maintain the quality experience they would have to reframe their feelings about the effects of commodification. This would include an acceptance of both the numbers of surfers in the water and the hierarchy of access to waves. At time this hierarchy is a meritocracy where the best or strongest surfer gets the most waves and other times it has to with a variety of other factors such as having "earned a place in the line up" of simply having your friends around you. One surfer claimed, "*Surfing is a kind of brotherhood and we share equipment, knowledge and whatever,"* another told me, *"I don't mind sharing waves with my friends."* These comments suggest that the surfer, again more often in an upper age bracket, values his place in the sport, feels that he has earned certain rights that have nothing to do with the commercial side and sees the need to compartmentalize their place on some resistance/compliance scale. They may contribute to the commodification but less so for the style than for the necessary equipment. This group is at times a tight knit organization and at times friendly to other surfers.

Conclusions

My observations and interviews (along with my own years as a surfer) have suggested that the resistance to this commercial application is first and foremost catalyzed in the realization that the following dynamics are likely in effect: a) The surfing experience is heightened when one surfer is on a wave at a time and there is little competition for waves, b) There are more surfers worldwide (and at my sites of investigation) now than ever and there does not appear to be any slowing in the growth or popularity of the sport, c) The growth of surfing and its resultant impact on the number of surfers in the water at any given time is at least, in part, due to the commodification of surfing as a subculture, d) The commodification is due to market forces at play, specifically, media and for-profit industries applying principles of capitalism to a subculture, e) Waves are forces of nature and are currently not easily re-produced into surf-able forms, thus re-altering further dynamics of supply and demand.

Thus, many surfers feel like their surfing experience has been reduced and or degraded as a direct result of commodificaiton. Yet, there is a separate though not always adversarial group of surfers who have embraced the commercial foray into their sport since it allows them career (or at least job) opportunities in an environment that is constituted by other like-thinking participants. There are many factors that influence a subculture participant's resistance or compliance to the dominant ideology. The noteworthy factors gleaned from the themes as discussed above are age, agency, region, wealth and ideology. In short, if I might paraphrase by illustrated the polar ends--the older, educated surfer that has been active in the sport for many years and has experienced surfing before the major onslaught of commercial interests and understands how the media and corporate influence works but is willing to negotiate his ongoing relation to the sport and subculture is less inclined to be affected by hegemonic forces than the younger surfer who has been socialized on technology, video imaging and as a youth wanting to break into a certain fratriarchal hierarchy surrounding surfing (let alone have a wave to him or herself), in the absence of patience, skill or a roots mentoring that would inform him otherwise, he chooses to be hegemonically swayed and supports the commodification by "swallowing" all

that he is fed by the media and its corporate counterpart. Realizing this is a gross narrative overstatement of a complex paradigm, we must assign some degree of empiricism as it has been supported here (to some extant, given the limitations of this study). The "finding" was also described to two of the interviewees for their comments and both concurred with it, at least in general theory.

Perhaps more importantly, we must realize that the events illustrated here are not conjunctural, immediate or accidental but are a result of, as Gramsci says, "organic movements (relatively permanent)" (5). Surfing as a commodified subculture has been used by dominant ideological forces since the early 1950s with only a small backlash during the early 1970s when an anti-contest, traveling soul-surfer zeitgeist formed in the blowback to the hyperbolic politics of the 1960s. Non-logo'd surfboards and black wetsuits became *bricolage* for the anti-materialistic surfer. To wit, the soul-surfer image itself was appropriated, packaged and sold by the late 1970s. All wetsuit sales were black and colored boards were re-coded to mean that the surfer was "trying too hard" to appear as a member of the subculture. It was only, in the year 2007 that you could again purchase a colored wetsuit.

The findings presented here open more research doors than they shut. Yet, returning to our suggested significance as touted earlier, the risk is faced if alternative sports are absorbed, commodified and stripped of their ability to function as subculture and will certainly be that loss of the ability to deliberately search for authenticity of meaning through sport.

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The Self, Anthropology and the Environment

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Introduction

Swimming

Trailing bubbles burst crystal white against the surface
Orange walls force a
Reverse, a flip which sends
Oxygen rushing to my brain and limbs and lungs.
Nineteen done and six to go we pant and watch the clock arm glide
Three, two, one. Go!
Order slides into my mind as I succumb to the

Bromine

Blue

Water.

December 1982

Skiing

The last hill of the day. Aching body weary but relaxed from 12 hours skiing through maple groves in the cold of a Laurentian winter. Stillness. A feeling of peaceful energy. The world holding its breath. I stop and look up at the branches gently waving in the breeze. Above the treetops, the sky is full of stars. The forest behind me is silent. I imagine it stretching for hundreds of miles to the taiga, the tundra, the frozen Arctic Ocean. Wilderness. From the other side of the valley, the roar of Sunday evening traffic on the Laurentian Autoroute sounds like a river. Civilization. It's twenty-five below. My body steams. The frozen hairs in my nose crackle. A point of light moves steadily across the sky overhead, a satellite not a star. I push off and glide down the faint path between the trees keeping my knees and torso loose. Skiing is easy in the dark when my mind abdicates control to my body and I merge with the hill.

February anytime between 1982 and 2010

Control, time, space, self, body, culture, nature, wilderness, technology, consumption. These vignettes, drawn from my experiences as an amateur athlete, encapsulate some of the ideas I will explore today. As an anthropologist who teaches medical anthropology, I focus on the biocultural quality of human experience. I am interested in how people—individuals and groups—experience themselves in the world, how they give meaning to these experiences and how these experiences and meanings intersect with broader political, economic and social

systems. Medical anthropology helps me think about these ideas through a biocultural analysis which examines the relationship between the biological entity we think of as the "human body" and the multitude of ways human bodies are given meaning in various cultural contexts. Today I want to analyze my own "sporting" body moving through the some of the environments in which I practice my activities. To help me do this, I will draw on a theoretical framework which has proved productive for medical anthropologists, Scheper-Hughes and Lock's analysis of the "three bodies". I extend this analysis to encompass each of these "bodies" as it moves through a sporting environment of space and time.

The "Three Bodies"

In 1988 Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock published a paper titled "The mindful body: A prolegomenon to future work in medical anthropology". In this paper they wanted to move beyond "... the biological fallacy...paradigmatic to biomedicine... [foremost of which is] ...the much-noted Cartesian dualism that separates mind from body, spirit from matter, and real (i.e. visible, palpable) from unreal" (7:6-7). To do this they introduced the analytical scheme of the "three bodies":

> "At the first...level is the individual body, understood as the phenomenological sense of the lived experience of the body-self....At the second level of analysis is the social body, referring to the representational uses of the body as a natural symbol with which to think about nature, society and culture....At the third level of analysis is the body politic, referring to the regulation, surveillance, and control of bodies (individual and collective) in reproduction and sexuality, in work and leisure, in sickness and other forms of deviance and human difference" (7:8).

Scheper-Hughes and Lock point out that the individual body, the social body and the body politic represent "...not only three separate and overlapping units of analysis, but also three different theoretical approaches and epistemologies: phenomenology (the individual body, the lived self), structuralism and symbolism (the social body), and poststructuralism (the body politic)" (7:8).

How does this relate to our conference topic: Sport and the Environment: Philosophical Dimensions? One of Scheper-Hughes and Lock's goals in writing their paper was "... to introduce general anthropologists to the potential contributions of medical anthropology toward understanding an intellectual domain we all share—the body" (7:7). Given the centrality of body in sport, the "three bodies" framework is fruitful addition to the theoretical toolbox of the anthropology of sport. The analysis can be expanded to help us think about the relationship between the sporting body and the environment through which it moves.

Swimming

In December 1982, I was a student at McGill visiting my family in Toronto during the Winter Break. I had started swimming regularly as an undergraduate and had continued to swim 5 or 6 times a week with the McGill Masters Swim Team. This was a tumultuous time in my life as it is in the lives of many graduate students writing a thesis. Amidst the uncertainty and frustration of each formless day during which I tried to accomplish a tiny step toward my ultimate goal of graduating and moving on with my life, was one hour and 15 minutes of order

and certainty. In the pool I swam a structured workout of measured times and distances of specific strokes and drills. The gliding arms of the pool clock—red, yellow, blue, and green—told me when to start, how hard I should push and when and for how long I could rest. In the pool my fear, anxiety and panic were calmed by the orderly movement of my body in a controlled and predictable human-built environment.

The individual body—lived experience of body/self

Precise movement of limbs through the water. Rhythmic breathing. Stretching body long and lean. Concentration. Flow. Overcome pain. Think only about the form of the next stroke, the next kick, the flip off the wall. Past and future disappear. Mind controls body until only body, water, lane-ropes, walls and the bodies of other swimmers exist.

The smell of chlorine. Muffled sounds. Water flows in and out of mouth. Straight blue line along the pool bottom. Red and white triangular flags strung across the pool 4 strokes from the end of the lane. Lights flash underwater. Laps measured in strokes--twenty three for freestyle. 50-100-150-200-stop.

This is the lived experience of body-self in the pool environment. Mind-body split. Total control.

The social body—body as natural symbol

Within "...consumerist late Western capitalist culture" the body can be cultivated and worked on by the individual through exercise (3:102, 4). The muscular and toned body signifies control, self-discipline, health, success and social mobility. The swimming pool, where near nudity is the norm, is the ideal environment to cultivate and exhibit the toned, athletic body. No wonder pools scare so many of us!

Scheper-Hughes and Lock point out that:

> At least one source of body alienation in advanced industrial societies is the symbolic equation of humans and machines, originating in our industrial modes and relations of production and in the commodity fetishism of modern life, in which even the human body has been transformed into a commodity (7:22).

As in many other athletic facilities, for example, gyms or running tracks—or as Howe pointed out in her keynote address for this conference (5), climbing walls or Nordic ski racing tracks—the pool invites us to embrace the metaphor of "body-as-machine." We enter the water and swim a warm up to "get us in gear" before tackling carefully planned sets designed to work specific muscles. Our hearts "pump" and our legs "beat." Nothing is left to chance. Through the training season we "prime" our bodies to reach their "best performance levels." We diligently prepare to win competitions or at least get a personal best. The bodies we produce embody cultural capital and exhibit our class position and ability to improve ourselves through self-discipline, control and work.

The pool is a machine. Nothing is natural. The water, heated to a specific temperature, is warm enough for comfort, but not so warm that swimmers overheat. Carefully balanced chemicals kill potential pathogens. Filters remove hair that escapes from obligatory swim caps or (please don't think about this too much) body fluids that ooze from the skin of naughty swimmers who did not shower before entering the water or other orifices. As Bale tell us, until the 1880s swimming in Europe and North America was primarily festive and demonstrative rather than competitive. People swam in natural waterways not in specially designed pools. In the early 20th century, competitive swimming became increasingly important and competitions were often held in courses set up in natural waterways using boardwalks and floats. By the 1950s, most competitive swimming had moved into the 25 and 50 meter indoor and outdoor pools, pools that allowed complete control of the swimmer's environment and his or her movements in time and space (2).

"...Machines. Total control.

The body politic--regulation, surveillance and control of individual and collective bodies

Swimming pools are places of regulation, surveillance and risk control. Swimmers follow rules stipulating what to wear, how and when to enter the water, what direction to swim, how to pass other swimmers, where to stand, where to jump or dive, what equipment to use etc. The pool environment is highly regulated. The size and shape of the pool is standardized to comply with competitive swimming norms and the water is treated and circulated to meet provincial health regulations. Swimmers are constantly surveyed by lifeguards or coaches trained to norms and standards determined by organizations such as the Lifesaving Society, St John's Ambulance and the Canadian Red Cross. Insurance requirements ensure that pool operators adhere to guidelines outlined by provincial authorities like the Nova Scotia Sport and Recreation Commission. While risk cannot be eliminated, it is, as far as possible minimized.

Through pool authorities, the state has the power to control the actions and the bodies of the individual swimmers who choose to use the facility. Pools are spaces where individual and collective bodies are regulated in subtle ways. For instance, in Canada, health is viewed as an achieved rather than an ascribed status (7:25). Individuals are encouraged through the tax system and increasingly through messages about the virtues of physical activity and organized sport voiced by institutions ranging from schools to the mass media to work hard to get and stay fit and, in particular, to avoid becoming overweight or obese. Increasingly, ill health and large body size are viewed as a failing—indeed a moral failing—of the individual (or his or her parents in the case of a child) who did not have the will-power and self control to exercise. In contrast, the lean, young, toned and androgynous body manifests "...the core cultural values of autonomy, toughness, competitiveness, youth and self-control" (7:25).

The denatured space of the pool disciplines bodies through surveillance, regulation and discourses of health and fitness. Individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their health through strict programs of self-discipline such as the "work-out." The unquestioned value of risk reduction ensures that their efforts will be closely scrutinized and surveyed denying them of the autonomy, freedom and power over their lives that they value so much.

Skiing

The Traversée des Laurentides (TDL) was born in 1974 when 4 men—Robert Londei, Pierre Googoo, Raymond Baris and one other skier whose name has been lost in the mists of time—decided to get together a bunch of their buddies to ski for several days through the Laurentian mountains from Mont Tremblant in the north to Shawbridge/Prevost in the south. The TDL was an alternative to the Canadian Ski Marathon, which in the mid-1970s, was in its heyday. In contrast to the Ski Marathon, the TDL was to be non-competitive but physically difficult enough to discourage the participation of the average skier. It would pose a challenge to those who skied the entire length of the expedition, but would have an atmosphere of freedom, autonomy and "bob vivant" lacking in the more structured and regulated Canadian Ski Marathon and other regulated loppets.

Like most good ideas, this one caught on. Within a few years, the TDL, organized and run by a small group of volunteers, became an annual event where about 100 people "from 10 to 70" spent 4 days skiing between 40 and 65 km per day up and down mountains on various tracked and untracked trails (see http://www.skitdl.com/). Many of these trails dated from the earliest days of Nordic skiing in the Laurentians in the 1930s and 40s, for example, the Maple Leaf, the Johannsen, (named after Herman Smith "Jackrabbit" Johannsen who immigrated to Canada from Norway in 1899 at the age of 24, became a professional ski engineer in the Laurentians at age 55, was still going strong at 99 years old when the TDL began and died in 1987 at age 111(1), the McGill Outing Club trails and the Petit Train du Nord. Others were prepared by volunteers during the autumn over private land once the land owner had given permission.

The TDL has gone through many permutations over the decades. By the mid-1990s, none of the original 4 organizers were still involved, but others had taken their places. At about this time, the TDL was incorporated as a non-for profit corporate entity and its administrative structure was formalized. Incorporation provided protection for the volunteer organizers against personal liability claims and membership in the *Ski de fond du Quebec* provided further protection. Still, the TDL remains, much as it was before, an informal organization with few rules and an ethos of autonomy and self-sufficiency.

I first skied the Traversee in 1982 at the tender age of 25. My last TDL was in 2010 when I was 53. A lot of snow went under my skis during those 28 years. Most of the bruises have healed.

How can the "three bodies" help us understand the relationship of body, self and environment this "natural" and non-competitive outdoor environment?

The individual body

Skis slide over uneven trails. Sharp bends, tree branches, holes where other skiers have fallen on the hills. Snow so deep that my pole keeps going down and down hitting nothing solid. Pack on my back full of water, food, my down jacket for safety, moleskin and band aids, an extra ski pole, a repair kit, extra mittens, hat and socks. At 7 am—breakfast heavy in my stomach—the thermometer reads -35C. A line of skiers moves silently across a lake into the rising sun. The stronger skiers—males with frosted beards—break trail at the front. I can keep up the rhythm now, but will soon begin to step off the trail to let faster skiers past. I wear a cagule, wool

hat, poly-prop top and bottoms, ski pants, fleece jacket, gortex jacket, wool socks, back-country boots and skies. I hear my breath going in and out. I'm waxed polar with a special green kicker and hope that's the right combination. The snow is so cold it feels gritty and slow. I worry about my glide. I have other waxes in my pack for when we begin to climb or if it warms up. Later in the day, the sun rises higher and then descends towards the horizon through the trees. I climb steep hills and ski down the other side. I stop to eat and drink. Sometimes I feel in tune with the forest. Sometimes I curse my lack of balance and cry in frustration. Sometimes, when no-one is in sight and I find myself alone I am conscious of my insignificance. Clock time and distance have no meaning here. I ski on and on toward the end of the day. A mole lies dead next to the trail. I cross a road. The sun slips below the horizon. I find my way through a maze of trails with the help of my headlamp and TDL--direction arrows--scrawled in the snow. The old train-station at Prevost finally comes in sight. I plant my skis and poles with the others in a pile of snow outside and enter the human world of warmth and light. Five minutes later the "sweepers" or "fermeurs"—the strong skiers—today 3 males and one female—at the end of the pack—enter the room to a round of applause.

This is the lived experience of body-self-nature in the forest. In the natural world. Autonomy. Risk. Vulnerability.

The social body—body as natural symbol

Numerous authors, including some who attended this conference, such as Stoddart (8) and Reichwein (6), describe the close connection between outdoor adventure sport and the young, virile, masculine, middle-class, white body. For these people, the wilderness is a place of potential danger and risk. It is also a place of freedom and beauty. For some it may even have spiritual meaning. Entering the wilderness takes physical effort, an able body and specialized knowledge of, for example, map-reading, sporting techniques, equipment and clothes. Those not strong enough, or those who do not have the appropriate knowledge or equipment to keep safe, have no right to be there. For core TDLers, the trail is the wilderness which symbolizes freedom from the rules and constraints of work, family and civilization--the feminine. The TDL is not high risk adventure. Skiers are rarely more than a dozen kilometers from a road. Still, the masculinist ethos of outdoor adventure sport is apparent to people like me who are not able to ski easily the long distances or to skiers who come unprepared—because of lack of knowledge or money—to be "autonomous" on the trail. Small comments, tone of voice, invisibility, lack of hot water in the showers at the end of the day, dismiss us and make us outsiders only welcomed into the fold under the mentorship of a stronger skier.

The cultural capital of individual skiers depends on the "natural" strength of their fit, not-old, usually male body. Older skiers retain cultural capital as long as they can "make the distance", after that they move to the periphery of the group and fade from sight. With a few exceptions, female skiers remain on the fringes of the group where they are identified as "so-and-so's 'blonde', that is, girlfriend". Cultural capital also depends on and the "culturally" produced gear skiers access as knowledgeable consumers. Gear has much symbolic value. Some skiers pride themselves on having the newest stuff, but the "hard-core" TDLers respect those who have functional rather than stylish gear. Specific items take on historical meaning when a skier uses the same pair of skies, pack, tuque or jacket for years or even decades.

For these skiers, the forests they pass through are both wilderness and as well-known territory. Many of them have skied these trails for 5, 10, 15, 20 years. They can recount stories about the year they had to walk down hills because there was no snow, the year so-and-so planted head first on the Kyber Pass, the year the openers couldn't find the marking tape because of the deep snow so took a wrong turn and…etc. Myths and legends are created by people who see each other only for these 4 days once a year over decades.

Missing are discussions of environmental change: less snow and more rain than 20 years ago, suburban and resort encroachment on trails, noise and light pollution from the numerous Alpine ski resorts. Missing also are people of colour, women in hijabs, factory workers.

The body politic-- regulation, surveillance and control of individual and collective bodies

Perhaps the most striking contrast between swimming in the pool and skiing the TDL is the extreme regulation, surveillance and control of body and environment in the former and the lack of these in the latter. Until the mid-1990s, the TDL did not formally exist except as a pile of papers in someone's basement, computer files on a private PC and a network of volunteers meeting through the autumn and winter to plan the next event. Unregistered, user funded, dependent on volunteer labour and not yet incorporated, the TDL was invisible to authorities and "advertised" through word of mouth. TDLers were careful to only encourage people who they through had "the right stuff" to participate. While this has changed as the result of incorporation in the mid-1990s and the development of a website which gave more public exposure to the event, the TDL stays remarkably under the radar.

Surveillance and control during the event are also minimal. Skiers are expected to be at the right place at the right time to begin their morning ski. If they are not, they are on their own. The only formal surveillance of any kind comes in the form of the volunteer "sweepers" or "fermeurs" who follow the group and help out any one left behind and the check at the end of the day to make sure everyone who started skiing is either in or accounted for in some way. Skiers enter the forest with a map, the name and phone number of the place they will be staying that night and instructions not to ski alone. In the morning meeting the day's organizer will give a "heads up" in French translated into English by someone in the crowd to clarify the route. Instructions might like this:

> When you come off Lac Munroe you'll be on a road. Turn left and go about 200 meters or so. There's a yellow bungalow on the hill. The trail goes up the driveway and into the forest behind the garage. Don't worry about the dog; it barks a lot but won't bite. This is at km 45 so if it's late and you're tired this is a good place to get out.

Those who cannot make the distance because they are injured, tired, break equipment or are just fed up get themselves to the finishing point by finding a road and hitching a ride or calling a cab. Small informal groups of skiers watch out for each other. For instance, many of my female friends ski together arranging to be picked up by others who choose not ski that day. More experienced skiers keep an eye on new or young skiers especially those who are poorly equipped or who seem to be weak or unskilled. These are informal rather than formal means of surveillance. Social control operates through gossip and advice rather than rules and regulations. Neither are the skiers' movements through the forest surveyed or regulated. Landowners grant the TDL permission to traverse their land, but they rarely see us ski by. The old trails pass

through parks, crown land and over private property. Their routes are known, passed down from one generation of skiers to the next. Many are marked, but are not formally controlled or regulated. Sometimes trails have to be moved to skirt recent clear-cuts. The organizers have to deal with issues of trespassing, but the average skier approaches these trails and forests as wilderness free from constraints and control. Middle-class, urban, male TDLers construct their identities as free and autonomous men of nature by limiting surveillance and regulation and imagining the wilderness as their own.

Conclusion

This paper has used poetry and academic analysis to think about the relationship between the sporting body and the environment through which it moves using the analytical framework on the "three bodies." This is the beginning of an anthropological project, rather than the end. I have no conclusion. I simply leave you with my ideas about nature and culture in the pool and in the forest hoping that anthropology can add to philosophical discussions about sport and environment.

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A Fresh Perspective: Parkour and the Infinite Potentiality of the Environment

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Many people refer to this planet and its environment as "Mother Nature." To describe the natural world with maternal characteristics seems fitting, especially in today's times. There is no need to be a politician or "tree hugger" to recognize the environment's importance; human civilization is influenced by Mother Nature. This mother has extreme power, as citizens in Japan experienced from the Tsunami. As the world unites to support Japan, all countries must realize that Mother Nature's destructive power could have, and has in the past, easily shown its destructive power anywhere. But, just like a human mother, the natural environment has a caring and nurturing side to her. To those who venture outside into the heart of this Mother Earth, she has the power to caress humans' cares away and can sing a lullaby to silence the stress of this human, "false" world. No one knows this mother's love better than those who move through the natural world by means of a new sport, called Parkour or Freerunning. Traceurs, those who practice the sport, are exposed to every element, tortured by rain and snow, submerged into every season, and surrounded by dirt and concrete. They have the scars to showcase Mother Earth's discipline and the smiles to demonstrate her wondrous love. Freerunners state the experience removes the scales from blind eyes and helps athletes to see the environment as a teacher, a friend, and a mother. But, how do Parkour and Freerunning increase one's appreciation and love for the natural world? In order to answer this question, one must first define the sport of Parkour.

Parkour and Freerunning

Parkour, also known as Freerunning, is a fairly new sport, but one that demonstrates a journey into nature in the simplest and oldest terms. Though all sports serve as quests, a physical journey of possibility is the primary goal of Parkour, instead of winning a competition (there are competitions, but Parkour is played by the majority in non-competitive forms). Furthermore, Parkour is played by taking an actual physical expedition through the landscape and seeking out as many moves as possible. Parkour seeks possibility, and that search requires freedom. Thus, Parkour disregards all formalities, rules, and boundaries of play beyond those necessary for a definitional distinction from other sports. If one is physically moving through the environment, then one is doing some form of Parkour. Sebastien Foucan, a co-founder of Parkour, believes this journey is the major goal in the sport, saying, "Enjoy the journey…destination is an illusion…it really is all that matters" (5: p. 22-23). So, unlike many sports where winning is the destination, Parkour strips away any illusionary objective. Instead, the journey of play and possibility within as many environments as possible becomes the method of participating in Parkour, with freedom as a consequence and the entire planet as its field of play.

Parkour has its origins in the "Natural Method", invented by early 20th century French naval officer George Hebert (1: p. 170). His *parcours* (obstacle course) method of training challenged "his students to practice basic human muscular-skeletal movements in uncontrolled settings, [developing] qualities of strength and speed toward being able to walk, run, jump, climb, balance, throw, lift, defend oneself, and swim in practically any geographic landscape" (1: p. 171). By the early 1990s, two young Frenchmen, David Belle and Sebastien Foucan, took

Hebert's "Natural Method" and made the streets of Paris their *parcours*, hence the name "Parkour" (1: p. 172). These young athletes started a counter-cultural movement, which would challenge societal ways of viewing the concrete environment (1: p. 172). Traceurs, those who practice Parkour, began using rails, walls, stairs, and urban architecture as an obstacle course that dared the athletes to move in different ways. By using once clearly defined city engineering in a new manner, traceurs started to report not only physical advancement, but also an opening of the mind, escaping from cultural rules and manmade obstacles. A philosophy grew from this innovative movement, one centered on existentialist and environmental theories, though unbeknownst to many of the practitioners.[1] Thus, the sport of Parkour takes its athletes on a journey from the physical to a unified being, from a strictly physical reality to a life of unlimited choice and self.

By practicing this new freedom-saturated sport, the athletes begin to have a communal relationship with all kinds of environments, ranging from ghetto-ridden urban settings to untouched parts of the rural wilderness. This relationship possesses many elements, which create reciprocal impacts upon the athlete and the environment. The first of the rudiments requires the Parkour practitioner to have very little equipment to play the sport. This not only means the environment's resources remain natural (instead of being recreated into pads/uniforms/etc.), but that there is a direct human connection with the environment.

No Equipment Necessary

Parkour and Freerunning only require what Mother Nature gave humans – bodies and the environment itself. The human body's limitations are endless, as well as the environment's, as athletes in the Parkour community have continually proven time and time again. Traceurs can currently jump from a height of 25 feet (two and half stories) without mats or safety equipment of any kind. There is no need to add helmets, pads, and uniforms to the body in order to make it perform better. Traceurs lack demands for bats, sticks, gloves, and balls; the body is all that is needed to play the perfect game of Parkour. Freerunners do not require bicycles, boards, or anything else with wheels to move through the limitless landscape. The physical body provides all that is needed. Without the interference of external objects, the traceur can directly connect with the natural world. As the Freerunner places her hands to perform a kong vault (a gymnastic move that requires an athlete to place both hands on a waist-high wall and leap, bringing the legs between the arms), she directly touches the environment. When she lands the kong and falls into a roll, the Freerunner's entire body is forced to mesh with the natural ground. Mother Earth and the Freerunner communicate through a constant pushing and pulling of energy, which becomes a conversational language of action between the traceur and nature (6: p. 215). The traceur interacts with Mother Nature through direct sensory experience, and though this may cause sprained ankles and concrete burns at times, it also produces a greater appreciation and love for the natural environment, shrinking the distance between the body and the environment. Furthermore, since traceurs require no additional equipment, the resources of Mother Nature do not have to be transformed into man-made products. This includes shoes, which may seem to most athletes as necessary, but many traceurs are starting to train using just their bare feet. The game of Parkour only requires Mother Earth's natural resources in their original form, which extends from bodily products to a further level: the sport's playing field within the environment.

No Stadium Required

Football requires huge buildings and a dedicated field in order for a game to take place. Baseball demands diamonds of land. Basketball must have a wooden floor with three-point designated lines. In fact, most sports necessitate separate spaces from the natural world (11: p. 11). But, these pre-defined fields of play only confine and constrain traceurs. The entire world is the playground for Freerunners. Deserts, islands, mountains, coastlines, frigid lands, and even the oceans themselves all serve as unique opportunities to explore the boundaries of Parkour. But, Parkour does something very unusual, unseen in almost all facets of human life: Parkour makes the *unnatural* natural once again.

Concrete cities are often seen as examples of humanity's stand against Mother Nature, as though humans can create and civilize the natural world (1: p. 175). Humans transform Earth's natural resources and attempt to make something better out of them, making untamed mountains of rock into neatly organized skyscrapers of concrete. However, the traceur transforms this concrete city back into a natural landscape. Instead of being rats in a walled maze, the Freerunner breaks out of the mold. He makes bricked walls into climbable rock slabs and metal bridges into fallen logs over the river. Concrete, metal, glass, and plastic become the same obstacles as trees, rocks, water, and dirt. What initially started as boundaries for human movement now become swing sets and slides to the traceur. The architect and city engineer join forces with the farmer and geologist. The traceur has progressed past the vision of almost all other athletes. Instead of separating and breaking the world into pieces, the traceur unifies the entire world and makes everything the natural environment in which to move through and enjoy. This connection and unification philosophy resembles the transcendentalist movement, particularly of Ralph Waldo Emerson's ideas concerning natural phenomena as higher truth planes that humans can connect to (1: p. 176). Thus, the traceur goes beyond shallow ecology, as defined by Arne Naess, and dives deeper into what Sigmund Loland defines as an "ecosophy of sport"(9: p. 71-72). This new athlete connects directly with his environment, seeing all parts of the world as one, with no separation. Loland defines the traceur as "an expanded, ecological Self that is realized in a process of deep identification with individuals of all life forms," including in this case inanimate, lifeless objects like concrete walls and steel rails (9: p. 72-73). Furthermore, since the entire world is one playing field that a traceur can connect to, the traceur also strives to preserve all environments.

Preservatives are Good

Nature itself allows Parkour to occur; if there were no obstacles, there would be no Parkour. However, the connection between Freerunning and nature runs deeper in terms of history and spirit. Parkour allows modern humans to connect with their ancient ancestors, who were physically connected to their environments. This physical connection is reinstated in the sport of Parkour. Additionally, there is an intimate, spiritual bond between the obstacles of nature and the athlete, both physically (by an actual touching relationship) and mentally, that works in a healthy symbiosis. The spiritual bond between the environment and the *traceur* causes a responsibility to occur in the athlete to preserve as much of nature as possible. One cannot enjoy this unified environment and intimate conversation unless the environment is preserved. And traceurs recognize this need to preserve the natural world their sport has introduced them to. Whether this bond and responsibility to preserve stems from anthropomorphic reasoning (I preserve nature because it helps me as a human) or from a desire to preserve nature for its own sake still needs

further research, but it appears to combine both systems into one, unique perspective. The traceur does interact with nature and becomes a better human being by forcing herself upon it. But, at the same time, the traceur recognizes that her "humanness" makes her a part of nature, not separate to it. The traceur builds a respect for every other part of nature, respecting the rest of nature's right to flourish and remain as a whole.[2] Regardless of the reasoning behind the preservation tactics, however, traceurs take great measures to preserve the environment.

In the United States, several Parkour groups have sponsored "Leave No Trace" events, which the traceurs volunteer their time to pick up trash in common areas of play. Furthermore, responsible Freerunners test rails, landing spots, and other elements of the environment to ensure safety for both the athletes and the environment. YouTube is filled with videos of wannabe traceurs falling through roofs and breaking pieces of the world because they failed to recognize the need to preserve the environment. Mature traceurs know that in order to continue to move through the world, traceurs must have as little impact on it as possible. This preservative mindset ensures that hot spots like Lisses, France will be around for future generations of traceurs. In essence, the environment invites the athlete into its home, but the athlete has to leave the home as clean and tidy as it was found. Finally, traceurs take preservation one step further, and once again seem to do the impossible: traceurs turn trash into fortune. Ghettos and abandoned industrial parks serve as urban dumpsites to many, eye sores to community members, and waste of resources to the financial-savvy. But, to Freerunners these forgotten places serve as modern training grounds. Traceurs recycle the run-down buildings into outdoor gymnasiums, becoming the paintbrushes of beautiful movement and reviving the dull ghettos. The same can be said for rural, forest areas that can literally transform into different landscapes over night thanks to natural disasters. Though destruction naturally occurs on this planet, the traceur observes the "new" rural environment as fresh opportunity and possibility. Thus, not only do Freerunners preserve their environment, but they also have the vision to transform the old, destroyed, and worn-down into the new and useful. But the ability to see possibility extends far past run-down areas of architecture for the traceur.

Perception of Possibility

As the traceur begins to explore all opportunities available in every possible landscape, the traceur starts to perceive the environment in a different light. Much like soldiers would see battlefields as places the enemy could hide or setup ambushes as well as a series of valleys and hills, *traceurs* start to see the environment with a new kind of perception. Every novice Freerunner can describe this fresh view of the world. The traceur starts to see possible movement everywhere, as though the floodgates have been lifted and what once was a boring, constraining environment of pathways and walls is now unlimited possibility as far as the eye can see. Everyday landscapes become fresh and exciting as the traceur explores every nook and cranny of the world. What once used to be a dull view of a single track of sidewalk existing in a blurry background suddenly converts into a clear perception of multiple pathways interconnected with a sharp, detailed environment. Mental images of the self moving through the world haunt the Freerunner as she travels in the car, walks to class, and stares out the window of her office. The perception of self becomes the existence of an external body within the environment, instead of an internal process (6: p. 214). The traceur's body has reached a relational level described by Tamboer as a "whole human being [capable of relating] to the world" (9: p. 79). The Freerunner has been blessed with an original vision of the environment, one that directly places her into the natural world as a unified body. Parkour's sensory experience with Mother Nature actually

causes a physical change in sight and a remapping of the brain, one that is deeper and richer. The remapping demonstrates how the physical world can directly change and relate with the mental, breaking down the mind/body duality and creating a theory of the human as one (9: p. 78-79). This new vision could be described as "Infinite Potentiality Perspective" (IPP), and is quite unique to Parkour (3: p. 70-74).[3] Where most see the world as limiting and debilitating, traceurs unfold the natural landscape to expose endless meaning and possibility to what exists, much like Heidegger suggests when discussing how an object can have endless meaning to all of those who use it (8: p. 307-325). Thus, not only do Freerunners envision one unified landscape that must be preserved, but also see potential in the natural world unseen by the "non-blessed." For traceurs, the environment is richer, deeper, and more meaningful, full of possibility and limitless interaction (See Figure 1 for an example). In essence, the human body can reach a higher level of skill because it can now interact in the environment on a greater plane of quality and quantity, all the while not requiring any changes in the environment. This new environment immerses the human back into the natural landscape, instead of drawing a border line between human and everything else. The traceur has successfully re-entered the original and natural world, which allows a view of the world unseen by most modern *homo sapiens*. Much like how a lion runs through the landscape unaware of its self in relation to the rest of the world and simply follows its instinct (which naturally helps the entire environment to exist in a healthy state), the traceur moves through the environment as a part of the whole natural world. By becoming a part of the whole, the self is forgotten and instinct moves the traceur through the environment. The world is free and open, exhibiting endless paths of movement to the traceur. But, unlike the lion, the traceur can see beyond basic definitions in objects. The traceur now has an edge on the lion because she can entirely see the infinite potentiality of the environment.

Fig. 1: An example of how a traceur would mentally see himself in the world with IPP.

Parkour and Freerunning change practitioners' physical bodies in several ways, from flabby to strong and from constrained to free. But, Parkour's ability to actually remap the brain and change sensory experience makes the sport very powerful and unique. Though many initially do not contemplate how a sport could change one's view of the world, Parkour and Freerunning do exactly that and more. Traceurs see a unified world of endless possibility, one that deserves to

be both preserved and used to its fullest potential. Parkour tells its practitioners that it is not the world that needs to be changed and adapted, but rather humans themselves need to be modified. Athletes need to *enter* the everyday world instead of creating separate fields of play. However, Parkour is not the perfect, environmentally green sport.[4] Parkour became popular through the sole means of electronic, social media, which does its part (along with the rest of the electronic nations) to destroy natural habitats and wildlife. Furthermore, there has been a recent movement to build parks and "fields of play" dedicated to Parkour and Freerunning. Instead of enjoying what is already available, some traceurs feel the need to artificially create a "Parkour-suitable" place. And there are of course many companies who now make products dedicated to the sport.

But at the heart of Parkour, and for the majority who practice it, the sport builds a respect for the environment within its practitioners. Parkour forces traceurs to enter the everyday world and to be a part of it, exploring its nook and crannies. By doing so, traceurs encounter the environment in a more meaningful way because they become part of the landscape. Parkour takes its athletes on this unique path into the environment; a path, which once taken, exposes a whole new world of clarity, ecological awareness, and, as a result, happiness.

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[1] According to the two main texts by Foucan and Edwardes, as well as surveys conducted by Urban Freeflow to over 100,000 athletes, many of the athletes describe their experiences in ways similar to existential theory, but none of them refer to the existentialists as support for their philosophical statements.

[2] Many thanks to Pam Sailors for her bringing this issue to my attention. Further research is needed in this area, and I thank her for opening a new area of scholarship to be discovered and debated.

[3] Carse explains the need for vision within what he calls "infinite games." I have taken his notion and dubbed the term "Infinite Potentiality Perspective" to combine his theory with reported perspectives of Parkour athletes.

[4] Thanks must be given to Clare Fawcett for bringing this fact to light. Parkour is definitely not perfect when it comes to environmental issues, and does its fair share of leaving carbon footprints across the world. However, it also does its fair share of getting humans out of their comfortable homes and experiencing nature and the environment as a whole, which is the first step in fighting environmental decay caused by the human species.

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Physical Education Curriculums: All Skateboarders Welcome

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Skateboarding has become a cultural phenomenon, from its humble beginnings on California boardwalks when the waves were taking a day off, to a multimillion dollar industry complete with professionals and some controversy. The evolution of skateboarding has resulted in a diverse participation continuum; it can be a mode of transportation, a recreational pass time, a serious leisure pursuit, a lifestyle, and even a livelihood. It seems skateboarding started as an activity, grew into an identity, and resulted in a sophisticated subculture that some may argue is very much mainstream, much to the displeasure of some 'skaters'. The published literature on skateboarding was produced in the last decade in response to the increasing popularity of the activity. The creation of the Extreme Games in 1995, which highlighted extreme skateboarding as its main event, was the catalyst for its international success, particularly amongst teens and young adults.

Given the widespread popularity of skateboarding, in this paper, I argue that schools ought to provide skateboarding as an extracurricular activity for middle and high school students. I examine the physical, psychological and social benefits of skateboarding, and provide contextual examples of the positive outcomes of this activity. Using the Manitoba Physical Education curriculum, I identify curriculum requirements that can be learned and developed while skateboarding. The similarities between skateboarding and desired curriculum outcomes will be addressed. Through discussion of the ethos of skateboarding, the values and norms of the subculture are compared to societal perceptions of the skateboarding community. The inferences drawn from this analysis will further inform discussion of stereotypical attitudes and social resistance towards the skateboarding community, and how this influences the progression of the sport and the inclusion into the school system. I also highlight the barriers and constraints skateboarders face, which strengthens the argument for provision of skateboarding as an extracurricular school activity.

I propose that school based skateboard programs should be delivered by older students whom have experience and are willing to assume leadership roles to mentor younger or new skateboarding peers. I establish that mentorship-style programs are most appropriate based on the ethos and environment of the skateboarding subculture. Provision of safe and legal skateboarding areas for youth will be discussed to establish the responsibility communities ought to have in designating proper skateboarding environments. A Utilitarian perspective will be adopted to justify the inclusion of skateboarding in school extracurricular programs, and will substantiate the argument that the potential positive outcomes of implementing school skateboarding programs outweigh the negative aspects of skateboarding.

Learning Objectives and Skateboarding

The Manitoba Physical Education curriculum is designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to live physically active and healthy lifestyles. The five general

learning outcomes (GLO) for the curriculum include movement, fitness management, safety, personal and social management, and healthy lifestyle practices (9). The holistic curriculum provides a balanced approach to physical education that focuses on the emotional, cognitive, social and physical development of students.

In examining the movement outcomes, it becomes apparent that skateboarding requires fundamental knowledge and skills that are foundational in the curriculum. For instance, skateboarders need body awareness, balance and coordination to have any success on a skateboard. Both skateboarding and the curriculum emphasize the understanding of space awareness, qualities of effort, and relationships. Space awareness of directions (forward, backward), levels (center of gravity high, middle or low), pathways (curved, straight) and planes (frontal, horizontal) allow the skateboarder to steer, balance and perform tricks. Various physical efforts allow the skateboarder to determine appropriate speeds, timing and transfer of balance. The concept of relationships applies to the skater and the skateboard, and the apparatus (skateboard) in relation to objects such as rails, ramps, curbs. The education system has recently emphasized the importance of cross-curricular instruction. Skateboarding satisfies this as it requires understanding scientific concepts such as momentum, friction, and inertia to control speed and perform tricks. Mathematical concepts are present in the form of angles of ramps, jumps and calculating projections and distances traveled by skateboarders, and are applied to complete more advanced tricks.

Given that skateboarding has the potential to achieve the numerous learning movement outcomes, in addition to other cognitive capabilities, it is puzzling that this activity is not supported, promoted or even recognized by school physical education programs. Many schools have actually banned skateboarding on school property. In Manitoba, skateboarding is classified as a level four activity on the Risk Factor Rating scale, which states that skateboarding is a high level of safety concerns and requires qualified instruction and adult supervision (10). As a result, skateboarding is not offered as part of the curriculum or extracurricular activity, and is also not permitted on school grounds. Providing a skateboard mentorship program would address the concerns associated with instruction, supervision and safety.

According to Shannon and Werner, because of the high inactivity and obesity rates, community and school leaders have a responsibility to provide space and programs for youth who are not interested in traditional sports (11). Extracurricular programs continue to focus on traditional team sports that are competitive, some of which require aggressive physical contact with opponents. Research has shown that sports and leisure "are not a homogenous, standardized experience" (1: p.85), therefore preferences in physical activity and leisure is a unique expression of an individual's personality. In response to the popularity of alternative pursuits, such as skateboarding, schools ought to consider offering new extracurricular programs, because even though skateboarding has become a mainstream activity, it has yet to be embraced or recognized by the dominant sport culture. Continuing to provide physically aggressive team sports (like football), while banning skateboarding for safety concerns results in an inequitable provision of physical activity opportunities in the school environment. School administrations ought to create diverse extracurricular programs to ensure the equitable access to physical activity for the greatest amount of students. Applying the Utilitarian principle of the greatest good for the greatest number of people negates the perceived dangers of skateboarding, and nullifies the misinformed reasoning for skateboard bans at many schools.

I propose that schools ought to provide skateboarding as an extracurricular activity for middle and high school students given the physical benefits and growing popularity of individual pursuits.

Psychological and Emotional Benefits of Skateboarding

Participation in traditional team sports is somewhat on the decline, while activities such as skateboarding have continued to gain participants. To understand the psychological aspect of team sport participation, we must consider competition as a primary determinant of pursuing team sports. Many individual pursuits are competitive in nature, however, they do not require physical contact with opponents, which can be considered the undesirable element of team sports given the aggressive and sometimes violent nature of competition. It is important to also note that traditional sports are perceived to be controlled, regulated, and at times, highly bureaucratic. Skateboarders are free from the pressures and expectations that are also prevalent in traditional activities and sports. While this is a bold assertion, I suggest that in skateboarding there is no commitment for coaches or teammates, no registration fees to pay, or scholarships to chase and teams to make. These factors can be perceived negatively and result in disengagement from traditional team sports, especially by youth whom are more likely to reject authority and seek autonomy. Sport sociologist Peter Donnelly, asserted that skateboarding is a "new leisure movement imbued with an individualistic, anticompetitive, and anti-capitalist ethos" (4: p. 220). Hedderson and Seifert similarly argue that, "Skateboarding, as it appears, is a subjective experience and skateboarders unabashedly stated that the subjective experience, in-and-of itself, was the reason for participating in the activity" (6: p. 282). Given the autonomy associated with skateboarding, it is important to note that participation in a skateboarding mentorship program would not compromise the individuality of the activity. With proper instruction of skills and safety, skaters will be able to make informed autonomous decisions that will ensure their safety and help them to achieve their skateboarding goals.

Societal Perceptions and Social Resistance to Skateboarding

With the rejection of traditional sport, and the values they entailed, skateboarding has become increasingly popular. Between 2001 and 2004, approximately twelve million people tried skateboarding, an increase of 73%, and subsequently there was a decrease in team sport participation by 54% during that period (2). The popularity of skateboarding is impossible to ignore, and the measures taken to ban it in public places is obvious. Skateboarders have been stereotyped as 'trouble makers', which is in large part due to their disregard for skateboarding bans, "Street skating has been made illegal in many public places due to pedestrian safety concerns and prevention of denigration of public property, such as stair railings and seats" (8: p. 72). If we examine the root of the problem, as opposed to what we see on the street, it becomes possible that societal constraints arbitrarily label skateboarders as criminals. Francisco Vivoni, concluded that while in the streets, skateboarders are criminalized for defacement of property (12). According to Tony Hawk, the most famous and influential skateboarder of all time:

> The outlaw aspect (of skateboarding) came because there was nowhere to skate. People saw skating office buildings as destructive and rebellious. That's what people don't

> understand. That kid skating in front of your storefront is not there to pester you or try to hassle people coming in. He just wants to learn (2: p. 75).

If communities fail to provide safe designated areas to skateboard, there will continue to be unnecessary tension between skateboarders and authorities. It seems unreasonable to deny a learning and physical activity experience because of negative stereotypes surrounding skateboarding, therefore efforts should be taken to remove this constraint.

Skateboarding Safety

Public support for skateboarding has seemingly increased, as many communities have built skateparks to accommodate the countless number of children who are taking up skateboarding as a leisure pursuit. Given the popularity of skateboarding, schools ought to be promoting skateboard safety, especially since there are no regulating bodies or organizations to promote safety for this activity. This objective could be achieved by providing skateboarding as an extracurricular activity for youth. Students should learn about selecting safe places to skateboard, what protective equipment to wear, and how to keep their skateboard safe (the wheels and bearings). Demonstrations of proper techniques by older, more experienced students could help the younger skaters develop safe skateboarding habits. Instruction on the safe way to fall, and how to help someone who has been hurt would also be valuable information for students. Creating and promoting a safe environment is another element of the ethos of skateboard culture. Before beginning any activity, especially skateboarding, Kellett and Russell believe that, "Part of the learning process is to understand the unwritten rules of social interaction and skatepark etiquette which is dissimilar to mainstream sports where, for the most part, interactions between players on the field are governed by a strict set of rules (8: p. 75).

Experienced skateboarders could offer invaluable skatepark etiquette tips and general safety tips to kids in their communities and to their peers who are new to the activity. Intentional instruction of skateboard safety is beneficial for all participants, whether they're riding in the driveway, street or skatepark. Alex Dumas, a sport sociologist and Sophie Laforest, a sport epidemiologist conclude that more research is needed to determine what will influence skaters to adopt more injury prevention measures, especially outside skateparks (5). I suggest that school based skateboard safety programs are a viable solution (or at least a start) to injury prevention, and that content should be delivered by older, more experienced students to be most effective. Within the skateboard community, Utilitarianism is also relevant given the environmental dynamic of skateparks, whereby the safety practices and etiquette of individual skaters affects the other participants. It stands to reason that the greater number of skaters whom have intentional safety instruction could have positive effect on the overall safety of skateboarding environments and participants.

Social Relationships in Skateboarding

Researchers argue that skateparks are positive environments for youth to learn physical skills and build social relationships. The popularity and usage of skateparks has become an important area of research. The draw of skateparks has been attributed to a variety motives and influences. First, skateboarders have a sense of ownership for their skateparks because "they manage, police, design, and even build those parks" (7: p. 491). The practice of self-supervision, and the

unwritten code of skatepark conduct, leads to the issue of liability, which is the main source of resistance from schools to offer skateboarding programs. However, to achieve the positive effects of skateboarding environments, skateboarders need to feel validated, and provision of skateboarding programs or facilities was viewed as symbolic of people in the community caring about them and their sport (11).

Skaters depend on one another to learn new tricks and observe new skills. Skateboarding is unique because it does not generally have any formal instruction, organization or league. Students cannot learn skateboarding during physical education classes, in extracurricular programs, or by registering in a club with a coach. Members of the skate subculture have overcome this barrier by observing, modeling and informally mentoring one another. It is conceivable that students would respect people that they are learning from, and would be willing to share feedback.

In a subculture where informal mentoring and peer feedback is the foundation of skill acquisition, it seems logical that older and more experienced skateboarders would be comfortable in leadership roles. In a 2008 study, Fred Coalter observed:

> because young people's attitudes are highly influenced by their peers' values and attitudes, peer educators are less likely to be viewed as 'preaching' authority figures and more likely to be regarded as people who know the experiences and concerns of young people (3: p. 53).

This observation is paramount because the counter-argument to providing skateboard programs through the schools is that skateboarders would resist any involvement of adults because they stereotypically reject structure and authority. Given that most skateboarders learn from observation and peer guidance, older students would likely understand the value of a skateboard program and may be more willing to volunteer for a student-led extracurricular skate program. Receiving instruction from individuals who are similar in age, and share the same interests is also important according to Coalter who also suggests that learning:

> Is most likely to occur when the learners perceive that they are capable of carrying out the behavior (self-efficacy expectancy), think that there is a high probability that the behavior will result in a particular outcome and if the outcome is desirable - all of which can be reinforced via peer education (3: p. 53).

If students and schools organized a skate mentorship initiative that would promote physical activity, friendship and leadership it would most likely receive support from community members, and could dispel the negative perceptions of skateboarding. Skateboarding has the potential to create friendships and community cohesion, which are both central themes in social capital theory.

Skateboarding Culture

Skaters have the autonomy to practice skills independently, progress at their own pace and challenge themselves by choice. The subculture provides the support from other people with the same interests and values, which allows a sense of belonging and community to grow. Studies of subcultures are essentially classifications used to identify the culture's characteristics, such as

individuality, collective identity, and lifestyle. Research and discussion of subcultures is also an important aspect of understanding the experiences of underrepresented populations within society as a whole, or as part of a specific subculture. In addition, traditional structural hierarchy differences in gender, sexuality, race, class, and age are still present within skateboarding subcultures (13), and it is important to continue working toward equitable practices.

After presenting the positive benefits of skateboarding, it would be irresponsible not to address the negative issues that are also prevalent in skateboarding. Similar to other leisure pursuits, activities or sports, skateboarding is still a male dominated environment, prevelant with the classic themes of sexism, inequity and exclusion. Dumas and Laforest found that 98% of the skaters they observed in skateparks were male, which affirms the underrepresentation and possible exclusion of females from this skateboarding environment (5). In acknowledging this unfortunate reality, the intentional examination of the positive outcomes of participating in skateboarding is not without consideration of the negative aspects of the environment. In response to the detrimental aspects of skateboarding culture, the potential for positive social capital, increased safety and physical activity is discussed as part of a larger framework that proposes school supported skateboard programs. Potentially, if skateboarding is introduced as an extracurricular activity in the school board than this provide more opportunity for young girls to try out the activity and improve their skill.

In conclusion, I believe that with intentional instruction of safety and skills through a skateboard mentorship extracurricular program, experienced skateboarders can develop leadership qualities and build relationships that strengthen the school and skateboard community, while all participants can benefit from the physical, autonomous, and social aspects of skateboarding. I agree with Dumas and Laforest when they suggest that, "skateboarding should be conceived as a valuable health-resource for youth because it provides various social, psychosocial and physical health resources that encourage a safe and active lifestyle" (5: p. 118).

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Stop Paving Paradise: Mountaineering, Environmentalism, and the Four Mountain Park Planning Era in the Canadian Rockies, 1968-1974

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Mountaineers in the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) articulated a new philosophy of environmentalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Minimum impact was a key element in its emergent philosophy of outdoor pursuits at a time when the demands of postwar tourism surged in national parks across Canada. This paper investigates the club's ideas and involvement as a public stakeholder in the Four Mountain Parks Planning program conducted by Parks Canada in Alberta and British Columbia. Plans for the Four Mountain national parks in the Canadian Rockies were realigned through democratic stakeholder participation and public policy development. The governance of bodies and governmentality exercised by citizens through physical pursuits of recreation and tourism were promoted, along with a new outlook on environmentalism that called for minimal impact practices but continued to promote the consumption of wilderness by fit athletic bodies.

Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Yoho national parks were the subjects of a master planning process that began with government proposals in 1968 to expand tourism infrastructure and development. As Canada's national mountaineering club, the ACC opposed federal proposals to build scenic highways and roads in the mountain backcountry and supported the protection of the natural environment in national parks, particularly wilderness areas for recreation, sport, and wildlife conservation. The ACC formulated a new environmentalism wherein its physical activities and sport—climbing, hiking, backpacking, backcountry skiing, and camping–were positioned as legitimate and superior.

In the shift toward master planning for national parks in Canada, appropriate recreational uses were framed by managerial land-use classifications and zoning. The club's arguments in favour of environmentalism and wilderness not only promoted self-propelled activities, but also posited debates over the territorialized inclusion and exclusion of bodies based on physicality, ability, health, sex, and age. Implicit assumptions tied to masculinist discourses of mountaineering in the club were an underlying logic supporting certain visions of mountain national parks and minimum impact philosophy. On the other hand, some leading thinkers in the club were actively rethinking environmentalist ethics to reposition mountaineering. At public hearings, the position of the professional middle-class in the ACC contrasted with other Rocky Mountain national park stakeholders, such as local working-class snowmobile clubs and YMCA camps for low-income urban families. Differences between diverse stakeholders underscored the philosophical underpinnings and environmentalism influencing changes in national park management regimes. Based on archival research and other sources, this historical inquiry reassesses a little studied but pivotal period of history in Canadian mountaineering and national parks as a window on changing environmental philosophy and sport.

Contentious federal government plans to build new scenic highways opening up more valleys to auto tourism in the mountain parks spurred public debate over the future of Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay in the late 1960s. Sweeping new drive tours were on the drawing

board for places such as the Pipestone-Cascade Valley, Howse Pass, Maligne River to Sunwapta River, and Fortress Lake, but the ACC and many other opponents to the proposals tended to see Ottawa planners driving the mountain parks from paradise to perdition on well-paved roads. Following the release of the Provisional Master Plans for the contiguous "Four Mountain Parks," approved early in 1968, Canada's National and Historic Parks Branch in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development faced vocal opposition to the directions it had outlined to meet escalating tourism demands. Implementing a park zoning system with five land use classifications, building new roads and mass campgrounds on valley floors, expanding service centres for automobile tourists, and encouraging more snowmobile recreation in designated areas were key proposals in the provisional plans released for discussion prior to public hearings. Formulated by the Parks Service Planning Division in Ottawa, they reflected an optimistic internal outlook on the strength of technocratic management and rational planning to design for and accommodate intensifying demands on the mountain parks. "The view taken by an emerging environmental lobby argued for curbing growth and focusing on protecting wilderness areas," according to C.J. Taylor, and, ultimately, contestation through a newly launched public consultation process and lobbying prompted the national parks organization to reverse direction and shift its outlook.[1] In the midst of this public policy debate, the ACC was concerned that the provisional master plans focused on automobile tourists, sightseers, and motorized recreation, while climbing, hiking, and ski touring in the mountain parks were scarcely mentioned as recreational activities. Moreover, it considered the preservation of wilderness to be seriously at stake. Emerging from a reexamination of its own conservation ethics, the ACC galvanized against the vision of mountain parks proposed in the initial government plans and put forward its own countervision. Here it was influenced by contemporary trends in thinking about wilderness, ecology, and environmentalism in the late 1960s.

A new wave in the club's thinking emerged when the ACC Edmonton Section held a panel discussion on conservation. Soon afterward, in October 1969, the club's national board of management appointed Edmonton members to form a new ACC Conservation Committee. The committee encouraged club members to engage the conservation objectives of the ACC and advised the national board of management on conservation concerns.[2] The chair of the new conservation committee and a leading thinker who articulated the club's changing philosophy of conservation and environmentalism during this era was Harry Habgood.

Habgood was a highly trained chemist and engineer employed as a senior administrator with the Alberta Research Council in Edmonton. His wife Thelma Habgood had joined the ACC to pursue climbing in the mid-1960s and he followed, attending two club summer camps and climbing in Baffin Island with fellow scientist Ted Whalley. Active in Jasper and Banff, as well as the Edmonton region, the Habgoods were avid outdoors people who also cross-country skied, backpacked, and scrambled. They carried their baby, Helen in a sling on her first mountain camping trip near Jasper. They loved plants and studied botany. Both were scientists deeply committed to nature and outdoor life.[3]

The Conservation Committee sought to define a conservation policy for the club and spent two years preparing a submission to the Four Mountain Park planning process and hearings. Habgood was its chief architect. In its first policy statement, the committee judged the aims stated in the club's original mandate paradoxical. To reconcile the goals of mountain use and preservation, the committee stressed the importance of environmentally sensitive conduct to safeguard "mountain ecology" as it sought to define the club's conservation policy stance:

> The Alpine Club of Canada includes among its objectives the encouragement of mountaineering and also the preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat. These objectives tend to be contradictory because, by his very presence, man alters the environment and most of his activities are damaging in some degree and to some aspects of the flora and fauna. A conservation policy for the Club, therefore, must be a set of guidelines whereby we can pursue mountaineering with minimum effect upon the mountain ecology. This policy is intended as a basis for our own activities and as a guide to the Club in its attitudes and policy statements concerning the actions of others including governments and corporations.[4]

The committee encouraged "Canadians to enjoy their mountain regions in ways that have minimum ecological effect on the Alpine wilderness" and advised its own club members to apply good conservation practices to set an example for other backcountry users. It laid out several internal management principles in 1969 to reserve protected areas and move toward minimum impact practices.[5] Awakened to ideas about ecology, the idea of minimum impact and "leaving no trace" was the latest philosophical concept to guide wilderness recreation, as the ACC attempted to undo and prevent damage caused by increased human activity in the mountain parks.[6]

The ACC began to realize by the late 1960s how the postwar tourism ideal had wrought unwanted side effects, such as vegetation damage. Witnessing the cumulative effects of use in the mountain parks through the 1950s and 1960s, especially in intensively visited areas such as the Lake O'Hara meadows and Lake Louise, it was apparent that strategies to better manage resource use and protection were needed.[7] Moreover, as early as 1959 through the mid-1960s, the Parks Branch itself came to realize that mushrooming visitation and its own race to keep up with these rising demands, by providing public works and services, were having adverse effects on the environment.[8] In little more than a decade, adherence to "limitless" postwar growth had produced a new generation of major management challenges that Parks grappled to reassess.

The ACC Conservation Committee began to publish regular reports in late 1969 to promote thinking about conservation and ethics in the club's national newsletter *The Gazette*, and to discuss with club members issues of concern. "As Alpine Club members we have probably a deeper appreciation than the average citizen of the values of wild country and the wilderness experience," it advised in 1970, asserting its privileged cultural capital, "and of the fragility of the natural environments in the face of increasing population and development pressures." The committee recommended club members write directly to government and parks officials on issues. It also recommended that members join and support conservation groups, specifically the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada (NPPAC). The Committee noted with approval that NPPAC believed rising demands for outdoor recreation called "for more recreational areas and advocates the development of provincial parks for this purpose to take the pressure off the wilderness portions of National Parks."[9] NPPAC was alert to the plans for the four mountain national parks and had sponsored a major event with the University of Calgary, the Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow conference, held in October 1968, that worked to mobilize critiques of Parks and the directions it was taking.[10] In these respects, NPPAC and ACC shared allied objectives as well as certain members.

A submission to the Four Mountain Parks planning hearings, coordinated and prepared in consultation with ACC section correspondents and the national board, was one of the Conservation Committee's major concerns. Caution was advised to proceed to hearings without

"being too emotional or in taking too strong a stance in banning snowmobiles from the Parks as we might lose the whole battle."[11] Following an internal club consultation and approval process, two briefs to Parks regarding conservation were published in *The Gazette* in May 1971–one pertaining to the four mountain parks and the other recommending the formal establishment of Kluane as a national park in the Yukon.[12] The committee was ready for public hearings.

The Conservation Committee also promoted conservation education. An illustrated pamphlet guide called "Mountain Manners" was produced to promote better environmental practices on trips and climbs through applied conservation ethics to minimize impacts. It instructed climbers to deal with garbage and fire hazards, and to minimize the use of horses and motorized vehicles such as snowmobiles. Backcountry users were advised to stay on trails, minimize campsite construction, dig latrines, store/hang food away from animals, use gas stoves as much as possible, and go easy on vegetation and trees. Campers were also encouraged to discuss conservation and clean up "messy campsites." "In short, do your best to leave no traces of your visit and to permit the next visitor to have the same thrill of unspoiled, quiet wilderness that you enjoyed." It quoted Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* to suggest "all conservation of wildness is self-defeating, for to cherish we must see and fondle, and when enough have seen and fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish." The club's *Gazette* circulated the guide in 1972; 15,000 copies were also provided for public distribution through the Regional Parks Office to national parks such as Glacier.[13]

The Committee also aimed to stimulate thinking and writing about conservation in the club's *Gazette* and alpine journal.[14] At about this time, the *Canadian Alpine Journal* expressed renewed interest in conservation politics and recreation ethics. Environment and access were now related as twin concerns for climbers according to the journal's new editor.[15] Readers of the 1971 journal found many articles pondering conservation and the future of the mountain national parks leading up to public hearings on the provisional master plans for the four mountain parks.

James W. Thorsell, a University of British Columbia PhD student in conservation and recreation planning who joined the club in 1967, published an article titled "On Planning Canada's Mountain National Parks" in which he urged all mountaineers "to follow the results of the hearings with a critical eye, and to offer support to the Alpine Club's Conservation Committee in re-establishing an active voice in the development of the national parks."[16] He was technically attuned to issues having worked as a planner and researcher in Ottawa's Park Planning Division from 1966 to 1968, as well as conducting research in the mountain parks where he lived intermittently in Banff.[17] In 1967, he was involved in professional work related to the Kluane Park Reserve and climbed with the club's Yukon Alpine Centennial Camp.[18] He commended the Parks Branch public hearings as "a very positive way to encourage more public involvement in the planning process." Classifying four types of mountain park users–the group package tourist, the trailer-camping automobile sightseer, the wilderness traveler, and the abstaining "option user"–Thorsell critiqued the provisional master plans for catering to the motorized culture of "travelling armchair" visitors in the first two classes, while they overlooked the other two along with the big picture of ecological management and wilderness preservation in the western mountain parks. His assessment lamented the Parks Branch proposals to build 250 miles of new highway for 13 more roads, turn Lake Louise into a townsite the size of Banff and Jasper, and zone more than a third of the total park area for uses other than wilderness. Taking up more wildlife habitat for campgrounds in montane valleys and sponsoring park snowmobile tours were considered a poor direction to take in western mountain national parks. "Inasmuch as areas of preserved wilderness are already in short supply, the prime function of most of the area of the

western mountain parks *must* be the preservation of the Rocky Mountain landscape. This is primarily a wilderness landscape and should be presented to future generations as such." Based on his reading of the *National Parks Act*, Thorsell did not find use and preservation to be a contradictory tradeoff provided that use caused no impairment and mass access was controlled. The overall question that emerged for him was "In essence what do we want–national parks or regional playgrounds?"[19]

Thorsell philosophically aligned himself with the "wilderness traveler" in the parks. How he identified and represented these users in tandem with a system of land zoning and the definition of wilderness was revealing. "He may be a mountaineer, backpacker, trail rider, ski tourer or canoer, but the common quest is active physical challenge and some sort of 'spiritual communion' with wild country," Thorsell wrote about this type of user. "He demands little in the way of facilities but requires that large areas of undisturbed land be kept at a low use density." Perhaps influenced by the functionalist emphasis on land use and recreational activities in the paradigms of park planning, wilderness zoning in his description was in many ways defined by travelling bodies rather than roads or motor vehicles. "All remaining wilderness land in the parks should be left undisturbed with *physical ability* being the selective filter that will limit use," wrote Thorsell. He quoted controversial American ecologist Garrett Hardin, a professor at University of California Santa Barbara and a polio survivor, to argue that the wilderness experience in many national parks was rightfully and "forever closed to people on crutches, to small children, to fat people, to people with heart conditions, and to old people in their usual state of physical disrepair."[20] This style of thinking constructed wilderness as a place occupied and territorialized by healthy athletic adult bodies–climbing, hiking, riding, skiing, and paddling–in a normalizing masculinist discourse of performance in a sporting landscape that excluded people based not on a vehicular mode of travel so much as by labeling bodies as fit versus unfit (that is lame, too young, fat, sick, or old, and implicitly feminine), and, thereby, transgressive in wilderness.[21] It also overlooked the longstanding Aboriginal and early settler presence on the land that predated the parks. These views give an indication of several common assumptions underlying the masculinist construction of wilderness at this time, particularly in the minds of many physically active, able-bodied young men in mountain sports represented in the newly vamped *Canadian Alpine Journal* that transmitted just such ideals.

In the same journal issue, a young geographer named John Marsh published his study of high-country recreational use in Glacier National Park, British Columbia, based on aspects of his doctoral research supervised by Dr. J.G. Nelson at the University of Calgary.[22] His analysis of climbing and ski touring commented on user statistics and longstanding regional traditions of mountaineering in the park. Climbers and ski tourers registered in 1967 were a small group of 890 recreationists, compared to 656,000 vehicles with more than 1.8 million passengers passing through the park. With consideration to "the expanding minority of park users," he concluded with his hope that the climbers and ski tourers in Glacier Park "will not be overlooked. They are certainly amongst the most legitimate of park users, and are in a position to cooperate with the Parks Branch in ensuring that the tradition of Glacier as an alpine recreation area of the highest quality is maintained, and its potential maximised."[23]

Dan Phelps, a former UBC graduate student who had once played a role starting the conservation committee in his campus outdoor club, contributed the article "Conservation, Preservation–Same Thing."[24] It was an allegory satirizing a fictionalized political economy much like the mountain parks. It pointed at club members to pick up the slack by working together for

the environment to save what they enjoyed in the mountains. In his story, he needled members to recognize themselves and their actions:

> Once upon a time in a country on the continent of techno-quick-fix there were some mountains. ...many more people came to enjoy the view and to climb the mountains. Things were not quite the same for the peak baggers. The new people that came did not appreciate the same aspects of the mountains and had somewhat different values (when in the outdoors at least). The new people used more machines.... Through all this, those who went to bag the peaks continued to do so. Some said that it was because they went there to escape from the situation they had helped create in the valleys and the lowlands; besides no one ever worried about how one square on the map affected another square on the map.

Phelps went on to enumerate a six-point plan for the club to aid "preservation/conservation" by encouraging more people to know and appreciate the mountains through publishing, engaging in active outdoor recreation, and working together with other outdoor groups to "present a much larger and more effective voice" to government. His article was darkly humourous yet hopeful. "I am really very happy to hear of the excellent work that the Conservation Committee of the Alpine Club is doing," Phelps noted, chastising more members to join their effort. He quoted from annual general meeting reports that the role the ACC and the Conservation Committee would take in the broader conservation movement "'will ultimately be determined by the wishes of the membership. The present committee has chosen to concern itself primarily with the alpine environment with emphasis on the *preservation* of wild areas in the mountains as being a significant and important part of the total *conservation effort*.'" The image of a mountain lake with a superimposed industrial mill spewing smoke skywards illustrated his story, hinting at how environmental concerns were caricatured, while his argument engaged principles of integrated land use planning, ecological models, and coalition activism. At the root of his arguments was the democratic assertion that mountain conservation stood a better chance if more people participated and cared.

Informed university students, researchers, and professionals invested as middle-class outdoor enthusiasts in the ACC were ready and capable to marshal considerable intellectual capital and expert knowledge to study and critique national parks and recreation policies. The reexamination of values and ideals related to parks and wilderness formed part of a larger wave of social, scientific, cultural, and generational change rolling through the late sixties into the seventies era of social movements and activism. The *Canadian Alpine Journal* acted as a platform for polemics among mountaineers just as the public hearings on national park planning approached.

Public hearings on the provisional master plans for the four mountain parks were held in April 1971 in Vancouver, Edmonton, and Calgary and in Golden, British Columbia, in May.[25] This road show integrated extensive public consultation hearings into national park planning, aired multiple stakeholder perspectives, and diffused political dissent into a transformative decision-making process leading toward revised planning documents and management directions. It followed the first three such hearings, conducted by the Parks Branch on the provisional master plans for Kejimkujik, Fundy, and Cape Breton Highlands national parks in the Maritimes.[26] Public park consultation processes emerged through the struggles of participatory social reform and changing styles of governance in the early 1970s.[27] Stakeholders

in the mountain park hearings involved many sectors. Regional chambers of commerce, gateway municipalities, local MLAs, provincial agencies, commercial business operators, and automobile associations came forward. Natural resource and planning concerns were presented by university researchers, wildlife and fisheries biologists, vegetation and forestry specialists, and logging interests. Snowmobile clubs, ski clubs, commercial skiing, varsity outdoor clubs, climbing clubs, and the YMCA, among others, represented various sport and recreation interests. Conservation considerations were presented by local naturalists' societies, various provincial federations of naturalists, and the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada (NPPAC). Aboriginal speakers, high school students, women's peace groups, farmers' institutes, various private individuals, and others brought many diverse perspectives to the table. Among them, the ACC argued for its vision of the future for the four mountain parks.

At the Edmonton hearings on April 22, Harry Habgood spoke during the afternoon session on behalf of the ACC president David Fisher and presented a written commentary endorsed by the club's national executive.[28] Habgood positioned the ACC as the national mountaineering club with a history of "sixty odd years" and organizational objectives for the enjoyment and preservation of mountain places that were "just the same as those of the National Parks Act." The national club and its local sections offered pursuits situated "to a considerable extent" in the four mountain parks oriented to novice climbers and skilled mountaineers. "We welcome the opportunity afforded by the master plan hearings to reassess our own thinking and to offer our opinions on the future of the parks," Habgood said in opening comments. Roads, visitor centres, and tourist recreation facilities in the four mountain parks were already adequate, according to the club. It preferred roads and service centres to develop regionally outside the parks, and wanted "to establish and preserve the integrity of relatively large wilderness areas within the parks, perhaps to some extent even extending outside into provincial areas":

> And, finally, people should be encouraged to visit these blocks of wilderness, but to visit in ways that are in keeping with the wilderness character of the country and that cause minimum damage to the land and to its natural systems. And to us this means hiking, climbing, primitive back-pack camping, ski touring, snow-shoeing.

Foot travel was seen as the right mode of recreation for wilderness; new scenic roads for auto tourism in wild valleys was not. Building more roads to address surging demands and deal with overcrowding was a futile enterprise, according to the ACC. Habgood compared automobile traffic to existing Park policy statements limiting aircraft in the parks, arguing the construction of proposed roads as thoroughfares would be to the detriment of "national park values." Working with provincial authorities to achieve "a comprehensive plan for the whole mountain area centered on the park" and offering federal subsidies for regional tourism development were recommended. He critiqued the classification system for land use zoning in the parks and advised eliminating Class III zoning (Natural Environment Area) in favour of Class II (Wilderness Recreation Area) because Class III zones ambiguously "allowed some new roads and parkways" that might permit creeping development toward Class IV (General Outdoor Recreation Area).

"Pedestrian travel" and "pack-in" camping were highlighted as prime uses. With regard to hiking, the club adopted some of the rubrics and language of recreational land use planning: "A degree of rationing of land use could be accomplished by means of variations in the density

and the difficulty of the trail network. In this way some of the more fragile alpine areas in the interior of the large wilderness zones, and in the Class I areas [Special Area, Wilderness], can be protected from excessive use in non-obtrusive fashion." Bridges were seen as a vital link to improve access up major stream valleys on existing trails, although the club stipulated "this does not mean...the usual magnificent sort that your engineers frequently put across our streams, when they get around to bridging them," but rather a simple construction with two or three well-anchored logs, noting "a handrail is a real luxury." It was not keen on horses using the same walking trails due to "drainage" concerns. The Great Divide Trail proposal for a north-south foot route through the Rockies was considered as "a good start on a system of cross-country touring trails." When designing campsites and shelters, planners were advised that "part of the pleasure of being in the wilderness is the feeling of freedom to go where you want and to stop where you want, and management policies should attempt to preserve that impression of freedom." With respect to more shelters and huts along certain heavily used trails, the club favoured enclosed huts because they were versatile enough for winter use. It also advocated more participatory decision making in ongoing management through "the formation of advisory committees concerned with trails and huts...we think that many of the organizations who have spoken here today could contribute usefully to such committees and certainly the Alpine Club would be very pleased to."

Winter travel was part of the ACC's vision for the future of mountain parks, but recent attempts to allow recreational snowmobiling were seen as "unfortunate" and recreational snowmobiling was ruled out in the club's recommendations for all national parks. "We think that mechanized vehicles of this type are totally out of place in a wilderness," Habgood commented, "and should be used only where strictly necessary on park business." The club had, in fact, already made an earlier and separate submission to Parks specifically regarding snowmobile use. In contrast, the club wanted a system of huts to "encourage extensive touring on skis and snowshoes and the further development of ski mountaineering." It also saw a need to extend the existing avalanche warning system. The club reasoned that facilitating backcountry use through more trails, shelters, huts, and primitive campsites would help to "defer" overcrowding problems, whereas proposals emphasizing roads and facilities in the master plans were seen to accelerate them.

Development of visitor services and a village in Lake Louise also concerned the ACC. Habgood noted, "I feel sure that these concerns are shared by a good many of our membership, and we are worried about the scope, and the extent and, really, the momentum of such a large development and whether you can really contain it within the limits you are setting." He concluded emphasizing this picture of mountain parks:

> ...we think the Department should take the initiative in encouraging people to enjoy the mountain national parks in ways that emphasize their distinctive natural features ...the activities of groups such as the Alpine Club of Canada indicate the sorts of recreation that are distinctive to the mountains, are rewarding to participants, and cause minimum damage to the natural environment.

The ACC and its habitus was front and centre in this vision of recreation in mountain parks. At the Edmonton hearings on April 23, Valerie Stevens, an undergraduate student at the University of Alberta and chair of the Edmonton Section's Conservation Committee, asked why the Red Earth Creek Road had already been surveyed for a tentatively proposed road. "I've often

wondered how many of you on the board, and your task force and the planners who have made up these plans, have ever been into the back country of these parks, and really know why we, who have been there, fear what you are going to do by putting in these roads and dividing up the area so badly?"[29]

At the April 19-20 hearings in Calgary, the Calgary Section of the club had rallied its efforts to speak in defense of wilderness protection. "Our section has recently become active in the growing conservation movement across Canada because we are afraid that the places in these mountains that many of us are so fond of, will be sacrificed to development," it stated in a submission. Like Joni Mitchell's popular song, it raised the question "Shall we pave paradise?"[30] Calgary Section chair Erik Laerz spoke to the hearings on the evening of April 19 and seized the opportunity to reply to issues raised throughout the day. He pointing out the park plans would set policy parameters for later development in Village Lake Louise, even though Parks had designated it as a separate planning process. Particular concerns arose related to prospects for installing secondary sewage treatment, as Laerz identified: "This I find rather appalling, because this water will be leaving a national park. This is supposed to be a wilderness museum, a living wilderness museum, and secondary sewage essentially means that right below Lake Louise you are not able to drink that water safely, and this is rather frightening." He was critical of detrimental vegetation impacts due to snowmobile use off designated routes at Lake Louise: "...on one particular weekend we were skiing out of there with a group, and we had just followed about 12 to 14 snowmobilers, and I think you could count on one hand the number of avalanche slopes or alpine meadows that were not completely covered by snowmobile tracks on the way out, and there's quite a few of them. They seem to hit everywhere but except the road." He concluded that "preservation of the wilderness must be of paramount importance in formulating policy."[31]

On April 20, the Calgary Section spoke at the hearings again. Its local Conservation Committee submitted a written brief, summarized at the presentations by Bob Jordan, that was endorsed by the Calgary Section chair Erik Laerz and unanimously by members voting at a regular section meeting. "The mountain parks are for all Canadians for all time and their value cannot be measured in terms of how many access roads, motels, souvenir shops and golf courses we've provided," Jordan began. "Rather their lasting value is in what might only be seen with a great deal of effort or perhaps never seen at all. The remote wilderness, we consider this to be the value of the National Parks and our comments on the master plans are based on this premise."[32]

The Calgary Section objected "very strenuously" to proposed roads on the basis they would carve through the "remaining three large wilderness areas in the parks, the Cascade-Pipestone, Red Deer Valleys, the area south and south-east of Maligne Lake and the north-west portion of Jasper National Park." It recommended that these areas in Banff and Jasper be reclassified as Zone I (Special Area, Wilderness) and left intact. Moreover, in Yoho all but two valleys were slated for road building, such as the extension of the Takakkaw Falls road to the foot of the Yoho Glacier. "Roads are the biggest single threat to wilderness and the parks," Jordan argued, presenting slides of maps to indicate how proposed new transport corridors through mountain valleys would fragment wilderness areas and drastically subdivide the square mileage of the remaining pieces. The Calgary committee was dismayed that more consideration had not been given to ecological implications regarding habitat and wildlife in planning, specifically critiques arising from a 1969 report by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). CWS biologists had stated "preservation of the wilderness character of National Parks...is paramount in importance" and were quick to point out that highly valued habitats, such as valley bottoms,

were under great pressure in the mountain parks due to park development demands; there was "no evidence to suggest that the present roadless areas are more than adequate, and strong indications that in some parks they are inadequate"; they were also concerned that better communication between federal agencies was "badly needed."[33] Both ACC briefs picked up on and repeated the concerns of the CWS, particularly related to problematic zoning issues and to promoting walking as the optimum non-consumptive recreational use by providing networks of trails and shelters. Jordan expressed that the proposed zoning lacked both "a sound and thorough scientific knowledge of the land involved" as well as "a feeling for the landscape." Cross-country skiing and ski touring in the mountain parks were popular among members of the Calgary Section, and they advocated the advancement of these activities through better trails, huts, and potential demonstration tours, along with trail maps and park information. High alpine refuges were promoted as invaluable emergency bivouacs for remote climbing and the section made recommendations to enhance the shelter system for hiking, backpacking, climbing, and skiing. The Calgary ACC was pleased there were no references to the development of new downhill ski facilities in the mountain parks, and it recommended that the expansion of existing ski hills be subject to public input. While no explicit comments were made regarding controversial proposals throughout the 1960s to hold the Winter Olympics in Lake Louise, it stated an overall preference for downhill ski facilities to operate on provincial lands. "The Alberta Government recreation policy has been getting a free ride from federally supported developments in the parks for decades, and we more than welcome recreation facilities outside the parks." Banning the recreational use of snowmobiles in the national parks was recommended as such use posed an "inevitable conflict with quieter types of winter recreation" and was difficult to oversee. Park interpretation was endorsed by the Calgary Section, which wanted programs and material expanded beyond park boundaries to serve school groups and adults in large urban centres. Lastly, the Calgary Section noted it was concerned that prospects for condominium development at Lake Louise would breach park policies and requested that complete plans for "Village Lake Louise" be made available for public comment.

Jim Thorsell attended the hearings in Alberta and British Columbia, and spoke on April 26 in Vancouver. He spoke as a UBC graduate student in conservation and recreation planning and also identified his role as a British Columbia board member of the Provincial Parks Association.[34] He noted his comments were based on the article he had published that year in the *Canadian Alpine Journal* and his observations of the hearings.

"Many people were somewhat bewildered as to how such development oriented plans could ever have been conceived in the first place. Does the Department of Public Works really run the National Parks," he questioned. "The difficulty here is that park planners are much further removed and less involved in the park than a dedicated inveterate park user." To contextualize the "puzzling" discrepancy between the provisional master plans and the reaction of the public at the hearings, Thorsell surmised that the plans were already obsolete when they were issued because they had been initiated four or five years "before the beginning of the environmental and social revolution we are currently undergoing." Looking ahead, he went on to say,

> I feel there is a lag in the Parks Branch, as evident in the plans, and this lag must be corrected by a set of new plans which will put the Parks Branch in tune with this revolution, and what it's going to bring in the 1970's. Nothing less than a new attitude and approach to park planning is required. Minor changes as

> accommodated in Ked-Gee, Fundy and Cape Breton will not suffice for the western mountain parks. I support the excellent Federation of Ontario Naturalists brief which suggested that entirely new operational philosophy is required. ...what is called for are plans which would lead to a veritable greening of the National Parks.

Part of the difficulty clarifying fundamental planning goals for the master plans was confusion arising from the dedication clause of the *National Parks Act*, along with the lack of a "viable national outdoor recreation plan." Thorsell reiterated arguments from his article with respect to the exclusion of non-conforming bodies, asserting exclusion was democratic: "All parks are not for all people. National Parks in the opinion of most people have the prime function of providing wilderness in the regional landscape." Backcountry travel, with the concomitant development of a hut system "common in every other alpine area of the world" and the proposed Great Divide Trail, was highly recommended as appropriate recreational use. Ecological management was the overriding concern Thorsell identified for the "greening" of the mountain parks, suggesting "the ecological approach has changed the dimensions of all our planning and [I] would proceed to plan and zone the parks on an eco-system basis." Notably, one mechanism he proposed was the establishment of a Rocky Mountain regional planning commission; his recommendations for regional ecosystem planning and integrated land use on a large scale in the Rockies were significant ideas in 1971. Thorsell later emerged to become one of Canada's world leaders in conservation and planning, working for the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and advising UNESCO's World Heritage Committee.[35]

Minister Jean Chretien and his department moved to make changes after releasing the provisional master plans in 1968. Criticism was building even before public hearings began, and a general consensus emerged against many of the major proposals. In an atmosphere of growing political pressure, Ottawa planners headed by Ron Maslin, the coordinator of Parks master planning, grappled with input and changes. Most of the scenic road proposals were scrapped, Lake Louise village plans were curtailed, snowmobiling was prohibited as a non-conforming recreational use, and a new backcountry management approach was adopted.[36] According to C.J. Taylor, "a sea change in attitude" rippled incrementally through Canada's national parks administration and provoked an overall reassessment that moved closer toward ecological management directions. Assistant Deputy Minister Al Davidson noted in 1979 that the public hearings "had a profound impact on our planning emphasis and public participation leading to decision making. Look back on some of the provisional master plans, at the emphasis on road building, at the catering to the *arm chair* tourists, and compare them with our present emphasis on programmes which will provide park experiences uniquely attuned to the environment."[37] The government did not accept all the recommendations, but, in essence, much of the public feedback hit the mark and the Parks Branch parlayed it into the revised set of master plans, which were implemented as working documents kept under a provisional title through the 1970s and 1980s.[3847] These outcomes, along with the five volumes of critical public commentary from the hearings, suggest that a new watershed had been achieved for public participation in policy making with the federal Park Branch, one that shifted the balance of roles and expectations between citizens and the state and challenged centrist tendencies inside the Branch.[39] Twenty years later, Parks Canada produced another generation of ecological shift in the next master plans, *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks* (1988), which treated the four parks as an ecological block and emphasized limiting development to

existing corridors.[40] Leading up to 1988, the ACC again played an active stakeholder role in park planning public consultations.[41]

The fact that many prime valleys and passes in Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Yoho parks are today unroaded by highways is a legacy of democratic social changes wrought by Canadian civil society in the late 1960s and early 70s. Likewise, there was a lasting effect on national park governance and policy making in Parks Canada, which came to institutionalize public consultation processes as part of successive ten-year planning cycles. The "greening" of national parks in the 1970s was a counter narrative to paving the postwar parks after 1945, yet later decades were still fraught with the challenges and contradictions of land management and intensifying tourism growth in the ongoing contestations of constructing the national park idea. How the four mountain parks in the Rockies differed from some national parks in other regions, such as the Maritimes and southern Ontario, was indicated in the 1970s by the groundswell of emphasis on protecting vast zones of wilderness–discursively constructed through land use classifications to mean a spatial and physical entity. A redefined vision of national parks was emerging from public debates and the habitus of mountaineers featured prominently in it, as did discourses of wilderness premised on the social, spatial, and ecological concerns of mountain parks in the west.[42]

The political lobbying of the ACC was also evident in the new vision. Advocacy of conservation was strongly asserted through the national club, and the Edmonton and Calgary ACC sections, in closest proximity to the parks, played leading roles. They spoke as local Alberta voices of national park conservation and wilderness preservation that contributed to guiding federal policy formation. Following the hearings, Harry Habgood published an article in the 1972 *Canadian Alpine Journal* to assess the outcomes: "Is the conservation effort worth while (sic)? Representations to officialdom do seem to produce some results. For example, according to a recent statement from the Parks Branch, the almost unanimous objections to new roads and visitor service centres in the four mountain parks have been heeded."[43] The promise of three new parks in northern Canada–Kluane, Nahanni, and Baffin Island–made in the 1972 Throne Speech was another outcome he observed in his article. The club had advocated them in three official briefs to Parks based on rationales that each area was spectacular, fragile, and wild, but subject to increasing visitor use.[44] Habgood was pleased with the promise of new parks, although he noted the club still wanted to see the addition of the lower ranges in Kluane and the "most spectacular part of the Ragged Range in Nahanni," while Ottawa Section members had pushed strongly with a proposal for the Cumberland Peninsula on Baffin Island. He looked back on the club's shifting vision of national parks and how its emergent ethics now expressed "a stronger conservationist stance." Stirred into action by the master planning process, a consensus on principles had emerged from what he identified as broad-based and intense discussions within the club as to what was deemed appropriate for Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, and Yoho national parks:

> Public opinion is changing, and Club policy is likewise shifting to give greater emphasis to preserving the park unimpaired for future generations while encouraging present use in ways that we think are most appropriate to the alpine wilderness, and are relatively undemanding on the environment....The Club submission on the provisional master plans was coordinated by the Conservation Committee so perhaps a conservationist point of view was to be expected. But there was a surprisingly broad and intense participation extending from the Board

> through the various committees, local sections, to individual members. The emphasis was on encouraging greater foot travel throughout the park by development of carefully sited trails, shelters, and huts. At the same time, while admitting that members enjoyed the use of roads, the submission opposed most of the suggested new roads as "any small gains in convenience of access that might result from additional roads would be outweighed by the loss of wilderness values."[45]

Henceforth, the club's vision of mountain parks highlighted the protection of "wilderness values" to safeguard the backcountry through zoning and minimum impact practices. Park wilderness was still defined as a place for people but a regulated place to visit on foot in search of recreation for the well-governed citizen.

The visions of national parks put forward by ACC mountaineers at the hearings were not without certain ambiguities and contradictions. Wildlife ecology was foremost in the planning discourse of habitat protection and wilderness zoning adopted by the ACC from the CWS, but this priority was closely combined with the intent for human recreational use. The parks were increasingly seen as interconnected ecological systems supporting diverse life forms, along with a political economy of tourism and low-impact visitation in the backcountry. Minimum impact necessitated conduct that veered away from the mass gatherings, woodcraft camping, and campfire burning practices still common in the club in 1970, particularly at the annual general mountaineering camps. The shifting paradigms constructing national park policy boded significant changes for the ACC and its operations. The masculinist discourse of a wilderness territorialized by fit and able athletic bodies in a sporting landscape overlooked the *de facto* history of travelers of all ages, sizes, and abilities, along with families, who did in fact go to the mountain park backcountry–women, men, war veterans, amputees, people with weak hearts, older people, children, and babies–some by direct means of the ACC camps and huts, not to mention adaptive users who would ultimately surpass previous boundaries by climbing with artificial limbs or riding non-motorized trail aids. It also overlooked the contemporaneous ACC family camps premised on the inclusion of children and camping for family leisure. The ACC vision of national parks as a wilderness and recreation domain for backcountry adventures on foot was in many ways an urban middle-class aspiration that contrasted with some of the concerns expressed by other stakeholders at the 1971 hearings.

The flip side of wilderness backcountry was the frontcountry. The Edmonton YMCA, for example, drew attention to the needs of "families of limited means" and wanted to ensure that national parks had room for them, such as it had provided at its frontcountry camp on Lake Edith in Jasper park since 1920, but which was newly jeopardized by changing national park leasehold policies coming into effect to phase it out.[46] At the hearings in Golden, British Columbia, Mrs. Minnie Wilder from Fairmont Hotsprings spoke out as a representative for the Windermere District Chamber of Commerce in favour of the park plans. "We hear an awful lot about people too lazy to use the trails. For your information there's babies come into the park, there's old age, there's people in wheel chairs, everyone cannot get out on the side roads, nor off on the trails." She went on saying "most Canadian families start teaching their families the nature's way [sic] through the car window first. ...And we must take care of that whole family unit...not just the man who wishes to hike or the naturalist."[47] The boundaries and dividing lines between recreational uses and zoning classifications were seen in different ways and contested. "We use our machines to go to nature, not through it," stated Ron LaRoy for the Golden Snow Kings

Snowmobile Club based in a logging town near Yoho National Park. He made the case for snowmobilers touring valleys in Yoho, arguing "the parks are ours, as much as they are the skiers, or the hikers or the campers. If areas can be set aside for these groups, then why not for us?"[48]

Contested social relations and the social reconstruction of meanings politicizing space were an ongoing process in the making of the mountain parks. The Four Mountain Park planning exercise was a political process of contestation and control, sanctioned by the public and the state apparatus, whereby certain meanings were privileged and emerged as dominant. The influence of the ACC and other stakeholders was embedded in the outcomes.

"Wilderness values" emerging by 1971 were constructed as prime considerations for national park management to safeguard mountain ecosystems. This implied quiet, unroaded, unmotorized, and "natural" habitats occupied by non-consumptive human recreational uses; it also implied bodily disciplines and economies characteristic of the habitus of ACC mountaineers and like-minded people.[49] Part of what defined national parks as places was a behavioural regime constituting and constituted as cultural difference and relations of power. Park boundaries, zoning, regulation of trail networks, shelter systems, trip registration, and safety processes were rationalized design mechanisms running through space and time that rendered the mountain parks as places for the exercise and control of human activity on the part of the state, the well governed citizen, and the disciplined bodies in mountain recreation, sport and tourism.[50] Ultimately, the ACC's input to master park plans and related political processes produced mountain national parks as a machine for the "freedom of the hills"–a romanticized dream of liberation, wilderness, and embodiment ideologically espoused and enacted by mountaineers.[51]

The realization among mountaineers that trail networks could regulate the frequency and density of visitation, for example, was newly visited as a positive social control in wilderness management because it preserved an illusion of freedom while operating simultaneously as a constraint. Some self-reflecting mountaineers observed this duality, and the ACC brief expressed it at the 1971 public hearings. Similarly the new code of "Mountain Manners" promoted through the club's Conservation Committee produced a different economy of embodied resource-use behaviours for travel and camping in the mountains. They were presumed to be welcome self-disciplines to the well-governed citizen as a necessary part of stewardship to address environmental concerns in the political economy of the mountain parks.

But the four mountain parks envisioned by the ACC were more than a disciplining mechanism of governance. They were also home. Parks were material and discursive places of being and affective belonging for mountaineers. Here was potential for a largely urban-based constituency to conceive of wilderness as a home place.[52] Part of the sense of being "at home" in the mountains for many ACC climbers was produced through sensual geographies of the moving body outdoors.[53] They knew themselves as alive and part of nature through the body. Thinking and sensing came together as ways of knowing. Sense of self and sense of nature brought together epistemology and ethics. In 1974, Habgood summed up his personal outdoor ethic as "a striving for non-consumptive enjoyment of nature":

> This, of course, is only an ideal because, although the pleasure I experience in the mountains is all in my head, I require some experience through my senses–seeing the wild streams and the ice-falls, feeling the rock and the push of the wind, smelling the vegetation in the hot sun, straining my muscles against gravity, and

> being aware of the solitude–and in the course of this experiencing I consume a bit of the naturalness, the wildness, and the solitude.[54]

Although he seemed to imply a Cartesian mind/body duality, this way of knowing nature was embodied knowledge engaged by a mountaineer through thinking *and* feeling in the mountains. This intimate form of knowledge was often ingrained into place attachment in making meanings about mountains. An ecology of self and world was thus known subjectively through the mountaineering body as in and of nature; existential meanings of the self/nature were also grounded subjectively in place.[55]

Proposals to pave paradise resulted in reexamination and vocal conservation advocacy. Roadless valleys in today's parks are a legacy of this public participation and democratic dissent in civil society. The ACC and other Canadians rejected the 1968 plans for the Four Mountain Parks issued by the Parks Branch. Influenced by the new environmental movement, key ACC members rearticulated and renewed the club's commitment to conservation as it developed an emergent awareness of the environmental limits of recreation and tourism. The club intervened to challenge the state's master park plans, and, along with minimum impact doctrines and applied conservation ethics, it reasserted mountaineering as a privileged habitus.

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[1] For context, see pp. 2 and 8, in C.J. Taylor, "The Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow Conference of 1968 vs. Banff and Jasper National Parks," Canadian Parks for Tomorrow Conference 40th Anniversary, CD Rom, May 8-12, 2008, 1-11. J.G. Nelson with R.C. Scace, ed., *Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow: Background Papers* (Calgary, 1968); also see J.G. Nelson with R.C. Scace, ed., *Canadian Parks in Perspective: Based on the Conference The Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow, Calgary, October 1968* (Quebec: Harvest House, 1970, c. 1969).

[2] "Conservation," *The Gazette* 76 (November 1970):11-12.

[3] E-mail interview, Migme Chödran to P.A. Reichwein, March 11-16, 2010. Chödran (Thelma Habgood) shared recollections of her life with Harry Habgood.

[4] "Conservation Committee," *The Gazette* 74 (November 1969): 3-4.

[5] "Conservation Committee," *The Gazette* 74 (November 1969): 3-4.

[6] For discussion of minimum impact ideologies and outdoor recreation, see James Morton Turner, "From Woodcraft to 'Leave No Trace,': Wilderness, Consumerism, and Environmentalism in Twentieth-Century America," *Environmental History* 7, no. 3(July 2002): 462-84.

[7] Backcountry use and cumulative impacts in the mountain national parks were the subject of various studies, for example, see Garry C. Trottier and George W. Scotter, *A Survey of Backcountry Use and the resulting impact near Lake Louise, Banff National Park* (Edmonton: Canadian Wildlife Service, 1973).

[8] MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 222-23. MacEachern contended that the Parks Branch saw its own actions contributing to "manmade change" and that this realization, along with other factors, contributed to an ideological shift away from interventionism; however, a disjuncture between ideology and action was evident as continuing demands to accommodate visitors mitigated against entirely adopting a new philosophy and park development continued in the 1960s. I situate the early provisional Four Mountain Park master plans at the site of this disjuncture.

[9] "Notes from the Conservation Committee," *The Gazette* 75 (May 1970): 5. All references are cited from this page.

[10] J.G. Nelson with R.C. Scace, ed., *Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow: Background Papers* (Calgary, 1968). The conference also led to a well-known book published as J.G. Nelson with R.C. Scace, ed., *Canadian Parks in Perspective: Based on the Conference The Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow, Calgary, October 1968* (Quebec: Harvest House, 1970, c. 1969). Many academics and graduate students in national park research also contributed directly to policy formation through the Four Mountain Park planning hearings and

associated briefs in 1971.
[11] "Conservation," *The Gazette* 76 (November 1970): 11-12.
[12] "Conservation Committee," *The Gazette* 77 (May 1971): 4.
[13] WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 2, "Mountain Manners"; "Conservation," *The Gazette* 78 (November 1971): 14-15; "Mountain Manners," *The Gazette* 79 (May 1972): 6; "Conservation," *The Gazette* 80 (November 1972):16.
[14] "Conservation," *The Gazette* 80 (November 1972): 16.
[15] Andrew Gruff, "Editorial," CAJ 53 (1970): 45.
[16] James W. Thorsell, "On Planning Canada's Mountain National Parks," CAJ 54 (1971): 18-19. Subsequent references to the Thorsell article draw on these pages. Thorsell joined the club as an associate member in 1967, see *The Alpine Club of Canada List of Members* (1967): 34.
[17] Elizabeth Lumley, "Thorsell, James Westvick" in *Canada's Who's Who* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001): 1285; for his early research studies, see J.W. Thorsell, *An analysis of mountaineering and ski touring registrations, Banff National Park, 1966-67* (Ottawa, National Parks Service, Planning, National and Historic Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1967).
[18] WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 3, "YACE List of Participants in First and Second Camps," May 25, 1967, p. 3.
[19] James W. Thorsell, "On Planning Canada's Mountain National Parks," CAJ 54 (1971): 18-19.
[20] Thorsell quoted Garrett Hardin, "We Must Earn for Ourselves What We Have Inherited," in *Wilderness at the Edge of Knowledge*, ed. M.E. McCloskey, (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1970), n.p.; see James W. Thorsell, "On Planning Canada's Mountain National Parks," CAJ 54 (1971): 18-19.
[21] The discursive production, discipline, and surveillance of fit and unfit bodies has been analyzed in Foucauldian sport sociology studies, see Brian Pronger, *Body Fascism: Salvation in the Technology of Physical Fitness* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Jennifer Smith-Maguire, "Michel Foucault: Sport, power, technologies and governmentality," in *Theory, sport and society*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Kevin Young (Oxford: Elsevier Science, 2002), 293-314; Pirkko Markula and Richard Pringle, *Foucault, sport and exercise: Power, knowledge and transforming the self* (London: Routledge, 2006), 51-71.
[22] John Marsh completed his PhD, "Man, Landscape and Recreation in Glacier National Park, British Columbia, 1890 to present," at the University of Calgary in 1971 and became a professor of geography at Trent University. Archives Network of Alberta, John Marsh fonds, http://asalive.archivesalberta.org:8080/access/asa/archaa/display/WHYTE-628 (accessed November 13, 2008). Trent University Archives, Professor John Marsh fonds, http://www.trentu.ca/admin/library/archives/03-002.htm (accessed November 13, 2008).
[23] See p. 40 in John Marsh, "Glacier National Park," CAJ 54 (1971): 39-40; for background, see John Marsh, "A History of Backcountry Facilities in Glacier National Park," CAJ 55 (1972): 66-67.
[24] Dan Phelps, "Conservation, Preservation–Same Thing," CAJ 54 (1971): 58-59. Subsequent references to Phelps draw on these pages.
[25] Canada, "Transcript of proceedings of public hearings on Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks, April 19 to 26, 1971, at Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver," vols. I-V (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, 1971). Hearings were held in Calgary on April 19-20, Edmonton on April 22-23, and Vancouver on April 26. Canada, "Preliminary report of the public meeting on Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks at Golden, British Columbia, May 10, 1971," (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971).
[26] For further discussion of public hearings related to provisional master park plans for national parks in the Maritimes, see MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 234-39.
[27] Kopas, 67-95.
[28] *Transcript of Proceedings*, vol. III, pp. 97-101. Subsequent references to Habgood's presentation draw from these pages.
[29] *Transcript of Proceedings*, vol. IV, 107.
[30] For the full brief submitted as to hearings see WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 3, Calgary Section of the Alpine Club of Canada, "A Brief on the Provisional Master Plans for Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Yoho National Parks," Calgary, Alberta, April 19-20, 1971, pp. i and 5.
[31] *Transcripts of Proceedings*, Calgary, April 19, vol. I, (July 1971), 127.
[32] References to Bob Jordan are drawn from *Transcripts of Proceedings*, vol. II, 45-49.
[33] Canadian Wildlife Service, *Some Ecological Considerations Relating to the Provisional Master Plans for Jasper and Banff National Parks, Alberta and Kootenay and Yoho National Parks, British Columbia* (Edmonton: Canadian Wildlife Service, April 1969): 1, 4, 5, 10, 14. The CWS specifically opposed the classification for Class III Natural

Environment Area, as did the ACC, as it was seen to jeopardize Class II lands with the risk of creeping development, see p. 2. CWS also opposed more commercial ski hills in the national parks. On the other hand, walking was prioritized based on the following rationale: "The resources of national parks should be used but not consumed. Nonconsumptive use if regulated is perfectly compatible with nature preservation. The best example of nonconsumptive use is hiking. Walking through wildlands unaltered by man's action can be equally refreshing to body and spirit yet leave the landscape unimpaired. To facilitate foot travel a well-planned network of trails should be established in zones named 'Wilderness Recreation Area.' The construction of trails involves minor alterations of the landscape. However, if well planned and executed the damage is minimal. Along the network of trails, cabins spaced at intervals of one day's walking, should be constructed." See p. 5.

[34] *Transcripts of Proceedings*, vol. V, 54-60. Subsequent references to Jim Thorsell's presentation draw from these pages.

[35] See *Transcripts of Proceedings*, Calgary, April 19, vol. I, (July 1971), 96. Thorsell obtained his PhD from in 1971, see Elizabeth Lumley, "Thorsell, James Westvick" in *Canada's Who's Who* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001): 1285.

[36] For an example of the emerging approach to backcountry management see, H. Sheppard, N. Woledge, O. Hermanrude, R. Wood, and W. Vroom, "Backcountry Management Plan for the Four Contiguous Mountain National Parks, 1973," (Field, BC: Indian and Northern Affairs), 25 September 1973.

[37] See pp. 8-9 in C.J. Taylor, "The Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow Conference of 1968 vs. Banff and Jasper National Parks," Canadian Parks for Tomorrow Conference 40th Anniversary, CD Rom, May 8-12, 2008, pp. 1-11. Davidson cited from Taylor.

[38] Librarian Katharine Kinnear, Parks Canada Agency, Calgary, indicated the Four Mountain Park plans that were revised following the 1971 public hearings became working documents under "provisional" titles until replaced by *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks* (1988). The author appreciates her insights.

[47] I appreciate the comments of librarian Katharine Kinnear, Parks Canada Agency, Calgary, who advised the Four Mountain Park plans that were revised following the 1971 public hearings became working documents under "provisional" titles until replaced by *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks* (1988).

[39] While centrism was certainly not demobilized, the provisional master plan hearings nonetheless marked a beginning in the transformation to participatory governance that led to later management changes, see C. Lloyd Brown-John, "Canada's National Parks Policy: From Bureaucrats to Collaborative Managers," Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference 2006, unpublished paper, http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/template_e.cfm?folder=conference&page_name=agm-papers-2006.htm (accessed November 28, 2008); Kopas, 93.

[40] See pp. 8-9, in C.J. Taylor, "The Canadian National Parks Today and Tomorrow Conference of 1968 vs. Banff and Jasper National Parks," Canadian Parks for Tomorrow Conference 40th Anniversary, CD Rom, May 8-12, 2008, pp. 1-11.

[41] Alpine Club of Canada, "Brief to the Four Mountain Parks Planning Programme," Edmonton, 30 May 1983, in "Letters and Briefs from Four Mountain Parks Planning Program 1983 Public Session," Parks Canada Western Regional Office, Calgary.

[42] Cultural assumptions about nature, beauty, and the sublime worked to privilege mountains and wilderness in the selection of early national parks in Canada, see MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 36-40, 239.

[43] Harry Habgood, "Preservation vs. Use in the National Parks," CAJ (1972): 67-68. Subsequent references to Habgood's article draw on these pages.

[44] WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 3, David Fisher Papers, "A National Park in the Yukon: a brief submitted by the Conservation Committee to the Board of Management of the Alpine Club of Canada," Edmonton, Alberta, January 18, 1972; WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 3, David Fisher Papers, "Ragged Range National Park: A Proposal to National and Historic Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development from The Alpine Club of Canada," David R. Fisher, President, n.d., draft version; WMCR, M200, accn. 6375, box 3, David Fisher Papers, "A National Park in the Cumberland Peninsula of Baffin Island: A brief prepared by the Alpine Club of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario," January 25, 1972.

[45] Harry Habgood, "Preservation vs. Use in the National Parks," CAJ (1972): 67-68.

[46] *Transcript of Proceedings*, vol. III, 94-97. Mr. A.E. Nightingale presented the brief for the Edmonton YMCA. He further commented: "There are many people, and many groups of people, and many families who lack the facilities

for camping, or for reasons of health, physique, or inclination, will not wish to camp out. These people should not be ignored in developing policy for national parks. They should not be greeted with a no-admittance sign at the gates, because if they are so greeted, they are put in the position, perhaps, of helping finance facilities which they themselves cannot afford." The YMCA also advocated for wilderness protection and conservation, partly through education, suggesting that nature study centres would contribute to producing "a better informed public which will result in more citizen self-control of pollution within our parks and country." See p. 96.

[47] Canada, "Preliminary report of the public meeting on Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks at Golden, British Columbia, May 10, 1971," (Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971), 20-23.

[48] Ibid., 13-15.

[49] For habitus as a system of dispositions, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984), 169-74, 215-19. For discussion, see pp. 166-68 in Alan Tomlinson, "Pierre Bourdieu and the Sociological Study of Sport" in *Sport and Modern Social Theorists*, ed. Richard Giulianotti (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 161-72; Grant Jarvie and Joseph Maguire, *Sport and leisure in social thought* (London: Routledge, 1994), 183-209.

[50] Segmentation, territorialization, and surveillance worked to discipline park space and its users through rationalized design and controls. For a Foucauldian theorization of sportscapes, see John Bale, *Landscapes of Modern Sport* (London: Leicester University Press, 1994): 67-84. Internalizing embodied regimes and regulating the self are central to how Foucault conceptualized panopticism/discipline and bio-power/governmentality. Self surveillance was also instrumental in affecting discipline and generating disciplinary power as an integrated network of relations, see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 1977), 176-77, 201-03. C.L. Cole, Michael D. Giardina and David L. Andrews, "Michel Foucault: Studies of Power and Sport," in *Sport and Modern Social Theorists*, ed. Richard Giulianotti (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 207-23; Jennifer Smith-Maguire, "Michel Foucault: Sport, power, technologies and governmentality," in *Theory, Sport and Society*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Kevin Young (Oxford: Elsevier Science, 2002), 293-314; Pirkko Markula and Richard Pringle, *Foucault, sport and exercise: Power, knowledge and transforming the self* (London: Routledge, 2006).

[51] The French architect Le Courbusier discussed landscapes as machines for sport, see John Bale, "Human Geography and the Study of Sport," in *Handbook of Sport Studies*, ed. Jay J. Coakley and Eric Dunning (London: Sage 2002), 180. Harvey Manning et al., *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills* (Seattle: Mountaineers Society, 1967). I take the guide book title as synonymous with ideological pursuits of North American mountaineering.

[52] Bale discussed how sporting landscapes, such as stadia, can generate topophilia and a sense of place associated as home by those who frequent there or know it. Regarding topophilia for home existing in sporting landscapes in apparent contradiction and tension with topophobia for landscapes that constrain, see John Bale, *Landscapes of Modern Sport* (London: Leicester University Press, 1994), 120-21, 131-34, 146. For reflections on ecologies of home, see Stan Rowe, *Home Places: Essays on Ecology* (Edmonton: NeWest Press 2002); Patricia Vertinsky and John Bale ed., *Sites of Sport: Space, Place, Experience* (London: Routledge, 2004), 1-7; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

[53] Here I draw on John Bale, *Landscapes of Modern Sport*, 132-33, 144

[54] Harry Habgood, "Swan Song from the Conservation Chairman," *The Gazette* 83 (May 1974): 5.

[55] See p. 24, Patricia Vertinsky, "Locating a "Sense of Place': Space, Place and Gender in the Gymnasium" in Patricia Vertinsky and John Bale ed., *Sites of Sport: Space, Place, Experience* (London: Routledge, 2004), 8-24.

Light Green Ethics and the Olympic Games Movement

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I will describe a strand of ecological ethics, known as light green ethics,[1] and then examine and critique recent environmental initiatives, policies, programs and games hosted by or affiliated with the International Olympic Committee (IOC). I will demonstrate that the IOC and the bid and host organizing committees of the Olympic Games continue to follow the paradigm of light green ethics as Helen Lenskyj (18) argued over a dozen years ago in her study of the 2000 Sydney Olympics. I will also show that although ecological theories, environmental requirements and practical implementation recommendations are now fully entrenched within the Olympic movement which no host city can ignore, how well environmental initiatives succeed in any given Olympiad is still contentious from an ethical perspective.

There are a number of schools of thought when it comes to ecological ethics. One of these is called light green or shallow ethics, which exemplifies an anthropocentric perspective (5). This human-centered approach may be understood in at least two senses. The first states merely that all values are generated by and for human beings as a factual matter. Therefore, any ecological discussion about the earth and nonhuman beings will always involve human-centered values. However, what this view does not capture is the idea that human beings may not be the core recipients or subjects of human values. If nonhuman beings and entities are never given priority by people, then anthropocentrism takes on a second sense whereby it discriminates for no good reason and ignores a "concern for nonhuman lives and life forms for their sake rather than for our own" (26: p. 13).

The latter meaning of anthropocentrism characterizes light green ethics. On this view, environmental issues are identified and dealt with as means toward the fulfillment of human goals, desires and aspirations. In other words, any human intervention to improve the environment is purposeful and altruistic (14). Human beings are the only ones capable of acting on behalf of nature and nonhuman beings to sustain the totality of life on earth. Whereas nonhuman animals typically fend for themselves and nature just "is," people have the capacity to engage other sentient beings and non-sentient entities to ensure that human life flourishes.

It is rather clear that light green ethics operates from a self-interested perspective where concern for the environment is limited and exploitation of resources is permitted to a certain degree. Businesses, governments, and institutions make use of technology and science to find new ways to encroach on nature all in the name of advancing human interests. This type of progress is fuelled by consumerism—the notion that human well-being is achieved by greater wealth and increased levels of consumption. Moreover, the anthropocentric view of the environment has a long history and is well supported in traditional religious thought whereby human beings are granted the status of stewards or caretakers of and have dominion over the natural world. In the modern age, utilitarian philosophers and social theorists advocate human ends such as personal and collective happiness by which to measure utility. Thus on a utilitarian calculus, shared human interests and communal goods take precedence and are the primary standards by which to gauge conflicts with environmental problems (22).

The Olympic Games movement has shown a serious growing concern for environmental issues for over 30 years although it took on more formal positions on the environment and sustainability in the 1990s. These positions were influenced by the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and several national and international business and economic organizations whose respective mandates include statements on environmental responsibility (25). In 1991 the IOC declared through its charter that it would attend seriously to environmental concerns. This led to the IOC formally adding to the existing pillars of sport and culture environmental protection as the third dimension of the Olympic movement (3). In 1995 the IOC established the Sport and Environment Commission and a year later it included an environmental paragraph in the Olympic Charter, and established Agenda 21 in 1999 to encourage sustainable development. The 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics in Japan was the first Games to follow the IOC's new environment policy. Since then, all Olympic Games bids must adhere to a set of environmental criteria if a host city wishes to stage one of the world's most popular mega sporting events (10). The IOC produced a comprehensive guide and manual to spell out the principles and practical ways to achieve green sports. The manual lists biodiversity conservation, protection of ecosystems, land use, pollution, resource and waste management, health and safety, and safeguarding cultural heritage as the main concepts and topics related to sport and the environment. It also covers legislation, individual and collective responsibilities, environmental partners and event management, plus a range of specific areas like location and landscape, facilities, equipment, transportation, energy, accommodation and catering, and water management (11).

Since 1994 the IOC has joined with UNEP to enhance awareness and educate people on sport and sustainable development. A number of World Conferences on sport and the environment have been held, the most recent in Doha, Qatar in May of 2011. Over the last decade, the IOC and UNEP have worked closely with and provide resources for bid and host organizing committees for the Olympic Games and National Olympic Committees through regional workshops and seminars. One of these resources is the Olympic Games Impact study, created in 2003, which measures the overall impact of hosting the Games by measuring over 100 indicators divided into economic, socio-cultural and environmental categories (10). Highlighting a few examples of recent Olympics Games and their environmental initiatives and impact will demonstrate that they continue to adhere to a light green ethics paradigm.

According to many, the first ecological games to implement sound and effective environmental policies and programs were the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games in Norway. This came about because the 1992 Albertville Winter Olympics were an environmental disaster which the IOC did not want to repeat, and the Norwegians had the leadership and were already experienced in and supportive of environmental initiatives even before formal guidelines were in place. In fact, members of the Norwegian organizing committee were instrumental in establishing IOC environmental policies and action plans (3; 19).

In 1993 the bidding process for the 2000 Sydney Olympics was the first to follow the IOC's environmental procedures. This mega-event was touted as the Green Games and its main environmental achievements included accessible public transportation, use of solar power and advanced building materials, recycling of construction waste, energy and water conservation, and wetland restoration (10). Olympic sponsors were also encouraged to adopt environmental strategies in the areas of waste management, recycling, refrigeration coolants and lighting (7). However, as Kearins and Pavlovich (13) argue, at the local level and among the many stakeholders involved there were internal tensions in managing the green event. Not all

stakeholders shared a common vision and negotiating every facet of producing greener games added undue costs and numerous peripheral demands. The green losses at the Sydney Olympics included sponsors who did not go green, poor quality merchandising, use of environmentally harmful refrigerant, loss of some biodiversity and failure to clean pollution in Homebush Bay. Critics also claimed that "best practice" standards were not always followed, there was a lack of transparency on the part of the organizing committee, and few ecocentric or dark green ethics suggestions were acted upon (19). The 2000 Sydney Olympics reminds one that despite the laudable intentions and plans and heightened awareness of environmental issues, shortcomings are likely inevitable and better coordination with all stakeholders is required to achieve green success (21).

The 2004 Athens Olympics was the first to comply with the Olympic movement's Agenda 21 that expresses the commitment to environmental responsibility and practice. Major projects to revitalize and upgrade a number of urban and suburban areas were carried out. These included the Olympic Village and the Olympic Sailing Centre, plus other initiatives to reconnect the city center with the sea through the redevelopment of the Faliron Coastal area where a number of competitions were staged. Sustainable infrastructure designs were linked to Athen's historical sites through pedestrian walkways and this effort was part of the legacy strategy of hosting the Games. Finally, the most significant environmental developments occurred around improving transportation and air quality. Integrating and extending interconnecting highways and public transportation together with new emission standards enhanced mobility and quality of life factors (7). It should also be noted that Athens was the first post-9/11 Olympic Games where security procedures were a priority and these costs reached an all-time high at that point. However Athens was not without its environmental shortcomings. Lack of reliance on solar-powered energy, poor environmental planning and evaluation, protection of fragile natural and cultural areas, waste management and water conservation, and reduced use of environmentally-friendly construction technologies were green setbacks (8).

One of the strongest elements of Beijing's bid for the 2008 Olympic Games was its environmental action plan and the financial resources committed to sustainable development. According to one account, over 17 billion dollars were spent on environmental initiatives and infrastructure alone (9). Due to the economic boom in China in the 1990s Beijing expanded rapidly creating numerous environmental stresses and deprivation, especially in terms of air and water quality. Olympic organizers established an Environmental Management System in line with international sustainability standards and developed a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment framework covering an expansive set of environmental targets.

The most significant gains were in relation to Beijing's notoriously poor air quality. Fuel quality was enhanced significantly and is now comparable to that in Europe, and today Beijing has one of the strictest emission standards in the world (27). Ozone-depleting hydrochlorofluorocarbons were lowered to almost zero levels thereby reducing global greenhouse effects. Carbon monoxide pollution was reduced by almost half and particulate matters were lowered by 20 percent. Nitrogen and sulfur dioxide levels that are the main sources of acid rain pollution were lowered by 38 and 14 percent respectively. These efforts increased so-called "blue sky days" where air pollution is the lightest from 180 to 274 days. Heavy restrictions were also placed on truck and industry pollution before and after the Olympics were held. Even though light-rail tracks doubled, air quality and vehicle congestion continue to plague Beijing where a 1,000 new vehicles are registered daily (9).

The Beijing Games could boast several other environmental improvements in areas such as waste management, recycling programs, renewable energy, the expansion of green space, and the planting of 30 million trees and bushes. Few can disagree with the assertion that the Beijing Games implemented many lasting environmental initiatives and sustainable projects. Yet despite its many successes, some contend that organizers did not work closely enough with nonprofit organizations, environmental awareness and educational campaigns fell short, soot and fine particle pollution were not regulated, tougher procurement measures were not enforced with suppliers that may have led to shortcuts detrimental to the environment, and air quality continues to be a pressing ongoing concern (9).

As for Canada's Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010, known as the "sustainability" Games, the environmental report card contains mixed scores. On the plus side the Olympic Village built in the False Creek area achieved a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver achievement rating. This meant, among other things, that solar panels and "green roofs" were outfitted; hydronic heating systems heated the floors; high efficiency boilers heated the water; rainwater was collected for low-flush toilets; efficient waste management systems and compostable bins were in place, and no fans were needed to circulate air that cut down on the amount dust. Moreover, many building materials were made from recycled trees that were destroyed from storms and beetle infestation (15). The village would later be part of a sustainable neighborhood that was once an industrial zone, and units at the two other villages would be sold as condominiums after the Games.

The official car of Vancouver 2010 was the hydrogen-powered Chevy Equinox. Olympic transportation included the use of 20 hydrogen-powered buses, and 4,500 flex-fuel vehicles, hybrids and traditional, fuel efficient cars. Two Chevy Volts are also part of the Olympic fleet of cars. Other transportation strategies included the encouragement of public transit use by offering free unlimited rides to Olympic ticket holders on the day of their event and banning spectator parking at all venues. Moreover, the Vancouver Games were the first Olympics to track carbon emissions from the time of winning the bid until the end of the games. It also had a program to offset emissions by buying carbon credits (15).

At the Whistler Olympic Park, staff used biodegradable cleaners and soaps, and nontoxic snow-melting products on walkways; all waste water was filtered and monitored daily before being returned to Madely Creek that was home to a variety of wildlife. The same treatment plant provided 90% of the energy for domestic heat and hot water. The relocation of plants, trees and frogs to similar habitats was another sustainable practice during construction. And although there was no indication the Games would face a blackout, low-emission generators were in place to ensure reduced greenhouse gas effects in the event the generators were needed (15).

On the negative side, the most contentious issue of the Vancouver Olympics was the failed but valiantly fought campaign to save the Eagleridge Bluffs from the expansion of the Sea to Skyway highway, part of the 120-kilometer distance between Vancouver and Whistler (20). Those who led the protest felt betrayed by Olympic organizers and later witnessed a 50-metre by 2.4 kilometer swath that saw rare arbutus trees cut down, various species of old growth removed, 4,800 trees destroyed, and damage to wetlands that was home to the endangered red-legged frog. More environmental harm was carried out on the highway between Squamish and Whistler while the bulk of tree loss occurred in the Callaghan Valley where the estimates range from 90 to 125,000 trees (24). In addition to harming the habitat of the red-legged frog, habitat damage threatened migratory birds on the bluffs and grizzly bears and caribou in the Callaghan Valley. There were also major shortcomings according to critics on measuring the carbon footprint at the

Vancouver Games. For example, commercial air travel, emissions due to increased traffic on the Sea to Skyway highway as well as the emission-costs to bring hydrogen gas from Quebec were not counted. Finally, as it happened, a mild spell hit just before the Games and there was a lack of snow on Cypress Mountain just outside of Vancouver where mogul, aerial, ski cross and snowboard cross competitions were scheduled. The contingency plan was to truck—even helicopter in—snow from outside the area and use stockpiles of artificial snow which, if chemically-produced, could harm the environment (24). Thus the environmental report card for the "sustainable" Games in Vancouver contained high and low scores.

As for the 2012 Olympic Games in London, only the environmental promises and a few organizational initiatives may be reported on briefly at this time. The theme for the London Games is "Towards a One Planet 2012;" it refers to acknowledging and living within the world's resources as situated and reflected in a local setting. In 2005, the environmental plan focused on four areas: low carbon emissions related to venues and infrastructure, transportation and offsetting emissions; zero waste; biodiversity; and eco-awareness and partnerships (16). Two years later, organizers pledged to host the greenest Games ever that would substantially transform London for years to come. Examples of these changes included 90% of demolition materials would be recycled, 20% of electricity would be provided from renewable sources, and all buildings would be more energy efficient. In addition waterways, roads, bridges, urban parks and public transportation would be significantly upgraded (1). The latest sustainability report published in April 2011 details the main themes that comprise "the blueprint for change," namely, climate change, waste, biodiversity, inclusion and healthy living. Each theme is explained in terms of building the stage of the London Games; the event management phase of the Games that includes how low carbon, zero waste, food quality, procurement, licensing, sponsorship, delivery, employment, healthy living and inclusion will be achieved in sustainable ways; the governance structure; and the legacy plans. Should the sustainable goals of the 2012 London Games be realized then it may well indeed fulfill its promise of being the greenest games ever.

However, like the very best thought out plans, there are bound to be possible shortcomings. For example, in an effort to lower CO^2 emissions, there is an initiative to have 20 to 50 hydrogen fuelled taxi cabs, 150 hydrogen-powered buses and six hydrogen filling stations ready for the London Games (12). Yet Olympic officials were warned a few months earlier by a grassroots organization that without more electric cars on the road, air pollution (especially harmful levels of nitrogen dioxide), air quality and sustainable travel targets would be difficult to meet (17). Moreover, if the United Kingdom does not meet specific European Union air quality targets, a lawsuit may be launched against the Olympic host country as early as a month before the Games. No doubt such a development would be a huge embarrassment to those hoping to put on the greenest Games ever (2).

By way of conclusion, let me begin by saying there are over 300 organizations worldwide interested in the Olympic movement directly and indirectly. Some support the movement, others are critical of it and some wish to see the Olympic Games vanish out of existence. As a multinational corporation, the IOC has no choice but to operate from a light green ethics stance. Human interests and an anthropocentric bias will always be its main priorities and for the critics and detractors this prejudice will always trump ecological and sustainable development problems. Bidding for and hosting the Games are extraordinary complex endeavors that involve many diverse stakeholders at many levels. To satisfy all of them is an impossible task. Yet, can one seriously say the Olympic movement is not committed to environmental responsibility?

Many critics and anti-Olympic advocates would answer in the affirmative. However more often than not I find their works to be full of hyperbole and shrill, their arguments faulty and evidence highly selective, and there are no clear distinctions between environmental issues and political, social and economic ones when there needs be. Plus, comparing Olympic officials and political leaders to fascists and Stalinists is inflammatory, slanderous and unhelpful (24: p. 240). On the view of dissenters, one cut tree, one displaced person or animal, one millilitre of effluent, one molecule of CO^2 are each one too many (of course I am exaggerating). Even when naysayers must acknowledge real environmental Olympic achievements, it is buried in their rhetoric and granted grudgingly. It is also interesting to note that not all ecocentric groups are on the same page. When the David Suzuki Foundation, for the most part, endorsed the environmental projects and strategies of the Vancouver Games, it was roundly chastised by other green organizations and Olympic protesters for selling out (24). But what about the other side?

Today, Olympic supporters and apologists bend over backwards to demonstrate and showcase that they are champions of the environment. They point to the third pillar, statements in the Charter, the IOC's affiliation with UNEP, Agenda 21, the Environment Commission, environmental bid requirements, legacy rules and strategies, management, awareness and educational campaigns, conferences on the environment and sport, and influencing corporate partners and governments to adopt green practices. All these efforts and guidelines are now part and parcel of the Olympic movement and are positive steps. Yet, the scandals, shortcomings and failures persist. Someone is getting rich, calling in favors, or getting away with something on the backs of others. Besides scrapping the Games entirely, there will always be an environmental cost to pay someone or somewhere. Moreover, the ecological bid promises never quite measure up to the realities on the ground, transparency and disclosure are never fully achieved, crisis management and manipulation through the media are the names of the game as well as co-opting as many green organizations as one can. This is the nature of the beast, the way light green ethics operates in the Olympic movement and there are no apologies for this by Olympic advocates.

However, if you want to read less polemical accounts of the Olympics and the environment, I suggest you turn to research conducted by engineers, architects, urban planners and economists who carry out assessment and impact studies (4; 23). Although their work is highly technical and empirically sophisticated, it's refreshing to read studies that don't have an axe to grind or engage in self-righteous chest beating. Yet even these scholars admit that it is virtually impossible to measure accurately the carbon footprint and other environmental outcomes of the Olympic Games.

In this sense, I believe that the light green ethics approach in the Olympic movement refers mostly to differences in degree not differences in kind or substance. For the past two decades all stakeholders affiliated with the Olympic movement have been and are showing greater concern and responsibility for the environment, and are encouraging more green practices by more people in more places. Yet all is not perfect and absolutely right all the time. The optimist in me still welcomes the protracted debate between watchdog groups, green protesters and Olympic apologists because as long as the dialogue continues, however fierce, then there is hope that a genuine environmentally friendly and sustainable Olympic Games is possible.

Notes

1. The explication of light green ethics below is adapted from DeSensi and Rosenberg (6) in a chapter entitled "Concern for the Environment."

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Humans 1, Earth 0: The High Cost of Getting Healthy

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It has been reported so often that it is now taken for granted that there is an "epidemic of obesity" in the United States. According to numbers from the US Centers for Disease Control, in "preschool children aged 2-5, obesity increased from 5.0% to 10.4% between 1976-1980 and 2007-2008 and from 6.5% to 19.6% among those aged 6-11. Among adolescents aged 12-19, obesity increased from 5.0% to 18.1 % during the same period" (11). And the numbers just get worse as people age. "Results from the 2007-2008 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), using measured heights and weights, indicate that an estimated 34.2% of U.S. adults aged 20 years and over are overweight [BMI 25.0-29.9], 33.8% are obese [BMI 30.0-39.9], and 5.7% are extremely obese [BMI 40.0 or more]" (10). An increasing population of obese translates into an increasing burden on the health care system and increased costs to businesses and institutions from the necessity of redesign for accommodation.

As a possible antidote to the epidemic, one might point to the growing number of major marathons filling to capacity, often within hours of opening registration. MarathonGuide.com does an annual report on marathon participation in the United States, charting a steady increase in the number of finishers over the last ten years, with 299,000 in 2000, up to 362,000 in 2004, rising to 468,000 in 2009. "The percentage growth rate—a 9.9% growth in the number of marathon finishers from 2008-2009—was a record and that on top of record numbers from the year before" (9). Not only is the number of finishers going up, the size of the field in the largest marathons is also increasing. The largest five marathons in the US in 2009 were New York City with 43,250, Chicago with 33,475, Boston with 22,849, Marine Corps with 20,882, and Honolulu with 20,321 (9).

Those numbers would seem to be hopeful news for a healthier United States, but, unfortunately, the cost of the increasingly large fields in major events falls on the environment, as the effects contribute to the despoiling of the earth, from the global, with heightened greenhouse gases, to the local, with massive amounts of trash, to the personal, with gear that doesn't biodegrade. Each event becomes an embodiment of the "tragedy of the commons," where the rational move for each individual participant is to take full advantage of the goods without any responsibility for the damage being done.

This idea comes from philosopher Garrett Hardin who asks us to "Picture a pasture open to all. It is to be expected that each herdsman will try to keep as many cattle as possible on the commons" (6: p. 1244). While this will work for a while, at some point the pasture reaches its carrying capacity, where no more cattle can be added without a negative effect on the ones already grazing. Each herdsman does an individual calculation of benefit and harm and sees that adding one more animal increases his benefit by the profit of the sale of that additional animal, while the harm of adding the animal is shared by all the herdsmen. So the rational thing for the herdsman to do is add an animal. But this is also rational for all the other individual herdsmen. And this, says Hardin, is the tragedy, "Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit—in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the

commons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all" (6: p. 1244). While marathon participants might not choose to think of ourselves as cattle, our effects on the environmental commons are similar.

Consider the staggering numbers from the 2010 marathon in New York City, a very large commons. About half of the runners take one of 12 ferries to the starting line. The other runners arrive via one of about 500 buses. Once at the starting line, those runners find "1,694 portable toilets, 42,000 PowerBars, 90,000 bottles of water and 563 pounds of Dunkin' Donuts coffee beans, enough to make 45,000 cups." Warmed by all that coffee, they can drop off extra gear at one of more than 70 United Parcel Service trucks, which deliver gear to the finish line for runners to pick up after the race. A total of 1200 vehicles are used during the race, some picking up runners who cannot continue, while some collect trash behind the back of the pack. To ensure that the runners don't have to worry about fuel during the race, 2.3 million paper cups containing 62,370 gallons of water and 32,040 gallons of Gatorade and 60,000 PowerBar Gel packets are available on the course. The stations providing this aid along the course will generate nearly 11 tons of trash. After crossing the finish line, each of the 52,000 runners is given a medal, a food bag, and a heat sheet (4). Just as in the situation outlined by Hardin, the benefits of allowing the toll on the environment go to each of the individual runners, while the harm is shared by us all (runners and non-runners alike).

The environment is negatively impacted not only by the events themselves, but also by the gear worn by the runners. A few years ago, Florence Williams investigated the running shoe industry, traveling to China to visit factories and assess the manufacturing process from start to finish. Recognizing that runners need lots of shoes and that those shoes are made of plastic that lasts, as plastic can last, for hundreds of years, and that heavily processed crude oil is required for the creation of plastic, she comes to the realization that: "We're wearing a gusher." She goes on to push the examination further, exploring the implications of the myriad processes involved in the construction of a running shoe:

> Did the titanium oxide needed to make your shoes white get mined in Australia? Were the dyes on the logo made with heavy metals that got released into a stream? Did workers wear adequate dust masks when they mixed up the powders to make your foam midsole? Were your laces made from virgin or recycled polyester, and if it was recycled, how far did it have to travel by a fossil-fuel-burning vehicle to get to the factory, and does "recycled" mean the material was actually diverted from a landfill to help compensate for that distance? It could go on and on (19).

Runner's World magazine tried to calculate, in 2008, the impact of one runner on the environment over a year's time. The calculation included 3 pairs of socks, 3 pairs of shoes, 2 pair of shorts, 1 pair of tights, 1 shirt [only one shirt per year, really?!], and 1 load of laundry per week. The costs of travel—384 miles per year driving to workouts and races, 3,000 miles air travel, and 100 miles driving a rental car after getting off the plane—were also included. The conclusion was that a single runner creates 5,449 pounds of CO2 (carbon dioxide) in a year. Recall that there were 468,000 marathon finishing times in 2009—do some quick math and you reach the staggering number of 25 and a half million pounds of CO2 added to the environment by what is considered one of the greenest sports (13).

Of course, there have been efforts to make races more environmentally friendly. For example, the Kiawah Marathon eliminated paper registration, donated leftover food to a local

charity, composted leftover scraps, recycled paper and cardboard, collected used running shoes to be reused or recycled, switched from metal medals to medals made from recycled glass, created a butterfly garden to honor age group winners instead of giving them wooden plaques, encouraged carpooling on race morning, and used organic cotton for the race t-shirts (12). The Los Angeles marathon recycled heat sheets and water bottles, used biodegradable soap and recycled paper products in portable toilets, and ran generators on biodiesel fuel (8). Both Portland and Austin used solar-powered generators at their marathons, and bio-fuel powered electricity for the pre-race expo at the San Francisco marathon (2). The Port Perry half-marathon in Canada used bamboo t-shirts, cups made of bio-degradable corn by-product, handmade 100% recycled organic native seed paper bibs, and calculated the total CO2 used for race and offset it by purchasing carbon credits (5). The Shamrock marathon in Virginia created a reusable cloth bag for packet pick-up, natural gas powered the shuttle buses for the John Muir trail run (2), and instead of distributing 10,000 plastic bottles at the finish line, the Hartford marathon uses a 70 feet long 2,000 gallon water fountain that serves 40 runners at the same time. The race's title sponsor, ING, also donated $10,000 for trees to be planted along the course in 2008 (7).

There have also been efforts to make runners' gear more environmentally friendly. According to package inserts, the midsole of the Brooks Trance running shoe, for example, is made of material that decomposes 50 times faster than conventional midsoles, but Brooks's Green Silence shoe is touted as the ultimate in green (thus, the name). The shoe is constructed from 75% post-consumer recycled materials. The laces, meshes, gillies, and tongue webbings are made from recycled plastic bottles, the heel counters from recycled CDs, the outsoles of 30% used tire material, and the sockliner foam is fully biodegradable. As a whole, the shoe is composed of 50% less materials than traditional manufacturing, and even the packaging is green, with 100% post-consumer recycled content (again, according to a package insert). What comes between your foot and the shoe can also be eco-friendly. According to their label, Fox River socks are "made from sustainable resources like corn and recycled waste. Products like pop bottles destined for landfills have been reclaimed by Fox River and given new life as a sock." And that label itself claims to be "Printed with Soy Inks on recyclable paper."

While some of these efforts may be worthwhile, I would argue that they are more often no more than cases of "greenwashing," where progress toward eliminating harmful effects on the environment takes a backseat to marketing. The creation of the term, "greenwashing" is credited to Jay Westerveld, who first used it to describe hotels' practice of placing a card in each room suggesting that guests reuse their towels to save the environment. He suggested that the real goal of the hotel was to save money (and increase profit). The term is used now when it appears that more money has been spent on claiming to be green than actually on being green (17). The environmental watchdog group, terrachoice, publishes an annual report of such practices. They found, in 2010, that over 95% of the 5296 products they examined committed some form of greenwashing, which could all be categorized as one of seven types ("the seven sins," to use their phrase). I will not discuss all of the sins, but provide the list since each can be identified in some of the practices and products associated with running:

1. *Sin of the Hidden Trade-Off*: committed by suggesting a product is "green" based on an unreasonably narrow set of attributes without attention to other important environmental issues.

2. *Sin of No Proof*: committed by an environmental claim that cannot be substantiated by easily accessible supporting information or by a reliable third-party certification.

3. *Sin of Vagueness*: committed by every claim that is so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by the consumer.

4. *Sin of Irrelevance*: committed by making an environmental claim that may be truthful but is unimportant or unhelpful for consumers seeking environmentally preferable products.

5. *Sin of Lesser of Two Evils*: committed by claims that may be true within the product category, but that risk distracting the consumer from the greater environmental impacts of the category as a whole.

6. *Sin of Fibbing*: the least frequent Sin, is committed by making environmental claims that are simply false.

7. *Sin of Worshiping False Labels*: committed by a product that, through either words or images, gives the impression of third-party endorsement where no such endorsement actually exists; fake labels, in other words (14).

I point to a couple of good examples of the 'sin of the hidden trade-off' found in the previously mentioned efforts to green running. Take the use of bio-fuels at marathons. In an article revealing that some of the companies that make the "greenest" list are also among the worst offenders on the environment, Ash Allen points out that:

> ...both ethanol and biodiesel emit less global warming pollution than burning petroleum-based gasoline. Unfortunately, producing biofuels creates enormous amounts of global warming pollution, so much that many argue that they offset the benefits gained when the fuel is used to power engines. This is the sin of the hidden trade-off. In this case, a company promotes the green attribute of a product without consideration for other environmental factors. ADM [Archer Daniels Midland] publicly touts biofuels' green benefits while failing to mention that the energy necessary to grow the corn requires significant amounts of fossil fuels, offsetting the environmental benefits. According to the journal *Science*, "corn-based ethanol, instead of producing a 20% savings, nearly doubles greenhouse emissions over 30 years and increases greenhouse [101] gases for 167 years. Biofuels from switchgrass, grown on US corn lands, increase emissions by 50%" (1: pp.101-102).

Another example is in the growing tendency to tout the use of bamboo in shirts and socks.

> END "infuses" its sockliners with the renewable plant. But Oboz does not. "We explored the process of taking raw bamboo and turning it into a textile, but it requires the use of very strong solvents," says Oboz cofounder Josh Fairchilds. There are similar problems with glue. Is it better to use a nontoxic water-based glue that requires more heat (and thus energy), or is it better to use a more hazardous solvent-based glue as long as you use the solvents really carefully? In this manner, each brand has to evaluate its

> priorities: toxins versus climate change; renewable energy versus renewable materials. Almost every change has its consequences (19).

So the treadmill of production (aimed always toward growth and profit creation) and treadmill of consumption (aimed always at acquisition in a never successful quest for satisfaction), concepts borrowed from environmental sociology, roll on apace. The treadmill of production describes the perpetual investing and re-investing of capital by businesses in order to maximize profit. Maximization of profit requires growth, which requires additional input of natural resources, and results in increased waste, which is dumped back into the environment. Automation increases profits, while eliminating the need for workers, leading to unemployment and strain on the economy. Unfortunately, in this model, the environmental and social costs are addressed by attempting to increase economic growth, completing the circuit of the treadmill by returning us to where we began (16: pp. 30-31).

The treadmill of consumption describes the individual version of this phenomenon. Instead of increased profit, we desire increased happiness, which we try to attain through material possessions. But our happiness is tarnished by the realization that others have more possessions than we do, which leads us to a Hobbesian state where competition, envy, and diffidence rule us, and lead us to try to compensate through the acquisition of yet more material possessions. Of course, this behavior by consumers does nothing more than speed the treadmill of production, as businesses are now faced with a greater demand for products (2).

All of this leaves the environmentally conscious athlete to a forced choice between two bad alternatives. She can give in to fallacious futility thinking or become a slacktivist. The first choice involves reasoning, as Peter Unger puts it, that "...since you can make only a small dent in the vast mass of all the serious suffering, there's no strong moral reason for you to take what's another's, or even to give what's your own, to lessening the suffering" (15: p. 63). So she does nothing at all because she is convinced that her individual efforts are nothing more than a drop in the bucket. The alternative choice, as described by the unquestionable authority on all things, Wikipedia, is slacktivism, a term

> formed out of the words slacker and activism. The word...describes "feel-good" measures, in support of an issue or social cause, that have little or no practical effect other than to make the person doing it feel satisfaction. The acts tend to require minimal personal effort from the slacktivist. Slacktivist activities include signing internet petitions, joining a community organization without contributing to the organization's efforts, wearing awareness ribbons or awareness bracelets with political messages, putting a ribbon magnet on a vehicle, writing blogs or statuses about issues on social networking sites, joining an issue-focused Facebook group, posting issue-oriented YouTube videos, or altering one's personal data or avatar on social network services (18).

So the choice becomes doing nothing at all and feeling bad about it or doing something with no impact at all but feeling good about it.

Considering all of this from a consequentialist perspective requires calculating possible good results as well as possible ill effects of increased participation in major marathons. Taking into account the likely very small effect on obesity rates, the much larger effects on the environment, and the negligible effects of the green marathon trend, my conclusion is that the toll on the environment far outweighs any positive effect on the health and well-being of those who

participate, or who might be moved to participate by example (thus becoming smaller and healthier). Encouraging people to participate in strenuous physical activity is a good thing, but we should seek better ways to do so than through the avenue of major marathons.

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An Argument for the Limited Fair Use of Animals in Sport

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This paper examines the many ways in which humans have used and integrated animals into their sport and leisure pursuits. The context of this paper is limited to animals' role(s) as our opponents, teammates, and equipment in sport and leisure pursuits, and does not address the use of animals as food sources, as companions, as exhibits in zoos, or in labour. Given that animals cannot give us their informed consent to participate in humans' sport and recreational activities, the question I will attempt to answer here is whether or not we can we use an animal in the context of sport without abusing that animal. My goal is not to promote a sport and leisure world where humans and other animals exist separately without any interaction; instead, the goal of this examination is to figure out if a line can be drawn between morally acceptable and morally unacceptable uses of animals in sport and leisure. To do so I will construct a taxonomy of animal involvement in humans' sport and recreational pastimes. I will next discuss distinctions between using and abusing in the context of animals in sport to argue that, yes, it is possible to use animals in sport without abusing them, but the instances where animal use in sport is acceptable are surprisingly limited. An implication of this argument is the condemnation of several forms of animal-human interaction that have been popular in the past and persist today.

Human-Animals Interactions in Sport and Leisure Pursuits

In compiling the ways in which humans use and interact with animals for the purpose of games, sport, and leisure in general, four categories emerged. I am not yet ready to claim that these four categories are either mutually exclusive or exhaustive of all possible interactions, but I think they help organize our thoughts about morally acceptable and unacceptable human-animal interactions that fall under the umbrella of sport. The four categories include: 1) Animals as opponents, 2) Animals as teammates, 3) Animals as entertainment, and 4) Animals as equipment.

In the category "animal as opponent," animal-human interaction involves organized, structured competitions between the human and the animal where the goal is to conquer, subdue, kill, or injure the opponent. Competitions of this nature include the so-called blood sports: hunting, fishing, bull fighting, bear baiting, and pigeon shooting, and in the past the challenges between wild animals and Roman gladiators. In each activity, a goal is to demonstrate survival and mastery over the animal, which may or may not result in its (or your) injury or demise. When animals are opponents, the goal of the game is to manoeuvre and strategize to subdue the animal as human and animal cannot both win. If the animal gets away, the human has lost.

The second category of human-animal interaction in sport involves "animals as teammates." In these activities, humans collaborate with animals with the goal of outperforming other human-animal teams. Past and present examples of this partnership include the equestrian sports, horse racing, and the crowd favourite at the Ancient Olympic Games, chariot racing. The International Equestrian Federation acknowledges the teamwork between animal and rider and thereby requires equestrian athletes to respect the welfare of the horse at all times. In order to win

in these types of events, a human must work with an animal in order to outperform fellow participants.

A third form of animal-human interaction in sport involves humans organizing and watching animals compete against each other for entertainment. The human involvement is thus passive and the competition exists between animals. Often the goal of the activity is to maximize profit for the human organizers. Activities such as cockfighting, greyhound racing, and dog fighting exemplify this type of human-animal interaction. Cockfighting is considered the oldest spectator sport in the world, dating back to ancient Persia 6,000 years ago where it was known as 'the sport of kings'; greyhound racing and illegal dogfighting may be traced back to ancient Rome and Japan. The practice of baiting donkeys, tigers, horses and other animals in 19th century Britain and camels in Africa to fight members of their own species exemplifies this type of interaction as well (1). Zoos and circuses would also fit here but are beyond the scope of this paper. As sport historian Wray Vamplew has demonstrated, activities that pit animal against animal were the first form of organized, structured sports. Moreover, the first rule books in sport were established to facilitate and standardize the practice of gambling on the outcomes of the competition (9). This category is not restricted to competitions between two or more animals as we sometimes train animals to perform solo and call it 'sport'. Consider, for example, the Surf Dog Society of California, which trains dogs to surf simply for humans' enjoyment in watching dogs surf in the ocean.

The fourth and final use of animals I will discuss in the context of sport, I have classified as "animals as equipment." Included in this category are uses of animal carcasses and by-products, after the death of the animal, as tools and equipment in games and sports played by humans. Uses of this nature may be ceremonial, and are also prevalent in sporting equipment, such as the pigskin footballs or leather gloves and athletic shoes. In this category, the competition occurs among humans facilitated by the use of animal by-products. Live animals are not included in this category. The use of animal products as equipment falls outside of the area of analysis for this paper as I am more concerned with our interactions with living animals. As there are few examples where animals are killed specifically for the purpose of using their various parts in sports, I am going to leave this use out of the subsequent analysis to focus on the use and abuses of living animals.

To sum up this section, I want to highlight the fact that animals play several roles in humans' sport and leisure activities. We use animals as competitors, as opponents, as sources of entertainment, and we use parts of their bodies as equipment to facilitate sports and games once they are dead. To analyze the moral acceptability of each of the roles, it is necessary to understand the history, context, and social norms of animal-human interactions. It is also prudent to avoid the trap of relying on emotionally-charged language to declare that all use of animals may be considered as abuse and consequently, as morally unacceptable.

Use and Abuse Distinctions in Sport

The language we use to describe human-animal interactions can impact our understanding and interpretation of closely related concepts. For example, one of Govier's classic examples in *A Practical Study of Argument* looks at the difference between persuasion through rational argument and persuasion through the use of the sophist technique of emotionally-charged or loaded language (4). In demonstrating the different connotations one can use to describe killing an animal, from cold-blooded murder to a caring act to end suffering, the words we use to

describe the subject of analysis matter and can impact our subsequent interpretation. If we look only at images of the conditions in which dogfighting dogs live it becomes easier to make a case that it is morally unacceptable to use animals for our leisure enjoyment. However, if we look at images of animals who appear 'happy' and well-treated in performing for humans it becomes more difficult to describe why these acts are morally objectionable. Philosophers examining the distinction between killing and letting die highlight the impact that word choice and context can have on our understanding of related concepts when it comes to difficult and divisive issues.

As a result, it becomes difficult to distinguish the demarcating features of the concepts of 'use' and 'abuse' in the context of animals involvement in human recreational pursuits, and to create an argument that applies to all instances of human-animal interaction in the context of sport and leisure. Researchers in many fields face the task of distinguishing use and abuse and understanding the difference between the concepts. It is common to hear discussions of using and abusing alcohol, and drugs like anabolic steroids, and popular thought seems to hold that when we treat something 'properly' for its intended and approved purposes we are using that item; but when we stop following the prescribed directions and use something 'improperly' we find ourselves in the realm of abuse. To use something is to deploy that object with a purpose or as a means involved in achieving a goal. When we abuse something, we use an object similarly with the addition that the use is for a 'bad' or improper purpose that may involve misuse or cruelty. Taking this initial starting point into consideration, it would seem the distinction is only a starting point in examining the moral acceptability of human-animal interactions in our recreational pursuits. It is not evident whether or not there are any natural or proper uses of animals in the context of sport.

To understand the instances when the use—and possibly killing—of animals can be considered acceptable, we need to start by addressing the metaphysical question of which human activities count as games and sport. This takes us back to Bernard Suits' work, which states: "To play a game is to engage in activity directed towards bringing about a specific state of affairs, using only means permitted by rules, where the rules prohibit more efficient in favour of less efficient means, and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity"(8: pp. 48-49). Suits summarized his definition as the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles, which encompasses four necessary elements of games: 1) a goal, 2) means a person can use to achieve the goal, 3) rules, and 4) a lusory attitude (8: p. 50). Suits subsequently argued that all sports are games that involve physical skill or prowess.

According to Suits' widely accepted definitions of games and sports, anyone participating in a physical activity with rules, a goal, and prescribed means to achieve the goal, is **not** playing a game or sport unless the fourth component, the lusory attitude, has been adopted and the participant has agreed to enter the sport world. While I cannot claim with 100% certainty that animals do not consent to participate or demonstrate a willingness to adopt a lusory attitude and accept the rules of the game set out by the humans in order for the game to occur, it seems unlikely that this is the case. Animals may participate as opponents or teammates due to conditioning or training, to gain rewards, or to please their owners, but the experience seems to lack a decision-making process to decide to engage in the activity for its own sake. Thinking of animals as participants in games and sports is inaccurate because the lusory attitude is missing. Animals, in the leisure pursuits described earlier, are treated as means to the human participant or organizer's end of demonstrating mastery or providing entertainment. However, to substantiate a claim that animals are not merely used, but are also abused, in the context of sport requires additional unpacking of the concepts of 'use' and 'abuse'. Greater understanding is needed

regarding how these terms function in the context of animal-human interactions for the purpose of sport. What I think I have established so far is only that it is inaccurate to call the human-animal interactions noted above games and sports. But are they morally acceptable and unobjectionable?

Argument for Limited Fair Use of Animals in Sport

The use of animals for our entertainment and recreational pursuits is not routinely condemned in many areas of the world. We continue to integrate animals into sport and recreation as opponents, teammates, as objects for our entertainment, and as equipment. In doing so, an all-or-nothing, or an us-versus-them, attitude appears to transpire between proponents and opponents of animal involvement in sport who argue that as living things, animals are not mere tools for humans' whims and entertainment. Which reasons can be given to oppose current examples of animal involvement in sport? Or, in other words, is a blanket ban on animal involvement possible to defend even though, on face value, it is obvious that the animals in question are treated as mere means? The arguments in the literature used to evaluate these questions seem to rely predominantly on rights-based and utilitarian analyses.

I will examine the rights-based arguments first. Philosopher Mary Midgley argued in her book *Animals and Why They Matter*: "the more clearly we see the difference between animals and stones or machines or plastic dolls, the less likely it seems that we ought to treat them in the same way" (7: p. 14). Midgley's view supports the argument that treating animals as objects by, for example, forcing them to act as opponents or entertain us, is morally problematic, and neither use should be condoned. Part of the reason these questions have come to light stems from animal rights advocates who challenge the ideology of speciesism, which assigns different rights or values to different species, and situates humans securely atop the hierarchy. These advocates argue that animals are moral subjects and deserve the same rights as other sentient moral subjects (3: p. 130). The idea that animals have interests that should be protected, including rights to life, to avoiding pain, and to not be used for others' whims falls well in line with vegan and animal-rights beliefs (2).

In contrast, other philosophers, including Tibor Machan, have argued that we can use animals justifiably because "we, as members of the human species, are more important or valuable than other animals and some of our activities may require the use, even killing, of animals in order to succeed at our lives, to make it flourish most"(6: p. 9). Under this view, which is unapologetically speciesist in nature, human beings rank higher than any other living creature because the interests that animals have are not considered equivalent to the rights humans possess. As Machan explains:

> Someone may have an interest in [the] grocery store carrying a certain kind of bread but the person has no right to the bread, or to [the store] providing him with it. The United States of America has an interest in Kuwait's oil but this does not provide it with the right to lay claim to Kuwait's oil. ... it is the capacity to direct actions toward or away from acting to fulfill proper interests that is relevant to having rights. That capacity belongs to human beings alone (6: p. 12).

The assertion that we as humans have duties to animals is much easier to defend than a claim that animals have the same rights that we possess.

Duties human have to animals could be direct, if we agree that we have a duty to not torture, and not to kill or harm for our fun or to alleviate our boredom. On the other hand, we may also have an indirect duty to other human beings not to harm animals. Kant's arguments have been applied to make the case that a person who acts cruelly to animals will be more likely to act cruelly toward humans, and given our direct duty not to harm other humans unnecessarily, we need to avoid committing acts that increase the likelihood that we will violate our duty to other people (10: p. 17). But does the premise hold that acting cruelly toward animals encourages a person to act cruelly to other humans? Animal rights activists would argue that the answer is irrelevant. However, as Scott Wilson emphasizes,

> the actions that we freely engage in are what shape our characters, and our characters manifest themselves in future actions. If a person lies on his taxes, not only has he done something that is dishonest, and therefore wrong, but he also has taken the first steps to becoming someone who is dishonest. If he becomes dishonest, then he is more likely to do more dishonest things than if he were not....For example, consider the difference between a dentist who drills in peoples' mouths and a person who does so because he enjoys causing people pain (10: p. 17).

The objection to this reasoning is that rational agents have the capacity to distinguish and identify unnecessary suffering. Machan forwards the argument that despite the 97% similarity between the genetic codes of humans and some animals, the 3% difference, which includes our ability to reason, create, and appreciate the arts, accounts for humans, and only humans', status as moral subjects (6).

From this reasoning it seems there are fairly persuasive reasons for treating non-humans differently than humans. This idea falls firmly in line with Aristotle's notion of distributive justice whereby we ought to treat equal cases equally but can treat unequals unequally if in treating dissimilar cases dissimilarly, the unequal treatment corresponds to the inequality in question (5). Support for using animals in our sport and leisure pursuits might come from this idea, but using animals in ways that constitute harm, pain, or suffering for those animals would not be permissible. Given that unequal treatment ought to be in reasonable accordance with the inequality in question, it seems unreasonable, and probably impossible, to attempt to justify uselessly inflicting pain, suffering, and/or death for the purpose of human leisure and entertainment. Here's where the utilitarian analysis comes in. If we accept that 1) there are sound ethical reasons to avoid inflicting pain unnecessarily, and 2) that not all rights ascribed to humans apply equally to other species, the justification for using animals in our games and sports seems to lead to Machan's position that "occasional use of other animals for human purposes [is justifiable], since, comparatively speaking, human interests merit greater service than the interest of non-human animals" (6: p. 13). So while animal rights theorists can argue that animals are enough like humans to have rights, this argument is met with the objection that a category mistake is committed in confusing "considerations applicable to moral agents with considerations not involving such agents" (6: p. 13). The underlying problem returns to the challenge of describing the necessary and sufficient conditions of moral agency and identifying who or what possesses it.

Conclusions

When and why is it morally acceptable to use animals in our recreational pursuits? I have tried to highlight a distinction between the use and the abuse of animals in the context of sport grounded in the premises that animals do not have moral agency, but that does not mean humans can treat animals cruelly. This view would seemingly allow the use of animals as teammates in activities such as the equestrian sports, but would not condone the continued organization of events that have the purpose of causing harm or death to animals, such as hunting and baiting. If human-animal interactions in the context of sport contribute to human participants mastering skills and living flourishing lives, but involve the intention of causing harm or death to animals, a tension arises. If the goal of the sport is to cause harm to an animal or the means employed to compete are complicit in causing harm, we need to be suspicious and not merely accept the activity as morally acceptable without reflection. Each person's evaluation of the moral acceptability of these actions seems dependent on his or her attitude toward the possibility that animals are moral agents. Given that this debate is far from resolved, any recommendation about the moral acceptability of human-animal interactions in sport and leisure pursuits are tentative at best.

I hope that this examination has shown that it is *possible* to use animals in sport without abusing them, but that the instances where animal use in sport is acceptable are impacted strongly by a person's views on the rights and duties we have toward animals.

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Hunting as sport: The virtuous do not kill for pleasure

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This brief paper will argue the immorality of hunting for sport: human hunting of non-human animals (hereafter simply "animals") for the human's pleasure and for their entertainment, by questioning the virtue of one who engages in such an activity (hereafter simply called "hunting"). In North America, sport television channels such as TSN and ESPN often show the hunting of animals and fish, and their websites offer similar content. Magazines focusing on hunting animals are also featured in the "sport" section of newsstands. Whether hunters compare themselves to athletes or even consider themselves as athletes is unknown; however, it is clear that hunting is considered to be a sport in social contexts, and the terms "sport hunting" or "trophy hunting" are common in the literature and in the media.

In response to the question of "why do you want to hunt," statements on the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA) website provided by human hunters who seek to kill animals include: "I don't know—I just like it," "I hunt to relax and to get away from it all," "I hunt to know the marvels of nature," "I hunt because I like adventure," "I hunt because it gives me a sense of accomplishment," and "I hunt to interact with nature" (1).

Such sentiments suggest that these people hunt—kill animals—because it gives them pleasure in both the simplest or hedonistic sense, as well as in the more complex sense: for example, when they speak of the pleasure from the feeling of accomplishment. Many of these sentiments from hunters also suggest that the reasons proffered for hunting may be satisfied by activities other than killing animals. There are many ways to pursue adventure, find satisfaction from accomplishment, and interact with nature without resorting to hunting. However, we focus here on the pleasure hunters report experiencing from their activity.

Some of the pleasure that hunters report experiencing is explained by the "sport" of the activity, the development and testing of their hunting skills in the killing of animals. They learn how to observe and pursue animals, how to test their own physical and emotional strength in persevering through arduous terrain and challenging weather conditions, and how to be patient for long periods of time while hidden in a blind. They learn how to lure animals with food or by imitating the animals' calls to where they lie in wait. They develop and practice their shooting skills, be they with a gun or a bow and arrow or crossbow. Hunters also develop other skills such as butchering or dismembering the dead body of the animal they have just killed. While some people may eat the animals they kill, others prefer to mount the heads or body of the dead animals for display on their walls, or to have the body turned into a floor or wall covering to serve as evidence of their exploits. Others simply leave the animal to rot where it dies.

Many people who hunt often claim to love animals (1, 2). It is my contention that hunting the objects of their love is an aberrant demonstration of their affection. Even though hunting is considered a "sporting pursuit" by some, from which pleasure is derived, this does not justify so-called "sport" hunting: that activity pursued deliberately for the sake of the hunter's pleasure and amusement. Sport hunting is the most common constituent of hunting in the United States, and likely in Canada as well. I focus here specifically on sport hunting, not on hunting for genuine

subsistence, wherein the hunter kills animals in order to eat them and for their survival. I also include fishing within this discussion, including catch-and-release given the high mortality and morbidity rates, as falling within this discussion. Fishing is hunting, in different environments and with different weapons (hooks rather than guns, although some hunters use the same weapons, e.g. bows and spears). Given the popularity of sport hunting, arguing against it is surely a contentious—and unpopular—position to take in many environments. The polarized debate unleashes great passion in those for and against hunting, and for and against animal rights. It is a morally controversial and politically sensitive issue, made even more so as many North American governments support hunting.

It would appear that most governments appear to ignore the moral questions about hunting. They endorse hunting in their jurisdictions, supporting it through policy and even mandating government agencies to support and promote it. Van de Pitte suggests that the reasons for this state of affair are complex, and contends that government support is most likely driven by financial and conservation benefits, and in some cases, heritage preservation (3). Governments appear to be ignoring the changing social ethic in relation to how animals are considered in the modern age, and often appear to be influenced most strongly by the loudest and most organized voices, which seem to be those with the prevalent consumptive attitude towards nature, the pro-hunting crowd. The overarching ethical approach by states is the prioritization of human over animal interests, and the general acceptance of the moral legitimacy of hunting. There seems to be little recognition of the repugnance of many citizens for the gratuitous harming of animals.

While most would agree that it is wrong to gratuitously harm, let alone to satisfy one's own pleasure, sport hunters appear to consider satisfying their pleasure and entertaining themselves as sufficient justification for the stalking, luring and killing and—in some cases—the torturing, of animals. The infliction of suffering is bad in itself because of its intrinsic nature, and the deliberate infliction of suffering for the amusement of another is even worse than bad, should such a thing exist: evil, perhaps? When the focus is on hunting as a so-called sport, and not on hunting for survival, I believe that it cannot be justified, and is thus morally indefensible.

In virtue ethics, the theory emphasizes the role of character and virtue of the moral agent. One asks what a virtuous person would do in any given situation. Aristotle considered a virtuous person to be one with ideal character traits, or admirable moral character. Were he to contemplate the qualities and characteristics of one who enjoys gratuitous harming and killing of animals, surely such proclivities would render that person as less than "virtuous." Here, I question the moral character of one who engages in hunting. In particular, I shall attempt to argue that one with admirable moral character—or, a virtuous individual—would not harm another sentient being simply for the sake of one's own hedonistic pleasure. This kind of action is morally offensive, and intrinsically objectionable. Significantly, Aristotle differentiated between pleasures in that what seemed pleasant to some was not actually pleasant to all, and to call something a pleasure was actually to endorse it for others, and thus, virtuous actions ought to be in themselves pleasant. This work holds the position that virtuous persons are those of good moral character, and their virtuous activity completes or perfects human life, and contributes to human flourishing. Sport hunting cannot be a virtuous activity and thus those who hunt animals for their own pleasure cannot be virtuous persons.

The virtue ethics approach is being tested and applied here because of the challenges to the position that non-human animals are rights holders whose rights not to be harmed preclude the activity of sport hunting. The onus of the argument against sport hunting thus moves from those seen as having the duty to avoid harming animals, to examining the virtues of good persons and

determining whether virtuous persons could be so in hunting animals for pleasure in the name of sport, as characterized here.

Significantly, Aristotle differentiated between pleasures; what seemed pleasant to some was not actually pleasant to all, and to call something a pleasure was actually to endorse it for others, and thus, virtuous actions ought to be in themselves pleasant. This work holds the position that virtuous persons are those of good moral character, and their virtuous activity completes or perfects human life, and contributes to human flourishing. Sport hunting cannot be a virtuous activity and thus those who hunt animals for their own pleasure cannot be virtuous persons.

As we progress through this consideration of the moral character of hunters, some clarifications are important. The animals under consideration here are *victims* of sport; they are not competitors. They are not participants in a sport, *per se*, for the following reasons. First, Bernard Suits' description of the lusory attitude explains the attitude held by players as the knowing acceptance of the rules which allow the game to be played (4). Clearly, animals (insofar as we are aware) are not players in this game of life or death known as sport hunting, as they do not knowingly accept the rules, nor are they even aware of these rules.

Next, hunting as a sport fails to be so for animals in morally significant ways. Boxill's description of sport in its paradigmatic form identifies four features: "1) Sport is a freely chosen, voluntary activity; 2) Sport is rule governed with two sets of rules; 3) Sport is physically challenging; 4) Sport involves competition in a mutual challenge to achieve excellence" (5: p. 1). Animals being hunted have not chosen to be hunted, and they are not participating voluntarily. They are unaware of any rules. Except where they are shot dead while standing still, or lying down, or perhaps sleeping, or when hunted with the various guns and other weapons most often used to kill them, attempting to escape alive would definitely involve physical challenge. But first the animal must perceive that they are being hunted:

> The kill ratio at a couple hundred feet with a semi-automatic weapon and scope is virtually 100 percent. The animal, no matter how well-adapted to escape natural predation, has virtually no way to escape death once he/she is in the cross hairs of a scope mounted on a rifle. Nature's adaptive structures and behaviors that have evolved during millions of years simply count for naught when a human is the hunter. Most deer, for example, would not perceive anything that is within the effective range of a big game rifle (up to 400 yards) as a predator or a source of danger. A wolf at that distance, even though detected, would be totally ignored. Even the much smaller range of bow-hunter (about 50-75 feet) is barely of concern to deer. Deer may start to keep an eye on a hunter at that distance, but the evasion instinct doesn't kick in until it's too late (6).

Animals are most certainly not involved in a *mutual* challenge to achieve excellence. Boxill points out that there are sports with different forms of competition: some do not require person-to-person competition, such as rock and mountain climbing where the person is pitted against nature. Morality cannot deign to equate a sentient creature with a rock, and thus there is no correlation here where one could argue that a non-consenting, sentient creature would serve as "that against which the human is pitted." Thus, under these qualifications, sport hunting does not appear to qualify as a sport for all those involved in the activity. Being the hunted does not qualify animals as participants or as competitors. Canned hunting, wherein the animal is held captive inside a small enclosure, precludes even the "hunting" action, and is unimaginable to most. In some cases, the shooter does not even have to leave the comfort of the truck. They can

shoot in comfort from within the vehicle, without having to be bothered by pesky insects, mud or other natural nuisances.

Finally, the sociological description of sport provided by Coakley defines sport as being "institutionalized competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by personal enjoyment and external rewards" (7: p. 6). Again, sport hunting fails the requirement here since personal enjoyment and external rewards apply to only the hunter, not the hunted, and thus not to *all* participants.

While sport hunting is a popular pastime in Canada and in the United States, it appears to be declining in numbers of participants, despite the efforts of many organizations. A 1996 Canadian survey reports that while the number of hunters has been declining, hunting and fishing remain significant traditional activities with approximately five percent of Canadians reporting being active hunters (8).

Billions of dollars are spent annually, and billions of animals are killed and maimed in North America. The numbers are staggering:

> With an arsenal of rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, handguns, bows and arrows, hunters kill more than 200 million animals yearly - crippling, orphaning, and harassing millions more. The annual death toll in the U.S. includes 42 million mourning doves, 30 million squirrels, 28 million quail, 25 million rabbits, 20 million pheasants, 14 million ducks, 6 million deer, and thousands of geese, bears, moose, elk, antelope, swans, cougars, turkeys, wolves, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, boars, and other woodland creatures (9).

Hunting has a strong historical and cultural tradition, and is tolerated and promulgated widely. Despite such a history, hunting remains morally objectionable for the following two reasons: First, "it is intrinsically wrong to deliberately cause suffering for the purposes of amusement, recreation, or in the name of sport" (10: p. 84). The choices we make, as moral agents, fall within the realm of morality: cruelty is immoral. Second, "it is intrinsically wrong to deliberately inflict suffering on a sentient mammal for purposes other than its own individual benefit" (10: p. 83).

The pursuit of a sentient creature to its death, or the killing of a live creature, for the sake of sport, is incompatible for one of virtuous character. That a person delights in such an activity, and engages in it for pleasure, is morally incomprehensible. "Taking pleasure from the cruel death of an animal is nothing less than morally evil" (10: p. 86). Any description of the virtuous life or behaviours to promote virtue simply cannot countenance hunting in this context. Someone of good moral character would not harm and kill sentient creatures and derive pleasure from such action. Aristotle has defined good moral character in his work, the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

> Excellence [of character], then, is a state concerned with choice, lying in a mean relative to us, this being determined by reason and in the way in which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect (11; p. 11.7: 1106b36-1107a3).

Aristotle wrote about the importance of pleasure in human life, and he held that a happy life ought to include pleasure. He insisted that the best pleasures were those experienced by virtuous people. His discussions of pleasure focused on his position that to live our lives well, we must focus on one sort of good above all others, and that good is virtuous activity. However, he noted that not all pleasures are good, and that there were some pleasures that could be considered disgraceful; indulging in them would discredit those who indulged.

There is a strong case to be made for the extension of moral solicitude towards all sentient beings, and to question the moral character of those who hunt to satisfy their pleasure. Taking pleasure in the suffering and death of any animal, and making a sport of it, deserves the highest form of moral censure: A good and virtuous person does not hunt for pleasure.

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Existential Environmentalism: Sport, Real Life and Seeing the Field

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What is the environment[1] and what is its purpose? It was not until recently when I put something together for this *Sport and the Environment* conference that I can claim to have acquired some meaningful insights into these specific queries.[2] With my research at the time of the call for abstracts focused broadly on what game-playing teaches about living "real life," the timing of the invitation was perfect. Clearly, with existence necessarily conducted within an environment, it was inevitable that I consider the essential nature of "the environment" within my questioning. Acknowledging that I am still searching, this paper attempts to share the "answer" I have arrived at as well as the journey within which the answer was "discovered."

It is arguable that all of Humanity shares an interest in Utopia as an ideal of the best possible existence. While there may exist disagreement as to precisely what this would entail, traditionally Utopia has been portrayed as a vision of a limitlessly abundant paradise wherein existence is experienced blissfully in liberated freedom and in the absence of any need to struggle whatsoever. Despite this universal vision of a reality without struggle, or "struggleless," struggle seems to be an essential condition of what it means to be human. As a species, we appear doomed to face a never-ending barrage of disease, poverty, hunger, war, disaster, chaos, crime, cruelty, pain, and suffering with numerous crusades, mandates, and missions emerging constantly to save humanity, save an endangered species, save the economy, save the world, save the planet, and save the universe from impending doom looming on the horizon.

Clearly, there exists a very large gap between the present state of affairs in the world and that of the perfect utopian reality described. In this paper, I hope to transcend this gap of appearances via a conceptualization of the existential environment within which human beings strive for meaning and quest for a utopia free of struggle. Toward this end, I share insights revealed within my own existential journey (which I concede is ongoing) with my argumentative content drawn from "praxis" as a deliberative process by which theoretical knowledge is applied to and practiced in action and by which action is used to empower ongoing insight and theory development. Within my existential shifting, I believe I have some insight on the environmental essence of utopia. While I cannot yet make the claim that these findings count as "*the* truth," in the name of the quest, I am excited by what I have experienced as a narrowing of the gap. My intent is to share some of these findings herein.

On the back cover of the second edition of Bernard Suits' *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia* (26) it is asserted that "playing games is a central part of the ideal of human existence, so games belong at the heart of any vision of Utopia." With "evidence" derived from existential praxis as the "sweet spot" between theory and practice, I have arrived at the same conclusion … with some further utopian insights. Building on Suits' claim, I seek to advance the discussion via the conclusion that existence is a sport specifically directed toward the goal of "struggleless-ness." I expand upon Suits' position in two significant ways. First, my position is stronger insofar as I argue that existence *is* game-playing. Second, I argue that existence is not just a game but also a *sport*. This claim is grounded in Klaus Meier's (17) position that all

physical games are sports and relies upon a theory of existence that qualifies *all* existential obstacles as *physical* in nature.

Game-Playing Theory

The definition of game-playing established by Bernard Suits' (25) in his "cult classic" (8: p. 88) *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia* is widely accepted within philosophy of sport circles as "one of the most substantive monographs in the field" (17: p. 12) and "the gold standard against which other such efforts are judged" (12: p. 142):

> To play a game is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs [prelusory goal] using only means permitted by rules [lusory means], where the rules prohibit use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means [constitutive rules], and where the rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity [lusory attitude] (25: p. 41).

The pre-lusory goal is identified as a specifically achievable state of affairs able to be understood prior to and independently of any game of which it may be or come to be a part (25: p. 36-37). The purpose of constitutive rules is to limit that which is permissible in the quest for goal attainment by prohibiting the use of more efficient in favor of less efficient means for such achievement. Basically, rules are devised to ensure the opportunity for game-players to struggle in the quest for goal accomplishment. Lusory means represent actions that are permitted by the rules in the attempt to achieve the goal. A struggle opportunity is established via the acknowledgment that a player must remain confined to "only" the lusory means (27).

The anomalous feature of the rules as obstacle-erecting is highlighted as a key attribute of game-playing and that which sets the stage for the lusory attitude as "the acceptance of constitutive rules just so the activity made possible by such acceptance can occur" (25: p. 40). This distinctive gratuitous stance requires that the player agree to pursue a goal using less rather than more efficient means just so that he or she can be struggling. In accordance with his observation, Suits offers a simpler and "more portable" definition of game-playing as "the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles" (25: p. 41).

It is my opinion that the theory advanced in *The Grasshopper* is explicitly suggestive of the stance that game-playing is conceptually broad enough to include any and all goal-directed activities embraced within a lusory commitment to struggle unnecessarily and need not be reduced to the "pedestrian view" (5) advanced by Caillois (1), Fink (5), Huizinga (9) and Schmitz (24) suggesting that because games involve trivial goals they are appropriately relegated to the periphery of "real life" as mere "recreation," "relaxation" and "diversion." As a theory demonstrating promise as a "real life" outlook capable of inspiring the enjoyment of an extraordinarily purposeful existence, I have become a devoted advocate of the Grasshopper, notwithstanding the fact that I continue to wrestle with a few lingering questions that fail to be "answered" conclusively within Suits' writings. I am also a supporter of Klaus Meier's (17) suggestion that all *physical* games are appropriately acknowledged as sports notwithstanding my remaining "stuck" on the precise nature of the distinction between "physical" and "nonphysical." As a result of my questions, I remain quizzical of the interrelationship between the concepts of play, game and sport.

I have recently come to realize that my ongoing questionning has been linked to the unresolved riddle spun at the end of *The Grasshopper* portraying a final *choice* to be made by

disguised grasshoppers seeking to discover the meaning of existence. This choice is framed within a vision portraying a mass-scale realization that existence is a game comprised of unnecessary, trivial and meaningless goals with each existent vanishing into nonexistence upon the insight that existence "had been as nothing – a mere stage play or empty dream" (25: p. 177). Interpreting the "end of existence" anxiety dream as horrifying, the Grasshopper presents his final riddle as follows:

> Were my repressed fears about the fate of mankind, or were they about the cogency of my thesis? Clearly they could not have been about both. For if my fears about the fate of mankind are justified, then I need not fear that my thesis is faulty, since it is that thesis that justifies those fears. And if my thesis is faulty, then I need not fear for mankind, since that fear stems from the cogency of my thesis" (25: p. 178).

The choice is framed by the Grasshopper as an either-or option ... maintain game-playing as central to the ideal of existence and accept the end of existence altogether or maintain the constructs of existence and reject the claim that game-playing is central to the ideal of existence. I did align with Suits and the instinct that game-playing *is* central to the ideal of existence. Noting the fact that I was not consciously afraid of "death," I made my "choice" accordingly. Notwithstanding, I did not understand that my acceptance of the "end of existence" could not be substantiated by a mere absence of a conscious fear of "death." My journey would require that I *fully* appreciate the magnitude of my alignment with game-playing as central to the ideal of existence.

Pondering the simplicity of Suits' short-form definition of game-playing, my initial questioning of the theory revealed a gap between the idea of a "game" as an *activity* and the concept of "game-playing" as an *experience* rooted entirely in a participant's *attitude* toward a *lived* activity. It seemed to me that these represented two entirely different categories of subject matter with "activities" being objectively of the world and "experiences" being subjectively of the existent. Within this recognition, I was compelled to make an initial "choice" which involved a conceptual alignment with *experience* and the view that an activity does not qualify as game-playing unless actually *experienced* as a voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles. I realized that the soccer games of my childhood were not examples of game-playing insofar as some rulebook or objective spectator judged them to be so. Instead, they were established as game-playing *for me* only in the *lived* moments within which I sought to place the ball in the net in accordance with the limitations imposed by the rules.

In the shift from activity to experience, I highlighted the concepts of "voluntary" and "unnecessary" as experiential descriptors and then played around with Suits' definition. I felt that a rephrasing was in order so as to bring the concept more squarely in line with experience. My rephrasing defined game-playing as "the voluntary attempt to overcome obstacles unnecessarily" further simplifying to "the commitment to struggle unnecessarily." With the *struggle* rather than the obstacles themselves acknowledged as "unnecessary" I felt that I was on the right track. Could it be possible that the solution to the Grasshopper's final riddle was somehow embedded within my own struggle experiences? My instinct was that my choice was at least "directionally correct."

Embodiment Theory[3]

As mentioned in the previous section, I did posses the instinct that a resolution to the Grasshopper's final puzzle somehow required a closer look at the distinction between "physical" and "nonphysical." Accordingly, I found myself drawn to what I have labeled embodiment theory which converges upon questions relevant to the essential makeup of a human being as some sort of union or unity of mind[4] and body. In general, embodiment theorists have identified two opposing ontological modes of *bodily* perception including "my body" as a body-subject and "my body" as a body-object (23). The body-object mode of perception appears to parallel dualistic theories of embodiment whereas the body-subject mode of perception seems to correspond with monistic theories of embodiment.

Descartes (3) is recognized as a prominent dualistic theorist and is best known for his assertion "I think therefore I am." Cartesian dualism maintains that the mind and body are two separate and distinct substances with the essence of humanity identified as the ability to think. Despite the fact that they can exist separately, dualistic theorists do acknowledge that the mind and body form an intimate union (not a unity) during existence. Of course, because mind and body are fundamentally separate and distinct substances, mind-body dualists are left with the quandary of how to explain the nature of the union between a thinking substance and a material substance.

With the mind acknowledged as the thinker and the essence of humanity believed to be the ability to think, mind-body dualists extol the mind as superior and therefore worthy of high regard as the ruler of the body in a puppeteer-puppet relationship. Plato (18), for example, specifically asserted that when the body and soul are united, nature ordains one to be master and the other to be slave. Because the mortal body represents the visible and changing kind of existence and the immortal soul represents the invisible and unchanging kind of existence and "truth" is aligned with the unchanging state of the soul, the soul qualifies as master and the body is denounced as slave.

This master-slave relationship is one that monistic theorist are critical of insofar as the body is reduced to a *mere* body-object as a thing among other things in the midst of the world (23). Meier (16) disagrees that mind-body dualism portrays the human existent as "ontologically schizophrenic" with the body viewed as a mere instrument, object or machine drained of its humanity altogether. As an alternative, monistic theories hold that a human being represents an embodied consciousness with the body appreciated as one's anchorage in the world. On this view, "I" am wholly body and wholly consciousness with "my body" acknowledged as that by which things are revealed to me rather than wholly body as defined as it is for others (23). Meier (16) characterizes the body as a mode of communication and interaction with the world. Similarly, Marcel (14) suggests that "my embodiment" is best depicted as a unity (not a union) of "my body" and "my soul" concerned with "my" own and continued unfolding in the world via "my" interaction with it.

Interesting to me was the fact that notwithstanding the critical stance against mind-body dualism, monistic theorists *also* seem to rely upon a dualistic argument. The difference between the two appears to be that mind-body dualists propose duality at the level of *substance* whereas monistic theorists acknowledge duality at the level of *experience*. Mind-body dualists claim that the superior thinking mind is primary and the inferior immoral body is secondary. Within the critical stance adopted toward mind-body dualism, monistic theorists do *acknowledge* the body-object mode of perception as a *contrast* to the body-subject mode of perception and then go on to

qualify the body-subject mode of perception as primary and the body-object mode of perception as secondary. Marcel (14) for example, asserts that "my body" must be appreciated as a subject first with "my body" representing "my" primary and active mode of being-in-the-world. Similarly, Sartre (23) qualifies the monistic mode of bodily experience as the first ontological mode of perception with the dualistic mode of bodily experience as secondary.

In general, the monistic critique appears to be that mind-body dualism is incapable of definitively clarifying the essence of what it means to be human insofar as it seems to incapable of explaining the more intimate body-subject mode of perception. It's not that both modes aren't experienced, but rather that *because* two ontological modes of perception are evident, mind-body dualism cannot be accepted as a *comprehensive* theory of what it means to be human.

It was in the recollection of my own physical experiences in sports that I was able to "side" with the monistic critique via my own recognition of two ontological modes of bodily perception. I recalled the fragmented dualistic moments wherein I experienced my body as a mere thing wherein I couldn't seem to connect with the ball. My action was very much full of thought and full of struggle. In these frustrating moments, I felt "broken" with the "treadmill image of sport" (16) seeming to apply as I perceived my body as "an instrument or utensil to be appropriately directed and mastered" (16: p. 93). However, the monistic conception of embodiment seemed more accurate as applied to my more intimate and liberating sporting experiences wherein my bodily action appeared to unfold simply, beautifully, perfectly and naturally in the absence of thought and the absence of struggle. During these "instances of total immersion and dynamic individuation" I became aware of my own capabilities and limitations with the action unfolding as a form of expression and affirmation of self (16). It was during these moments that I felt real, whole, and entirely my*self*.

Having already aligned with inner experience, I was comfortable reducing the issue of embodiment to one *experiential* question: "Is there thought in my action?" Action full of thought equated with the body-object mode of perception and action unfolding within a state of thoughtless-ness characterized the body-subject mode of perception. Preferring the abundant, simple, perfect, beautiful, natural, peaceful, joyful, liberating, thoughtless moments, my instinct was that, given a choice, I ought to choose the body-subject mode of experience that allowed for the expression of self. However, with the moments of thoughtless-ness *also* characterized as moments of struggleless-ness, this intuition seemed to conflict entirely with my instinct that game-playing (i.e., the commitment to *struggle* unnecessarily) is central to the ideal of existence. The choice to maintain game-playing as central to the ideal of existence no longer appeared clear. Here's where the "muddlement" began.

Existential Theory[5]

The search for meaning and significance represents subject matter central to existentialism which embraces questions of meaning and significance. Existentialism represents a style of philosophizing embracing the view that human beings are free agents and therefore solely responsible for their own self-defining actions as well as for discovering meaning in an environment that appears as chaotic, hostile, and outwardly empty (13). Grounded in reflective action, this metaphysical perspective argues that individual existents have the authority to decide their own essential nature and to exist in accordance with these choices. It encourages the free living of a genuine and joyful existence, notwithstanding the numerous obstacles, distractions

and issues that plague human existence including finitude, guilt, fear, despair, angst, absurdity, alienation and boredom (13).

Viktor Frankl (7) highlights the "will to meaning" as "the primary motivational force" of existence which accounts for the fact that a human being "needs 'something' for the sake of which to live" (7: p. 99). Accordingly, from an existential point of view, finitude, guilt, fear, despair, angst, absurdity, alienation and boredom all represent normal features of human existence that place the existent in a state of frustration with the existential restlessness serving as the very motivation required for the discovery of meaning. Embracing the *search* for meaning and significance, existentialism acknowledges two modes of discovery traditionally contrasted as "inauthentic" and "authentic."

Inauthentic existence is experienced when choices are rooted in the collective welfare of the "group." With group interests linked to "work" as instrumental activity designed to produce useful results, the individual existent who chooses with the group experiences a dehumanized existence as he or she is reduced to a simple assemblage of instrumental tasks and functions. Alienation results as efficiency and productivity are chosen as features central to identity. Engulfed in the communal consciousness, the existent experiences his or her self as a *mere* reflection of social functions and obligations. Meaning and significance are granted in the external form of identity and status as the existent is judged in accordance with what he or she has produced or contributed to the group. Existentially, inauthentic choices are experienced as mechanistic action based upon the blind or unconscious adoption of group directives. Accordingly, inauthentic experience is "meaningful" only in an external way and only to the extent that the *consequences* of and *result* brought about by the existent's action serve to advance group interests (15).

In contrast, authentic discovery of meaning and purpose is experienced when life choices are rooted in a sense of individualism acknowledging that one is a unique human being with unique personal interests. Despite the fact that the world represents an environment necessarily shared with others, each and every individual existent does have the capacity to transcend group dictates so as to define his or her own self by his or her own choices and actions. Authentic experience is characterized as reflective action wherein freedom is embraced as the existent accepts responsibility for his or her own choices via a tense encounter with uncertainty. Rather than surrendering to the dictates of the group, authentic discovery of meaning emanates from within as the individual confronts a course of action within an ever-present stance of open and responsive awareness (10). All reflective action is experienced as authentic and internally significant insofar as it represents an attempt to define one's own self (15).

The relationship between existentialism and game-playing is clearly at the heart of the Grasshopper's final puzzle and one that has received some attention from philosophers of sport. Fully appreciative of the *experience*, authentic game-playing is extolled as an encounter with existential possibility (4) and a fundamental phenomenon of existence that "is always a process that has meaning" (5: p. 101). As an activity of creation (22), it offers "moments of intense, vivid, and individuating engagement … the individual is provided with numerous occasions to recover himself (sic) and to attain a new and more perceptive sense of his own unique, personal existence" (15: p. 124). Existential theory, by definition, entails a focus on inner experience. Having reduced game-playing theory and embodiment theory to this same focal point, I sensed that my theoretical influences were beginning to synchronize and direct me toward resolution.

Within the common ground established, the distinction between the mind of an existent and the influence of the "collective consciousness" on the thought conducted by that mind

became arbitrary with the recognition that despite what appeared as two separate and distinct areas of questionning, both theory sets seemed to boil down to a fundamental contrast between two modes of *experience*. Of course, this realization was revealed to me in and through my own experience wherein I noticed that the moments of existence I qualified as "inauthentic" were always accompanied by a dualistic body-object experience characterized by resistance and the feeling of being controlled. Similarly, I noticed that all "authentic" existential moments appeared to involve a monistic body-subject experience with my own consciousness deeply embodied in and aligned with the motions and activities of the lived-body. These insights seemed to correspond with Sartre's (23) descriptions of the two ontological modes of perceiving "my body" with the body-object experience described as "*being*-for-others" and the body-subject perceptive experience described as "*being*-in-itself."

I arrived at the conclusion that the "gap" between inauthentic and authentic existence central to existential theory is identical to the "gap" between the body-object and body-subject modes of perception central to embodiment theory with the commonality established at the level of *experience*. My intuition remained that the solution to the Grasshopper's riddle may involve the "choice" of the authentic body-subject experience over the inauthentic body-object experience with this intuition continuing to conflict with my instinct that the lusory commitment to struggle unnecessarily is central to the ideal of existence.

Experiential Duality

Gandhi said "happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." Suffice it to say I became very unhappy. With diametrically opposed theoretical instincts "guiding" my action, I entered a state of *being* "muddled in praxis." My either-or predicament became existentially intolerable with every choice somehow involving a compromise of ideals. Within an extended state of existential despair, my journey became frightening as I wrestled with two irreconcilable choices with the wrestling eventually perceived as entirely involuntary. I "bounced" between thought*ful*ness (and I mean *full*!) and thoughtless-ness (and I mean absolutely *no* thought whatsoever), between struggle and struggleless-ness with the "degrees" seeming to open up at both ends with the ongoing perception of my existence somehow being "involuntary." At the extremes, I found myself confronted with the same "end of existence" vision portrayed by the Grasshopper and the same either-or choice … maintain game-playing as central to the ideal of existence *and accept the end of existence altogether* or maintain the foundations of existence and reject the claim that game-playing is central to the ideal of existence.

At the thoughtless-ness extreme I experienced the complete absence of struggle within my own confrontation with no*thing*ness (i.e., the end of existence). At the thoughtfulness extreme I faced a hyper-vigilant stream of incessant thoughts speaking to the obstacle-laden environment within which I existed with the thoughts themselves serving to present a landscape of excruciating struggle. [6] I fully believe (now) that these extremes were required in order for me, personally, to accept the *totality* of the choice to maintain game-playing as central to the ideal of existence … *If* this would be my choice, I needed to *fully* accept the end of existence as a consequence. Frankl (7) claims that the key to overcoming devastating external circumstances is to find meaning in the suffering. Accordingly, I *choose* to believe that the extreme nature of my own experience (inner and outer) was *meant* to help me clarify the essential nature of the two options proposed by the Grasshopper in his final riddle and thereby *help* me to make my own

final choice. If not for the extreme nature of my own experience, I would not have been "open" to the influence that would prove to ground a profound paradigm shift in my own theoretical outlook.

Split-Mind Dualism

Derived from *A Course in Miracles* ("ACIM") (6),[7] it is arguable that the theory of split-mind dualism to be advanced is deeply embedded in a level of duality introduced by existential theory which portrays two irreconcilable modes of *experience* as intricately linked with two different *thought* systems. With thought being of the *mind*, existential theorists establish a questionning platform that allows for the possibility that the bouncing experienced between inauthentic and authentic modes of existence might be able to be explained by a theory of embodiment that accounts for the existence of two thought systems with each occupying a portion of a *mind that this split*. Traditionally, embodiment theorists have begun the question of embodiment with the primary assumption that the *body* serves as one's primary anchorage in reality. Split-mind dualism serves as an "exactly the opposite" alternative insofar as it begins with the *mind* as one's primary anchorage in reality with the bodily environment "existing" only as a projection therein. Split-mind dualism serves as a *reversal* in traditional embodiment thinking ... rather than the mind somehow dwelling in a physical environment, the physical environment exists only in the mind. On this view, existence *is* merely a dream (recall the anxiety dream of the Grasshopper!) with the physical environment (including the body, the world and "others" sharing that world) "existing" only as content projected therein.

"The Zone"[8] of *Reality* extends from a Source of pure, perfect and abundant Love infinitely radiating only absolutes including peace, joy, strength and truth. There are no opposites or divisions in Reality. Reality just *is*. I cannot be contained. It is divine infinite eternal ever-present bliss. Within the oneness that characterizes the Zone of extension, the Mind becomes "split" upon the eruption of a single thought. This "tiny mad idea" emerges as a wonderment of what it would be like to go off on "my" own and "exist" separately. As an idea, the separation doesn't actually occur and, in Reality, is immediately dissipated by Reality (to be clear, there *is* no separation, just the *thought* of separation). Metaphysical questions arise surrounding existence.

Within the "bang," a tiny portion of the One "falls asleep" wherein the thought of separation is metaphysically "hidden" from Reality. Within the "dream," the wonderment is entertained via the conceptualization of a physical body as a means for containing the tiny mad idea. The "individual" born of the idea is given the name of Ego and, not knowing an alternative, is preprogrammed to accept separation as its mandate. Of course, because in Reality the Ego *is* still in the Zone of extension, the absolutes radiating infinitely from the Source of abundant Love remain in its awareness as a "distant memory." Unconsciously torn between an awareness of absolute Love and the preprogrammed instinct to separate, the Ego experiences a sense of disconnect which motivates a striving to overcome incompleteness (10). Herein lays the essence of all *struggle*.

In the gap between the awareness of Love and the thought of separation, the Ego is frightened. Alone and afraid, the Ego is compelled to "build" a substitute for the metaphysical absolutes of the Zone in physical form which sets the stage for the conception of a world as a place to belong with "others" in that world. Of course, the "growth" (a substitute for the extension that characterizes the Zone) that results from derivative reproductions of the thought of

separation ensures that the initial tiny mad idea becomes more and more concealed within the dream as the erroneous source of the chaos. Ongoing chaos guarantees fear with the "circle of fear" serving as the only means of ensuring that the tiny mad idea remains hidden from Reality forever.

The physical nature of the environment of unreality provides the illusion of impermeability and is intended to establish solid containment of the thought of separation. But, with each projection within the dream preprogrammed to separate and struggle, the world of the Ego is inevitably doomed to portray an environment of never-ending division, change, upheaval and unrest. In response to the fracturing, the Ego is compelled to maintain the illusion of oneness via the construction of "rules" that, if followed, are capable of establishing unity. Of course, this strategy is doomed to futility insofar as it is rooted in the illogical assumption that it is possible to unite a collective of separatists each preprogrammed to separate and therefore resist all unifying efforts. Clearly, maintenance of the illusion is very hard work which at some point does become recognized as entirely futile. What is the existent to choose upon the recognition that existence is futile (recall the Grasshopper's final riddle)?

The choice is logically revealed in a fundamental flaw in the Ego's thought system with this flaw fully substantiating the inevitability of the illusion ending (*this* is the end of existence) with the existent waking up to Reality. The flaw lies in the fact that the physical environment of the illusion is, despite all appearances to the contrary, permeable with the permeability guaranteed as an inevitable consequence of the physical environment being "built" upon the thought of separation. Endless fracturing ensures increasing permeability as the seemingly solid physical constructs of existence "open up" to allow for infusion of the absolutes of the Zone of extension into the dream.

The fractures themselves serve as "portals" that allow for the physical environment of the illusion to be "reframed" by absolutes. Increased fracturing means increased permeability and more widespread infusion with the infusion serving to dissipate the Ego's thought system and replace it with abundant Love as the Source of the Zone. Washed in absolutes, the Ego does inevitably submit and thereby experiences the authentic existential state of being-in-the-Zone (a glimpse of the absolute non-embodied state) with the physical constructs of the illusion of existence revealed in truth as illusive. Herein lays the meaning of "seeing the field" and the justification of my instinct that, given a choice, I ought to choose the authentic mode of experience characterized by thoughtless-ness and struggleless-ness over the inauthentic mode experienced as full of thought and full of struggle.[10]

The Game of "Real Life"

So, what of struggle and the suggestion that game-playing is central to the ideal of existence? Doesn't my existential preference for struggless-ness require that I reject this ideal? My answer is no with the reconciliation of ideals rooted in the acknowledgement that existence fulfills the definition of game-playing as the commitment to struggle unnecessarily. From the metaphysical point of view of reality, the illusion of the physical environment and the struggle imposed therein is entirely "unnecessary." However, from within the illusion itself, struggle represents a central defining condition that must be embraced in the quest to end all struggle. It is only in and through struggle that the thought of separation is activated which ensures a fracture within which the absolutes of the Zone can infuse the illusion and thereby offer the Ego a choice capable of ending the illusion of existence.[11]

Within the illusion of time, the sense of incompleteness appears as a constant while the Ego learns how to choose, and then consistently choose, Love over fear. It is *only* in these authentically chosen choices that the split-mind is able to be healed. The dissipation of the tiny mad idea within the absolute Reality of the Zone seems to call for a reversal of all derivative thoughts of separation to a point in time wherein the physical environment of the illusion exists as a state of harmonized oneness.

At this point I pause to stipulate that I have only conjecture as to what appears to occur within the tiny interval of time that remains between split-mind and One Mind. I offer my speculations in the interest of "invoking closure" in this particular paper. The *quest* to heal the split-mind is a *process* that is very much full of struggle. However, just as the struggle itself is projected into the dream, I trust that the healing will also be "seen" within the physical content of the illusion. I trust that "seeing the field" entails the recognition of "signs" of healing therein. How else will I know if I am on the right track? I suspect that it is *only* in the actions and choices of the Ego involving a submission to abundant Love that the fractured physical environment "built" to hide the tiny mad idea will be able to be transformed into "Utopia" as a perfect physical reflection of a mind that is healed. I'm not sure exactly what "Utopia" looks like[12] but I trust that it exists as a synchronized physical conceptualization of the absolutes defining the Zone.

Notes

1. "Environment" is interpreted broadly in this paper to include the totality of the surroundings, circumstances and conditions within which an existent exists.
2. Thank you to Charlene Weaving and Gabriela Tymowski for organizing the *Sport and the Environment* conference. I am also grateful to the conference participants whose provocative presentations and questions helped to significantly advance the theoretical position taken in this paper.
3. I cannot claim to be an "expert" in embodiment *theory*. I have read just enough to have been able to borrow from it as a foundational influence. What I have included here is only that which has been borrowed. What I have acknowledged here is only that which I resonated with within my own journey.
4. In the interest simplicity, "mind" is used broadly in this paper to refer to metaphysical (i.e., beyond the physical) concepts including "soul," "consciousness" and "spirit."
5. Søren Kierkegaard is widely recognized as the father of existentialism with other prominent existential theorists including Friedrich Nietzsche, Edmund Husserl, Martin Buber, Karl Jaspers, Paul Tillich, Gabriel Marcel, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Albert Camus. I have not studied each thinker's position and cannot therefore claim to be an "expert" in existential theory. Notwithstanding, with existentialism characterized as *style* of philosophizing embracing the *search* for meaning, I have been strongly influenced by it. Again, I have read just enough to have been able borrow from it as a foundational influence. What I have included here is only that which has been borrowed and woven into my own existential outlook.
6. There was a relationship between my external and internal environments with my internal thoughts "matching" that which I judged to be occurring in my external situation My point here is simply that I noticed the *thoughts* themselves had the power to cause me pain and suffering (i.e., struggle).

7. *A Course in Miracles* (6) is over 600 pages of beautifully written valid logic. My intent here is to share enough to demonstrate that a cohesive theory of self may be enlightened by the questionning provoked by this text. I offer *my* own interpretation of the content and the outlook derived from it as a bridge to such questionning. I am not "settled" in my own symbol set (which favors game-playing terminology) and my ability to communicate the essence of ACIM therein. I expect clarity will unfold in time. Accordingly, the content here is qualified as provisional.

8. I have borrowed "the Zone" as a symbol from the descriptive narratives used by athletes to describe moments of peak experience. It is intended as conceptually equivalent to the essence of Reality portrayed in *ACIM* and seems to also serve as an equivalent to the "in flow" experience described by Jackson (11) and Csikszentmihalyi (2, 11) as well as the spiritual experience of being "with God." The Buddhist concept of nirvana also seems to fit as well as what I have heard called the aesthetic experience. I fully believe that this represents a *universal* experience despite the wide variety of terminology sets employed in the name of expression.

9. Insofar as it offers some conceptual insight on some of the experiential features of this environment, I recommend *The Ant and the Elephant* by Vince Poscente (19).

10. I concede that split-mind dualism does require that I reject the *terminology* of embodiment theorists. The creation of a new terminology set is beyond the scope of this paper. I maintain (for now) the existential terminology as an alternative here.

11. Before studying *ACIM*, I read *The Disappearance of the Universe* (20) and *Your Immortal Reality* (21) by Gary Renard. I found these books helpful as preliminary to *ACIM* insofar as they helped me to clarify my questions and fears about the "end of existence."

12. *If* the Grasshopper's proposed Utopia of a futuristic mechanized world wherein all instrumental tasks are able to be accomplished via the push of a button (25) represents a viable description, it would have to be true that all existents populating this landscape exist as complete incarnations of One Mind.

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Mother Nature: The problematic discourse of feminizing the great outdoors

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In this essay, I will argue that it is problematic to associate nature as "feminine" or to feminize nature given the sexist context of North American culture and society. Entangled in the feminization of nature argument are examples of negative sexual discourse that will be explored in the paper. Such an association is negative because it results in some concerning gender constructions for women and participation in outdoor sport and activities. The persistent feminization of nature lends one to question how women ought to fit in and thrive in this environment. I highlight that I interpret "feminizing nature" to imply treating "nature" as feminine. For example, the expression "let's conquer her." I argue that when we refer to various outdoor activities in the feminine persona, this results in devaluing femininity and lends to viewing women as weak and harmed. For instance, "let's bag some cougars." Consequently, my interpretation of "feminizing nature" is broad and encompasses treating nature as feminine as well as outdoor activities assuming feminine characterizations. I highlight that the examples I refer to in this essay involve a negative and harmful characterization of the feminine. In order to demonstrate the case that it is problematic to configure nature as feminine, I refer to the following three examples: 1) Women and hunting; 2) Women and mountaineering; 3) Women and bear attacks. Despite the perceived diversity of the above examples, the common thread of sexist underpinnings and struggles for women participating in outdoor sports and recreation remains prominent in all three cases and such connections will be emphasized. Angela Schneider has commented:

> It is the basic idea, the idea that sport (sometimes even physical activity), particularly high-level competitive sport, is somehow incompatible with what women are, or what they should be, that must dominate any discussion of the unique issues for women in sport (1: p. 122).

I ought to highlight that I approach this paper with some inconsistency. I do not make clear cut distinctions between the complex terms outdoor sport, leisure, recreation, nature activities, and outdoor pursuits. For the purpose of this paper, I have grouped all of the above in the same category. I did so for simplicity as I could have spent an entire paper defining the above terms. Moreover, I argue that gender is constructed in similar fashions in all outdoor activities regardless of how you define the activity.

My theoretical approach is grounded in Greta Gaard's interpretation of ecofeminism. Such a theory draws on the insights of ecology, feminism, and socialism. Ecofeminism's basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions—such as those based on race, gender, class and sexuality—is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature; moreover, ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppression (2). Ecofeminists have described a number of connections between the oppressions of women and nature that are significant to understanding why the environment is a feminist issue, and conversely why feminist issues can be addressed in terms of environmental concerns.

Cara Carmichael Aitchison, through her analysis of gender and leisure, argues that we ought to challenge phallocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality, because when combined, they enable the continuation of male dominance through both structures and cultures. She refers to Bender's work on landscape and notes, "The landscape is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate and contest it. It is part of the way in which identities are created and disputed, whether as an individual, group or nation state" (4: p. 3) Consequently, I stress that in this paper, I believe it is problematic to feminize nature because of our current North American institutionalized sexism. Unfortunately, greater social structures and cultures are reproduced in outdoor activities.

1) Women and hunting

I begin with the first example of women and hunting. Robert Baker suggests that the way in which we identify something reflects our conception of it; the conception of women embedded in our language is male and chauvinistic:

> Perhaps the most striking aspect of the conceptual discrimination reflected in our language is that man is, as it were, essentially human, while woman is only accidentally so (5: p. 253).

For Baker, therefore, the root of the problem is social structures of sexual identification. Baker observes the following five ways that women are typically identified in our language:

1. Neutral terms: lady, gal, girl, sister, broad (pregnant cow)
2. Animal: chick, bird, fox, vixen, filly, bitch, bambi, cougar
3. Plaything: babe, doll, cuddly
4. Gender: typically associated with a type of clothing, worn by those in that specific gender (Skirt, purse, makeup)
5. Sexual: snatch, cunt, ass, twat, piece of ass, lay, pussy, sweat hog (5: p. 254).

For the purpose of this essay, I focus solely on # 2: Animal Associations and #5: Sexual Associations, because they are most prominently found in examples of outdoor activities.

Andrea Smalley in her work, "I just like to kill things: Women, men and the gender order of sport hunting in the USA 1940-1973," explored women's writing and experience in sportsmen's magazines. It is important to stress that typically, men in the 19th Century feminized nature, and metaphorically linked the forests and animals they pursued as feminine; therefore, believed they had economic rights to outdoors because of its feminized nature. It could be argued that the feminization of nature ideal still exists and plays a role in the gender effect surrounding women's participation in outdoor activities. Smalley maintains that women were active hunters in the early 19th Century but after World War I, sports men began to reconfigure the cultural meanings of blood sports through their gendered identification. Seemingly, this perception held post WW II and an increased connection of militarism and sport hunting developed. For example, if one was capable of killing a deer, they were also capable of killing a "Jap." There was a sentiment that while outdoors, soldiers fostered a greater love for America and a desire to protect its wilderness. This alludes to the idea that pursuing wilderness adventures and hunting involves ideal masculine and patriotic characteristics.

To support the claim that gender effects do exist in outdoor recreation, Smalley described one of the magazine's readers' interpretation of the importance of camping. Mr. Millar expressed how he enjoyed celebrating his masculinity while outdoors and wrote:

> men's physiology is adjusted to this kind of life because a man is at his best from the standpoint of fertility if he is away from home a night or two at a time giving his sperm cells a chance to accumulate (6: p.13).

Therefore, it seems that the outdoors refreshed males so that they would be better prepared for sexual activities and reproduction; however, it was not perceived to have the same effect for women adventurers. One can even describe the atmosphere as hostile towards sportswomen, since domestic abuse was a staple humour among outdoor enthusiasts. For instance, Smalley highlights some typical comments found throughout the magazine that degrade women like, "wife beating was a minor crime compared to poaching partridge"; and "all pussies I see in the woods become dead pussies". Note Baker's 5th theme of how we often associate women, by the use of the term "pussy". When women are described in this sexual manner, their genitalia is reduced to something that is perceived to be weak and powerless, overall decreasing women's bodily empowerment. Consequently, Smalley establishes that post the World Wars, hunting and outdoor pursuits were associated with masculine endeavors and women's participation decreased.

Another example that highlights the problematic feminization of nature and hunting involves an example from the 1990s. Consider this description of a cartoon that appeared in the magazine *Hustler:*

> Two white men, dressed as hunters, sit in a black Jeep. The two men carry rifles…The men and the Jeep face into the camera. Tied onto the hood of the black Jeep is a white woman. She is tied with thick rope. She is spread-eagle. Her pubic hair and crotch are the dead center of the car hood and the photograph. Her head is turned to one side, tied down by rope that is pulled taut across her neck, extended to and wrapped several times around her arms, crisscrossed under her breasts and over her thighs, drawn down and wrapped around the bumper of the Jeep…Between her feet on the car bumper, in orange with black print, is a sticker that reads: I brake for Billy Barter. The text under the photograph reads 'Western sportsmen report beaver hunting was particularly good throughout the Rocky Mt. region during the past season. These two hunters easily bagged their limit in the high country. They told Hustler that they stuffed and mounted their trophy as soon as they got her home (7: p. 49).

The description promotes the traditional view that men have power over women, depicting the woman as prey that is to be hunted and then harmed. The words used describe women as animals that are hunted, preyed upon, and owned. In this cartoon, the power of sex is identified with the power of conquest, a power prevalent in the language of hunting.

The concepts involved in sport hunting echo the concepts implicated in the subordination of women. In sport hunting language, sexual contact is implicit. There is a strong conceptual connection between hunting terms and expressions used in sexual language. We often refer to courting women as "chasing beaver", "chasing tail", and "hunting for cougars." There is a parallel between conquering animals and conquering women sexually.[1] These conceptions of women are embedded in our sporting language. They make it inevitable that women have little

place within the hunting world. Indeed, the preceding cartoon description, especially the description "stuffed and mounted", suggests scarce qualitative distinction in the hunting world between putting a moose head over one's fireplace and placing an open-legged woman over the same. This further alludes to the problem of feminizing outdoor activities. The second examples that helps to illustrate why we ought to be concerned about the feminization of nature, involves examining mountaineering and referring to a brief historical account of gender construction in Canadian mountaineering.

2) Women and mountaineering

At the onset of World War II, mountaineering declined tremendously in Canada and abroad. The 1940s marked a changing face to the sport of mountaineering. A military approach to mountaineering was adopted, detracting from the leisure-exploration style typical of previous mountaineering decades. The military connection to the mountains increased as guides in the Rockies taught military troops climbing techniques rather than instructing their usual clientele of upper class Victorian ladies and gentlemen. This new style of mountaineering featured a large mega expedition approach to the sport when the 'so-called' glorification of Everest emerged. With that noted, it is valuable to mention that increased airplane travel occurred post World War II, leading to a North American curiosity regarding the Himalayan Mountains. With the heightened nationalist sentiments post war, individuals from England, Germany, and North America developed a strong desire to put their country on the top of the world before others.

It was discovered through increased exploration of Nepal and the surrounding Himalayas that the mountains were viewed as an abode of the gods, and the gods must be kept happy if successful summits were to exist (8). Sherpas[2] believed that the Gods would be angry if certain things were to occur on their mountains. For example: climbing too high on a mountain in one day; stepping onto a summit incorrectly; shedding blood via killing animals; dropping human excretions on the mountains; burning garbage, and, finally, people engaging in sexual relations on the mountain, were all thought to anger the Gods (8). In some instances women were not even allowed to set foot on mountains, according to the religious based Himalayan myths. One begins to question how women were supposed to actually summit the mountains of the Himalayas.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, an increased level of competitiveness in mountaineering developed and, unfortunately it became the sole reason why certain individuals even engaged in the activity. The post-war era of mountaineering is what Sherry Ortner refers to in *Life and Death on Mt. Everest* as the "post war raunchiness machismo"(8: p. 128).

The mountaineering community argued that men possessed a distinct sense of control as they climbed; conversely, women were considered as lacking the physical strength required to perform such an activity:

> It is this feeling of unfluctuating control, I think, that women cannot share, and it springs of course not from the intellect or the personality, nor even so much from upbringing, but specifically from the body. The male body may be ungenerous, even uncreative in the deepest kind, but when it is working properly it is a marvelous thing to inhabit (8: p.166).

The above passage illustrates the 1950s aspirations for appropriate masculinity, which emphasized the strong male body, and competition against other men. Male superiority was exhibited through physical strength. This style of mountaineering required discipline, training and, of course, suffering in order to achieve the 'ideal' mountaineering fitness level (9).

Sexual discourse played an important role in mountaineering during the 1950s when a feminization of the mountain occurred and the sexualization of the climber's relationship with the mountain was displayed. The perceptions surrounding the idea of 'conquering' the mountain involved sexual and even violently sexual scenarios (9). For instance, mountaineering became a metaphor for sex; sometimes forced if need be. This was especially evident in an account of a 1953 Expedition to Everest, "There might have been a more sporting ethic about the conquest of the worlds' highest mountains: less rape and more seduction." (8: p. 175)

The sexual discourse surrounding mountaineering seemed to only expand over time. Mountaineering, once noted as encouraging female participation in the early 1900s, developed into a sport into the 1970s that demonstrated resistance against female participation. These sentiments reproduced those that existed in society regarding female participation in traditional sports such as hockey and football. The following suggests how mountaineering can be identified as a metaphor for sexual acts:

> As for the female character of the mountain, the anthropomorphism has been automatic, its roots found in a tangle of male psychology and mountaineering tradition. The usage varies, the climber's approach to the image is personal. [Ron] Fear's sweet lady and delicate lover is [Jim] Morrissey's siren, whore, and bitch: only the eyes of the beholder are different...well let's climb this pig, he was calling on an image not of the barnyard but of a college freshman mixer (8: p 178).

Illustrated below is an example from the 1980s demonstrating that attitudes instilled in the 1950s about women and mountaineering remained prominent ever thirty years later:

> She's here now. She hovers. She doesn't need our technology to sustain her but she does need us. We are important to her, her lovers. I close my eyes and a stroke of white silk caresses my face...I'm excited and content. This is how humans were meant to be...Wind pulls the white dress tight to her body. I strain against the ropes of my mortality (10: p. 265).

Post war mountaineering culture did not seem to involve a place for women amongst its peaks, since women were viewed as sexual encounters leading to conquests rather than peers within the climbing community. Mountaineering in the mid 20th Century was associated with notions of nature, spirituality, quality of the inner-self and the meaning of life yet, the actual activity consistently involved masculinity and the creation of the ideal 'manlyhood,' as well as feminizing the mountains. Similar to the first example, hunting and mountaineering reproduce a negative sexual discourse when nature is feminized.

3) Women and bear attacks

In this final example of outlining the problematic conceptualization of feminizing nature, I refer to a case that I believe highlights how women can struggle to fit in and truly be accepted by participating in outdoor activities when nature is perceived to be feminine. I hypothesize that there is a connection with feminizing nature and viewing women's bodies to be weaker and frailer compared to males, especially in the case of women, menstruation and bear attacks. Before this hypothesis is explained, it is necessary to reflect on some theories.

During the 17th, 18th and early 19th Century, North American women were closely connected with the vital energy theory. This has been well researched and documented by historians Patricia Vertinsky, Jennifer Hargreaves and Ann Hall. It was believed that if women participated in physical activity, or even masturbation for that matter, they would deplete their vital energy. It was also suspected that women lost their vital energy during menstruation. Women were supposed to save up this vital energy in order to maintain their social role as reproducers. Therefore, they were discouraged from participating in physical activity. Where I see a connection with the vital energy theory and the main argument of this paper is in the menstruation aspect. Forever perceived as the curse—the myth of the menstruation entered the Canadian forests in the 1960s—and although it was not thought that women depleted their vital energy through physical excursion in the outdoors, it was believed that that the menstrual cycle affected women's participation, because grizzlies would attack and kill menstruating women if they caught their scent. It can be argued that the menstrual cycle was used again as a reason to hinder or decrease women's participation in physical activity, particularly in the great outdoors, leading to a negative view of femininity and incompatibility in nature.

Some studies attempted to dispel this myth. For instance, in her work "Deer, bears, and blood: a note on Nonhuman animal response to menstrual odor", Katherine Marsh discusses the experimental and mythological evidence that indicates that animals respond markedly to human menstrual odor, and furthermore she believes that it is because of this myth that women have been excluded from many outdoor adventures (11).

The event that seemed to start this great fear of the menstrual cycle occurred on August 13, 1967 in Glacier National Park. It is often referred to as the "night of the grizzlies." In separate incidents, two women were attacked and killed by two different grizzly bears. Following these attacks there was speculation that because of odors associated with menstruation, women were more prone to grizzly attacks than men. This resulted in national parks creating pamphlets and publications on menstruation and likeliness of grizzly attacks. Women were discouraged from participating during menstruation, and if in the wilderness were instructed to use tampons rather than pads and to dispose of products immediately through burial. However, a study conducted by Herrero concluded that no evidence exists that links menstruation to any grizzly attacks. Even though evidence was inconclusive, the myth seemed to continue to tie women to their bodies and deter participation (12).

Another bear and menstruation study by Rogers, et al. formulated an experiment to gauge the reaction of grizzlies with menstrual blood. Various experiments took place. For example, human bloodied tampons were placed on the end of a fishing rod, and 'fished' at the bears. There was no interest. The second experiment involved a garbage dump where bears had a choice of garbage, piles of corn, and four tampons. One was unused, one soaked with human blood, another specifically with menstrual blood, and the fourth with beef fat. On all occasions, the bears were more interested in the beef fat-soaked tampons than any other source (13).

Rogers took the study a step further. In his third experiment, he had four women on different days of their period make contact with bears who were used to human interaction. Most wore tampons, except one woman (described as "crazy") who wore pants that were soaked with her menstrual blood. The bears did not pay any attention to the lower torsos of any of the women. The smell of menstrual blood was of no interest to the bears (13). This further supports the notion that it appears to be a myth that grizzlies are attracted to human menstrual blood. I highlight how silly the extent of research and time that has gone into the case of menstruation and grizzly attacks. At some level, I suspect that even though the research findings have dispelled the myth,

many people continue to believe it to be true. For instance, some park pamphlets I have come across warn women about "bathroom practices" while outdoors. In the case of bear attacks and menstruation, the feminization aspects leads to a negative and weak view of women's bodies and abilities in outdoor adventures in bear country.

Conclusion

I have attempted to demonstrate that when we feminize nature it often results in negative constructions of women, sexuality and the activity in and of itself. Hunting and mountaineering represented direct explicit examples of feminizing nature, whereas the example of women and menstruation and bear attacks symbolizes a more abstract connection of feminizing nature. However, I believe that all three examples illustrate that we need to be aware of the harmful backlash of feminizing nature. Until we can break down institutionalized sexist views of women, feminizing nature remains problematic for women's positioning and overall participation in outdoor activities.

Notes

[1] This motif is confirmed, again, in a story about a rugby team that travels to play in a tournament. The team captain orders the men's team florescent orange shirts as its "tour" shirts. When prompted by the players about the colour, he responds, "We need to wear hunter orange, since we'll be chasing cougars all weekend."

[2] Sherpa is the name used to describe a Himalayan or Nepalese person who has lived in the foothills for most of their life. They are known to have excellent adaptation to high altitudes and are used on expeditions for porting and guiding.

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