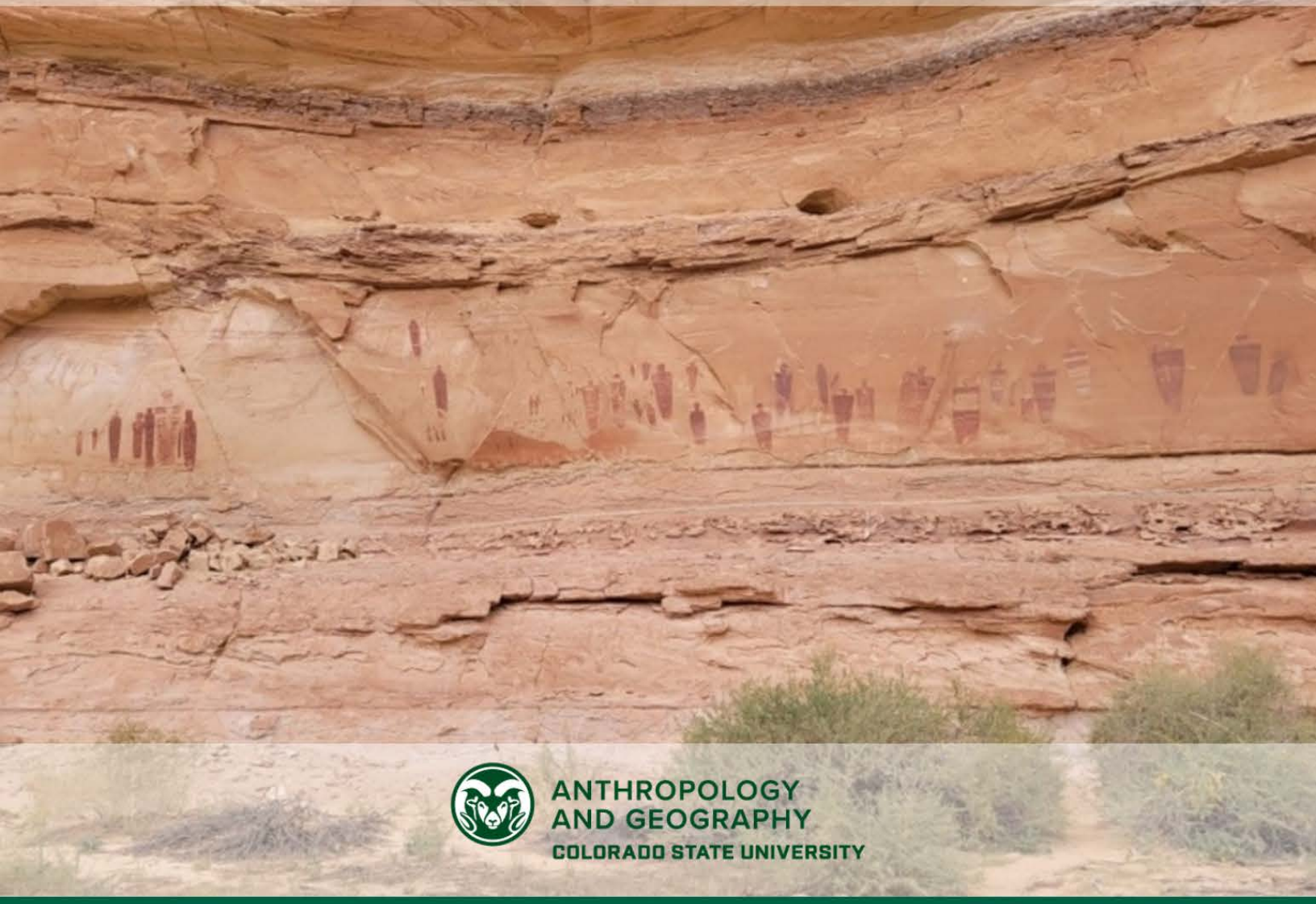
Furthering Perspectives:

Anthropological Views of the World



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Editor's Note

I am proud to present to you the 12th volume of *Furthering Perspectives: Anthropological Views of the World*. In this issue, we expand to include opinion pieces regarding how the field of anthropology and geography should move forward. It is my vision that *Furthering Perspectives* can be an archive to not only innovative research projects from CSU students and alumni but should also be a platform for ideas—whether it be new theoretical orientations, methodological challenges, directions of graduate training, or inter-disciplinary collaboration.

The field of anthropology has changed and developed drastically since its early days. At Colorado State University, our focus of integrating anthropology and geography has fostered a collection of research situating at the intersection of environment, public engagement, etc. This shows up in this issue of our journal, where our authors discussed a range of topics from environmental knowledge, the idea of development, and well-being.

I am extremely grateful for all authors and editors whose efforts and dedication make this publication possible. I am also grateful for the support from Anthropology Graduate Student Society at CSU, which provides the flatform for such amazing collaboration.

Katya Xinyi Zhao

Cover Picture
The Great Gallery rock art panel, taken by Michael Stapleton

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How the Environment Influenced Ancient Culture at Horseshoe Canyon, Utah

Michael Stapleton

Abstract

Archaeologists can determine patterns of ancient human behavior based on where cultural material exists on the landscape. These spatial patterns can vary based on environmental conditions regarding the landscape. Horseshoe Canyon contains eleven known ancient rock art sites and multiple undocumented sites that show evidence of cultural utilization of the environment. Located within Canyonlands National Park, Utah, this canyon sits between 1430 m - 1630 m above sea level on the western edge of the park. Navajo Sandstone is the dominant geologic formation, accompanied with various plant and animal species which live along Barrier Creek within the canyon. Horseshoe Canyon has seen continuous human occupation for at least 11,000 years (11,000 B.C.E – 700 C.E), including the Fremont, Ancestral Puebloan, and multiple unknown desert cultures before them. Since the 1920s, European Americans have known about the canyon, however archaeology did not begin until after 1971, the year Horseshoe Canyon was added to Canyonlands National Park. My research shows how the environment influenced culture at Horseshoe Canyon by analyzing artifacts found on the landscape, where rock art is located, and the environmental conditions in general. The presence of abundant raw material, natural shelter within the canyon, lithic assemblages and artifacts, rich soil and alluvial deposits, and evidence of hunting on the rim, suggest that humans could have stayed in Horseshoe Canyon throughout the year. Synthesis of archaeological and cultural data, along with my own discoveries from Horseshoe Canyon back the idea that ancient humans were influenced by the environment while manipulating the landscape to their needs.

Introduction

Over the span of thousands of years, humans have utilized Horseshoe Canyon, Utah in a variety of ways. By analyzing the manipulation of the environment and where cultural material exists on the landscape, archaeologists can better understand patterns of ancient human behavior and culture. Spatial patterns such as these can change depending on the environment, landscape, and cultural preferences. The goal of this research is to identify the spatial patterning of rock art and cultural material on the landscape to understand how the environment of Horseshoe Canyon influenced ancient humans to practice certain cultural activities in specific areas. This research integrates existing archaeological, ethnohistorical, and cultural data, along with direct observations from two surveys of Horseshoe Canyon. The analysis of artifacts found on the landscape, where rock art is located, and the environment in general support this hypothesis and suggest that ancient humans could have resided in Horseshoe Canyon's interior year-round. This research is significant because it provides a detailed overview on how the environment of Horseshoe Canyon influenced ancient culture and outlines what areas were utilized for specific cultural purposes.

Regional Background

Horseshoe Canyon is located outside of Green River, Utah, and has seen continuous human occupation for thousands of years. The Canyon exists within the Colorado Plateau region and is made up of mostly Navajo sandstone as the dominant geologic formation (Herbert 2015). Millions of years of geologic uplift and erosion from the Green and Colorado rivers carved out Horseshoe Canyon and separated the Canyon from neighboring geologic formations seen in the La Sals, Henrys, and Abajos mountain ranges (Herbert 2019). Horseshoe Canyon is situated around 1430 m - 1630 m above sea level. The Canyon is home to a wide variety of plant and animal species which thrive along Barrier Creek within the Canyon's interior. Barrier Creek itself is a runoff drainage from Green River and is responsible for bringing in much of the raw material that ancient humans used into the Canyon (Anderson 1978, 90, 91). Rich soils and alluvial deposits within the Canyon, as well as along some of the Canyon's shelves suggest that farming could have also been practiced in Horseshoe Canyon during the time of the Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan (Jackson 2010, 29). However, no evidence collected during the surveys or from past studies can accurately confirm that farming took place. Desert patina is also prevalent in Horseshoe Canyon and was used by ancient humans to create some of the petroglyphs seen at multiple documented sites within the Canyon's interior (Herbert 2022).

Early occupational history of the Canyon dates to at least 11,000 B.C.E - 700 C. E encompassing the cultures of the Ancestral Puebloan and the Fremont, along with multiple unknown desert cultures before them (Herbert 2021). The Canyon itself contains some of the most intricate rock art in all North America, commonly known as Barrier Canyon Style (BCS) rock art which dates as far back to 6,000 B.C.E. Sites such as the Great Gallery (42WN418), the High Gallery (42WN375), Horseshoe Shelter (42WN374), and the Alcove Gallery (42WN372), are a testament to the incredible pictographs within the Canyon's interior. The Horseshoe Canyon complex also contains seven more documented pictograph/petroglyph sites which are Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan in origin and date from 2,000 B.C.E to 700 C.E (Anderson 1978, 93-97). Besides the eleven known rock art sites, three more non-rock art sites have been surveyed within Horseshoe Canyon and have yielded a wide range of different artifacts. Artifacts found at Cowboy Cave (42WN420), which include animal skin seed bags, stone tools, plain weaved sandals, and lithic assemblages, illustrate some of these discoveries (Schroedl and Coulam 1994, 14-16). In conjunction with previously surveyed and excavated sites, undocumented sites are scattered across the landscape of Horseshoe Canyon and await further archaeological survey.

Later in the 1920s, European Americans took note of the Canyon and started to settle within the region. Oilmen and miners began to extract resources, while ranchers diverted water from Barrier Creek in the Canyon's interior to the rims where the land could be used for cattle. Private land use and resource extraction continued for decades until Horseshoe Canyon became a detached unit of Canyonlands National Park in 1971 (Herbert 2021). Prior to incorporation into the national park, no comprehensive archaeological survey or excavation was conducted at Horseshoe Canyon. However, limited information about Horseshoe Canyon and its history was

still available through obscure reports by independent researchers before 1971 (Anderson 1978, 90, 92). This research contributes to the literature regarding Horseshoe Canyon by outlining the spatial patterning of rock art and culture material. These aspects of Horseshoe Canyon demonstrate how the environment influenced where cultural activities took place.

Methodology

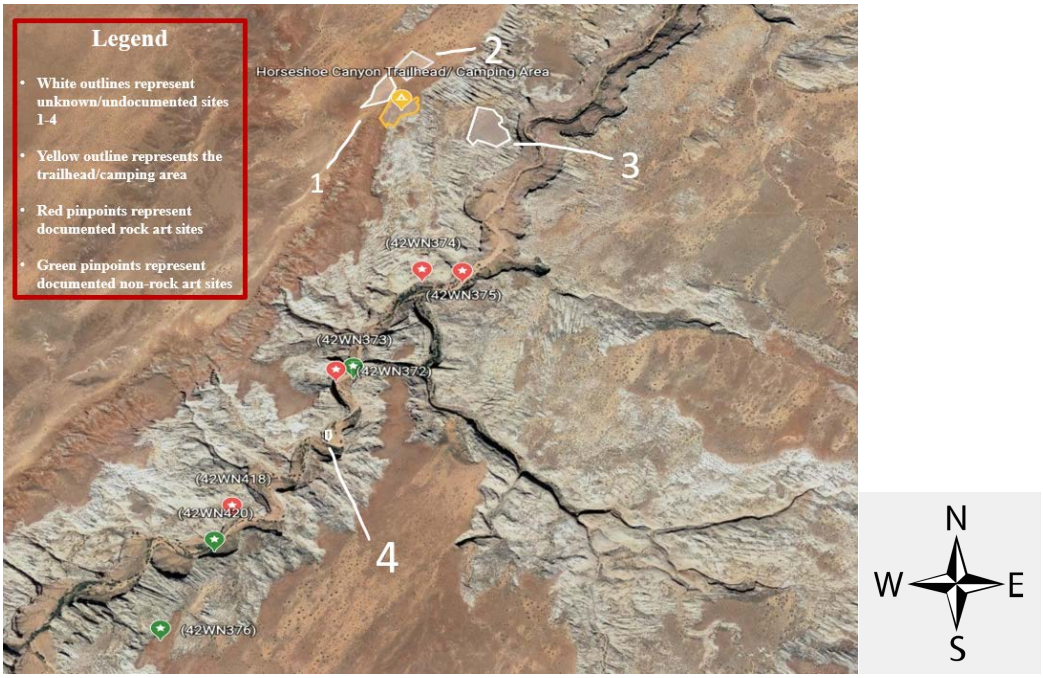
The core of the methodology consisted of observational surveys across multiple documented and undocumented sites within the Horseshoe Canyon region. It is important to note that all observational surveys conducted during this research project at Horseshoe Canyon were not in association with Canyonlands National Park or the National Park Service. No collections were taken, precise mapping and measuring was not conducted, and absolutely no excavations were organized at any established archaeological sites or any other area within Horseshoe Canyon. While standard and comprehensive archaeological methods could provide new insights into Horseshoe Canyon's ancient human occupations and site dynamics, I was not at liberty to conduct such methods during this research project. Adherence to all Canyonlands National Park regulations were followed while surveying Horseshoe Canyon.

On the first trip to Horseshoe Canyon, observational surveys were conducted along a small section of the northwest rim far outside the perimeter of the Horseshoe Canyon trailhead and camping area. This area has not been comprehensively documented or surveyed before using traditional archaeological methods (Anderson 1978). However, knowledge of this area containing a potential series of sites is known about and awaits further study. Observational surveys of the four main rock art sites were also conducted which include the Great Gallery, the High Gallery, Horseshoe Shelter, and the Alcove Gallery. Sections in between each of the rock art sites were also observationally surveyed to provide greater context to how each rock art site ties in with one another. While the main rock art sites have been documented and surveyed, much of the interior of the Canyon between the main four rock art sites still lacks comprehensive archaeological study.

The second trip to Horseshoe Canyon involved continued observational survey of the northwest rim, the four main rock art panels, and sections in between the rock art panels. During this survey, five other archaeologists assisted me in surveying two new locations of the northwest rim. As a larger group, we were able to cover more ground than the previous northwest rim survey and hike down into the Canyon to reexamine the four main rock art sites, as well as the landscape in between. During the observational surveys, we looked for natural features, such as rock niches, caves, flat-ground, and areas close to Barrier Creek that would have assisted ancient humans during their occupation at Horseshoe Canyon. In conjunction, we also took note of culturally modified landscapes and artifacts that provide evidence for ancient human occupation and utilization of specific locations within canyon, as well as along the Canyon's rim. These natural and cultural aspects of Horseshoe Canyon provide greater understanding of why ancient humans chose specific locations to perform their daily activities and to go about their lives.

Results

After surveying multiple locations within Horseshoe Canyon, four potential undocumented sites were identified. These areas are outlined in Figure 1 in white and show the theorized boundaries of the undocumented sites. The spatial relationship between the undocumented sites and the documented sites, along with the associated rock art, lithic assemblages, and other artifacts present, suggests the environment influenced culture profoundly at Horseshoe Canyon. This is apparent considering certain parts of the Canyon were utilized for specific, and sometimes mixed, cultural activities. Figure 1 provides an overview of Horseshoe Canyon and depicts where rock art sites are located, as well as other non-rock art sites.



(Figure 1: Horseshoe Canyon map recreated based on Anderson 1978, 91.)

The Canyon's interior most likely served as the main area for residential living and a space where individuals could go about their daily lives. Observational surveys at the Alcove Gallery, its neighbor site 42WN373, and Horseshoe Shelter show evidence of sparse communal living due to charcoal deposits and its higher elevation from Barrier Creek. Charcoal deposits at these sites are noted by Anderson along with evidence of storage pits at site 42WN373, which could have been a cache for food or stone tools (1978, 109-110). Site 42WN373 and Cowboy Cave are very similar because site 42WN373 appears to be a cache site like Cowboy Cave with remnants of residentially based cultural material nearby (Geib and Robins 2019, 316). Additionally, both sites are situated within proximity to large-scale rock art sites, such the Great Gallery and the Alcove Gallery. Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont people often cached food, tools, and other items near important locations, such as rock art panels, but also near residential spaces (Janetski 2002). The sites of Cowboy Cave, the Alcove Gallery, site 42WN373, and Horseshoe Shelter are also situated against the roughly 250 m high canyon walls, which would have provided increased protection from the elements. Barrier Creek also exists within a few

meters of these sites so access to water would have been easily available. Ethnohistorical and general cultural accounts of the Ancestral Puebloan and the Fremont state that these agriculturally driven peoples preferred to set up long-term residences around water sources so farming could be practiced more easily (Jenkinson 2009, 2).

While the sites previously mentioned appear to show residential possibilities, it is apparent that not all sites within the interior of the Canyon were used as residential spaces. The sites of the Great Gallery and the High Gallery show little to no cultural material on the landscape currently. However, at the Great Gallery and Cowboy Cave clay and stick figurines were discovered that show cultural similarities to Barrier Canyon Style (BCS) rock art found at the Great Gallery and other rock art locations (Schroedl and Coulam 1994, 2, 16; Jackson 2010, 8, 29). At the Great Gallery and the High Gallery, it is apparent that these rock art locations served a more profound purpose than just a residential space. According to Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont cultural traditions, places like the "Holy Ghost Panel", a section of the Great Gallery, were popular spiritual pilgrimage locations for these ancient peoples (Gough 2009, 35-36). Figure 2 shows the Great Gallery site (42WN418) and the "Holy Ghost Panel" section on the far lefthand side of the picture and figure 3 shows the impressive High Gallery (42WN375) site.

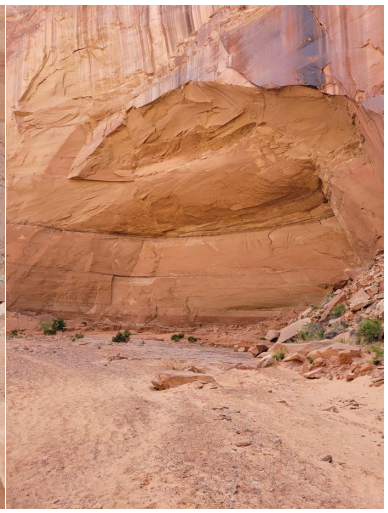
(Figures 2 and 3: The Great Gallery rock art panel and the High Gallery rock art panel. Photos taken by author.)

Further evidence that supports the idea the interior was a main residential area for ancient humans occupying Horseshoe Canyon is the presence of scattered lithic assemblages found in a few different sites. Observational survey of Horseshoe Shelter, the Alcove Gallery, as well as undocumented site 4, showed evidence of lithic assemblages. The lithic assemblages at these sites consisted of chalcedony, jasper, and some unknown raw material. Jasper and chalcedony are common abundant raw materials that flow down Barrier Creek and end up being deposited in the Canyon. This is also the same raw material used for most tools from multiple sites within Horseshoe Canyon (Anderson 1978, 102). The Alcove Gallery contained only a few jasper

flakes, most likely due to the rest of the assemblage being disturbed by modern humans and National Park archaeological surveys. Lithic assemblage disturbance at the Alcove Gallery is likely due to multiple previous surveys being conducted at the site, as well as frequent tourists who visit this site. Undocumented site 4 contained a small assemblage of jasper flakes and micro debitage, however there is a possibility that the rest of the assemblage has since flowed down Barrier Creek during heavy storms. The site is situated on a high embankment along the western canyon wall and appears to have been utilized by ancient humans. Undocumented site 4 could have been utilized to observe activity at the bottom of the canyon due to its high elevation above Barrier Creek, as well as a small-scale location to create tools. Figure 4 shows undocumented Site 4 and its gradual increasing elevation from Barrier Creek.

At Horseshoe Shelter, hundreds of flakes, debitage, and core pieces were observed alongside a projectile point preform. At this site, the lithic assemblages were situated away from the flattest areas and tucked in smaller corners, which could be interpreted as ancient humans creating tools apart from where they rest. Besides the Alcove Gallery, Horseshoe Shelter may have been the only other location with rock art where ancient humans decided to set up residences. While multiple non-rock art sites and undocumented sites within the Canyon show evidence of residential life, only the Alcove Gallery and Horseshoe Shelter sites show evidence of residential living near rock art. Pieces of charcoal was located at the Alcove Gallery which could be surfacing from hearth features within the ground. At Horseshoe Shelter, abundant charcoal deposits were also located at the base of the pictograph alongside lithic scatters which also support the idea that hearth features could exist under the surface. Most of the rock art at Horseshoe Shelter shows a Fremont hunting scene with dogs, anthropomorphs, and trapezoidal figures, however some depictions represent similar pictographs found nearby at the High Gallery (Anderson 1978, 99, 102). Figure 5 shows the Horseshoe Shelter (42WN374) panel which depicts cultural hunting scenes, animals, and humans. This artwork is representative of Fremont culture during the time of occupation at Horseshoe Canyon. Figure 6 shows the Alcove Gallery (42WN372) and its natural amphitheater design.

(Figure 4: Undocumented Site 4. Photo taken by author.)

(Figures 5 and 6: Horseshoe Shelter rock art panel and the Alcove Gallery rock art panel overview. Photos taken by author.)

Lastly, at Horseshoe Shelter a black and white lined ceramic sherd was discovered at the base of the pictographs. Prior to the surveys, no ceramics were located at this site (Anderson 1978, 102) and no other sources exist that discuss ceramics at this site. The ceramic sherd once was a part of a vessel, most likely Ancestral Puebloan in origin due to its iconography. Although, it is also possible that the vessel survived in a completed form well into the Fremont period and could have been traded amongst Fremont peoples (Janetski 2002). Considering that Ancestral Puebloan ceramics are scarce and represent a tiny fraction of all ceramics found at Fremont sites, it is likely that the original vessel may have been brought to Horseshoe Canyon well before Fremont occupation. Further analysis of the ceramic sherd through radiocarbon dating could provide the answer regarding when the vessel was created. Regardless, far away trade of exotic materials was common in Fremont society and the geographical location of Horseshoe Canyon would have been an ideal trade route considering the accessibility provided by the Colorado and Green Rivers (Janetski 2002). The idea that exotic trade and culture exchange was being practiced throughout Horseshoe Canyon is further supported by the instance of rock art. Ancestral Puebloan and Fremont peoples considered Horseshoe Canyon extremely spiritual and incited pilgrimage to the canyon from all over the American Southwest (Jenkinson 2009, 12; Gough 2009, 35-36). Figures 7-11 show the cultural material observed at Horseshoe Shelter.

(Figures 7-11: Horseshoe Shelter lithic assemblages, projectile point preform, as well as black and white ceramic sherd. Photos taken by author.)

Beyond the interior of the Canyon, three undocumented sites on the northwest rim of Horseshoe canyon nearest to the trailhead and camping area showed evidence stone tool creation and possible hunting nearby in the surrounding region. Undocumented sites 1 and 2 are split apart by a road that leads to the trailhead and camping area. It is apparent that these two sites were connected prior to construction of the road due to their proximity to one another. During observational survey of these areas, finished projectile points were discovered and projectile points with horizontally broken tips. The evidence of projectile points with horizontal broken tips, or impact fractures, indicate that these specific projectile points were used in a hunting event and broke because of striking a target. These projectile points were situated alongside lithic assemblages on a raised dune-scape area, so the likelihood of these tools and assemblages being out of context is low. The projectile points and lithic assemblages are consistent with previously established raw materials local to Horseshoe Canyon (Anderson 1978, 102). However, there are some projectile points and lithic assemblages that show signs of non-local material.

Within the lithic assemblages, cores and flakes with cortex were common which indicate that tool creation was practiced in this area. Apart from the elevated areas where the sites are located, the greater landscape surrounding the elevated dune-scape is relatively flat and would have been perfect for large herds of animals to travel through during certain times of the year. It is consistent from Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan cultural data that they would have utilized the flat terrain of this area for hunting (Janetski 2002). This is supported by the fact that animals would have been less prevalent in the Canyon due to high numbers of people living within the interior (Geib and Robins 2019, 316). Additionally, undocumented sites 1 and 2 are reminiscent of documented site 42WN376, which is also located on the rim of the canyon and contains lithic assemblage's indicative of tool production (Anderson 1978, 95, 97).

Undocumented site 3 rests on an alluvial shelf and contains many large lithic assemblages consisting of jasper and chalcedony, but no projectile points. The large size of the

lithic assemblage indicates the site was likely utilized regularly throughout many different cultural occupations. The site is situated at a halfway point between the Canyon's interior and the northwest rim making it an attractive space to accumulate large quantities of tool stone from the canyon's interior, without having to haul the material back and forth. Figures 12-22 show the lithic assemblages, lithic cores, and artifacts evidenced all three undocumented sites on the northwest rim of Horseshoe Canyon, as well as the site overviews.

(Figures 12-22: Undocumented sites 1-3, lithic cores, site overviews, projectile points, and lithic assemblages. Photos taken by author.)

Discussion and Conclusion

The compiled evidence from the undocumented sites and the documented sites supports the hypothesis that the environment influenced ancient culture at Horseshoe Canyon. Each site shows that specific cultural activities were being practiced in certain locations depending on the environmental context. The evidence gathered also suggests that residential spaces existed within the interior of the Canyon and not on the rims of the Canyon. The rim sites were most likely seasonally occupied for hunting, and tool creation. It is unlikely that the rim sites were used as permanent residential areas due to the lack of natural shelter, inconsistent year-round water availability, and the lack of abundant raw material as compared to the interior of the Canyon. Abundant lithic assemblages made from local raw material, including lithic cores, complete and

broken projectile points, and similar evidence from the southeastern rim site 42WN376 support these claims.

The interior sites of Horseshoe Canyon point towards evidence that not only residential spaces existed, but the Canyon itself acted as a pilgrimage and possible trade hub for ancient peoples who moved across the American Southwest. The stone tool and seed bag cache found at Cowboy Cave and the possible cache site 42WN373 indicate that ancient humans stored food and tools for later use or consumption near sites where they set up residences. The Alcove Gallery and Horseshoe Shelter sites depict evidence of being used for residential purposes with associated cultural activities nearby. Charcoal deposits, stone tool preforms, and abundant lithic assemblages support the idea that these sites were used as main areas of living and day-to-day activities possibly year-round. In contrast, the Great Gallery site and the High Gallery site do not provide evidence of consistent residential or day-to-day cultural activities. These sites were most likely utilized for ceremony, spiritual offerings, and pilgrimage due to the intrinsic and complex rock art. Lastly, the entirety of Horseshoe Canyon's interior could have been utilized for farming since the Barrier Creek flows through it and would have been a lot stronger in the past.

All the sites discussed in this study were integrated with ethnohistorical and cultural data from Fremont and Ancestral Puebloan traditions, as well as archaeological data from across the American Southwest and Horseshoe Canyon. All aspects of data were synthesized in conjunction with observational surveys of multiple different documented and undocumented sites across Horseshoe Canyon. This research is significant to Barrier Canyon archaeology and native southwestern cultural data because it provides an overview of Horseshoe Canyon's natural environment and how ancient humans utilized the landscape. Future comprehensive archaeological survey should be conducted at undocumented rim sites 1-4. Further study of rim sites at Horseshoe Canyon can provide greater insights regarding how ancient humans were influenced by the environment and modified the environment to fit their needs. Overall, this evidence shows that the ancient people who inhabited Horseshoe Canyon practiced a wide range of cultural activities across a vast area. By utilizing the natural environment, cultures of the Fremont, Ancestral Puebloan, and other unknown cultures before them transformed Horseshoe Canyon into a rich cultural landscape. Horseshoe Canyon represents a complex landscape and cultural mosaic where humans came together to live, thrive, and practice spiritual beliefs.

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Homeowners Associations' Role in the Development of Material-Social Landscapes: A Case Study of Two Golfing Communities in Colorado

Riley Lynch

Abstract

In an era where public governments in the United States are less able to sink capital into residential communities, Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) have emerged as a form of private governments for people who seek a cohesive community identity and can afford additional amenities. As such, HOAs act as agents of racial segregation, capital accumulation, uneven development, and ecological change throughout the United States. Though only a small percentage of HOA communities feature golf courses, these communities offer important insight to how disproportionately powerful communities simultaneously shape ecologies and identities. To unpack this relationship between HOAs, identity, and the physical environment, I conducted a literature review about HOAs and golf culture then critically examined governing documents and marketing tools of two golfing communities in Colorado (Pine Creek Village Association; The Fairways at Pole Creek) to understand how HOAs manage lawns, golf courses, and human-animal interactions. I ground my analysis in political ecology, subjectivity, and placemaking.

Introduction

In the United States, Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) govern about 20% of all homes and 80% of homes built since the year 2000 (Clarke and Freedman 2019). Through a matrix of bylaws, restrictions, and regulations, HOAs have the power and potential to enact major ecological and sociocultural change as they legislate landscaping, architecture, and design and maintain common areas in neighborhoods. As the literature has only begun to critically examine HOAs within the last 20-30 years, we have not yet gained a deep understanding of these agencies' long-term political or environmental implications. The sheer number of families and acres of land that must comply with HOA legislation constitutes the need for empirical, scholarly work to unpack their relationships with our material and social landscapes.

Some scholars have suggested HOAs act as powerful agents of segregation (Scheller 2017). Residents of HOA communities are statistically significantly whiter and less racially diverse than neighborhoods that are not overseen by an HOA (Clarke and Freedman 2019). Houses in HOA communities are an average of $13,500 more expensive than those in non-HOA communities and HOA residents must pay monthly fees, which cost an additional $2,840 per year on average (Clarke and Freedman 2019). The sheer expense of living in HOAs makes these neighborhoods exclusive on the basis of class and race, particularly as these social factors are historically intertwined. Most notably, the United States' history of redlining effectively barred people living in "declined" neighborhoods, marked by the presence of industrial activity, immigrants, and people of color, from obtaining loans, buying a home, and climbing the socioeconomic ladder (McClure et al. 2019; Rothstein 2017). The practice of redlining blocked

generations of black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) families from homeownership and wealth-building that would contemporarily give these families access to more expensive, exclusive, and amenity-rich HOA communities. HOAs can further maintain socioeconomic segregation by advertising a particular lifestyle, community culture, aesthetic, or architectural style. HOAs seek to attract people with similar personal interests, relatively high-standing economic statuses, and comparable racial backgrounds to produce relatively homogeneous neighborhoods. Building homogenous HOAs pivots on racial viscosity, the notion that bodies of particular races attract and 'stick' to one another (Ramírez 2014; Saldanha 2007), by mirroring images of heterosexual, white, nuclear families engaging in outdoor leisure in their marketing.

Golf courses are featured in 0.1% of non-HOA communities and 0.4% of HOA communities in the United States, a rarity that attracts particular residents to golf communities (Clarke and Freedman 2019; DeChaine 2001). As a hobby, golf requires an immense amount of wealth to afford the clothing, equipment, club membership or fees, and leisure time to be able to play a full game of golf (about 4-6 hours). Residents in golfing communities access the course through their status as homeowners, a major and exclusive indicator of (relatively) high socioeconomic standing. The desire and ability to live in a golfing community suggests a resident has a high investment in their identity as a golfer, a status which demands widespread radical environmental change, the input of fertilizers and pesticides on to the landscape, and alteration of native biodiversity and habitat. Certainly, golfers are not inherently bad people, and many may consider themselves environmentalists, but their hobby requires significant land use change with cascading ecological effects, which in turn reinforce golfers' identities as they live and recreate on a landscape which affirms their status. As such, individual and group identities and their surrounding physical environments construct one another (DeChaine 2001). To unpack this relationship between HOAs, identity, and the physical environment, I conducted a literature review about HOAs and golf culture, and then I critically examined the governing documents and marketing tools of two golfing communities in Colorado to understand how HOAs manage lawns, golf courses, and wildlife interactions. I draw on political ecology, subjectivity, and placemaking to contextualize the trends I observed.

Data and Methodology

Sites

This project critically examines the governing practices and marketing techniques of two HOA communities in Colorado (Figure 1). These two communities are comparable in size and share the ethos of recreation and leisure but differ in their suburban and mountainous ecologies. I examined both communities' HOA's community guidelines and marketing materials such as promotional videos and websites, with a particular focus on lawn and landscape design requirements, golf course regulations, and how human-wildlife interactions are managed.

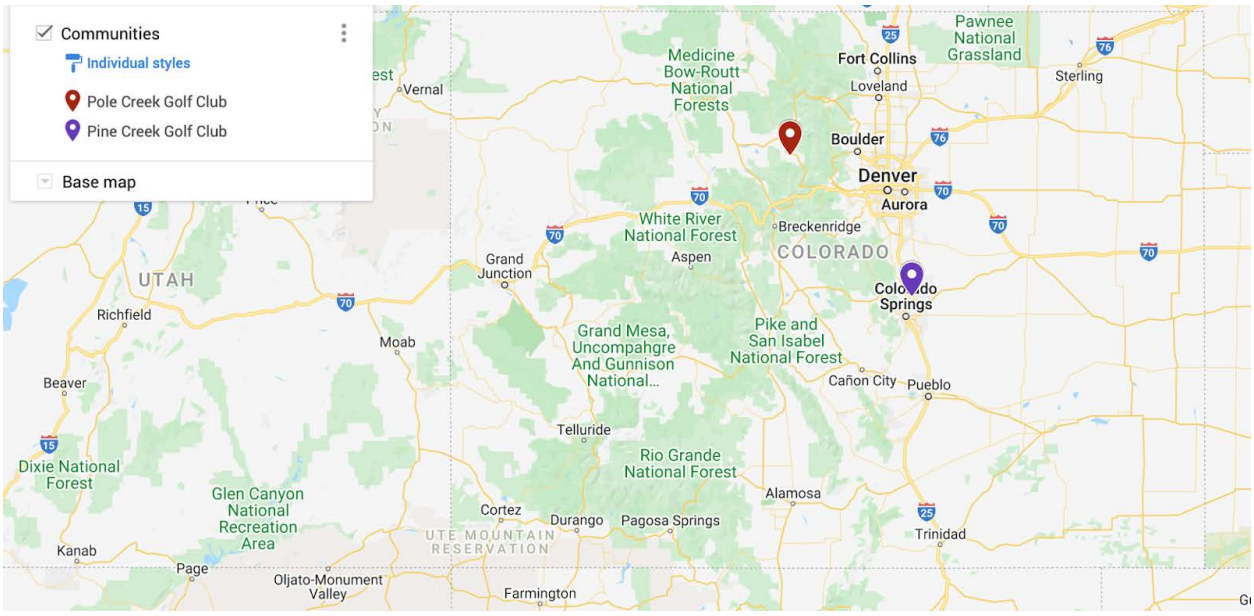

Figure 1: Two HOA golfing communities in Colorado: Pine Creek Village Association in Colorado Springs and The Fairways at Pole Creek in Tabernash. Map made by author May 2022 using Google Maps.

The first site, Pine Creek Village Association (Pine Creek) is located in northern Colorado Springs, Colorado (Figure 2). Pine Creek is a suburban, 900-acre "upscale residential community" (Pine Creek Village Association 2022). Their website states: "The purpose of the Pine Creek Village Association is to ensure a continuing quality neighborhood environment from the design and maintenance of the homes to the quality of life of its residents, and to ensure the highest possible property values," (Pine Creek Village Association 2022). The slogan suggests the community provides residents with "Golf Course Living, Close to Everything," striking a balance between exclusive privacy while maintaining access to public or external activities. Pine Creek also sits on important habitat for the threatened species Preble's Jumping Mouse (PJM), with many homes less than 200 ft of the Kettle Creek riparian zone (City of Colorado Springs 2007; Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2020).

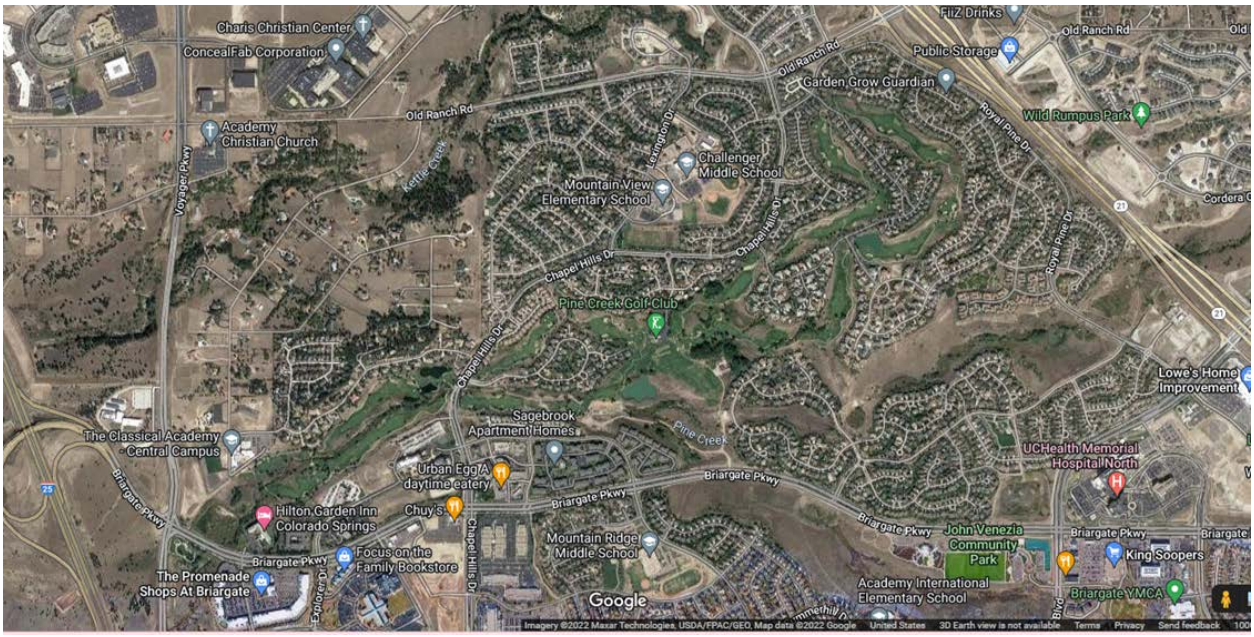

Figure 2: Aerial image of Pine Creek Village Association community and golf course in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Imagery provided by Google Earth in May 2022.

The second site, Fairways at Pole Creek in Tabernash, Colorado (Pole Creek) is a 1,000-acre "established upscale mountain community," and "recreational paradise," (The Fairways at Pole Creek 2019). Their website claims their HOA works to enhance property values (The Fairways at Pole Creek 2019). The community is designed to provide all residents with easy access to the golf course, with each lot at least 2 acres in size. A Pole Creek marketing video entices potential homeowners to "find the Colorado [they] thought was gone," (The Fairways at Pole Creek 2019). The community establishes a "spirit of living in harmony with nature, neighborly community," and a "place for families to renew, spirits be rekindled," (The Fairways at Pole Creek 2019). Simultaneously, the location of Pole Creek offers privacy and recreational opportunities and access to the Front Range and mountain resorts, as stated on their website.

Figure 3: Aerial image of The Fairways at Pole Creek community and golf course in Tabernash, Colorado. Imagery provided by Google Earth in May 2022.

Secondary Data

To supplement the primary data collected through my site analysis, I conducted a literature review about the history of HOAs, their style of governance, and how they regulate residential ecologies. I searched for combinations of the following frameworks and concepts: political ecology of lawns, history of lawns, HOAs and lawns/landscaping, HOA governance, history of HOAs, and quantitative data on HOAs. I also looked to scholarly literature to learn about golf history, culture, identity, ecology, and how golf courses act as environmental 'goods' (i.e., provide bird habitat) and 'hazards' (i.e., source of stormwater pollution). Finally, I use concepts from the canon of scholarship about space and place to explore the ways in which people and landscapes are co-constitutive.

Results and Discussion

HOA History and Governance

HOAs emerged in the early 1900s in response to a slew of social and political changes at the turn of the century. During the Great Migration, hundreds of thousands of black Americans migrated north between 1915 and 1930 (Marks 1989), drastically altering the demographic makeup of northern urban areas. By 1917, Supreme Court case *Buchanan v. Warley* made racial zoning practices illegal, giving rise to racially restrictive covenants which would be made illegal in 1948 *Shelley vs. Cramer*. Despite these legal rulings, some covenants continued to enforce racial segregation until the 1960s (Gotham 2000). The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) coded black people as 'adverse influences' on property values in their Underwriting Manuals until 1952, but banks, appraisal companies, and realtors continued to use this racist criteria until at least the 1970s (Gotham 2000). To prevent racial integration in neighborhoods, HOAs purchased homes from landlords renting to black people, homes from black homeowners, boycotted businesses serving black people and lobbied to enforce discriminatory zoning practices (Gotham 2000).

The number of HOAs rapidly increased in the 1960s when the Federal Housing Administration encouraged homeownership as a tool of upward social mobility (Cheung and Meltzer 2013). Simultaneously, urban regions became increasingly diverse, precipitating an era of 'white flight' to suburban neighborhoods which coincided with rapid increase in HOAs. In recent years, some municipal codes, for instance in Arizona, encourage the incorporation of HOAs because public entities are unable to scale-up infrastructures and services to meet the needs of rapidly increasing populations (Turner and Stiller 2020). As such HOAs act as private governments to ease the burdens placed on public governments. This neoliberal solution to state failure has the potential to magnify uneven development and segregation as wealthier, whiter people can afford to pay for additional hyper-localized services in HOA communities that those in non-HOA communities cannot access (Meltzer 2012).

In Colorado, HOAs are bound to relatively few federal- and state-level legislation. At the federal level, they must comply to the Americans with Disabilities Act and ensure all common spaces are accessible to those with disabilities, and the Federal Fair Housing Act which prohibits discrimination against the renter or purchaser of a home on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2022). In the state of Colorado, the Colorado Fair Housing Act, the Colorado Nonprofit Corporation Act, and the Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act limit the governing powers of HOAs, but these regulations are relatively lenient (Colorado Department of Regulatory Industries 2022). Without strict oversight, HOAs can act as their own government, shaping municipal development, capital investment, and the demographic structure of the community.

Courts consider covenants legally binding contracts and, in some states including Colorado, HOAs have the power to sue to foreclose on your home for compliance violations (McCabe 2005). HOAs act like private governments in that they conduct zoning-like practices, collect fees, solve disputes, and provide services such as maintaining common areas and stormwater infrastructure (McCabe 2011). Some scholars theorize private governments emerge when people are dissatisfied with public services *and* they are able to pay for additional services (Cheung and Meltzer 2013, my emphasis), thus perpetuating significant disparities of infrastructural services on the basis of class. Homes in HOA communities are an average of $13,500 more than homes in non-HOA communities, and average monthly HOA fees cost $237, prices which constitute mechanisms for exclusion (Clarke and Freedman 2019).

In Colorado, HOAs are classified as non-profits and may apply for a tax-exempt status if they meet certain criteria, for instance by maintaining a common green space within their community. This status could perhaps lighten the financial burden on HOA residents, but it also implies that HOAs do not contribute to development outside of their boundaries, thus deepening the pattern of uneven development. HOAs can also influence or lobby for particular government decisions as they have more power as a united force compared to individual citizens in non-HOA communities and they may leverage their ability to lighten the burden on public resources (McCabe 2005).

Lawns and Residential Landscape Management

Amongst the many things HOAs regulate, rules managing lawn and landscape design are perhaps some of the most well-known and contested. The lawn has been constructed as a major component of the middle class, suburban American home enclosed by a white picket fence and a monocultured blanket of low-growing, green turf grass. This landscaping feature is often cited as a cultural practice descended from pastures and lawns kept by lords in the United Kingdom. These historical landscapes were kept by professional gardeners and were gated to prevent public access, but lawns today are much smaller and may not allow fencing to maintain a cohesive appearance between neighboring properties. In the mid-19th century, American landscape architect, Andrew Jackson Downing, promoted the lawn as a space of pleasure and a mechanism to maintain a genteel citizenry (Fraser et al. 2013). Downing promoted the private, un-fenced

lawn as an object to be enjoyed by the public and maintain community cohesion through a shared aesthetic. As the lawn became more accessible to Americans in the 20th century, its presence and standard of upkeep soon became associated with the moral character and respectability of the resident in charge of caring for the lawn (Robbins 2007). Referencing Alfred Crosby's term "ecological imperialism," Robbins suggests the American Lawn exists the colonial tradition of replacing native species with an exotic monoculture (2007, 23).

The specific properties of turf grass require consistent maintenance and chemical inputs. As turf grass evolved alongside grazing animals, these species came to require constant trimming which triggers the plant to send out more grass shoots and form a dense mat covering the soil (Robbins 2007). Turf grasses cyclically become brown, especially during periods of dryness or drought, but this physical trait can be curbed with frequent watering and fertilizer inputs. Polyculture and the presence of insects is also inevitable due to natural succession, so to maintain consistent green swards of turfgrass, lawns require frequent mowing, high inputs of water, and pesticides to suppress other species. Turf grass is the most irrigated crop in the nation, and in Colorado, 50% of residential water use is used to maintain lawns and outdoor landscaping (Environmental Protection Agency 2017). Class identity and performance are thus partially defined by one's ability to keep up with the labor and cost-intensive demands of turf grass (Robbins and Sharp 2003), thus monocultured turf lawns perhaps act as an ethno-class index, or at least a forced assimilation into this system.

Both Pine Creek and Pole Creek HOAs cited maintaining the highest possible property values as one of their primary goals, invoking tremors to historically racist HOA practices designed to maintain segregation and shield whiteness in 'safe' and 'moral' neighborhoods, ultimately reflected by the ubiquitous well-kept lawn. Within the structure of American capitalism, landscaping and residential ecologies are reduced to their abilities to maximize capital inflow vis-à-vis property value. The economic value attributed to plants and landscape structure reflect a subjective evaluation that fails to recognize the importance of Indigenous ecologies and management practices, edible foodscapes, water-wise, permaculture and other landscaping practices external to the hegemonic lawn. The strict adherence to grass lawns, especially in arid environments like Colorado, signify the tight hold that white supremacist power blocs have on present day American communities, facilitated in part by HOAs (Gotham 2000).

Properties inherent to monocultural turf grasses are hazardous particularly to pets, children, water quality, and further reduce habitat for pollinators and wildlife. The majority of pesticides and herbicides on the market are toxic, carcinogenic, or are endocrine disruptors, yet we knowingly and willingly spray these chemicals on the very grass on which our children and pets play (Robbins 2007). Fertilizers, though less directly harmful to humans and pets, get picked up by stormwater and carried to streams, lakes, and oceans where they fuel algal and cyanobacterial growth which eventually makes waterbodies anaerobic and unable to support aquatic life. Homeowners often overapply chemical inputs which magnifies the hazard and pollution load of lawns, a trend which is worsened in HOA communities as residents attempt to

keep up with the appearance of their neighbors' lawns and comply with HOA rules (Fraser et al. 2013; Robbins and Sharp 2003). Perhaps contradictorily, lawn input application increases with education status (Robbins 2007). Even when we are aware that these chemicals are harmful to our families and environment, we continue to apply them because we feel the need to maintain the appearance of our individual lot and collective neighborhood space to ensure high property values, keeping in line with the status quo of capitalist pressures on land.

Because HOAs yield disproportionate power, they actively contribute to the uneven development of neighborhoods in Colorado and across the United States. HOAs directly maintain and manage communal landscapes within the boundaries of their community, such as parks, greenways, dog parks, and medians. HOAs also directly shape and regulate the land, plants, animals, and built structures on residential plots within the community, doling out fines for failing to maintain established landscaping standards. Such punitive measures affirm HOAs' role in manufacturing a visibly homogenous community by pressuring residents to sink capital, labor, water, and chemicals into the land they live on. Robbins argues lawn managers become subjects of their lawn as they monitor the appearance of the turf and tend to its every need or abnormality. In fact, managers of golf courses who become obsessed with irrigation practices are commonly known to have "green grass syndrome," (Labbance and Witteveen 2002).

The Pine Creek Village Association website explains 'traditional lawns', meaning a monoculture of turfgrass, can be found in Downtown Colorado Springs, while 'conservationist landscapes' are exemplified in the Colorado prairies (2022). This assertion verifies Robbins' suggestion that it is an American 'tradition' to remove and replace native for exotic species. Despite this discrepancy, Pine Creek highlights an alternative to traditional lawns through xeriscaping, or the use of mulch, rocks, and drought-tolerant plants. As another effort to conserve water, they also restrict residential irrigation to three times per week and between 6 PM and 10 AM which reduces water lost to evaporation. These landscape alternatives and restrictions are appropriate considering Colorado is amid a megadrought and climate change will reduce water availability in Colorado (Barnett and Pierce 2009).

The Pine Creek Village Association Community Guidelines (2020) details that the HOA must approve of all landscaping designs, including those with xeriscape features, a typical HOA practice. Reminiscent of turf grasses kept below a height of six inches, the guidelines state xeriscape designs must use a high density of low-growing (two to six inches) plants in transition zones to maintain continuity between lots. Residents are advised against using plants that grow taller than 24 inches in places that are visible from the street or sidewalk. While there are a plethora of plants that fall within this height range, this rule excludes several native and xeric species that grow beyond 24 inches. Habitat complexity, including the height of plants, is extremely important to maintain the ecological integrity needed to support native species, such as the endangered PJM.

In Pole Creek, residents cannot utilize planting patterns that form any lines or circles, but instead must plant in a random pattern to mimic 'nature.' However, shapes, lines, circles, and fractals exist in nature: spiders craft beautiful and intricate geometric webs, bees create perfectly

hexagonal honeycombs, mollusks live in spiral shells, grasses are typically linear, and circles can be found in every tree's internal rings. Despite this, shapes and symmetry are assumed to only be featured in human-made landscapes as opposed to naturally evolving landscapes, but this logic is only valid if humans are distinctly separate from nature or are 'unnatural'. Pole Creek's philosophy emphasizes a 'harmonious' relationship between the natural and built environment by requiring the selective erasure of perceived unnatural human presence.

Uniquely, Pole Creek also implements watering restrictions based on space, a maximum area of 1000 ft^2 per lot, rather than temporal irrigation restrictions encouraged by Pine Creek. Additionally, residents are also required to install drip irrigation which further minimizes evaporation. Every household is bound to strict planting requirements, but newly planted vegetation cannot interfere with neighbors' views as the 'view' is central to the appeal of Pole Creek. Pole Creek's Guidebook recommends residents plant native and xeric species as they are adapted to the local ecology and require less irrigation. However, residents must also plant 10 evergreens, 10 aspen trees, 15 shrubs, must reseed all areas disturbed by home construction, and are recommended to remove all juniper trees. Despite their extensive presence in the Rocky Mountains, aspen trees are not native to Colorado and act as weeds as one tree can produce a colony of shoots that crowd or overtop other vegetation. Though Juniper trees are native to Colorado, the Bureau of Land Management has removed tens of thousands of these trees because they are less fire resistant than other pines and to restore habitat for Sage Grouses (Bureau of Land Management 2020). Planting 20 trees and 15 shrubs, regardless of species or native status, drastically increases the density of woody and burnable vegetation and thus increases the risk of spreading fire. If 100 lots must plant a minimum of 20 trees each, the Pole Creek HOA will have established a small forest of 2,000 trees which could act as a carbon sink and could additionally be beneficial considering the great losses of trees from pine beetle kill and forest fires in recent years in Colorado (Schoennagel et al. 2017). While trees offer numerous ecosystem services like carbon sequestration, oxygen production, soil stabilization, and provide habitat for numerous species, they also consume mass amounts of water and can block sunlight from lower lying plants. This tree obsession (Paul and Jones 2021) erases other diverse ecosystems and microclimates that occur in the Rocky Mountains, such as montane-subalpine grasslands, shrublands, and wildflower-rich valleys filled, which are all necessary and important to maintain biodiversity and habitat complexity.

Golf Courses and Golfer Identity

Golf courses require vast amounts of space to undergo ecological change including the removal of native plants, planting exotic turf grasses, thousands of gallons of irrigation water, inputs of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and constant manicuring. The labor to upkeep a golf course is time-intensive and costly. Players gain access to golf courses via expensive pay-per-play or membership fees, but in planned golfing communities, players access the course via homeownership. Golfers also need special equipment, clothing and between four and six hours of leisure time to complete an 18-hole game. As such, golf is inherently only accessible to a wealthier class of people who can transform a landscape into a 'topography of exclusivity'

(DeChaine 2001). Both the Pine Creek and Pole Creek golf courses have restaurants, pro shops, and clubhouses for players to socialize and continue circulating capital internally.

Despite the inherent ecological hazards and social inequalities embedded in the structure of golf, the game has deep cultural roots. Humans have been participating in land use change for tens of thousands of years, whether in the form of agriculture, controlled burning, or the construction of cities and golf courses. These changes are not synonymous, nor do they have directly comparable impacts, but the boundary between 'natural' and 'cultural' landscapes is difficult to define. Further, recent research suggests golf courses can provide green space and corridors for wildlife and are particularly suited to supporting migratory and riparian birds (Merola-Zwartjes and DeLong 2005). Simultaneously, researchers observed fewer native birds in golf courses compared to non-golf course sites so recommended increasing habitat complexity, increasing leaf litter on the ground, reducing turf grass area, maximizing native plant species, and adding buffers to protect water quality to increase accessibility to native species (Merola-Zwartjes and DeLong 2005; Nguyen et al. 2020; Terman 1997).

The 200-acre Pine Creek golf course features 18-holes of "natural grasslands," and creek beds nestled in "complete harmony," with the surrounding neighborhood (Pine Creek Village Association 2022). The Pine Creek Golf course uses an American Links Course design which maintains the original topography of land, has few to no trees and thick, rough grasses. The Links design originates from Scotland, the sport's birthplace, which perhaps adds a layer of historical authenticity to Pine Creek's appeal. Some research has suggested Links courses may be more suited for wildlife compared to other course designs as the Links requires the least drastic land use change (Terman 1997).

The Pole Creek golf course has an astonishing 27 holes surrounded by "lush fields, native flowers, [and] water challenge shots," (The Fairways at Pole Creek 2019). A 50-foot transition zone between each hole and the surrounding homes helps blend the golf course into the surrounding forested residential area. Residents are not allowed to install protective barriers or netting to catch loose golf balls as these features may take away from the 'natural landscape'. This invocation of 'natural' is perhaps a bit contradictory because the golf course and homes would not fit Pole Creek's definition of nature, meaning golf courses do not emerge without human action. To drastically change the landscape, alter the species composition, preserve turf grass with chemical inputs, plant over 2,000 trees and 100 homes, but draw the 'natural' line at golf ball barriers is a great source of irony. I am not advocating for residences' ability to protect their homes from golf balls, though I'm sure some may appreciate that ability, but instead I hope to highlight the contradictory usage of 'natural' when describing an extensively planned golfing community. This usage implies that 'natural' does not have to emerge organically or without human intervention, but instead pivots on the *visual illusion* of having emerged organically by obscuring human intervention. The 'view' of the Rocky Mountains, the forests, and golf course is so important to these communities because it affirms communal identity as recreationists, outdoorsmen, and Coloradoans. Residents are drawn to neighborhoods with a view of nature and privacy afforded by isolation from the 'chaos' of urban areas (DeChaine 2001). Yet these

environments are not 'natural' as some residents might believe, but are carefully planned, constructed, and manicured, thus constituting a form of a cultural landscape (especially considering about ⅓ of the required plants are not native to the state). Thus, the places these HOAs craft emerge as an intense social imaginary (Stewart 1996).

Human-Animal Interactions

In addition to being near the Rocky Mountain foothills and the Air Force Academy, Pine Creek sits next to an open space off-limits to humans and relegated for wildlife, particularly the threatened Preble's Jumping Mouse (Colorado Parks and Wildlife 2020). This unique geographic position fosters frequent human-animal interactions throughout Colorado Springs (Pine Creek Village Association 2022). In Pine Creek, residents are entirely discouraged from interacting with wildlife and can face a $500 fine for feeding any non-domesticated animal. Deer are framed as a safety concern as they could potentially draw in other wildlife, bring disease, become aggressive, or cause a vehicle accident. Most apparent is the community's disdain for coyotes. Coyotes have attacked and killed small pets in the neighborhood and residents are concerned they threaten the safety of children. Their website suggests coyotes are "feasting on Preble's Jumping Mouse," and perhaps contributing to the vulnerability of the threatened mouse, despite mice being a component of coyote diets. They further remind residents that it is illegal to shoot coyotes and state, "unfortunately PCVA can't get involved directly in coyote eradication efforts," as this would pose too much of a liability to the neighborhood. This reflex to kill and eradicate any perceived threat to the constructed environment aligns with the colonial legacy of domination and ecological imperialism (Robbins 2007).

Pole Creek takes a different approach to human-wildlife interactions, likely stemming from their desire to integrate the built and natural environments. Their Design Review Guidelines acknowledge the neighborhood is located on important wildlife habitat and, thus, seeks to reduce design features that would interfere with animals' movement. To foster an open space design, fences and planting patterns that form boundaries which could inhibit wildlife movement are not allowed.

DeChaine claims golfing communities are built upon the tensions of American values of freedom and control, ideals which are physically embedded in Pine Creek and Pole Creek (2001). Both communities market the privacy of their neighborhoods while highlighting their proximity to city life. HOAs and residents maintain control over their private spaces, even controlling which weeds grow and whether or not animals pass through their backyard, but they maintain the freedom to leave and enjoy life outside their community.

Conclusion

HOAs comply with the capitalist tradition of maximizing value through the uneven distribution of resources and capital accumulation. They create exclusive communities on the basis of wealth and race and the rarity of golfing communities which require massive ecological change, capital, and labor. Colorado golfing communities seek to (re)produce the landscapes their clients perceive as "natural," in Colorado, for instance: unobscured views of mountains and

a high density of trees. This invocation of "nature" is a vague and contradictory marketing tactic that obscures how the HOA shapes neighborhood ecologies and their associated hazards. Humans and nature are posited as separate entities, either via attempts to keep a boundary between humans and wildlife, or by suppressing architecture elements like non-random planting patterns to obscure human presence.

Despite these contradictions, both HOAs make concerted attempts to reduce water consumption with policies requiring drip irrigation or by promoting xeric plant species. While lawns and golf courses are inherently hazardous, they have the potential to foster important green space and wildlife habitat, particularly for migratory avian species. Golf courses could experiment with native grasses (i.e., in Colorado: *Bouteloua gracilis*; *Andropogon gerardii*) in to reduce the need for irrigation and chemical inputs. Both Pine Creek and Pole Creek foster communal identities centered around love of the outdoors and recreation, which could be extended with the implementation of more intentional stewardship practices. For instance, Pole Creek could stop requiring residents to plant non-native aspen trees and instead encourage residents to plant a mixture of native grasses and wildflowers to attract pollinators. Rather than perpetuating hostile attitudes toward coyotes, Pine Creek could recognize their neighborhood's proximity to important wildlife habitat and encourage residents to monitor small pets or children when outside. Both HOAs should continue to promote planting native and xeric species, water conservation practices, and could implement restrictions on chemical lawn and golf course inputs.

Though HOA golfing communities comprise a small proportion of neighborhoods in Colorado and the United States, they hold a disproportionate amount of wealth and power politically and environmentally. Residents of HOA communities tend to be whiter and wealthier than those in non-HOA communities and their lawns and golf courses have immense environmental impacts, yet people in these golfing communities value recreating and affirm their identities as Coloradoans vis-a-vis their dwellings in what they perceive to be natural landscapes. HOAs have the ability to nourish this love for the environment to promote attitudes of stewardship and conservation and achieve more ecologically sustainable communities. However, this vision fails to resolve the racial and financial exclusivity inherent to HOAs, so any environmental health strides made in HOA communities can only be accessed those who are considered wealthy (and perhaps white) enough.

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Postdevelopment: Critiques, Challenges, and Possibilities

Hope Radford

We are living in a time of crisis, from rising inequality to global conflict to environmental destruction. While international development has conventionally been framed as the pathway out of such crisis, it is now clear that it's a main contributor. The paradigm that has dominated international development thought and practice since the "first world" initiated the post-WWII development era centers endless economic growth, industrialization, and the assumed superiority of Western culture, knowledge, and technology in bringing development to "third world" countries (Escobar 2011a; Esteva 2013). The most pressing challenges to development as we know it point to these theoretical and empirical flaws; conventional development imposes a universal conception of a desired futurity based on capital accumulation, and in doing so, undermines the fundamental relationship between humans and the planet (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Postdevelopment theorizing articulates key challenges to the conventional development project including 1) a questioning of Western ideas imposed through "development," 2) an assertion that development has increased inequality and exploitation and 3) a recognition of the ecological crisis resulting from this imposition and exploitation.

This is the basis of the crisis in which we find ourselves today. In crisis, however, lies the possibility for transformation. Moving beyond critique, postdevelopment seeks to imagine "alternatives to development" that focus on local visions and systems and revive knowledges that promote reciprocity with the earth and each other (Escobar 1995). While this proposal holds great promise to address the challenges to conventional development, it is most likely to succeed within a network that connects local articulations to global solidarities. Postdevelopment opens the door to locally based, long-term conceptualizing of how humans can "live better," but on the ground enactments face immense challenges within the current global system. The freedom to imagine and enact alternatives encompassed within postdevelopment theory is unlikely to come to fruition without the support of global civil society and advocacy networks that both nurture alternatives and challenge the corporate and state interests that weaken them.

Challenges to Conventional Development

1) *Defining "Development"*

A questioning of the very concept of "development"– what it means and who gets to define it – is the central idea from which postdevelopment challenges the conventional paradigm. This challenge is built upon poststructuralist and postcolonial theorizing that preceded it. Poststructuralism emerged in the 1980s, contrasting with prior structural Marxian and neo-Marxian arguments; though the forms and articulations of poststructuralism were diverse, it broadly questioned the metanarratives of Enlightenment thought, rejected universal (i.e. Western) truth, and emphasized knowledges of subjugated groups (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Accordingly, whereas "structuralism saw potential for human emancipation in modern

development, poststructuralism saw development as a strategy of modern power and social control" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Similarly, postcolonialism paid close attention to the power enacted within discourse, arguing that the Western construction of knowledge misrepresented subjects and identities that had been colonized (Said 1978; Mohanty 1988). This construction fed into the characterization of colonized groups as agentless victims and falsely universalized knowledge and experience interpreted from and for the West.

Building upon these schools of thought, postdevelopment theorists critique the practice of conventional development as a reflection of Western hegemony and argue for a more pluralistic approach that recognizes alternate conceptions of good living (Sachs 199; Escobar 1995). A core argument of the postdevelopment school is that the very notions of "development" and "underdevelopment" were born out of a political objective to increase Western control in the Global South, initiated in US president Truman's 1949 inaugural address. Development, they argue, is predicated upon a Eurocentric conception of modernity, progress, and wellbeing that is ultimately used to justify neocolonial intervention in the Global South. Postdevelopment theorists view these notions as instruments of power that legitimate the role of the "developed" West in improving other, "less developed" societies. Accordingly, the dominant conception of development tends to "violate other societies' right to develop according to their own prerogatives" (Slater 1993). The Western economic worldview focused on growth, consumption, and environmental exploitation should be understood as culturally contingent, not universally desired. Postdevelopment's broad questioning of the epistemological and cultural basis of conventional development shapes other key aspects of the theory including the revival of indigenous and place-based knowledges, the importance of community self-determination and increased self-reliance, and the reconciliation of human and environmental wellbeing, to be discussed.

2) *Failure of "Development"*

Another key challenge to the conventional development paradigm is the assertion that development simply hasn't worked in equitably improving human wellbeing; though development has been framed as "a tide rising all vessels and boats ... it is clear now that it raises only the yachts" (Escobar and Esteva 2017). Conventional development has focused on economic growth as the indicator of progress, but this "growth" is falsely inflated and is increasing, rather than decreasing, global inequality. A fixation on growth and ignorance of distribution has facilitated and legitimized a deepening of material inequalities: "Development is a kindly face we place on this kind of profit-oriented endeavor wherein economic growth is recast in terms of …some liberal bromide concocted, to render more palatable policies that deliberately produce inequality (Peet and Hartwick 2015; Esteva 2013). In Latin America, for example, the number of those living in poverty rose from 135 million to 204 million between 1980-1997 (Hoogvelt 2001) a period in which neoliberal development policy and intervention grew significantly throughout the region – and this trend has continued across many other areas. Global wealth indices have also indicated deepening inequalities, reflecting a growing gap both between and within countries (Oxfam 2022). Alongside postdevelopment thinkers, other scholars

have identified how the rise of "rentier capitalism" within the neoliberal development model– dominated by finance, pharmaceutical, and tech industries – has benefited a wealthy minority while expanding a "precariat" class defined by unstable work conditions and erosion of rights (Standing 2018). Even without considering the importance of non-market values and invisibility of non-market transactions within this growth-oriented paradigm, increasing inequality and expansion of the "precariat" class across the globe should bring into view the "social implausibility and ethical irresponsibility of being satisfied with the current model" (Peet and Hartwick 2015).

3) Ecological Crisis

Through interrogation of the meaning of development and recognition of its ultimate failure, postdevelopment theory points to another crucial challenge to the dominant paradigm: the ecological crisis. Indicators of the declining state of our planet are numerous – from biodiversity loss to freshwater depletion to global climate change, it is clear we are on a path of development that prioritizes capital accumulation over the very existence of our ecological foundation. The continued expansion of extractive industry, industrial agriculture, and fossil-fuel dependent economies as foundational components of "development" demonstrate the ways in which this path is fundamentally unsustainable. As we know it, "development is of capitalism, rather than of humans and their relationship with their natural conditions" (McMichael 2020). Theoretically and ontologically, conventional development has been rooted in a fundamental divide, or "metabolic rift," (Marx 1973) between humans and the environment that underlies this crisis. Development was "fashioned as if humans had no ecological base" and continues to propose a model of capitalist industrialization, resource extraction, and "high mass consumption" that is based in the Western nature/culture binary (McMichael 2020; Rostow 1959). As stated by Arundhati Roy in reference to a dam construction development project in India, these endeavors "represent the severing of the link – the understanding – between human beings and the planet they live on. They scramble the intelligence that connects eggs to hens, milk to cows, food to forests, water to rivers, air to life, and the earth to human existence" (Roy 2001). This fundamental divide is a key feature of conventional development's continued exploitation of the earth's resources and must be addressed if we ever hope to move towards a more sustainable conception of progress.

Importantly, this disconnection with the environment encouraged by the dominant development model is particularly evident within food and agriculture – arguably, the most fundamental way in which humans and the earth interact. Conventional development has created an agricultural system based on input-intensive monocultures, fossil fuel dependency, and export prioritization, undermining local food systems that foster relative self-sufficiency, stability, and agro-ecological knowledge. Within this system, Northern agricultural subsidies are protected beneath a facade of market liberalization that creates food and fossil fuel dependency in the Global South and creates further ecological damage. "Petro-farming" based on chemical fertilizers and petroleum fuels this system, contributes to climate change. More than one-third of the world's greenhouse gases are due to industrial agriculture (McMichael 2020). Conventional

development's push towards industrial agriculture has also led to "depeasantization" in which smallholder and subsistence farmers that cannot compete with corporate agriculture are compelled to move to urban areas and become wage workers; this pattern further perpetuates the human-nature divide that, in part, generated the problem. The imposed expansion of an industrial agricultural system is emblematic of the fundamental issues within conventional development and highlights their intersection. The dominant paradigm is based on hegemonic Western ideals that ultimately, in serving the wealthy few, have further destabilized more sustainable social and ecological systems. This paradigm rests on conception of development in which "a financial calculus overrides two fundamental human reproductive needs: a healthy environment and the capacity for self-determination" (McMichael 2020).

Promising Paths Forward

Importantly, postdevelopment theory begins with critique of the dominant paradigm, but also offers pathways for moving beyond it. Where postdevelopment challenges the Western conception of development, it opens the door to "unthink" the dominant paradigm (Escobar 2011a) and imagine and enact alternatives from diverse positions. Where postdevelopment challenges the inequality and exploitation development has perpetuated, it encourages a turn towards alternate principles of community self-reliance and solidarity. Where postdevelopment challenges a system that prioritizes financial gain over human and environmental wellbeing, it proposes a recognition of knowledges that understand our relationship to the planet more holistically. Where postdevelopment challenges, it offers at least the start of pathways towards alternatives.

Postdevelopment's foundational challenge to conventional development –questioning the notion of development itself – serves as both critique and possibility; the questioning opens space for re-imagining. Within a hegemonic meaning of development, alternatives to the dominant system are hard to conceive of. Accordingly, post development thinkers propose that attention to the Western epistemologies, cultural values, and political agendas underlying the conventional conception of development enables us to unthink a paradigm that has been imposed, and consequently, imagine and enact alternatives (Escobar 2011a; Esteva 2013). As these scholars have identified, movements for change "are struggles over *meaning* as well as over material conditions and needs" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Ultimately, postdevelopment thinkers recognize that alternative conceptions of development, conceptions that seek to restore human and environmental integrity, must center on a shift in values: " We need to replace egoism with altruism, competition with cooperation, and obsessive performance with leisure" (LaTouche 2009).

Accordingly, postdevelopment thought turns to local enactments, grassroots organizing, and social movements (especially from the Global South) as sites of counter-conceptions and practices. As opposed to the top-down nature of conventional development theory and practice, they prioritize "autonomous non-centralized theorizing [which] pulls from local knowledge instead of one great theory of development" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Arturo Escobar, a leading

postdevelopment theorist, argues a new paradigm of development already exists, " not in academic rooms but in reality – in the form of an alternative practice that is in itself a theory" (Escobar and Esteva 2017). This approach displaces the Western and "expert" led perspectives that have dominated development theory and encourages a process of "indigenization" in which theories and concepts are also derived from non-Western philosophies and civilizations (Alatas 1993). Finally, the postdevelopment perspective contrasts with the one-size-fits-all prescription of development, recognizing a plurality of cultural perspectives and desired futures. Postdevelopment theory promotes the understanding of a pluriverse "a world where many world fits" (Escobar 2011b) as a plural and multicultural alternative to the homogenizing effects of globalization-based development; cultural difference is understood as an asset, rather than impediment, to human progress. Within their theory, moving towards a "'No' to development" can allow us to be "open to a thousand 'Yeses'" (Escobar and Esteva 2017).

Closely related to this reconceptualization of development, postdevelopment encourages attempts to "unplug" from the dominant system of exploitation in order to rebuild more equitable and sustainable lifeways. Postdevelopment begins from the foundational recognition that conventional development has been shaped to facilitate the accumulation of wealth amongst the few. Development has been the vehicle of capitalism, ultimately perpetuating the growing wealth inequality observed. Whereas conventional theory promotes "plugging in" to the global economy as the path to development, postdevelopment theorists ultimately view this as a construction that opens economies and peoples of the Global South to exploitation and dependency. Therefore, they encourage recognition and support of on-the-ground "community building around alternative material practices" (McMichael 2020) that facilitate self-reliance and community solidarity rather than dependency and exploitation (Esteva 2013). Informing the foundational critique of conventional development, post development theory seeks to "discursively displace the hegemony of capitalism by focusing on the economic and material alternatives" of local communities and social movements (Asher 2019). As Escobar states, this turn towards greater self-organizing and self-reliance "is not the impossible attempt of going back in history or of discarding everything that modernity has brought about. It is the autonomous construction of a contemporary art of living. Instead of cutting a head off the capitalist hydra, only to see how it regenerates other heads, people are drying up the soil on which the hydra can grow" (Escobar and Esteva 2017).

One iteration of this turn away from the market is the concept of a "solidarity economy," emerging throughout (and historically rooted) in Latin America. The concept centers on the primacy of "solidarity over individual interest and material gain…expressed through equitable criteria, participation, the socialization of productive resources, and cooperative labor (Ferrarini 2022). The solidarity economy is not a perfect model, criticized on the grounds that it is a product of desperation and/or a discursive tool of states (Healy 2021) but it may be part of starting to imagine how communities may meet material needs with greater autonomy, cooperation, and independence. It's important to reiterate that postdevelopment does not propose well-worn, standard paths towards an alternate future. Rather, postdevelopment sees the many

"experiments" enacted by people on the ground, the solidarity economy being one example, as the beginning of imagining and building alternatives that grow on the margins of market dominated systems of exploitation.

Postdevelopment's other major challenge to the conventional development project highlights the ecological crisis this growth and consumption-based model has induced. As the start of moving towards a more sustainable paradigm, postdevelopment encourages the revival and recognition of Indigenous and place-based knowledges that support local food production, restore local ecologies, and, ultimately, help us to reimagine the human-environment relationship. The current agroindustrial model, controlled by corporations and "experts," prioritizes capital accumulation over the nutritional content and environmental sustainability of food production. In line with broader calls for food sovereignty and restoration of agrarian citizenship postdevelopment encourages relocalization efforts that draw on place-based knowledges and utilize agroecological methods – alternatives that have the "potential to challenge the dominant model of large-scale, capitalist, and export-oriented agriculture" (Wittman 2009). These efforts to relocalize and withdraw from the dependency inherent within input-intensive agriculture parallels postdevelopment's recognition material alternatives that evade corporate exploitation. Beyond their role in re-establishing more sustainable agricultural systems, postdevelopment theory recognizes these Indigenous and local knowledges as a counter-understanding to the human/nature divide characteristic of Western epistemologies. Displacing the hegemony of Western thought allows for the rise of alternate understandings – based more on reciprocity and stewardship, and less on exploitation and destruction – that can inform a longer-term shift in how "development" of humankind intersects with the environment we inhabit. Postdevelopment theory makes great strides in exploring how we can begin to shift towards an understanding and practice of "alternatives to development" that transform the top-down, inequitable, unsustainable model of development it critiques.

The Role of Global Solidarity

While postdevelopment provides crucial long-term visioning and suggests ground-up models from which to begin, it is not a perfect solution, particularly not on its own. Postdevelopment has been critiqued on a number of grounds, as some scholars have argued it unfairly rejects modernity, is difficult to enact, fails to address global concerns, and/or assumes development is a monolith (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Although some of these concerns have been addressed in more recent postdevelopment theorizing, many remain valid. Postdevelopment's shortcomings, I propose, could be addressed through thoughtful and strategic collaboration with transnational organizations and networks; postdevelopment's strengths could point the infrastructure of these organizations and networks in more equitable, sustainable, community-led directions. Though postdevelopment calls attention to the importance of imagining and constructing "alternatives to development," global civil society could provide resources, information, and advocacy that can both support these alternatives and challenge the

global forces that undermine them. Postdevelopment provides the long-term visioning, the ethical orientation, the spirit; global solidarities support the transition.

The most pronounced critiques of postdevelopment center on its inattention to materiality and rejection of modernity. Some development scholars have argued postdevelopment's "overemphasis on representation and discourse" detracts from its potential for "practicality and action" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). Arguably, the theory's attention to discourse is what ultimately allows for recognizing and rethinking the material harm that conventional development has caused. Additionally, a key aspect of the theory is the recognition and support of the material alternatives constructed by communities on-the-ground. Regardless, for these material alternatives to come to fruition, institutions that more directly support "practicality and action" may be necessary. This idea relates closely to another prominent critique; some scholars assert "postdevelopmentalism denies the 3rd World what the First World already possesses" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). First, it is important to highlight that more recent postdevelopment theorizing does not endorse a wholesale rejection of modernity; rather, postdevelopment thinkers encourage democratic control and distribution of the parts of modernity communities chose for themselves. As stated by postdevelopment theorist Gustavo Esteva:

> "Communities were never isolated; this was an invention of British anthropology. We can find all the global forces affecting and infecting the communities and barrios everywhere. But what we also observe is the creative construction of a contemporary art of living. The Zapatistas are amazingly autonomous and self-sufficient. They don't get any funds from the government. They don't need the market or the state to live their lives. But they have X-rays and ultrasound equipment in their health clinics and they buy in the market equipment for their community radios, mobile phones, computers, bikes, vehicles and so on, but they know how to use those technologies instead of being used by them" (Escobar and Esteva 2017).

Postdevelopment opposes the imposition of a modernity built around enriching the rich but welcomes modernity when used for liberatory ends. However, there is a gap here; in order to expand access to chosen aspects of modernity in the global South, while remaining within ecological limits, hyperconsumption in the Global North will need to be addressed. This is an important lever where transnational countermovements will be key. In order for "alternatives to development" in the Global South to strategically engage in modernity, the earth's resources will need to be distributed more evenly; initiatives based in the Global North such as degrowth, transition towns, and agricultural relocalization efforts could be key allies in addressing the flip side of the coin (McMichael 2020).

Another key critique of postdevelopmentalism is its discouraging track record in areas that have championed the approach, notably the Andes. The constitutionally formalized concept of *Buen Vivir/Vivir Bien* in Ecuador and Bolivia has been postdevelopment's poster child. However, these governments have failed to meaningfully engage with and support on-the-ground practice. In Ecuador, for example, scholars have observed that food sovereignty efforts have

been largely overridden by the state's prioritization of more profitable agroindustrial firms used to fund their neodevelopmental model (Clark 2017). These case studies bring up a broader question: how are small-scale, local alternatives to survive against powerful state, corporate, and global interests? While alternatives are initiated by communities, those "confined to the local can be far more easily obliterated in the absence of outside support" (Peet and Hartwick 2015). As exemplified by climate change and other transnational issues, the scale of problems is now global, requiring concerted global action (Buroway 2010). While local initiatives can be shaped around local understandings and needs, global solidarities will be needed to address the scale of problems they face. More recent postdevelopment theorizing encourages this transnational solidarity:

> "Those practicing this option would be, in my view, radical Post-Development's natural allies. What is interesting is that this form would go beyond the binary of 'us' (who have) and 'them'(who need), and embrace all sides in the same, though diverse, movement for civilizational transitions and inter-autonomy, that is, coalitions and meshworks of autonomous collectives and communities from both the Global North and the Global South" (Escobar and Esteva 2017).

Global solidarities, particularly transnational advocacy networks, could be key sources of support to the locally determined postdevelopment effort. Transnational advocacy networks – value or issue-based networks including actors such as NGOs, research organizations, the media, and more (Keck 1999) – can provide support to bottom-up initiatives and Indigenous movements, and perhaps even more importantly, campaign against corporations, governments, and policies that undermine these initiatives. La Via Campesina, for example, is a transnational advocacy network focused on locally based food sovereignty efforts; in addition to supporting peasant organizations and farmers on the ground, they campaign internationally against transnational agroindustry, free trade policy, and land grabbing. In order for postdevelopment-aligned alternatives to be viable and enduring, it will be necessary for social movements, civil society, and other allies to attend to government-condoned corporate monopolization, seed patenting, subsidies, land-grabbing, and other challenges local communities face.

Postdevelopment has also been critiqued on the grounds that it homogenizes many diverse institutions and organizations within the category of development (Peet and Hartwick 2015). While I agree with this critique, I also see it as an opportunity. The diversity of organizations under the banner of development opens the possibility that some of the infrastructure of conventional development could be pivoted towards postdevelopment conceptions. This is not only possible, but arguably, necessary – while postdevelopment recognizes the profoundly unequal state of the modern world, it does not theorize a direct mechanism for redistributing. "Unplugging" from exploitation is a start, but is there any way that some of the wealth extracted could be channeled into rebuilding alternatives? Could some of the present development infrastructure be used to bolster local initiatives and challenge corporate exploitation? Could development funds support postdevelopment efforts? While this may seem to contradict postdevelopment's indictment of development, it could be a crucial transitory step –

following legacies of colonialism and continued neocolonialism, communities may need returned resources in order to build towards greater self-sufficiency and autonomy.

While monumental development institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and USAID, amongst others, will be incredibly difficult to turn in this direction, smaller, less politically motivated organizations may be able to pivot. The organization Trees, Water, and People, for example, has channeled development funds into establishing sustainable community-based agricultural systems, purchasing and maintaining land rights on communal forest lands, and supporting resistance against mining corporations encroaching on Indigenous territory in Central America. This is one example, but the possibility remains that smaller development organizations can pivot towards these postdevelopment-aligned endeavors. Importantly, in order to minimize the top-down nature of development that it criticizes, organizations moving in this direction must retain postdevelopment's emphasis on Indigenous/place-based knowledges and participatory methodology in determining development directions. Centering local understanding and leadership can open possibilities for more equitable, sustainable definitions and enactments of development. Engagement with the global can fortify these possibilities.

Conclusion

The challenges to the dominant development model are apparent and pressing. The conventional conception of development imposes a top-down, growth-based pathway that has ultimately led to increasing inequality, exploitation, and environmental destruction. In contrast, postdevelopment theory proposes an "unthinking" of this model, creating space for alternative knowledges, epistemologies, and practices to shape what development is, who gets to define it, and how it relates to community and environmental wellbeing. While postdevelopment holds great promise in reimagining the long-term vision of what development could be, the current state of the world – a product of colonial legacies that have produced profound disparities in wealth and power – necessitates that global solidarities support ground-up efforts to construct alternatives. In addition to the support of transnational advocacy networks, the diversity of the organizations within development offers the possibility that some of the conventional development infrastructure could be pivoted towards postdevelopment ideals, channeling Northern wealth into Southern models that center community leadership and knowledge, holistic conceptions of progress, self-determination and self-reliance, and environmental sustainability. Perhaps the combination of new thinking and old tools can help us transition towards a future in which humans can "develop" without destroying the earth and each other.

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Food and Health:
Resisting Subjectification During and After Slavery

Reagan Ross

Abstract

Every way we turn, food is there. It underlies many of our motivations, provides a basis for forming and sustaining relationships, and is quite literally our life force. On a more systematic level, foodways, have also been an avenue for control by elites. Foodways have also, however, been an avenue for resistance, including in the form of finding joy and self-actualization. This complex relationship between control and resistance has most certainly been the case for Black women in America. This paper will focus primarily on the Antebellum through the Jim Crow eras to examine how Black women have used food to deny imposed subject positions. The narrative that espouse these subject positions often characterize Black women as servants who lack skill and talent, but are mean to use their "natural" abilities to take care of everyone except for themselves. In this examination, I first briefly describe how and why Western power structures seek to create dehumanized "subjects" of those in lesser power positions. This is followed by a short preview of some Black and feminist (and Black feminist) literature that demonstrates greater autonomy by those who, within the perspective of those in power, are in the position to become "subject." Then, I provide examples of how food has been used against enslaved peoples, but more importantly, as a tool for Black Americans to exercise their autonomy, especially through practicing good health. I focus particularly on some of the cases presented in Psyche Williams-Forson's 2006 book, Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power. My analysis is put forth in hopes of illustrating the complexity of the power/knowledge nexus in foodways. It also emphasizes that food can be a powerful instrument for agency and resistance when used as social medicine to promote community care and ensure the survival of one's self and her loved ones.

Introduction

The intersection between food and health is undeniable. In a biophysical sense, it is a literal requirement for life. Socially, the practice of cooking and eating often acts as personal therapy and a bonding mechanism for communities. Medically, foodstuffs are used to treat the body in Western medicine and "non-traditional" healing practices such as herbalism. Because the relationship between health and food is so important to life, it is often exploited as a component of dominating Western metanarratives that create "subjects" of powerful elites (Godderis 2006; Williams-Forson 2006; Guthman & Brown 2015; Tipton-Martin 2015). All hope need not be lost, however; this relationship can also be utilized to resist such subjectification.

Throughout history, this utilization has been particularly helpful for African Americans. From the point of slavery into today, food has been weaponized to attempt to control Black populations. At the same time, however, people have also countered this suppression by owning foodways to find power in themselves and their communities. In particular, during slavery and

into the 20th century, food was essential for personal survival and the support of strong social networks of enslaved people and their descendants.

Black feminist scholars such as bell hooks, Katherine McKittrick, and Audre Lorde, provide extensive commentary on the relationship between power, subjectification, and identity. They also aptly explain how the same systems that oppress can be turned on their head, challenged, resisted – used to empower those which structures of power seek to oppress. Other Black feminist scholars like Toni Tipton-Martin and Psyche Williams-Forson demonstrate how foodways act as such a system; one that has the power to oppress, but is also primed to promote resistance. Especially as we encounter issues of Black resistance and Black foodways, it is not just Black feminists' theoretical import that is critical to consider; it is also their position and intersectionality. This paper predominantly discusses Black women's food realities and the issue of defining one's own identity in relation to food. Such discussion could not take place without centering the perspectives of Black women authors who are writing about their ancestor's experiences. This paper is about identity and power; it is only the voices of Black women that can truly define their own identities and explain the empowerment found in resistance by their ancestors through identity ownership. My writing here is a mere synthesis and reporting of a small part of their extensive scholarship.

In this paper, I explore what defines the "subject" in Western metanarratives and how food can act as power. I especially rely on feminist, feminist-indigenous, and, most importantly, Black feminist perspectives to inform this issue. Through this exploration, I examine how food was used to resist the title of "subject" during enslavement and into the early 20th century.

Creating the "Subject": Colonial Power Structures, Ideologies, and Dichotomies

Before examining how food has been used as a way to resist subjectification, we must first understand how the "subject" is created in the first place. In this paper, I refer to the "subject" as the person or people who are intended to be manipulated by elite groups in order to reinforce elite power. I also argue that this manipulation takes place through the exploitation of popular ideologies and epistemologies by Western colonial structures of power. Within these manipulated knowledge systems, dichotomies such as us/them, developed/underdeveloped, and powerful/subject-to-power, are created and naturalized in an effort to dehumanize and undermine individuality (Foucault 1982; TallBear 2017). In such obfuscation of the individual, elites can focus on the species body (populations), and, therefore, population control, to ensure capitalist (and colonialist) sovereignty (Guthman & Brown 2015; Packard 2016; Adams 2016).

Foucault proposes in *History of Sexuality* how "biopower" acts as one of the mechanisms by which this dehumanization occurs in Western metanarratives, through powerful and pervasive exploitation of knowledge systems surrounding the human body (Foucault 1978). In *The Birth of the Clinic*, he also introduces the concept of the "clinical gaze" as a lens through which patients are reduced to their physical body and systems, rather than being viewed as individuals who live in entangled and intersectional realities that could be affecting health outcomes (Foucault 1973). In this way, the clinical gaze is a prime example of subjectification.

Escobar (1995) offers further commentary on how the subject is formed through Western metanarratives. He again explains that health and political/economic discourse is developed by those in power, wherein categories like "developed" and "undeveloped" are formed to justify control over those deemed "Third World" or "undeveloped". In this, he also brings up the "colonization of reality," explaining that, similar to Foucault's proposed power and knowledge relationships, this subjectification is so invasive and powerful that it has become a part of individual reality (Escobar 1995: 5).

This "colonization of reality," as characterized by Escobar, certainly points to the fact that the "subject" has become a cultural, political, and economic reality. However, we must recognize that individual agency and refusals to be reduced to a "subject" are equally as powerful as the processes that are reductive. A growing body of Black, feminist, and Indigenous literature shows that by acknowledging and drawing on social and historical entanglements, as well as undeniable personal agency, the "subject" is non-isolated, powerful, and capable of experiencing and forming other realities. For example, Indigenous scholars such as Kim TallBear (2017) challenge Western dichotomies (such as life/not-life), which leads us to question the subjectifying tactic of categorization. Feminist scholars like Hunt (2016) bring humanness to medical power relationships by, specifically in her case, demonstrating how nervousness is experienced throughout communities in reaction to this type of domination, but also how personal and interpersonal joy can be found despite it. Black feminist scholarship, similar to Indigenous and generally feminist work, provides a space for power, individualism, and personal and community agency. For these feminist, Black feminist, and indigenous and feminist-indigenous scholars, however, their attention is drawn to this type of power found by Black people and African Americans.

Reality & Resistance: Black Feminist Approaches

A great deal of Black feminist scholarship draws on the concept of oppositional consciousness, which describes a collective mental state that prepares oppressed people to act against systems of human domination (Lorde 1984; hooks 1989, 1992; McKittrick 2006). While Foucault described these systems of domination, and his later work like *Power/Knowledge* described "gut refusals" to be subjectified, he never clearly explained tactics for acting on these gut refusals and resisting becoming a subject (Foucault 1980). Oppositional consciousness put this concept into action. Famous black feminist scholar bell hooks speaks on this concept in her 1989 essay, "Choosing the Margin as a Space for Radical Openness," where she calls people, specifically Black women, to draw from and feel the power of their marginal positions in society to form their own realities of agency and joy (hooks 1989). Often, tactics like cooking and embracing relationships surrounding food act within this margin to support the individual and community (Williams-Forson 2006; Tipton-Martin 2015). This support is manifested through all elements of health.

As mentioned, however, the relationship between food and health is multi-layered and complex. Food can influence health in various ways; for instance, enslaved people used food

items, and herbalism in general, to promote physical health (Fett 2002). Further, when used as an attribute of social medicine, food can also contribute to personal and interpersonal care beyond the biophysical – such as when care providers emphasize the importance of loved ones caring for crops when patients are unable, or performing this restorative work themselves when they are able (Hausermann 2019: 2; Nelly 2021).

Additionally, as mentioned, this complex and important relationship between food and health can be exploited as a weapon against the oppressed; this was indeed the case for the enslaved and their descendants. For example, enslaved people were barred from easily accessing adequate foods, but were simultaneously forced to provide immaculate meals for plantation owners and support US food economies. This intersection of food and health, though, can also be used to support the resistance of the oppressed, including use *by* enslaved people and their descendants. In using food to support their literal survival, promote cultural heritage, and maintain community and individual livelihood, people practiced agency over their own health realities (in all aspects ranging from physical, mental, spiritual, economic, etc.), thereby resisting their positions which sought to reduce them to mere subjects (Williams-Forson 2006, Tipton-Martin 2015; Crowder 2018).

Using Food and Health to Resist Subjected Reality

Foodways as Health

Acknowledging that food can, in fact, be used to counter subjectifying power, we can now turn to a few examples of how it has been (and can continue to be) used in this way. During the antebellum period, for instance, herbal treatments administered by enslaved African practitioners, which often involved ingredients also used for culinary purposes, were common, according to Sharla M. Fett (2002). At the same time, medical abuse towards this same population fostered distrust of white medical institutions. These institutions, which pushed enslaved Africans further into their traditional health practices involving food work and herbalism, also worked to invalidate and publicly shun these traditional practices. In this way, food is clearly characterized as a weapon against enslaved people. Nevertheless, it is clear, especially as outlined by Fett, that enslaved people held a wealth of their own valuable health knowledge that was sought after not only by their own community but also by plantation owners and their social networks. By embracing this knowledge and carrying forward these healing practices, community values, self-identity, and tradition are protected and supported.

Additionally, this example shows the power that exercising oppositional consciousness can have; speaking as a witness myself, power in this knowledge and the collective utilization of these health traditions has lasting impacts on southern healing into today. Although there was certainly exploitation in this system, it allowed people to exercise agency over their own health outcomes, power over the health of the plantation owners and friends that sought treatments, and collective identity.

Foodways as a Tool of Resistance

Other elements of foodways were also used to exercise agency, power, and identity to resist subjectification. A particularly poignant example of how food is integral to identity and collective support is the hidden transport of African crops. During the transatlantic slave trade, those being enslaved braided seeds and grains into their hair and clothing to secretly carry them across the ocean, ensuring some semblance of the retention of food tradition as well as community care with the eventual growth of these crops which could feed others in what social network they could access (Carney 2004). Speaking of the growth of crops, some enslaved people were permitted to maintain their own small gardens from which they could practice into internal economies as well as grow foods, such as the secretly transported seeds and grains, which allowed the maintenance of culinary traditions that helped maintain personal and community identity (Schlotterbeck 1991, Pinchin 2014, Deetz 2018). Even when access to adequate food items and quantities was severely restricted, enslaved people used traditional crops and cooking traditions when possible, to maintain and sense of self, tradition, and community, thereby supporting mental, emotional, and social health and resisting the structures that attempted to force powerlessness when it came to food and health agency.

Building House out of Chicken Legs

Chicken, Power, and Agency

Finally, as a prime example of how food has been used at this food/health nexus, Psyche Williams-Forson demonstrates in her 2006 book, *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power*, that chicken specifically was a foodstuff that gave Black people during enslavement and through the Jim Crow era an opportunity exercise good health, in every meaning, and therefore supported resistance against subjectification. In utilizing ethnohistorical and archival research methods, she characterizes chicken as something that people could use to challenge power structures, enable agency, and own their identity and individual interpretations of themselves and others in the African diaspora (Williams-Forson 2006).

Regarding challenges to power structures, Williams-Forson explains that oftentimes, although it was often subsequently met with punishment and racist stereotypes and negatives, enslaved people would steal chicken to cook for their families and social networks (Williams-Forson 2006: 25-27). In doing so, she explains that people were able to participate in informal, internal economies and thus benefit financially, as well as find pleasure in resistance and ease the hunger of loved ones. She also tells the story of a formerly enslaved woman who owned a chicken-forward food stall and how she exercised power over customers. In this particular story, a white man visited the stall looking to buy a half chicken. Attempting to demean her, the man speaks to the owner using stereotypes and dehumanizing terminology. This woman, however, challenged traditional power differentiations using her position as owner, which held authority over the nourishment of potential customers. In this case, she denied this man's access to food. Further, had she allowed him to eat, she would have financially benefitted from the transaction (21-23). In this case, chicken as a foodstuff was the very reason for this social interaction and

gave the formerly enslaved woman a platform on which to practice agency and challenge the powers which seek to put down her humanity.

Further, when it comes to enabling agency, Williams-Forson writes about waiter-carriers, who actually gave this book its name. In the early 1900s, some Black women (particularly in Virginia and other areas of the southeast), were able to work independently or within chosen, small social networks to sell their wares consisting primarily of fried chicken to passersby on stopped trains. In essence, this action functioned to provide travelers with provisions before dining cars or train cafes began to develop. When it comes to "building houses out of chicken legs," this is, of course, a common metaphor but is particularly impactful in this context because Williams-Forson speaks to the way that her ancestors, who were waiter carriers, used this practice to gain financial freedom that allowed women to literally build up their home life by supporting their families and creating some financial stability for future generations (32-35).

Imagery and Identity Ownership

Williams-Forson makes clear that some saw (and still see) participation in racist imagery as complying with "spreading the network of racial power" (69). For those who *did* participate in it, however, these spaces could be viewed as a "locus for social and political activism" (71). Again, speaking to challenges against power structures, and to owning identity and interpretations, Williams-Forson tells the story of a Black cook, Hawkins, who worked at a "Coon Chicken Inn" restaurant, depicted in Figure 1, as head waiter. Williams-Forson explains that Hawkins used his position here to both aim to change the narrative of Black people for white

Figure 1. An example of a Coon Chicken Inn restaurant. (Williams-Forson, Psyche, Curt Teich Postcard Archives, Lake County Discovery Museum, *Coon Chicken Inn, unknown location*)

passersby and save money to open his own restaurant where he would make and sell his own, secret, fried chicken recipe. Hawkins choosing to work inside these systems perpetuating racist imagery appeared to some as supporting these systems. Williams-Forson also explains, though, that for Hawkins, the power felt from this act came from his intention to change the system from the inside (even if it impacts only one person) and gain agency in a way that preserves his scholarship (i.e. his secret recipe) to hopefully gain wealth and notoriety comparable to the white owners of the restaurant (66-71).

Figure 2. Fictional illustrated postcard sent by a black domestic cook to a friend. (Williams-Forson, Psyche, Author's collection, "*Thanksgiving Greetings." Written on the card is "Imogene, Ula, and Me."* Postcard, n.d.)

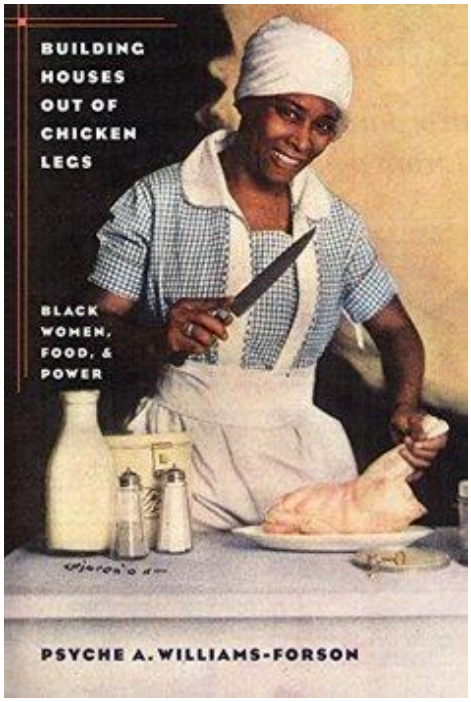

Figure 3. Book cover exhibiting conflicting cultural symbolism. (Williams-Forson, Psyche, Author's collection, *Snowdrift shortening advertisement,* ca. 1925, *Ladies Home Journal*)

Finally, using specific imagery of Black women, Williams-Forson directs us to a few more examples of owning identity and interpretation through chicken (and other poultry). Figure 2 features a postcard that depicts a fictional domestic cook, looking directly at the observer and standing over two children fighting over chicken or turkey. This postcard was sent to a friend by a Black domestic cook, and in the attached note, this woman proudly proclaimed the fictional cook to be representative of herself. Her writing spoke of her position as one that presides over the children of the house which she worked for, and also one that allows her creativity and power

over the Thanksgiving meal. While to some, this postcard could clearly be objectifying, Williams-Forson argues that the sender practiced agency by flipping the probably intended narrative on its head; instead of allowing the image to place her in a position of servitude for the children and household, the sender placed herself in a position of power and influence (90-91). Additionally, in Figure 3, we see the complexities of a 1925 advertisement for Snowdrift shortening. In this ad, a great deal of conflicting cultural symbolism is at play. On one hand, Sarah, the woman depicted, is shown with signifiers that attempt to subjectify her to stereotypes and happy servitude, such as her mammy-style dress, gleeful expression, and obviously, her position to prepare her supposedly famous fried chicken. However, there are other interpretations that can be taken from this imagery that directly oppose this subjectification. With the way she holds her knife and stares into the eyes of the viewer, her expression that, for some, is consistent with the mammy stereotype can, for others, be seen as threatening and powerful. For clarification, Williams-Forson cites knowing these different interpretations based on written and oral history regarding the ad (89-90).

These examples demonstrate that even if interpretation is fully internal or simply shared amongst a small social circle, owning one's own definition of self and alternate, non-subjectifying interpretations of diasporic community members, can provide a sense of freedom and resistance. This type of challenge to interpretations by elite power structures is seen across social settings and is indeed powerful amongst each of them. However, being that Black women, especially following slavery, were subject to food stereotypes that in many cases revolved around chicken, owning the interpretation of one's self and community was particularly powerful in this setting.

Conclusion

For people across cultures, the nexus between food and health is evident. By exploiting knowledge systems (i.e. through the use of food stereotypes), Western colonial power structures reduce infinitely complex individuals and groups to mere subjects meant to bolster their power. Given the impact of this relationship, the potential power at this nexus is also clear. People across time and space have found ways to use foodways to their own advantage. Black feminist scholarship has shown us that this has been and will continue to be especially true for African American communities. Historically, this was seen through oppositional identity ownership in imagery intended to exploit, the use of certain food-based practices to maintain cultural heritage and promote physical health, and more.

In potential power at the food-health nexus, we see that people can truly "build houses out of chicken legs" by carrying these lessons forward and supporting future generations. Food has the power to oppress, and as long as our same white hetero-patriarchial power structures are in place, foodways will continue to be exploited in this way. However, food can *also* be resistant by giving space for agency and challenging subjectification. This agency and resistance are manifested throughout health practices like community care, social medicine, and simple

physical survival. By ensuring one's health through food, one can practice power through this medium.

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Challenging "Neutral" Environmental Knowledge

Zoey Walder-Hoge

Abstract

This commentary article discusses the importance of including authors and perspectives beyond Western academic traditions in social science literature on human-environment interactions. There is a critical lack of intellectual engagement with non-Western, specifically Indigenous scholarship and ontologies. Particularly, there is a need to focus on different ontological perspectives within the literature on natural resources and subsistence activities, such as agriculture. This article expands on ideas presented by Paige West (2020) on environmental anthropology 's engagement with humans and non-humans and Juanita Sundberg (2014)'s critique that non-Western ontologies are not effectively considered or included in scholarship.

Introduction

Academic research on socio-ecological systems and human-environment interactions should be conscious of multiple ontological perspectives. This commentary article discusses the importance of including authors and perspectives beyond Western academic traditions. This discussion focuses on the critical lack of intellectual engagement with non-Western, specifically Indigenous scholarship and ontologies. While it is increasingly a point of discussion within the literature (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018; Eglash 2020; Sundberg 2014; Tallbear 2015), I believe there is a need to focus on the lack of different ontological perspectives specifically within the literature on natural resources and subsistence activities, such as agriculture. This focus is crucial, as resource literature frequently informs development recommendations and environmental management practices. This commentary article expands on ideas presented by Paige West (2020) on environmental anthropology's engagement with humans and non-humans and Juanita Sundberg's (2014) critique that non-Western ontologies are not effectively considered or included in scholarship.

The terminology of 'West' or 'Western' requires some explanation. Sundberg (2014) presents the concepts as "Eurocentric knowledge" or "Anglo-European scholarship", therefore highlighting the Anglo legacy and hegemony within the academic world. Both West (2020) and Sundberg (2014) discuss how the simplification of the 'Western' concept involves combining a multiplicity of sciences and knowledge practices into a single concept. Therefore, perhaps in this commentary, some arbitrary dichotomies are reinforced between Western knowledge and Indigenous ontologies. Hopefully, they are not simplified to the point of futility.

The concept of 'ontology' also deserves some explication for how I approach it in this article. When exploring Western versus Indigenous ontologies, two themes emerged: 1) The global West is a force that consumes other ontologies; 2) What are ontological units and how are they defined? Abigail Neely argues that the main ontological unit is "made up of relationships" (2020, 10). Yet how ontological units are recorded and communicated is largely organized

through Western categorizations (Hunt, 2014). The concept of Indigeneity itself involves "ontological limits around what knowledge is and is not legible…" and then making it "real" through its use in literature (Hunt 2014, 29). Isabelle Stengers (2018) argues "The global West" is not an ontology, as it "is not a 'world' and recognizes no world". Instead, it is "a 'machine', destroying both politics and ontologies" (Stengers 2018, 86). This reflects Zoe Todd (2016)'s argument that "'Ontology' is just another word for colonialism". For example, the utilization of Indigenous theories and conceptualizations in the climate literature regularly fails to attribute the ideas to Indigenous scholars who have published on the subject for decades (Todd 2016). While these ideas are largely beyond the scope of this article, it is valuable to acknowledge the power dynamics between Western and non-Western ontologies, and the multiplicity of ontological perspectives.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive review; I use particular authors and writings as examples of how ideas are framed, and some pitfalls that can occur with ontological blinders. I largely draw from disciplinary perspectives within geography and anthropology. Through discussions centering on the topics of natural resources and knowledge hierarchies, the variety of approaches illustrated in these writings show the importance of engaging with different ontological perspectives, and in particular Indigenous scholarship, when discussing the environment or nonhuman world. Just as prejudiced social hierarchies, embedded in geographies, are often presented as, and perceived to be, "natural" or at least "neutral" (McKittrick 2006; Wright 2018), a lack of consideration of multiple ontological perspectives can easily perpetuate ignorance and reinforce knowledge hierarchies that ignore Indigenous scholarship.

What is a resource?

Within Western literature, the concept of resources, its distinction from the natural world as a whole, and what constitutes resource management, are shifting. For example, while Amazonia was once seen as quintessential, unaltered nature, historical ecology research increasing understands Amazonia as a domesticated landscape; the result of at least 11,000 years of human-environment interactions and resource management (Balée 2013; Erickson 2008). Most Western scholarship presents the environment as a collection of resources that are for people; it should be in a state that provides the most benefit, and environmental management practices should protect and/or increase those resources (Folke et al. 2004; Redman 2005). For example, Carl Folke et al. argue that ecosystems are assessed in their "capacity to generate ecosystem services" (2004, 557). Charles Redman presents a similar conceptualization of the environment, with the goal to identify the characteristics "of social systems and human interactions with the environment" in order to attain "desirable social and ecological outcomes" (2005, 71). An environment being in a "desired state" indicates a conceptualization of the environment as something separate from humans, something humans can (and have the right) to change and exists to provide people with services. This ontological perspective is in sharp contrast to the relational concepts of "reciprocity, and accountability" in Kyle Whyte's interpretation of Indigenous communities and the nonhuman world (2020, 268). Folke et al.

(2004) and Redman (2005) perhaps seek similar ecological conditions as Whyte (2020). However, describing the primary role of the natural world as serving societies could be seen, according to Whyte as an "environmental injustice" through the absence of concepts like "reciprocity" and "interdependency" with the natural world (2020, 268).

Kim Tallbear (2017) complicates the concept of resources by arguing that the Western conceptualization of the culture-nature divide can instead be perceived as a culture-resource divide. Indigenous people, their knowledge, DNA, and more, are seen as resources for modern non-Indigenous societies. The perception that indigenous groups are seen as resources, and should provide resources, is a central part of Linda Noel et al. (2014)'s description of how Pomo should manage the land and oak trees in the future. Noel et al. (2014) argue that they should not give in to scientists who see their land within the context of climate change or hydrological needs; the scientists would not engage with Pomo as equals or see the land within kinship relationships. Overall, how resource management is framed within the literature varies greatly across disciplines and between Western and Indigenous scholarship and having ontological blinders to these issues is detrimental to understanding central aspects of human-environmental interactions.

Knowledge hierarchy in resource management

Adaptations, especially subsistence-level resource management (e.g., smallholder agriculture), are often framed as either scientific or unscientific. James Scott describes the practices of smallholder farmers in terms that are often used to depict scientific methods; Tanzanian farmers successfully readjusted "farming practices in accordance with climate change, new crops, and new market" (1998, 253). While a 1964 World Bank report argued Tanzania must "overcome the destructive conservatism of the people…" (Scott 1998, 241), Scott frames these agricultural practices as more innovative than "conservative"; they are highly adaptive to local conditions over a variety of time scales. This type of practiced knowledge is evident in descriptions of smallholder practices across Africa, such as Ghanaian farmers' adoption of soil management practices from farmers in Burkina Faso, and then their adaptation of those practices to suit local conditions (Nyantakyi-Frimpong 2020).

Scott (1998) also demonstrates an analytical approach that is common in Western discourse on smallholder farmers. While Scott presents the idea that "every African farm" can be seen as a "small-scale experimental station", he also writes that local knowledge has limitations, such as perspectives from "modern science" (1998, 285). While all knowledge does have limits, given the damages of colonial and then neoliberal agricultural interventions, I think who it is that determines the limitations is quite important; damaging practices can still occur under the guise of local knowledge limitations.

Ontological discrimination is often associated with knowledge differentiations and hierarchies that legitimizes positivist Western practices, while dismissing others. However, I find these differentiations are often arbitrary. For example, Whyte describes how Indigenous peoples "have their own sciences for protecting ecosystems" (2020, 268), such as Waikato Maori's river

management that have led to sustainable fishing practices (2020, 271). Their practices are based on observations and reactions to conditions and can be characterized as a "reciprocal exchange between people and the river" (Whyte 2020, 271). These types of practices, of observation and adaptation over millennia are a form of science.

From my own fieldwork in smallholder agriculture, I found that farmers seek drought resistant varieties of crops through practices that include diversification and identifying varieties that are better for certain conditions. However, farmers are increasingly told to grow monoculture seeds developed for drought conditions, but not for particular localities. Through limiting the use of grains that were developed in those specific environmental conditions, and constraining the diversity of crops grown, these development practices hinder the ability of farmers to adapt to current drought conditions or prepare for the future. This is an example of a knowledge hierarchy; the ontological perspective and knowledge practices of researchers in agricultural centers that are often hundreds if not thousands of miles away from the farming communities are prioritized over the ontological perspective and knowledge practices of the farmers, whose time frame of study is quite a bit longer. My fieldwork, along with the research of many others, illustrates that what is considered "science knowledge", agricultural practices, or products should not be introduced if it replaces or subverts local knowledge, practices, and agricultural conditions, which are the result of many generations of daily experiences and experiments by individuals and communities (Altieri 2012; Robbins 2001; Scott 1998).

'Sanctioned ignorance'

Characterizations of Indigenous peoples as "magical and pre-modern" play a role in invalidating Indigenous perspectives on "the political significance and vitality of nonhumans" and kinship with the natural world (Sundberg 2014, 38). Therefore, these characterizations 'sanction ignorance' of Indigenous knowledge and learning (Sundberg 2014). This ignorance can limit the possibilities of engaging with non-Western perspectives and possible futures. For example, Redman argues that just because people "'feel' that a sustainable world requires economic equality and purposely diminished consumption", it is illogical because the "archaeological record does not offer many case studies as exemplars…" (2005, 74). He argues that the discipline of archaeology is able to distinguish all different types "of interactions that have and have not existed…up to this point in history" (Redman 2005, 71). However, this type of paradigm and examples are offered by many Indigenous scholars, including Whyte, who argues that only through kinship, future goals of sustainability are possible. Whyte writes that "Indigenous environmental justice" offers a "critique of capitalism, colonialism, and industrialization as disruptions of kinship", and this economic equality should extend beyond local indigenous spheres, that "reciprocity with non-human relatives in the environment" involves "human kinship across societies" (2020, 275). My critique is not a condemnation of analyses that contain a long temporal-scales. Many such publications provide crucial insights into human-environment interactions (Balée 2013; Erickson 2008). This commentary is only a

critique of one such approach that falls into what I feel are common tropes within Western academia; disregarding Indigenous ontologies and scholarship.

At the very least, expanding one's ontological awareness would hopefully prevent issues like Scott's problematic nomenclature and characterizations of African farmers, who he said, "like peasants in the Mediterranean Basin, China, and India…are capable of damaging their ecosystem" (1998, 285). There have been reoccurring assertions that local subsistence practices damage ecosystems, when other factors, such as displacement, colonialism, or industrialization, are actually driving factors. Also, Scott's use of the word "peasant" perhaps illustrates some biases. He used the word in the sentence quoted above describing modern populations, and in describing the experiences of modern Tanzanians and Ethiopians, and of historical Europeans. Yet when discussing the "farmers breaking new ground on the plains of Kansas" (Scott 1998, 253), there was no mention of 'Kansas peasants'. It seems to me that the term 'peasant' is often used as a way to identify people with an agrarian vocation while depriving them of their agrarian expertise.

Tallbear's (2017) insights into the conceptual relegation of Indigenous communities to resources is applicable here. The distinctions not only reflect the nature versus culture divide, it reveals the Western perception that Indigenous peoples do not have the ability to create knowledge that is "legitimate" and "modern" (Sundberg 2014, 38). To bridge ontological divides, Sundberg advocates for a "performative coproduction of knowledge and space" (2014, 39). Yet, if Western knowledge practices conceptually remove the other from space and time, it precludes the ability to even remotely take part in this engagement with multiple ontologies.

Conclusion

This commentary article advocates for understanding human-environment interactions through multiple ontologies, with a particular focus on Indigenous conceptualizations within literatures on resources and resource management (or their ontological equivalents). When engaging with multiple ontologies, it is also important to work with local perspectives and multiple ontologies in an iterative fashion (Mikulewicz et al. 2023). How the multitude of non-Western ontologies are presented or discussed within the academic literature is an evolving process, and I believe invites frequent reflections on what literature should be included and cited in research. Hunt (2014), Todd (2016), and Sundberg (2014), provide insights into how to (and who) to cite. Hunt and Todd warn that the use Indigenous ontologies in Western academia could be 'epistemic violence' (Hunt 2014, 29), through removing "the embodied, practiced, and legal-governance aspects of Indigenous ontologies" (Todd 2016, 17). Todd argues that "Indigenous thinking must be seen as not just a well of ideas to draw from but a body of thinking that is living and practiced by peoples…." (2016, 17).

Through this critique of Western environmental binaries and approaches towards non-Western knowledge, I am aware that it is reinforcing a binary, between Western and non-Western knowledge. By simplifying these ontologies into dichotomies, am I once again perpetuating unhealthy divisions? Sundberg promotes keeping 'Indigenous epistemes' separate from the Western theory that resembles Indigenous ontologies, "even as there may be

overlapping themes and goals" (2014, 34). I think this is an apt approach, as Sundberg advocates for recognizing the production of knowledge, "that knowledge comes from somewhere and is, therefore, bound up in power relations" (Sundberg 2014, 36). Therefore, Western theory that reflects Indigenous theory is still inherently bound in the power relations of Western academic institutions. This reflects "cartographic rules unjustly organize human hierarchies in place", perpetuating "uneven geographies in familiar, seemingly natural ways" (McKittrick 2006, x). Addressing ontological blinders can be a way of questioning the "cartographic rules" that are used to navigate research into human-environmental interactions.

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