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- The world's coral reefs have thinned by 27%.
- Rainforests could disappear in 25 - 30 years.
- Air pollution, acid rain.

It all adds up, or maybe we should say, it all subtracts, down, down, down.

But, she also provides us with hope. She points to good stewardship in Milwaukee, and other positive examples around the country. And, she discusses modern economic forces that are driven by the pressure of population growth and basic human nature. These economic forces are then seen as possible sources of support for the future of our urban forests.

Our suggestion is that our cities do in fact have the economic and technological resources to grow magnificent urban forests, but they lack the political will. Further, we would say that political will, rooted in the minds and hearts of the public, can be won through education. There is an old Chinese proverb: "Think one year ahead - plant rice; think ten years ahead - plant trees; think one-hundred years ahead - educate people."

And, we would finally suggest that North America's 1200+ nature centers are good places to look to. Nature centers teach environmental values, and are vital members of their communities. While school districts may be slow to advocate for social action or conservation, nature centers are busily doing just that.

The education of all citizens, not just the young and not-yet-enfranchised, but the adults, the property owners, the industrial leaders, and our civic representatives - all need education. However, sending them facts and figures, and even sending them this wonderful book, will probably not do the trick.

They spend the vast majority of their lives indoors. They need contact with nature. If you want to educate someone about the value of trees, take them to an arboretum, or a nature center, or a fabulous old urban park. Once inspired, *Trees At Risk* can help any community organizer understand what mistakes to avoid, what social forces are in play, and just how much truly is at risk.

Evelyn Herwitz deserves the thanks of all the tree-huggers, tree-lovers, and even those not yet educated and inspired. As a boy, Brent's one great and often expressed fear of growing up was that he might someday no longer want to climb trees. Well, he's 54, and still climbing (every now and then)!

Negotiating Nature: Culture, Power and Environmental Argument, Hornborg, A. and Gisli Palsson, eds. Lund, Sweden: Lund University Press (2000), 225 pp.

Reviewed by Leif John Fosse, World Wide Fund for Nature, Oslo, Norway.

This collection of essays emerged out of a social science initiative of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Nordic Environmental Research Programme, and examines the cultural dimensions of environmental policy negotiations. Whereas much environmental social science research tends to focus on the institutional, legal, economic or sociological aspects of such negotiations, the aim of these authors, ten anthropologists and ethnologists from Sweden, Norway and Iceland, is to highlight their symbolic, experiential, and ideological aspects. In other words, they seek to identify the metaphors, symbols or aesthetic ideals that implicitly frame discourses on the environment.

This review, in turn, is written by an environmental anthropologist practitioner, rather than researcher. Therefore, any failure to place the contributions in the proper context of ongoing academic discourses and exchanges on the environment may be due to the perspective of the reviewer rather than a failure of the individual authors or editors. The editors' introduction provides a good overview of the contributors' main arguments and I draw extensively on their observations in this review.

The volume's subject matter is approached through a diverse set of concerns with the phenomenology of tourism, landscape conservation, environmental activism, and the practical management of fisheries and reindeer pastures. The perspectives are too disparate; by the editors' own admission, to represent a uniform statement on how to apply culture theory to environmental issues. There is, however, a common preoccupation with how cultural perceptions of nature are generated. A concluding commentary by Tim Ingold places the individual contributions in a wider perspective in a succinct overview of anthropological approaches to the environment.

The first five contributions are concerned with how cultural perceptions of nature are generated at the experiential and phenomenological level. Löfgren discusses the way cultural ideals about the kinds of nature found

worthy of protection vary in historical time, geographical space and social context, depending on the technology used for transportation and representing the landscape.

Svensson, in turn, observes that the tourist industry is founded on the commoditization of landscape experiences. Noting how nature is increasingly marketed as an “experience,” she claims that the tourist industry’s appeals to the picturesque, sublime and panoramic also underlie environmental or heritage protection policies.

Saltzman notes a similar romanticism in the landscape ideals of urban administrators and the environmental and heritage conservation policies of the EU, which are at odds with the rationalized farming practices of today’s rural populations. Guided by these romantic ideals we thus find

Swedish bureaucrats praising the past knowledge and experience of old Öland farmers, while ignoring the rationality of their technologically and scientifically informed, contemporary descendants. When farming methods change while landscape ideals do not, contradictions are inevitable.

While there is no denying aesthetics and romantic notions of nature have formed an important part of the origin of environmental practices and policies, Svensson’s observation, in particular, may not be entirely up to date. Protection of landscapes today forms part of the wider field of conservation, concerned with broad-based management of ecosystems and natural resources, and involving a wide array of actors and interests ranging from indigenous peoples, peasants and farmers, to business people and technocrats. Today, conservation is often informed by development research and practices, and is likely to stress the economic function and utility value of biodiversity rather than aesthetics and romantic values. These may, however, form part of the individual environmentalist’s motivation, even for the confrontational environmental activists studied by Kapstad.

Kapstad investigates the importance of bodily experience in the everyday cultural practices and confrontations with authority of environmental activists. As a liminal experience, action operates on the edge of what is civilized and structured, and transgresses the relation between subject and object. This allows access to a state where I am the action, and the action is me, where doing is everything. But their engagement, as Ingold observes in his concluding commentary, is in fact not with the global environment for which they campaign, but with the local authorities and symbols of power. Deep green ecologists have the opposite problem, Hornborg observes in his contribution: The environment they want to save is so lofty and all encompassing that it is impossible to relate to it in a practical, embodied way.

Moving on to the cognitive and conceptual, Jensen looks into how the notion of biodiversity has come to occupy centre stage in environmental discourse by filling multiple functions. In the Swedish forestry debate, the concept has apparently facilitated constructive communication between foresters, scientists and environmentalists, by suggesting scientific precision and a moral measure of natural values at the same time. The concept of biodiversity, she finds, summarises all the values which environmental groups had previously been unable to formulate. Indeed, it forms part of a wider cultural re-evaluation of the fundamental premises of modernity, which has until recently been identified with uniformity.

Diversity is now commonly perceived as crucial to the survival of ecosystems as well as human cultures. The Convention of Biodiversity, an important outcome of the 1992 Rio conference, states that nature has intrinsic value, but places humans firmly within that nature. Here biodiversity is viewed as a democratic right of future generations as well as a prerequisite for the survival of future generations. The corresponding term “cultural diversity,” we may note, has provided an important common ground for environmentalists and indigenous peoples.

Hornborg looks into the correspondence between how humans in different cultural contexts relate to nature and how they relate to each other through exchange. Whereas social metaphors for human-environmental relations in pre-modern contexts have been couched in terms of reciprocal gift giving, modern economists use terms such as ecosystem services, natural capital, environmental costs and debts. These projections of principles of social exchange onto human-environmental relations correspond, in turn, to different cultural perceptions of the human person, whether engaged and infused with the natural environment or its detached observer.

Hornborg notes the ways in which personhood, nature and exchange are conceptualized in terms of concentric, spatial models; which in his view permit formal comparisons between pre-modern Algonquians of northeastern North America, modern economists, and the post-modern deep ecology movement. This argument may, however, rest on a stereotyped view of the sociability of the Algonquians.

Helgason, O’Jinsson and Pálsson in their substantial contribution trace some of the moral and existential consequences of the commoditization and bureaucratization of Icelandic fishing. In order to tackle the problem of over-fishing the Icelandic government in 1983 introduced a management system based on individual transferable quotas (ITQs) – a market approach to managing natural resources and a radical departure from the largely unmanaged fisheries of previous times. The fisheries soon took on the characteristics of factory production, in that the fishermen have become passive workers while the owners and exchangers of fishing rights are perceived as the

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creative agents of economic value. Fisheries ecologists and economists have assumed the modernist role of engineers, manipulating the configuration of variables in a predictable system to achieve the desired outcome.

The ITQ reform was originally presented as a temporary measure, but soon developed into a system of property rights, and the ITQs become market commodities. The stated objectives of policy makers had gradually shifted from the original emphasis on the protection of fishing stocks to the economic goal of efficient production. According to the authors, the ITQ system has violated some tacit moral tenets of the fishermen's world view, such as egalitarianism and personal autonomy. In the share system that preceded the ITQs, the fishing enterprise was perceived to be a joint venture, with an explicit economic recognition that the efforts of the skipper and the crew were essential in the creation of value.

In the new production discourse, however, the efforts of fishermen are taken for granted, and exchange with ITQs have replaced the act of fishing as the source of economic value. The commoditization of fishing rights has displaced the locus of agency associated with the fishing enterprise from the skipper and his crew on the fishing vessel to ecological specialists and business managers on dry land. In their argument to reclaim the role of individual skills and agency in the fisheries as a production process, I find it puzzling that the authors do not draw on F. Barth, who makes a similar argument in his classic study of role play and impression management on a Norwegian fishing vessel (1966).

But does the new system of management solve the underlying problem of over fishing? The ecological benefits of privatisation are a key justification for the ITQ system. This sort of argument is usually informed by G. Hardin's "tragedy of the commons" (1968): it is rational for a herder on a common pasture to add extra animals to the pasture although this will collectively result in overgrazing. Arguing against this, the authors find that the institution of private property cannot on its own be expected to maintain or improve the condition of the marine habitat, contrary to the tacit assumption of mainstream fisheries economics.

Beach's chapter on Saami reindeer herders follows this discussion nicely by focussing on the repercussions of regulatory mechanisms implemented to remedy the problem of overgrazing by reindeer in northern Sweden. International conventions prescribe new forms of natural resource management and EU membership provides the Saami reindeer herders with new subsidies and regional aid. As Beach points out, however, the Saami must also deal with rational herd management measures prescribed by the authorities

Compensation payments from hydroelectric companies that have flooded grazing lands and from the Chernobyl disaster add considerably to Saami funds which, according to the Reindeer Herding Act, can only be spent on the herding enterprise. This stimulates the increased purchase of high-tech gear and the use of helicopters and transport trucks to carry the reindeer between ranges or abattoirs. According to Beach, these technologies impair rather than enhance fine-tuned pastoral skills among the herders, and the reindeer lose knowledge of migration routes and useful routines. A dilemma for the Saami herders is that the more they utilize modern, high-tech gear and methods promoted by the state, the less their livelihood is regarded by the rest of the society as being an expression of Saami culture and a livelihood rightfully granted special resource rights.

Beach's argument is well made and the dilemma observed applies to the Norwegian context as well. Here too, reindeer herding is so closely associated with Saami identity in the wider community that it has become an imperative to that identity. Saami activists have successfully utilized reindeer pastoralism as a metonym for their livelihood, identity and way of life in their struggle to be recognised as an indigenous people with special resource rights. However, their success in this regard, makes negotiation of identity and claims of indigenity difficult for non-reindeer herding Saami.

Several of the book's chapters focus on the tensions and transformations that appear in the discursive interchange between local life-worlds and abstract authority. Environmental discourse is an arena both for the assertion of local autonomy and for the exercise of centralized power. The denigration of practical knowledge noted in several contexts, is here seen as a by-product of high modernism. The proper response to the modernist agenda, according to the editors, is not romantic adherence to the past, or fetishization of traditional knowledge, but a management framework democratic enough to allow for a realistic adaptation to the complexities and contingencies of the world – in sum a communitarian ethic of "muddling through".

Some of the contributors tend to get so carried away in their deconstructionist zeal that one is left to wonder whether environmental problems exist at all. The eloquent concluding commentary by Tim Ingold goes a long way in correcting this impression. The concept of nature may be culturally constructed, he admits, in the sense that its meaning is continually subject to negotiation in the multiple contexts of ordinary discourse. But which elements of the world this concept is supposed to denote, are culturally constructed as well? "Nature" is certainly not a given pre-existing stage for existence, but is continually negotiated. But this is a life process that involves more than just the world's human inhabitants.

In a fascinating argument verging on pantheism, Ingold holds that if the concept of construction is to be

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useful, we have to include the natural, physical world in it, as this shapes the human life-world as much as it is shaped by it. Human beings, Ingold muses, are to be found around the edges of nature, not at its core. He proposes the term “anthropocircumferentialism” to denote this position, which may not gain currency for the mere unutterability of it.

On a final note, we may observe that the English of some of the Nordic authors is patchy in places, indicating the proofreading may not have been entirely up to standard.

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Social Change in Melanesia: Development and History, by Paul Sillitoe New York: Cambridge University Press (2000), xx, 264 pp.

Reviewed by Jerry Jacka, Department of Anthropology, University of Oregon Eugene, OR

This book is a companion volume to Sillitoe’s 1998 book, *Introduction to the Anthropology of Melanesia*. It is intended for as a general introduction to Melanesian studies. The first book deals with “traditional” Melanesian social life, while this latter book looks at the changes that have come via “modernization.” Those researchers who disdain the use of such terms and the obvious dichotomies produced by publishing the two different books, may find serious fault with Sillitoe’s approach. Despite this, I think that the latter volume is a good book for the number of topics it brings up in attempting to cover the range of issues relevant to Melanesians today. I deal with the topics in greater detail below, but give a brief listing of them here (in the order they are addressed in the book): land tenure, community development, business and entrepreneurship, formation of class, mining, forestry, migration and urbanization, cargo cults, missionization, state formation, tourism, and custom and identity.

One of the strengths of the book is that each of the chapters that addresses the topics above uses a particular culture group or region to illustrate the ways that these processes of modernity articulate in that particular area. At the same time, though, some Melanesianists may be disappointed by the bulk of the examples coming from Papua New Guinea at the expense of the other Melanesian countries. West Papua, rather anachronistically called “Irian Jaya” throughout the book despite the name being changed in 1999, receives only passing mention. Only one chapter is devoted to the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu each, while Fiji and New Caledonia are only briefly alluded to from time to time. However, the particular case studies presented in each chapter could also be used by instructors to make comparisons and contrasts of the areas where they did their respective research to their students.

In general, this is a good book, but it has some faults that I found hard to overlook. The greatest of these is that at times Sillitoe slips into language that makes social change seem teleological or evolutionary. He sometimes mentions certain groups as “moving back towards their cultural roots” (p. 107) or as being at a certain “stage” (passim). But then a few pages later he will note that there is no unidirectionality to change. Some readers may find this confusing and take refuge in a more comfortable mode of thinking of change as coming in stages where the West is modern and the Rest are working towards that goal. Most of the seeds of confusion are sown in the fourth chapter of the book, entitled *Technological Change and Economic Growth*.

Sillitoe uses modernization theory as developed by W. W. Rostow (e.g., 1960) to talk about models of economic growth in Melanesia. Readers are subjected to discussions of “economic take-off” supported by two nearly incomprehensible graphs that attempt to show the relationships between labor and output in tribal versus capitalist economies. By the end of the chapter I was unsure as to whether he was critiquing modernization theory or defending it. But then he opens the next chapter by writing that sweeping universal economic theories are quite limited in real-life contexts. As a result, there is a danger that introductory-level readers may come away with an incomplete understanding of the issues surrounding economic change.