

Inside English 1010

A Journal of First-Year Writing

Volume 3 | Fall 2019



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'm excited to see this third volume of *Inside English 1010* come to fruition. It is a vivid illustration of the excellent, thought-provoking work going on in our first year writing program at the University of Wyoming.

The heroes and heroines of this year's collection are, of course, the undergraduate student writers. Their work demonstrates the varied interests and strong talents of UW students. In the following pages, you'll find expository writing on ecotourism, on race and representation in popular movies, and on how Matthew Shepard's murder impacted the UW university community. Digging into their own curiosities through exemplary researched academic arguments, this volume's authors will persuade you to expand your views on xenotransplantation, on the regulation of palm oil, and on regulating media coverage of mass shootings. And in our final genre—op-eds aimed at broader public readers—students share informed opinions on the benefits of co-ed sports, the physical nature of being in a marching band, and the potential harms of “powerbait” to fly fishing culture. In addition to the great writing contained within these pages, the cover photo was contributed by one of our graduate students and English 1010 instructors, Alyssa Canepa. I thank her for sharing her talents.

Putting together a journal is a major undertaking, and this year's development team was exceptional. A big shout-out goes to Lead Editor Mary Hill. From coaching student authors through final revisions to making sure the visuals were appropriately licensed, Mary brought a special level of care and organization to the project. She and undergraduate intern Kyle Moore are to be commended for their detailed attention to checking

sources, editing, and proofreading as well. Talented Production Editor Heather Holland has once again made the journal look spectacular, and a last special thanks go to this year's board of reviewers: Isiah Dale, Will Kingsland, Kalie Leonard, and Lydia Stuver. Because we continue to have so many high-quality submissions, they had to make some tough decisions.

With gratitude to the people who made this year's volume a reality and with cheers for another year of fantastic student writing--

Professor Nancy Small,
Inside English 1010 Faculty Advisor
Director of Writing Programs
Assistant Professor of English
University of Wyoming
May 2019

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The process of choosing essays to feature in this edition of *Inside English 1010* was a challenge because we received many outstanding submissions. The editorial board considered carefully the value each piece would contribute to the journal. Keeping in mind the purpose of the journal and its use in the English 1010 classroom, we wanted to include a variety of topics, authors, styles, and creativity. We hope that instructors will find many ways to utilize this edition of *Inside English 1010* in their classrooms.

I am very proud of this edition of *Inside English 1010*. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the production of this journal—it was definitely a group effort. I would like to specifically thank the student writers featured in this journal for taking the time to revise their papers. You were all prompt, thorough, and working with you was a pleasure.

I hope English 1010 students find this journal inspiring and helpful as they craft their own essays in their first-year composition courses.

Mary Hill

Inside English 1010 Lead Editor

MA in English Graduate Assistant

University of Wyoming

May 2019

HOW TO USE *INSIDE ENGLISH 1010*: AN INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

Inside English 1010 showcases work in the three main genres taught in English 1010: the Expos Essay, the Researched Argument, and the Opposite Editorial. The essays included in this journal were written by University of Wyoming students in the academic year preceding publication, and were recommended by instructors who feel that this work represents some of the best their students produced.

Reading this introduction, you are probably enrolled in English 1010, and likely haven't written in some—or even all—of these genres before. *Inside English 1010* is a resource designed for you; these essays will clarify evaluation criteria for the three major assignments and will model rhetorical strategies that you will learn and practice in your own writing this semester.

As you read the Expos Essays, pay particular attention to the writers' use of summary, paraphrase, and direct quotation. Can you follow the arguments of the articles being summarized? How do the writers indicate which points are most important? How do visuals and layouts contribute productively to the essays?

What topics have writers chosen for their Researched Arguments, and how have these topics been narrowed into specific arguments? What kind of evidence do the writers use to support their claims, and how do these claims build towards their theses? How are paragraphs organized? What make the introductions and conclusions effective?

How do the writers incorporate personal experience and pathos into their Opposite Editorials, and what other types of evidence do they use? How is the writing style of the Op-Eds different from the Researched Arguments'? How do the writers target a particular

audience in each essay?

Examining strong work in each of these genres will help you recognize what is and isn't effective in your own writing, and why. Use these essays as model and inspiration for your own writing, and know that there is not simply one way to write an extraordinary essay; *Inside English 1010* offers excellent examples of the different ways English 1010 students have been successful in communicating their interests and ideas.

Once you've revised your essays for the final portfolio, send your best work as Word documents to insideenglish1010@gmail.com to be considered for publication in the next issue of *Inside English 1010*.

The editorial board of *Inside English 1010* wishes you a semester filled with interesting reading, engaged discussion, and good writing. Work hard, have fun, and write on!

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Expos

INSIDE ENGLISH 1010

Expos | Summarizing the Experts on Issues that Matter

Brown Bear Quick Facts

- A brown bear's scientific name is *Ursus Arctos*
- Typically, they weigh around 700 pounds
- Dominant male bears go out more at night to hunt and eat
- Brown bears dig dens for winter hibernation, often holding up in a suitable hillside
- Adult brown bears are powerful, top-of-the-food chain predators, but most of their diet consists of nuts, berries, fruit, leaves, and roots

Source: *National Geographic*, 11 Apr. 2010, www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/b/brown-bear/

About Expos

Expos essays summarize a scholarly or article for a public audience, identifying main arguments and key information important to the academic community. We call these pieces “Expos” because they are written in the tradition of expository writing, which provides readers with research findings in order to inform and educate. Expository writing is found in many academic contexts, including our student journal *Inside English 1010* and popular news publications such as *Inside Higher Ed*, which run feature stories on cutting edge scholarship for a general academic audience.



Photo Credit: Kevyn Jalone/NPS Photo

Bears and Ecotourism

By Natalie Smyth

“Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?” [1] “I see humans taking pictures of me.” For many years, bear viewing tourism has been one of the world’s greatest commercial activities. Nearly eight billion ecotourists, tourists who direct their attention toward threatened animal environments, visit these sites each year (Penteriani 170). Although brown bear viewing can be an exquisite and intriguing activity to participate in, there are also many risks that come along with it. In order to perform proper bear viewing, the audience should understand the consequences. Some consequences of ecotourism includes preventing the bears from foraging for food and interacting naturally with their habitats, which alters the bear’s daily routine. The article “Consequences of Brown Bear Viewing Tourism: A Review” by Vincenzo Penteriani, et al. discusses

[1] Martin, Bill. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. Puffin Books, 1984.

the wonder that is bear ecotourism, informs viewers of the detriments and benefits of bear viewing, and identifies cautionary factors that need to be carried out while engaging in this popular activity.

What is Brown Bear Ecotourism?

Penteriani describes brown bear ecotourism as a rapidly growing industry around the world. There are numerous international locations in which locals and tourists can observe the bears and how they interact with each other in their natural habitat. Penteriani states, “In 2012, bear viewing companies in the Great Bear Rainforest generated more than 12 times more in visitor spending than bear hunting” (Penteriani 171). Due to the massive population this activity has generated, some bear viewing sites have specific time schedules for visits that prove to be beneficial for the bears. Penteriani informs the audience that a bear’s daily routine gets interrupted when a group of viewers resides in their habitat. Humans alter the natural pattern that bears follow, resulting in fewer day-time activities like hunting and playing. Because of this, the bears feel limited to using resources that lay close to the viewing sites (their natural habitats) and become more cautious overall. However, Penteriani goes on to claim that bears are becoming more tolerant of humans. He states, “Brown bears in denser populations show higher tolerance towards people and other bears compared to bears in lower density populations. On the other hand, viewing sites may also lead to bear habituation, i.e. the loss of human avoidance and escape responses” (Penteriani 173). Although this human-to-bear interaction reduces the chances of an attack, it organically creates a new routine in which the bears must become accustomed.



PHOTO CREDIT: SARAH JASSO

Writer's Bio

Natalie Smyth

For most of her life, Natalie has lived in Centennial, Colorado, and is currently a Junior at the University of Wyoming. She plans to major in Management and in her free time, she loves to paint and skateboard. Natalie has always found an interest in wildlife. Her favorite animal is the tiger and has only been to the zoo four times in her entire life. Back in middle school, she was given the opportunity to hold a baby white tiger and play around with it at the Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado. Natalie loves to explore new hiking trails and take her time adventuring in the forest. Recently, Natalie visited the zoo and took pictures of the bears which appear throughout this paper. She has also run across moose and deer on her last visit to Vedaauwo!

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Sch, Co. *Pexels*, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/brown-bear-close-up-view-river-water-530797/>



Photo Credit: Francis C. Franklin

Risks at Brown Bear Viewing Sites

Throughout the entire article, Penteriani stresses how important it is to understand the rules and regulations when attending any viewing site. Bears are lofty animals who can be ferocious and defensive if they feel they are in potential harm. In other words, bears are much bigger than humans and can easily attack an unwelcomed visitor. The author warns, “Hence, it is important that any bear viewing activities are accompanied by appropriate information campaigns, both about the real risks of the activity as well as of how to appropriately interpret bear behavior as to minimize the likelihood of an aggressive encounter and a negative experience” (Penteriani 176). Penteriani dives into deeper detail with the specific risks to bears and humans.

Risks to Bears

According to the article, “. . . behavioral consequences may be very different from bear to bear and, therefore, difficult to predict” (Penteriani 173). If bears notice a stranger in their habitat and become defensive, it

will cause the humans to act out in a way that could greatly harm the bears. One of the greatest potential risks for bears is getting injured or killed by humans. Bears settling in viewing sites near roadsides and railroad tracks are at a higher risk of getting into a serious automobile collision. The article discusses how sites with artificial feeding (stations used to attract and habituate wildlife species) are more dangerous because they have a negative effect on the animals and cause potential threats to human safety. The food at these feeding sites is composed of dog pellets and farmed salmon. These pellets contain pesticides; artificial colors and chemicals; and preservatives that can cause cancer, liver damage, and numerous other health issues (Penteriani 174). Regardless if the site has artificial feeding or not, another risk that is highly stressed occurs when people feed the bears human food. Human food can put the bears' health in jeopardy and even cause a disease. When humans participate in inappropriate behavior by feeding the bears or approaching them at close range, there is a higher chance of bear harassment resulting in human injury.

Risks to Humans

There are also many risks for humans as the article states "... bears were sufficiently habituated to olfactory, auditory, and visual cues from people at the viewing locations that they may approach areas frequently by tourists without regard to the people present" (Penteriani 173). Humans who come in close proximity to habituated bears could potentially risk death. In addition, getting too close to the bears can encourage illegal behavior, such as poaching and poisoning. Lastly, bears can cause traffic jams on the roadways. Because of this, all people should take precaution when driving near a viewing site and drive slowly to prevent collision with any of the animals



Photo Credit: Natalie Smyth



Photo Credit: Natalie Smyth



Photo Credit: Natalie Smyth



Photo Credit: Magnus Johansson



Photo Credit: Co Sch

Benefits of Brown Bear Viewing Sites

Economically, there are many benefits that come from viewing sites. The author explains, “The habituation of bears to people will occur to the extent that the benefits of not reacting outweigh the perceived costs” (Penteriani 175). In other words, this activity contains more beneficial factors than detrimental factors. Penteriani claims that, “These economic benefits caused by the opportunity to see bears along roads within the park are estimated to outweigh the costs of managing traffic problems associated with bear watching activities” (Penteriani 176). Most people report a positive experience when viewing bears in their natural habitats. In addition, simply interacting with nature proves to be directly beneficial to a person’s health. Penteriani believes that people can reconnect with the environment when they observe the bears. First-hand experiences with the bears and wildlife encounters, in general, have also been reported to generate a positive effect for people. As long as tourists are respectful at all times in the bear viewing environments, it can be a very fulfilling experience.

Conclusion

Even though bear viewing has some risks, Penteriani concludes that with the right behavior, all visitors will be protected from potential harm. It is still unclear as to how close people should be allowed to approach the bears at the viewing sites, but there is always active management practiced in order to maintain a nonviolent environment. Penteriani states that “Every area should be regarded as a separate case [...] eventually locations and schedules of bear viewing should be evaluated on the basis of the conservation status of the bear population, local bear behavior and density, as well as year-to-year availability of food resources and their use” (Penteriani 177). Penteriani also informs the reader to be more cautious about viewing sites that are higher risk. Not every place inhabited by bears is suitable for viewing, but if given the opportunity, Penteriani suggests the audience take the opportunity to experience brown bear ecotourism.

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Expos | Summarizing the Experts on Issues that Matter

Gay Rights Background Knowledge

- On July 14, 2004, an effort in the US Senate to pass a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage received only 48 votes of the necessary 60 votes for the proposal to proceed.
- On Aug. 11, 2010, CNN released the results of the first national poll to show a majority support for gay marriage, with 52% agreeing.
- A Gallup report released on May 8, 2013 found that national support for same-sex marriage peaked in 2011 at 53%, dropping to 50% in 2012.
- On May 9, 2012, President Obama became the first sitting US president to declare his support for gay marriage.

“Background of the Issue – Gay Marriage – ProCon.org.” Should Gay Marriage be Legal? , 12 Nov. 2017, 12:16:14 PM, gaymarriage.procon/view.resource.php?ID=006275



Photo Credit: Wokandapix

Tragedy Sparks Change

By Chris Denis

Tragedy is a catalyst for change; and it changes the way people think. In this case, Matthew Shepard's death helped open minds on and off the University of Wyoming's campus. In the article "The Matthew Shepard Tragedy Management of a Crisis" by James C. Hurst, Hurst depicts Matthew's assault, death, and the impact of those events on the small town of Laramie, Wyoming. Hurst tells the events with the purpose of informing future generations about Matthews's tragedy so an event like this never occurs again.

It was October 7th, 1998, around 6:00 p.m. when a University of Wyoming student out for a bike ride discovered a horrid sight: a badly beaten, unconscious Matthew

Shepard. For Shepard, left overnight in below freezing Laramie weather, hope for survival was minimal. The bicyclist immediately contacted the authorities, and the police concluded that Matthew's robbery and assault was motivated heavily by hate. Hurst explains, "Matthew later left the bar with McK-inney and Henderson, was taken to a location several miles east of Laramie, and was robbed, severely beaten, tied to a buck fence, and left in subfreezing temperatures" (Hurst 5). Matthew was brought to Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, but the doctors couldn't save his life because of the severity of his injuries. Matthew's assault motivated local activist groups to take a stand against hate.

A Time For Change

People didn't become tolerant overnight, awareness had to be spread. After Matthew's death, The Crisis Intervention Team taught tolerance on campus and in the Laramie community, hoping to gain a positive outcome despite a negative event. Hurst writes, "The University of Wyoming Crisis Intervention Team has demonstrated its usefulness repeatedly over the years in a variety of circumstances having an impact on the entire campus community, and the community of Laramie" (Hurst 6). Matthew's assault caused the team to take action.

The University of Wyoming Crisis Intervention Team managed the media covering this event, communicated with academic and Laramie communities, coordinated memorials for Matthew, modified pre-planned homecoming events, encouraged students to get involved, provided support to the Shepard family, held Gay Awareness Week activities, and educated the Laramie public about the tragedy (Hurst 6). The LGBTA and student associations also got involved. Hurst writes, "The director of the Wyoming Union



Writer's Bio:

Chris Denis

Born and raised in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Denis is a college freshman at the University of Wyoming. Denis's major is currently undeclared, but he is thinking of majoring in communications and journalism. His hobbies include skiing, running, and mountain biking. Growing up in a transformative time, he believes equal rights are essential for the U.S. to thrive. Growing up in Wyoming, he is no stranger to Matthew Shepard's story. However, reading about this tragedy shocked him because he wasn't familiar with the exact details of Mathew's traumatic passing. This story is close to his new community at UW; therefore, being a part of this community makes this story important to cover.

Additional Information

Read

“The Crucifixion of Matthew Shepard.” The Hive, Vanity Fair, 31 Jan. 2015, www.vanityfair.com/news/1999/13/matthew-shepard-199903.

“Home.” Matthew Shepard Foundation, www.matthewshepard.org/.

Watch & Listen

MattShepardFDN. YouTube, YouTube, 5 Jan. 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=TOsgy7CYnMI.

“Matthew Shephard Dies.” ABC News, ABC News Network abcnews.go.com/Archives/video/oct-12-1998-matthew-shepard-dies-11251310.

and the student activities staff turned over their main offices and phones to the LGBTQA leadership and members to provide them with resources and enable them to better provide assistance to the university and community in dealing with the tragedy” (Hurst 7). In efforts to teach tolerance, activist groups provided people with information about the tragedy and how to prevent a similar one in the future.

Also, yellow bands with green circles made by a variety of student organizations were seen all around campus. These bands were one of the strongest symbols representing the crisis; the color yellow stood in remembrance of previous national tragedies and the color green stood for the eternal sign of peace. These homemade bands became a significant reminder of Matthew’s assault, the unification of Laramie, and the college as a whole.

Some members of the town and college weren’t grasping the gravity of the situation. The message of tolerance needed to be translated to something many members of town understood: football. Hurst writes, “At the Crisis Intervention Team meeting Friday morning, the representative from Intercollegiate Athletics indicated that he would approach the football team and the women’s volleyball team, who were both playing on Saturday, October 10, to assess team members’ interest in wearing what was becoming the unifying symbol for nonviolence—the yellow bands with green circles” (Hurst 7).

Members of the football team rushed onto the field sporting these bands, and a picture of Matthew was displayed on the scoreboard. After the game, the homecoming parade included floats decorated with the yellow and green bands as a memorial to Matthew’s assault with the goal to raise tolerance within the town. This movement was successful and remains successful to this day. Every year around the time of Matthew’s death, these bands can be seen around campus. The annual resurgence of these bands spark interest among students who don’t know their meaning. The bands serve as a reminder to the community that an incident like this should never happen again. Much like Hurst’s purpose for writing this article, the bands encourage students to become familiar with Matthew’s tragedy and have conversations to prevent similar tragedies and intolerance.



Photo Credit: Ludovic Bertron

Town In Shock

On October 11th, Matthew passed away overnight. Hurst explains, “Monday morning, October 12, we all awakened to the news that Matthew had died overnight. The mood across campus was somber; all members of the campus community seemed to feel keenly for the implications of Matthew’s death” (Hurst 8). The Campus Activities Center sponsored a memorial service for Matthew in Prexy’s Pasture. Over one thousand participants celebrated his life.

The Crisis Intervention Team evaluated campus leadership’s involvement in the crisis (Hurst 9). The team’s critiques helped them to improve the manner in which they work, hoping to look back on the way they handled the crisis and build upon their strongest areas of management. The team noticed the president’s intense personal involvement, “His unequivocal anti-hate, anti-violence stance and acceptance of differences among individuals was a powerful factor in establishing a

sense of leadership for the institution in this crisis” (Hurst 9). Laramie’s LGBTA Community played the strongest role in crisis management. Hurst writes, “No other group could have played a more powerful role in helping the nation understand that the university and the Laramie community are not filled with anti-gay malice and hostility. [...] The leaders and members of the LGBTA offered the most powerful voices of accuracy and reason” (Hurst 10). Thanks to the efforts provided by these organizations during the unfortunate tragedy of Matthew Shepard’s death, Laramie took an important step towards acceptance.

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INSIDE ENGLISH 1010

Expos | Summarizing the Experts on Issues that Matter

About Expos

Expos essays summarize a scholarly or professional article for a public audience, identifying main arguments and key information important to the academic community. We call these pieces “Expos” because they are written in the tradition of expository writing, which provides readers with research findings in order to inform and educate. Expository writing is found in many academic contexts, including our student journal Inside English 1010 and popular news publications such as Inside Higher Ed, which run feature stories on cutting edge scholarship for a general academic audience.



Photo Credit: Hashi Photo

When Inclusion Is Not Enough: How Hollywood Continues to Marginalize Minorities in Modern Film

By Anna Platt

Diversity and the representation of minorities in film is something that many people claim to value. It would appear that progress has been made in this area in recent years but, in “The Color Scene,” the third chapter of *You Mean, There’s Race in My Movie?*, F.W. Gooding breaks down the subtle ways in which Hollywood continues to marginalize minority actors and minority viewers ultimately to increase a movie’s appeal to the white market. While minority characters have been featured in mainstream movies with more frequency, these roles are almost always part of the same basic character patterns or archetypes (Gooding 54). The portrayal of these minority characters also reflects heavily on the minority group itself, and inadequate portrayals of minorities in film have an overall

negative impact on the group's real-world image (Gooding 60). Minority actors whose appearance resembles that of a white person generally receive larger roles in more mainstream movies than actors who do not fit these physical standards, leading many minority actors to change their images accordingly as a way to appear more marketable (Gooding 62). Gooding explains how these factors combine to show a pattern of continued marginalization in Hollywood — one that communicates the harmful message to both actors and moviegoers that minorities are less valuable and important than their white counterparts (68). When a form of media that is as influential as film constantly reinforces these racist and harmful values, there is no doubt that it will continue to fuel the inequality that exists in our society today.

Archetypes and Their Impact

Minority actors seem to have been given a wider range of opportunities for roles and storylines, but most of these characters fit into a set of basic archetypes which act against the concept of diverse casting and instead further ideas of inequality. When looking back at classic films, it is easy to find examples of the racist and stereotypical roles that minorities were given. These days, the restrictive casting is less obvious, but Gooding begins by explaining six basic archetypes found in modern cinema that almost all minority characters are cast into: the angel, the background figure, the comic relief, the menace to society, the physical wonder, and the utopic reversal (54). He clarifies that “while stereotypes are typically derogatory in nature and are specific in their application, archetypes are more neutral in nature and more general in their application” (54). At first glance, these archetypes are not necessarily negative and may even seem like positive representations. How-

Key Terms: Archetypes

“Angel: Usually found in a servile position or functioning as a sidekick, this character serves as a source of spiritual strength, guidance, and support to the central characters.

Background Figure: Inconsequential to the overall storyline, this character has limited dialogue (if any) and does not help to advance the plot, thereby serving as a mere “window dressing” to reinforce a visual—albeit illusory—message of diversity.

Comic Relief: This character's culture serves as the fodder for most of the jokes; typical conduct includes boisterous and improper grammar, exaggerate motions and facial expressions, and intense emotion, often in stark contrast to standardized, White, middle-class behavior.

Menace to Society: This character is portrayed as possessing a value system that poses a threat to civil “normalcy,” either through violence (or potential violence) and/or moral corruption.

Physical Wonder: This character is regarded for their physical or sexual prowess, typically at the sacrifice of intellectual or emotional capacities.

Utopic Reversal: Occupying a high social position or position of authority (e.g., police chief, judge, etc.), this character's “authority” is usually undermined, thereby rendering their authority as mostly symbolic in nature” (Gooding 56-57).

ever, when the same archetype is used repeatedly, it becomes limiting and creates a misleading and incomplete picture (Gooding 54-55). For example, minorities are frequently given parts as law enforcement officers, an esteemed position and a powerful casting choice when considering the current dialogue surrounding police brutality. Yet, in 2016, 79% of police officers were white while only 13% were black. Continuing to cast minorities as police officers when the statistics do not reflect a high number of minority officers gives viewers an incorrect idea about the actual state of equality in today's society. Gooding points out that these roles usually only play a minor part as well, allowing the movie to seem progressive and diverse despite its failure to challenge inequality in a meaningful way (55).

"The Color Scene" also discusses Hollywood's Acting Roles for Minorities (HARM) theory, a process which minimizes a minority character's storyline while also attaching it to the main white character's storyline, producing characters who cannot stand independently as positive protagonists or act as good representation for their race. The HARM theory states that "if and when a minority character appears in a mainstream movie, this character will be compromised in some way, shape, or form, often in relation to the White lead counterpart" (Gooding 56). Minority actors are cast into restrictive archetypes then "compromised in some way... in relation to the White lead," further undermining the minority character's importance in the film by giving them a story that is dependent on that of the white character. When evaluating minority roles with archetypes and the HARM theory in mind, a distinct pattern emerges, and it is easy to see that Hollywood has not truly become progressive in writing and casting—it has simply found a way to make marginalization subtle while still maintaining a mainstream appeal.



Photo Credit: Thomas Wolf

Simple Inclusion Is Not Enough

The lack of minorities in positive, impactful roles has a negative impact on the social status of the actual members of these racial groups. Minorities in both leading and supporting roles receive a much smaller number of roles than white actors. In 2015, the Media, Diversity, and Social Change Initiative at the University of Southern California conducted a study on the racial makeup of one hundred top films of 2014 and found that 73.1% of the actors in these movies were white. Only

seventeen of these hundred movies had main or supporting roles featuring minority actors. Gooding addresses this concern because this overall lack of screen time results in an increased amount of attention placed on the minority characters who are featured. When white actors are cast as background or antagonistic characters, these roles do not have much impact on



Photo Credit: Nick Youngson

the reputation of their racial group because there are likely plenty of positive images of white people to balance out this unflattering one. However, when minorities are given the same small or unflattering roles, these roles have a damaging impact on the actual minority group because there most likely are not as many positive images available to counteract the negative ones (Gooding 58).

This phenomenon of the negative real-world impact of unfulfilling minority roles can be explained using two terms: “racial capital” and “premium of proportion.” Racial capital is defined by Gooding as “the racial group’s collective onscreen presence” (59). White people have an overwhelmingly higher amount of racial capital than minority groups due to the inequality in the number of roles between white actors and minority actors. Premium of proportion refers to “the amount of impact a character image possesses relative to their entire racial group” (Gooding 54). Minority characters have a higher real-world impact or premium of proportion than white characters because minorities have a lower amount of collective onscreen presence or racial capital. Therefore, when moviegoers consistently see minorities in negative or unimportant roles without positive depictions to balance these negative ones out, this pattern ultimately affects the real-world reputations of minority groups in a detrimental way.

There is nothing inherently wrong with casting a minority actor as a one-line waitress or the main villain, just as there is nothing wrong with giving a white actor these roles (Gooding 58). The problem arises when the only time a minority actor appears in a movie is in these roles. Suddenly, the representation of an entire minority group falls on this isolated character. As Gooding puts it, “a negative depiction of a White character does

Further Reading

“Inequality in 700 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race, & LGBT Status from 2007-2014”. Media, Diversity, and Social Change Initiative at USC Annenberg. https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/MDSCI_Inequality_in-700_Popular.pdf

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Gooding, Frederick W. You Mean, There’s RACE in My Sports?: The Complete Guide for Understanding Race & Sports in Mainstream Media. On the Reelz Press, 2016.

not hurt the entire group’s ‘bottom line’ as much as a minority character whose group is depicted onscreen with less frequency, but in a consistently disparaging light” (60). Statistics prove that there is a lack of meaningful minority representation in Hollywood. Until this changes, it will continue to have an enduring and harmful impact on the real people who belong to these groups—actors or otherwise.

How to Look the Part

White actors are seen as more attractive and marketable when it comes to casting and are often chosen as leads over minority actors; this is a form of marginalization which is harmful to both these actors and the moviegoers as it sends the message that minorities are less valuable and appealing. Gooding explains how white beauty standards heavily influence who is cast in which parts, with the studio’s overall goal being to maintain a movie’s appeal to the mainstream white audience while also maintaining a facade of diversity and change. The White Beauty Standard is defined as “the ideal paradigm by which most White women are measured” (Gooding 61) and includes traditionally white physical characteristics, such as a “small hips and a slender build” or “long or lightened, flowing hair” (Gooding 61). Studios cast actors with the white audience in mind and may be unwilling to cast minorities in main roles because they risk losing white viewers who feel they cannot relate to a lead who looks different from them (Gooding 65). When they do cast minority actors, they are more likely to choose those who most closely resemble this White Beauty Standard because film producers will view those actors as less of a financial risk. This promotes the idea that minorities who do not align with white beauty standards are unattractive, or that whiteness is the only way to be truly beautiful.

The White Beauty Standard affects which minorities are cast in which roles, with those who look “more white” chosen over those who look “less white.” Gooding further explains the White Beauty Standard by using the terms “asymptotes” and “across-the-street” minorities. Asymptotes are “those actors who most closely resemble the White Beauty Standard, but cannot reproduce the paradigm completely since they are not White” (63). Minority actors who qualify as asymptotes are more likely to be cast in lead roles as they are seen as more appealing to white audiences. They may be cast as minority characters but are frequently cast as white characters or characters of another minority group different from their own. Across-the-street minorities are “minority actors where little ambiguity exists as to their racial identity based upon their physical appearance” (63). These are actors who do not closely fit the white beauty standard and are consequently cast as minor characters, the comic relief, or as a supporting character who reinforces the race of the lead asymptote character (Gooding 65). According to Gooding, asymptotes are cast in main roles to preserve a movie’s appeal to white audiences while also targeting minority viewers and giving the impression that the movie is diverse (65). Across-the-street minority actors are usually cast in supporting or less serious roles due to the belief white audiences cannot relate to them as the lead. As a result, many actors will change their appearances or even their names to better fit white beauty standards. Hollywood rewards minority actors who align themselves with white beauty standards with mainstream success, effectively showing that minorities are unappealing in both appearance and culture, which furthers the real-world inequality in our society through these values.

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There's Race in My Movie- So What?

When mainstream movies consistently marginalize minorities through archetypal casting, roles with no real diversity or positive impact, and harmful white beauty standards, this only serves to contribute to the inequality that real people experience every day. There aren't many of us who can say we've never seen a movie, seen a trailer for a movie, or heard about a movie through others. Film is a very significant form of media and the values, standards, and ideas it showcases will both reflect and influence those of our society. It is incorrect to deny the impact of these factors on minority groups in our world. We are living in a time of intense social and political change. As Gooding explains in "The Color Scene," if we continue to give Hollywood a pass on its treatment of minorities, we are encouraging a critical factor in the inequality that most would claim to fight against.

Author's Bio



Anna Platt is a freshman at the University of Wyoming. She is originally from Cheyenne and has lived in Wyoming for twelve years. Currently her major is undeclared, but she is considering majoring in English because of her love for writing and creativity. In her free time, she enjoys painting, crocheting, reading, and going to concerts and festivals.

Researched Argument



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kayla Griffith is a first-year student attending the University of Wyoming in Laramie and is from Thornton, Colorado. She is currently working to achieve a degree in physiology with a minor in general religious studies. She plans on attending medical school, although she is not sure where. Her career goal is to practice surgery. Throughout high school, Kayla participated in several varsity sports including cross country, swimming, and track and field. She spent most of her free time outside of class and athletics volunteering at a local hospital, shadowing a general surgeon, babysitting children between the ages of newborn and 10 years old, and cooking. She recently researched xenotransplantation for an essay and participated in a debate on the same topic in high school. She feels that this is a medical development that could benefit many people around the world.

DETERMINING IF XENOTRANSPLANTATION SHOULD BE PERMITTED

Kayla Griffith

Waitlists for organ donations are lengthy, and the odds of an individual receiving the organ before their time has expired is low. This is due to a shortage of organs that people can and are willing to donate to save lives. This has become a problem, if not an epidemic, and one solution that has been offered by scientists and medical professionals is xenotransplantation. The Oxford English Dictionary defines xenotransplantation as “the process of grafting or transplanting organs or tissues between members of different species” (“Xenotransplantation”). This paper explores the plausibility of transplanting organs or tissues from animals, such as pigs into humans. Xenotransplantation is very different than allotransplantation, which is transplanting organs tissues and cells from members of the same species and is much more common (“Xenotransplantation”). Using organs from different species has more risks than allotransplantation and involves some ethical concerns. However, xenotransplantation would increase the number of organs available for transplant and therefore should be allowed. Although there are more risks with xenotransplantation than allotransplantation, there are things that are being done, such as using immunosuppressants, to decrease the possibility of risks. Xenotransplantation is a valid medical treatment that should be permitted because the benefit of saving lives would greatly outweigh the risks and controversies that come with it.

Organ donation wait lists are extremely long and many people pass away before they even come close to the top of the list. According to “Biologics Evaluation and Research:

Xenotransplantation” published by the United States Food and Drug Administration, “Currently ten patients die each day in the United States while on the waiting list to receive lifesaving vital organ transplants” (“Biologics”). Similarly, articles by Hai-tao Zhu, Arun Sharma, Shinichi Matsumoto, Michael Cook, and an article on transgenic animals all believe that the shortage of organs has become a crisis and that something needs to be done. The alternative that has been offered is xenotransplantation, which could temporarily extend one’s life, or even be a permanent solution to organ transplantation. Xenotransplantation is an up and coming medical advancement and although the benefit is tremendous, there are still risks that need to be considered.

Xenotransplantation is a beneficial medical development that could save thousands of lives; however, there are risks associated with it. Due to the fact that the organs, cells, and tissues are coming from an animal donor that is not the same species as the recipient, the procedure comes with higher possibilities of old risks as well as new risks. These risks include interspecies virus transmission, a wider variety of complications, and organ rejection. In *Xenotransplantation: Weighing the Risks and Benefits of a Controversial Procedure* written by Arun Sharma, it is argued that, “Traditional transplantation has been associated with terrible medical problems such as acute organ rejection, and because of xenotransplantation’s cross-species nature, these problems are only magnified through concerns such as interspecies virus transmission” (Sharma 27). Sharma introduces the idea that cross species transplant has the same risks as human-to-human transplantation as well as additional risks. He emphasizes the fact that there is a greater variety and higher chance of complications when undergoing a xenotransplant. Throughout the article, Sharma explains risks such as hyper-acute rejection, which is when the immune system of the recipient quickly identifies the organ from the animal as a foreign body and immediately rejects it, sometimes leading to death (Sharma 27). On the other hand, he also explains how transgenic or genetically

modified animals could reduce the possibility for organ rejection (Sharma 27). There is the possibility that the human body rejects an organ transplant whether or not it is from another person or an animal; a solution to this problem is for patients undergoing transplant surgery to take immunosuppressant drugs, which help keep the body from rejecting the transplant. Swine are most commonly used for xenotransplantation, which creates the risk of introducing the porcine endogenous retrovirus (PERV) to humans. According to Shinichi Matsumoto's article *Current Status and Future of Clinical Islet Xenotransplantation*, after xenotransplantation "[s]amples were collected from 160 patients up to 12 years after transplantation who had been treated with various living pig tissues [...] Neither viremia nor PERV infection was found in any of the patients" (Matsumoto et al. 485). This helps show that risk of PERV infecting humans is very low and could continue to decrease with more advanced gene editing technology. With the current developments in technology, scientists are working towards creating devices that could potentially eliminate the risks associated with xenotransplantation.

Another reason that xenotransplantation is a viable option is because the development of transgenic animals would help increase human compatibility and reduce the possibility of introducing new viruses to the human race that could potentially be incurable. A transgenic animal, as defined in *Transgenic Animals: Their Benefits To Human Welfare*, is an animal whose genome has been edited or modified. This can be done through deleting genes from the animal's DNA sequence, cloning, editing the DNA to cause different expressions, gene mapping and treating the embryo of the animal with human stem cell ("Transgenic Animals"). The development of the CRISPR (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats) has helped the medical field, specifically Xenotransplantation. This *Little Piggy Went to Market* written by Michael Cook, explains how the CRISPR technology is a gene-editing device that reduces the cost and increases the efficiency in deleting and

altering a DNA sequence. By creating a transgenic pig, scientists lower the risk of rejection by deleting or altering genes that cause the recipients immune system to identify the organ as foreign. Scientists could also delete genes or alter their expression to reduce the risk of PERV being introduced to the human race. Transgenic animals and gene editing would benefit the transplant patients because it would lower the risk of rejection, infection and other medical complications.

In addition to transgenic animals and gene-editing, another thing that makes xenotransplantation successful is the age and breed of the pig. *Optimal Pig Donor Selection in Islet Xenotransplantation Current Status and Future Perspectives* written by Hai-tao Zhu focuses on the reason why pigs are used for xenotransplantation and why the breed and age of pig is important (Zhu 681-87). As Zhu states:

The pig is considered as the most suitable candidate for xenologous islet [tissue that is structurally distinct from the surrounding tissue] grafts owing to several advantages including (1) structural similarity of insulin between pig and human, just only one amino acid difference; (2) availability in sufficient quantities; (3) feasibility in genetic immunomodulation; (4) lack of amyloid formation; (5) resistance to recurrent autoimmunity; and, (6) few ethical problems associated with slaughter pigs. (Zhu 681)

Some scientists debate whether they should come from embryonic, fetal, neonatal or adult pigs (Zhu 682). Embryonic pigs are beneficial because the procedure is sterile, there is no need for an islet (a cell or group of cells that are structurally different from surrounding cells) isolation procedure, and there is a low risk of transmitting pathogens; however, there is delayed function in vivo for about three weeks or more (Zhu 682). When using a fetal pig, the benefits are the sterile environment, easy islet isolation, and low pathogen transmission, but there are much higher ethical concerns at this stage than any other stage, as well as in vivo delay for about two months (Zhu 682). A sterile procedure is also capable in a neonatal

procedure. Additional benefits are that the isolation of islets is easy, the pig is resistant to ischemic injury, and there is a higher response to glucose than there is in fetal pig islets (Zhu 682). The drawback from neonatal is that there are fewer isolates available than there are in adult pigs, as well as a delay in vivo function for about one month (Zhu 682). However, adult pigs have constant and large amounts of islets (enough to potentially only need to use one pig per person); there is immediate function. And when using islets to treat diabetes in humans, adult pig islets had reverses and corrected diabetes (Zhu 682). There are different drawbacks for adult pigs: the procedure is not sterile, there is difficult isolation of islets, and the costs are higher (Zhu 682). Considering the benefits and drawbacks that have been determined through research and experimentation, it is believed that a pig, particularly a young adult pig is best for xenotransplantation. This is especially true when it comes to the transplant of islets. Using adult pig islets is the most beneficial option because it is the least harmful to the animal involved while continuing to be advantageous to the transplant patients.

Although xenotransplantation can benefit the human race, there are several ethical concerns that are raised about the process of using animal organs in humans. Michael Cook's "This Little Piggy Went To Market" explains possible ethical concerns. When discussing the possible arguments against xenotransplantation, Michael Cook explains that the basic and fundamental values of an animal's rights are denied when humans use their extra parts for their benefit (Cook 50). He also quotes a group called the Genetics Forum saying, "The use of animals as sources of cells, tissues, and organs for humans causes us much concern. It encourages the concept of animals as 'pharm' factories and reinforces the ethos that they merely exist in order to satisfy human needs" (qtd. Cook 50). Both of these quotes raise concerns about animal rights; however, the benefits that could come from xenotransplantation outweigh the potential harm to the animals. Other arguments that Cook brings up

as potential objections to xenotransplantation were religious beliefs. He states that, “Some Christians believe that animals should only be used for ‘natural’ purposes. While it may be natural to eat pigs, it may not be natural to use their organs. Jains believe that all exploitation of animal life is wrong. A Muslim group told the Nuffield Council that pigs and other prohibited animals were not acceptable as transplant sources” (Cook 50). While some believe that this procedure is immoral, this surgery is optional and an individual who is in against it does not have to participate in it. There are risks that come with xenotransplantation, as well as ethical concerns that are raised against using an animal specimen in humans; however, the benefits outweigh the risks and ethical concerns. The human organ wait list is extraordinary in length and will continue to grow with the rate of the population increase. People are dying everyday while they wait for organs. Many of them know that their odds of receiving the organ in time is low, which is why xenotransplantation needs to be offered as a solution. There are risks that come with the use of animal organs, but there are risks that come with any medical operation. The introduction of new viruses to the human race, as well as the increased possibility of rejection are both risks that are being eliminated with medical developments such as transgenic animals and gene-editing technology. The human race needs to consider alternatives when dealing with organ transplantation and xenotransplantation is a possible solution. Xenotransplantation would help solve the growing epidemic of organ shortages.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Olivia Lyle grew up in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Being surrounded by the beauty of national forests created her strong passion for environmental stewardship. Olivia enjoys recreations such as spending time outdoors, reading, cooking creative recipes, being with friends, and traveling in her free time. Olivia is studying business and sustainability at the University of Wyoming and is an active member of the Sustainability Coalition. With her degree, Olivia hopes to push for sustainable development, especially in the business field because of their strong influence on production and consumers in society.

PALM OIL AND SUSTAINABILITY

Olivia Lyle

Due to its nutritional content, cheap cost, and vast versatility, palm oil is the most demanded vegetable oil in the world (Vijay et al. 1). When it was first produced in the early 1900s, many tropical rainforests were destroyed to make way for rubber, cocoa and palm oil plantations (Fitzherbert et al. 542). One hundred years later, these practices have created serious environmental problems. To produce palm oil, the fruit is harvested in bundles from palm trees. Due to their hard shell, the fruit must be steamed at a high pressure for an hour to separate the pulp and kernel. Oil can be produced from both parts of the fruit. The pulp oil is generally cheaper and used for cooking, while the kernel oil is more expensive and used in chocolate, soap, cosmetics, and other products (Martinko 10). Palm oil production has caused mass deforestation, biodiversity destruction, and increased greenhouse gas emissions. If society's need for this vegetable oil continues to grow without improved sustainability methods, then the world's tropical rainforests and peatlands will diminish, eliminating numerous additional plant and animal species, and contributing greatly to global warming. However, palm oil is a necessity to society in some respects. It is a solution for food insecurity and provides a cleaner alternative to burning fossil fuels through the conversion to biofuel. While many might argue that palm oil production has immense benefits to human life, such as a solution to food insecurity in developing countries, which far outweigh environmental well-being, I will argue that the palm oil industry needs to be educated regarding industry repercussions and pursue sustainable plantation methods.

Palm oil should be regulated because its production is limited to the humid tropics; therefore, species-rich and carbon-rich tropical rainforests have paid the price for expansion through deforestation. Tropical rainforests are a major CO₂ sink, meaning they eliminate far more CO₂ from the atmosphere than any other forest ecosystems around the globe. According to information collected by The World Bank, in Malaysia, the CO₂ emissions have increased from untraceable amounts in 1960 to 243 million tons in 2015 due to rainforest deforestation alone (“CO₂ Emissions”). In their review of palm oil and its effect on deforestation and biodiversity Varsha Vijay, et al., explain that tropical rainforest deforestation is the most harmful type due to the dense biomass that makes up these ecosystems. Additionally, they explain that “annual carbon emissions from gross tropical deforestation contribute nearly 10% of the global total of anthropogenic [human induced] greenhouse gas emissions” (Vijay et al. 2). Deforestation is a double-edged sword; if those rainforests still existed, greenhouse gas emissions would be down 10% instead of up 10%, meaning a loss of rainforest creates a 20% margin of emission increase. The only way for palm oil plantations to become carbon sinks – reducing carbon emissions through production – is if they are planted on degraded grasslands instead of clearing tropical rainforests (Fitzherbert et al. 539). In a personal interview with Dr. Zachary Lebo, atmospheric sciences professor at the University of Wyoming, he explained why increased CO₂ emissions matter: without tropical rainforests, CO₂ emissions will rise more rapidly, causing the planet to warm, ocean water to expand, and sea levels to rise (Lebo). Rising oceans will cause coastal cities and some islands to submerge underwater, forcing millions of people to relocate in an already over-populated planet. Lebo emphasized the fact that in most cases, the people largely affected by global warming have done little to cause it and have no means to fix it, such as tribal peoples living off the land on South Pacific Islands (Lebo). They have lived simply for thousands of years but will soon no longer have a home. This is just one consequence of

increased greenhouse gas emissions. Deforestation may not seem like something we need to worry about now, but it is the first falling domino in a long line of destruction for our planet.

Biodiversity and deforestation go hand in hand, since the palm oil industry is destroying forest, they are inadvertently destroying animal habitats well. If animals have nowhere to live, they die. Animals are cohabiters of Earth with humans, and a crucial component to our world for many reasons. One way animals directly affect humanity is by assisting humans with expanding their empathetic capabilities, curiosity, and awe. Animals are vital to earth and cannot thrive in palm oil plantations because the structure for growing palm trees is drastically less complex than natural rainforests. In their article on the impacts of biodiversity in particular due to palm oil, Emily Fitzherbert, et al. state that the palm oil plantations have “a uniform tree age structure, lower canopy, sparse undergrowth, less stable microclimate and greater human disturbance and are cleared and replanted on a 25-30-year rotation” (Fitzherbert et al. 539). Across the entire spectrum of plant and animal species, it has been recorded that “a mean of only 15% of species recorded in primary forest was also found in oil palm plantations” (Fitzherbert et al. 540). However, biodiversity isn’t just affected in the plantations themselves; in many cases, plantations cause fragmented rainforest sections. Fragments, although technically undisturbed from the plantations, create large obstacles for biodiversity. The fragments are often small parcels of land that are surrounded by plantations and have great distances from the nearest large primary forest (Vijay et al. 14). These circumstances create quite a dilemma for plant and animal species alike. Some species are too small to make the trek, while others are too frightened to cross plantations - trapping them where there isn’t enough food or water to sustain the growing biodiversity in such a small area. Many of the animals that do leave the fragments die trying to migrate through. Plants rely on wind and animals to disperse seeds. If a forest is fragmented, the seeds carried by wind and animals will likely not make it to the closest primary forest. It is very hard for

the forest to sustain life when it is broken into such miniscule sections. Although the plantation owners mean well in their attempt to conserve small amounts of the forest, they need to be aware of where the plantations are located to avoid fragmentation at all costs. Some researchers and conservationists suggest the best way to prevent fragmentation is to protect the forests that are most obtainable for potential plantations, such as flat forested areas that are easily accessible by vehicles and roadways. Vijay et al. states, “protecting areas of high accessibility prevents deforestation [and biodiversity loss] more effectively than protecting remote and high slope areas” (Vijay et al. 17). The protection of forests is crucial in the sustainable future of the palm oil industry. The palm oil industry must stop replacing forests with plantations if it wishes to have a planet on which to harvest palm oil.

Another big biodiversity issue that is caused by palm oil plantations is the invasion of alien pests into the forests. It has been recorded in numerous studies that rare native fauna species - the ones with the highest conservation concerns - decreased, while non-native invasive species have increased on plantations (Fitzherbert et al. 541). If the invasive species increase on plantations, that means they have access to large primary forests, potentially throwing off the ecosystems of a particularly diverse and delicate group of plants and animals. On Malaysian plantations, the highest producer of palm oil in the world, it was found that 40% of the ant species discovered were aliens (Fitzherbert et al. 542). Palm oil plantations not only destroy the forests they are planted on and create fragments, but also wreak havoc in the remaining sections of large primary forests.

Despite being unfavorable for the environment, palm oil has immense economic benefits, for poor societies especially, all over the world. There are many starving people on this planet and palm oil is not only nutritious, but affordable for even the poorest areas of the world; therefore, it is essential that we work together as a global community to solve this problem because people need to have access to food. Man Kee Lam discusses the food

advantages of palm oil in his article about the food versus fuel debate. He explains that in 2007 it was recorded that palm oil contributed to feeding around 3 billion people in 150 countries (Lam 1457). In the 10 years since then, those numbers have surely risen. Palm oil is especially important in developing and desert ridden countries; it is cheap to obtain, available year-round, and suitable for edible and non-edible application (Lam 1458). For example, the Middle East is heavily dependent on palm oil to relieve food insecurity. Since they are able to rely on the importing of palm oil to sustain some of their diet, they can use the small amount of local farmland to cultivate food crops (Lam 1458). In countries that heavily rely on palm oil as a staple, such as: Malaysia, Nigeria and Indonesia, “common illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer have been reported to be relatively low, attesting to its [palm oil] healthful nature” (Lam 1458). Palm oil is necessary to a functioning world. Many developing countries are able to provide more food for people and decrease poverty in their nation due to its numerous benefits. Billions of people rely on it to survive, but the palm oil industry must be intensely reformed if it wants to continue improving the lives of many.

Another benefit of palm oil is its ability to be used as a biofuel; however, using palm oil as biofuel can actually do more harm than good. It’s no secret that fossil fuels aren’t going to last forever and are extremely harmful to our atmosphere and oceans. Biofuels made from seed oils create a zero-emission balance (Lam 1457), but because tropical rainforests eliminate more CO₂ from the atmosphere than fossil fuels emit into the atmosphere, biofuels are only helpful if tropical rainforest deforestation is terminated. A statement from Emily Fitzherbert et al. puts this idea into perspective: “It will take decades or centuries for the avoided carbon emissions [of biofuels] from fossil fuels to compensate for emissions released when forest or peat soils are converted [from tropical rainforest]” (Fitzherbert et al. 539). It is likely that the use of vegetable oils for biofuel will progress global warming,

increase food prices, and expedite biodiversity loss unless the farms are no longer replacing tropical rainforests (Fitzherbert et al. 539). Another important perspective to consider is the food versus fuel debate. Many people would argue that using palm oil as a fuel when it could be feeding millions of starving people is unethical (Lam 1459). There is only so much palm oil for the world to use, so it is up to us to decide what we will do with it. It is true our world must begin using renewable fuels, but palm oil used as a biofuel, when still destroying rainforests, is hurting the world even more than fossil fuels.

After hearing all the good things about palm oil, it's difficult to argue that the environment should take precedence over this cheap, problem-solving, and versatile oil; but there are many reasons everyone in the world should care — especially Americans in the Rocky Mountain West. Climate has a lot to do with precipitation patterns; and as the earth warms, snow pack will decrease. A decrease in mountain snowpack has two major side effects. The first is a lack of drinking water. In the U.S., we are heavily dependent on snowpack runoff to refill aquifers for drinking consumption (Lebo). As populations rise throughout the world and snow pack in the mountains decrease, available drinking water for the Rocky Mountain West and Western United States will diminish. Second, ecosystems will also be affected by decreased snowpack. The areas on mountains covered by snow year-round are becoming smaller and smaller. Therefore, more trees and undergrowth are sprouting up seasonally. This has a big effect on ecosystems and migration. Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park ecosystems especially will be greatly affected by these changing feeding and migration patterns of wildlife (Lebo). Hunting, public lands use, and livestock can all be affected by wildlife migration. That being said, this is not just an issue for conservationists to be concerned with.

No matter the country borders, cultural traditions, or socioeconomic backgrounds of the inhabitants of earth, we all share the planet we call home; therefore, we are all responsi-

ble for its well-being. However, when it comes to solving most problems, no one can argue that first world countries have an advantage over those still developing. For those countries heavily dependent on palm oil to feed their people, it should not be denied to them. On the other hand, countries like the United States, the European Union, and China who more than have the means to use an alternative vegetable oil with less environmental repercussions, must bear the burden of doing so, even if that entails more time and money spent (Lebo). The environment, specifically tropical rain-forested areas, can only thrive if we give it the best possible chance.

Palm oil affects the entire world. So how do we go about fixing it? The answer lies in the care and actions of corporations and individuals. The palm oil industry is doing some things to reduce its carbon footprint, such as developing higher yielding trees in order to produce more fruit in a smaller space (Fitzherbert et al. 542). In addition, every individual can help solve this issue. I would encourage everyone to be aware of their purchases by limiting the number of items bought that contain palm oil or try to find a palm oil free alternative. Another easy way to take initiative is to educate others on palm oil and the harm it does. Our home is so important, and it's up to all of us to care for it.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sophie Williams was born in New York City and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is majoring in secondary education and history and plans to teach at the high school level. As someone working towards a career in education, school shootings are a deep concern to her. Sophie is passionate about making change in her own community and has been involved in local marches and demonstrations in partnership with the March for Our Lives organization.

MEDIA CONTAGION EFFECT: MASS SHOOTINGS

Sophie Williams

In 2018, there were 307 mass shootings in just the United States alone (Robinson et al.). The frequent occurrence of mass shootings, specifically school shootings, have horrified the nation; as a result, many solutions have been given to reduce these tragedies ranging from a full assault weapons ban to more gun control acts. One possible solution that could have a huge impact is regulating how news outlets report mass shootings. The way that shootings are currently covered in the media gives fame to the perpetrator while exploiting the victims' pain. This technique can encourage other troubled individuals to commit the same crime because it shows that killing people is a definite way to gain an audience. This phenomenon is called the "media contagion effect" or more commonly referred to as the "copycat effect." While the term was originally coined by researchers looking into the cause of suicide clusters, it happens for a variety of crimes (O'Carroll 3). Mass shootings happen to be one crime that are uniquely triggering this copycat effect on an increasingly regular basis. In order to combat this issue, the media must apply regulations to reduce the screen time for information about the shooter, their manifesto, and the details of their crimes.

Since the Sandy Hook Elementary school shooting in 2012, news outlets have established routines for reporting these kinds of massacres, which are only working to inspire future shooters. The reporting for the Sandy Hook shooting had many mistakes (Siegel). The month following the Sandy Hook shooting there were 10,000 stories written about it, but only three years later— after the reporting cycle was created— the San Bernardino

shooting had over 29,000 news stories written about it (“Media Cloud Explorer”, Towers). This cycle focused on releasing every detail of the shootings. Jennifer L. Murray, a justice and criminology professor at Indiana State University, details how after every mass shooting the news tends to follow the same six step pattern which largely focuses on the shooter (116). While the first two steps do focus on victims and the community, the coverage tends to just exploit them by only collecting painful and detailed first person descriptions of the event and focusing on the shock waves going through the community (Murray 117-120). The last four steps of the pattern focus on the shooter (Murray 117-120). These four steps give in-depth details on the crime and the shooter’s manifesto or rationalization for committing the crime (Murray 117-120). The media tends to go into such detail on the crime that it actually lays out a clear blueprint for future shooters, and in turn increases the rate of other mass shootings; subsequently, showing that one can gain a large audience for committing this type of atrocity. In fact, in the article “Mass Shooting: The Role of the Media in Promoting Generalized Imitation” by James N. Meindl and Jonathan W. Ivy the authors state, “There is now evidence that when a mass shooting occurs, there is a temporary increase in the probability of another event within the next 13 days on average” (368). This “increase in probability” is all part of the media contagion effect (Meindl and Ivy 368).

Interestingly, not only does the media’s reporting increase the frequency of shootings but it also increases the number of deaths in each individual shooting. Author and professor Adam Lankford and Eric Madfis explain this topic saying, “many fame-seeking offenders deliberately kill and wound high numbers of victims because they know it will help them garner more media attention” (Lankford and Madfis 263). As a matter of fact, studies have shown that many mass shooters tend to look at previous shooters as role models and even look for ways to better commit the crime by researching them: “perpetrators and plotters look to past attacks both for inspiration and operational details, in hopes of causing even

greater carnage” (Murray 120). The media is providing a prime resource for future shooters by giving them vividly detailed news reports that provide the blueprints for a mass shooting. Refraining from giving shooters infamy might not only decrease the rate at which these shooting occur but also decrease the number of deaths.

In order to reduce the media contagion or copycat effect, it is critical that news outlets put in place self-regulations that discourage showing details about the shooting and the perpetrator. Zeynep Tufekci, a social media expert and fellow at the Center for Information Technology Policy at Princeton University, states that by refraining from mentioning the shooter’s name and manifesto or showing his face could lessen the copycat effect (Tufekci). In fact, Meindl and Ivy discuss how the former head of the FBI, James Comey, incorporated this idea into his reports of mass shootings:

Part of what motivates sick people to do this kind of thing is some twisted notion of fame or glory, and I don’t want to be part of that for the sake of the victims and their families, and so that other twisted minds don’t think that this is a path to fame and recognition. (Meindl and Ivy 369)

News outlets should follow Comey’s lead and reduce the amount of airtime for offenders and their ideas to show that killing is not an acceptable way to gain fame (Meindl and Ivy 396). Additionally, if the media is able to implement guidelines and stop giving the offenders so much air time, then the media contagion effect may begin to fade and would allow for “impressionable individuals who are inspired by such killers [...] to look for other role models” in people who are not committing atrocious crimes (Lankford and Madfis 266). As of right now, many media outlets go to great lengths to research the shooter and their manifesto as much as possible, but as behavioral analysts and psychologists James Meindl and Jonathan Ivy state, “Fulfilled manifestos and repeated reports of body counts heap rewards on the violent act and display competence. Detailed play-by-play accounts of

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the event provide feedback on the performance of the shooter. All of these instances serve to create a model” (369). In other words, consistently putting emphasis on the shooter’s “body count” only shows that he is competent; similarly, by providing a detailed blueprint of the shooter’s actions, the media is creating an instruction manual on how to commit a shooting (Meindl and Ivy 369). Instead of focusing on the shooter and their manifesto, the news outlets should instead focus on providing minimal coverage of the victims that respects their families’ privacy and explains how community members can help.

If more media sources were to follow the ideas of campaigns like #NoNoteriety, it would greatly decrease the media contagion effect. #NoNoteriety is a student run social media campaign which works to encourage people to not post the shooters name, image, or manifest (Beckett). Prior to this campaign, most news sources did not make an effort to focus less on the shooter, with few exceptions such as CNN’s Anderson Cooper pledging to not use the shooter’s name (Stetler). Recently however, this group has started to see success. After the shooting at The Capital Gazette that killed five employees, headlines from major news sources such as NBC and CNN focused on the victims and refrained from naming or showing the shooters image (Beckett). Meanwhile, other news sources such as The New York Times and The Washington Post still mentioned the shooter’s name but made sure to keep his photograph out of the papers (Beckett). While this may seem like a small start, it could help prevent future tragedy.

While some people may argue that limiting the amount of reporting on these tragedies does a disservice to the community and is infringing on free speech, the media already has some guidelines and regulations in place. The media contagion effect has been documented in a variety of crimes, especially suicide (Meindl and Ivy 368). There is a lot of research done especially by the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the ways the media can reduce the media contagion effect for sui-

cide, which tends to result in “clusters” of suicides (Meindl and Ivy 369, O’Carroll 4). This research lays out simple guidelines for news outlets: “Don’t refer to the word suicide in the headline. Don’t report the method of the suicide. Don’t present it as an inexplicable act of an otherwise healthy person” (Tufekci). These guidelines are already being enforced. They are also easy to follow and do not take away from the story at all. Since news companies already refrain from going into detail about suicides to discourage “copycats” it makes sense that these regulations should be enforced for other crimes, such as mass shooting.

There are many theories why news outlets have not already implemented these life-saving guidelines, but none of them justify the media’s too in-depth coverage of mass shootings. Psychologist Dr. Nigel Barber suggests that the reason that news companies have not already put guidelines into place is because “generally speaking, journalists and social media writers are unwilling to accept that sensational coverage of mass shootings makes these crimes more common” (Barber). If willful ignorance is the only thing stopping reporters from implementing guidelines, then they are only contributing to the problem of increasing mass shootings. Others suggest the reason that the media refuses to limit reports could be due to a much more sinister reason. As quoted in Kim I. Mill’s article “ ‘Media Contagion’ is Factor in Mass Shootings, Study Says,” media psychologist Jennifer B. Johnston, Ph.D. alleges, “[the media’s] cling to ‘the public’s right to know’ covers up a greedier agenda to keep eyeballs glued to screens, since they know that frightening homicides are their No. 1 ratings and advertising boosters” (Mills). If the true reason guidelines are not being put in place is so that news outlets can maintain “No.1 ratings” then they are willfully contributing to the media contagion effect in order to keep their network afloat. Additionally, some people argue that limits placed on news companies may be infringing on the first amendment. Since these guidelines would not be laws set by the government, but instead regulations for a news company set by the company, it would not be infringing on the first amendment.

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Even so, news outlets could compromise by refraining from stating the shooters names on their televised reports and could instead keep it in their print reports (Stetler). By not creating these guidelines and recklessly publishing every disturbing and tragic detail of these massacres, the media is doing the world a disservice by giving infamy to mass shooters and inadvertently encouraging future shooters.

While the media is not fully to blame for mass shootings, there are ways for them to minimize influencing others to commit similarly atrocious crimes. If the media creates and follows guidelines to help reduce the media contagion effect, then the number of deaths due to mass shootings might decrease. The data is already there to support putting guidelines or regulations in place. When news outlets continue to ignore this data, they are not only being negligent, but they are contributing to the accelerated rate of mass shootings in the United States.

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Op Ed



Photo Credit: Patrick Young

MIXING IT UP: COED INTEGRATION IN SPORTS

Ryan Tucker

It was the first day of my freshman year of high school, and I was in Spanish class. As most first days go, we went around and began to introduce ourselves and share one special talent we had. My palms were sweaty, my knees were weak, and my arms were heavy due to my preconceived lack of “talent.” Before I knew it, it was my turn to go, “Ryan” my teacher said, “What is a special talent that you would like to share?” My mind raced as I panicked for an answer, and I mumbled the first thing that came to mind: “I can do a backflip.” The teacher seemed excited and so did the class. They began to chant “Backflip, backflip, backflip!” I walked up to the front of the class and backflipped my way through the pressure. After class, two girls walked up to me with smiles on their

faces, “You should try out for the cheer team!” “The cheer team?” I questioned, “Isn’t that for girls?” They responded, annoyance across their faces, “No actually it’s not, cheer is a coed sport... think about it.” I dismissed the thought, but as the summer of my freshman year drew to a close, I thought more and more about the cheerleading incident. Little did I know that by choosing to participate in a coed sport, my views would be changed forever.

When we categorize sports, we typically group them into two distinct categories: men’s sports and women’s sports. Very rarely do the two intertwine. This can be clearly seen by separate companies such as the NBA for men and the WNBA for women; the lack of coed sports seems to be commonplace. Even though players in the NBA and WNBA all play the same sport: basketball, [WNBA players still make way less than that of their male counterparts](#). To put this into perspective, the minimum salary of a professional NBA player is \$582,180 while the starting pay for WNBA players is \$50,000. NBA referees typically make around \$150,000 which is also higher than a WNBA player’s salary—and they are not even the athletes. This is an issue because it perpetuates an ever-growing barrier between men and women. The lack of coed integration within sports can make women feel inferior to men. Coed sports disband this sense of inferiority by assigning team membership based on skill level and [recognizing the athletic skills of players regardless of gender](#). Encouraging coed sports gets rid of the belief that one gender is superior to the other and bases

one's athletic prowess off of legitimate skill, not gender.

Coed sports can help promote and/or teach individuals how to better handle their emotions. Since most coed sports are female driven, such as cheerleading and ballet, men who participate in these sports are often ostracized by their friends and peers. This ostracization, albeit wrong, can lend itself to be a positive thing by teaching these men how to be emotionally resilient. The video entitled [“What it’s Really Like to Be a Male Ballet Dancer”](#) relates to this topic of ostracization by showing the raw athleticism of being a male ballet dancer, but also the common stereotypes that are thrust upon these men. One of the male dancers in the video, whose name is Amar Ramasar talks about the idea of masculinity stating, “As a male dancer we try to have it come across that you can be a man and you can be strong, but you can also be soft and vulnerable.” He is challenging the stereotype that in order to be a man you have to be strong and not show emotion. Sharing stories of how they were shunned and mocked by their peers shows the emotional resilience that these men acquired from participating in female dominated sports.

While most people arguing against the practice of coed sports state that it's unfair to women because men are biologically stronger and faster, they fail to recognize the positive impact that these coed sports have upon men and women. Being in a coed sport myself, I can personally attest to this. I am a male cheerleader and cheerleading is a predominantly female driven sport. From my

three years of cheerleading, I have noticed something: women tend to work two to three times harder than men to achieve their goals. Since men in the cheer community fall into the minority, [many teams are desperate for strong athletic boys](#) which can lead to a larger amount of college scholarships being gifted to them. But women have to work twice as hard to get cheerleading scholarships because there are more women in cheerleading. That drive, that determination, and that passion are inspiring.

Not only has this coed sport (cheer) given me a lens to peer through, but it has also formed a sense of comradery and trust among my female teammates. Working together with male and female teammates helps everyone on the team learn from both sexes. The practice of coed sports encourages a mutual respect between both men and women and promotes a better sense of equality.

This idea of equality can branch out from sports and stems its way into the real world by teaching men and women how to appropriately interact with one another in a social setting. By teaching this, coed sports help encourage equality and mutual respect through teamwork and striving towards a common goal; both of which are useful skills to have in the real world.

[A 1998 study which investigated both male and female youth soccer players](#), found that there are more similarities than disparities between girls and boys and that “the few differences have no influence on soccer outcomes.” This shows that even though the teams were coed, the results of the game were not

affected because the players were very similar. Coed sports not only promote equality and respect, but they also help reduce common stereotypes associated with each sex.

Coed sports while not favored by some, should be encouraged because they offer not just physical benefits but social and even emotional benefits. Who knows, maybe one day through the encouragement of coed sports, society will be more accepting of men who want to do ballet and women who want to play hockey.

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Ryan Tucker was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado and spent eighteen years of his life there. He is currently attending the University of Wyoming to pursue a degree in Communications with a focus on Journalism and hopes to minor in Creative Writing. When he is not studying, doing homework, or sleeping, he is usually at cheerleading practice or cheering on the cowboys and cowgirls in events ranging from football to volleyball. He hopes to one day impact the world through writing and to inform others on important events taking place around the globe.



Photo Credit: Kenneth C. Zirkel

DON'T OVERLOOK THE PHYSICAL INTENSITY OF MARCHING BAND

Lucy Bennett

While I was in high school, I became increasingly involved as a student leader, volunteer, and participant in the instrumental arts. Throughout my time at Evergreen High School, I was able to see all the work both students and parents put in to participate and compete, especially the marching band. Playing an instrument is one thing but carrying it around a field for hours is another. Not to mention being weighed down by a heavy uniform while marching to synchronized choreography for a timed performance. Currently, most school districts do not acknowledge participation in marching band for credits toward the state-mandated physical education requirement. That needs to change. My case is not that marching

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band is a sport. It is a subsection of performing arts. What they do encompasses largely musical talent and physical capability. Some marching band members even resent the notion that marching band is a sport as it doesn't fully capture the essence of what they do, that is, elevate the performance of music. I am arguing that the physical ability required to participate in such an ensemble is rigorous enough to adequately fulfill the requirements of a P.E. credit. In general, this Op-Ed will focus on compensating marching band members with P.E. credit for the physical work they do during hours of practice each week.

Most people who haven't been involved in any type of instrumental arts, performing arts, or musical production find it hard to fathom the amount of work students who participate in marching band put in. Imagine walking into the rehearsal area just before practice and seeing roughly 70 kids rushing to tune their instruments, change their clothes, and devour any food within sight before their 4-hour practice. These musicians trade in most Saturdays for a full day of memorizing choreography and practicing music in the scorching heat in addition to the cold weeknights spent at home football games. Former EHS drum major, Mad-die Toews, says this time doesn't yet factor in the extended early morning and late-night rehearsals marching band members must commit to during competition season. School administrations must recognize that students are putting in effort well above and beyond the credit they receive back. Unfortunately, school administrators

aren't usually familiar enough with the marching band program to understand how students adequately can meet P.E. requirements. Their support, opinion, and influence matters in regard to setting curriculum standards. If the very people we need to back the proposition of allowing marching band to count toward a physical education credit do not understand the mechanics of these programs, there is little progress to be made. Therefore, it is crucial to make student, parent, and staff dedication known to influential educators, so we may move toward recognizing marching band members for their hard work.

Marching band members should be allowed to fulfill P.E. credit through this alternative method because other high school students can choose to take an online P.E. course. Students within the Jefferson County School District in Colorado, for example, can choose to take online bowling as a class in place of in-school P.E. to fulfill the mandatory physical education graduation requirement. I recognize the importance of this alternative. There are students who have work, family obligations, competitive sports, or disabilities who would not be able to complete this credit without the online option. Regrettably, there are students who will misuse the intent of these online classes. A considerable number of my former classmates opted out of actual in-class physical education courses so they would not have to be active in school. Online P.E. courses create a gray area in terms of which students should and should not be allowed to take these online options. Therefore, keeping

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such options available is unavoidable. Regardless, if courses like online bowling count toward the physical education requirement then marching band, an activity that actually requires a lot of physical activity, should count as well.

In light of the physicality necessary to participate in marching band, it is apparent that marching band fulfills the exercise component of the physical education requirement. Most competitive performances require students to play anywhere between [8 to 12 minutes while carrying a 30- to 40-pound instruments in-sync with assigned choreography](#). Even before regular rehearsals, students have to run laps, sprint, stretch, and complete some light cardio circuits in order to get their muscles ready (Toews). A nutrition section is also required to fulfill the qualifications of a P.E. credit. Some educators still do not believe marching band covers the nutritional element necessary to fulfill a P.E. credit. Those who favor marching band accreditation offer a solution. School districts can employ a [nutritionist on staff or even bring in a dietician periodically to talk with the students about maintaining their dietary health throughout, and beyond, marching band season](#). Nevertheless, it is clear that marching band participants would meet the necessary requirements to attain a P.E. credit with the support and assistance from school administrators as well as school districts. It would take a substantial amount of effort to achieve this, but the students would have one less class to worry about finishing in time for graduation.

My deep personal commitment to the arts really solidified throughout my time both participating and performing with the EHS Orchestra and marching band. The connections I made along with the camaraderie and dedication I both observed and took part in gave me a unique perspective. Recently, [South Carolina passed Bill S.302 that will accept marching band for P.E. credit](#). The success they accomplished could be seen nationwide soon if some points were revised. For example, sharing personal narratives directly from students, parents, and coaches of marching band would inform school administrators and the general public about the time commitments and strenuous physical activity required. Their message would promote why they deserve P.E. credit from an insider's perspective. As of right now, the most proactive steps communities can take for their local high school marching band is to find opportunities to view practices and performances, engage with the students and staff involved, and talk with school officials about accepting marching band practice for P.E. credit.

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About the Author

Lucy Bennett is currently majoring in Business Management at the University of Wyoming. In high school, she participated in her chamber orchestra for four years as a violinist. As a student ambassador, she worked closely with faculty and other musicians and ensembles to set-up, facilitate, and play in performances. It was through these experiences that she developed a passion for working with people and learned the value of being surrounded by others who share similar passions.



Photo Credit: Nick Perry

POWERBAIT RUINS THE CULTURE OF FLY FISHING

Conner Whitman

Shrubs and bushes surround the banks of a smooth flow of water in an open area just five miles outside of Laramie, Wyoming. This scene describes the Little Laramie River, shallow and solemn, and I stand in its wake. As I cast my fishing line into the morning beam of sunlight, a hushed ‘whip’ of a fly is heard as it makes way to land gently on the surface of the water up river. This is fly fishing.

Fly fishing is a sport; a sport that yields solace of the mind and is artful in its craft, execution, and results. In the state of Wyoming especially, the opportunities in fly fishing are plentiful all over the state. [The Big Laramie River, Little Laramie River, and](#)

[North Platte River](#) are among the most popular fishing destinations in the state. At each location, fisherman use many fly fishing techniques with varying levels of effort.

When it comes down to the essentials of fishing, bait is one of the necessary components. In fly fishing specifically, you will see more fishermen using handmade flies over other baits. As a craft of fly fishing, fly tying is a hobby of its own. Experienced tiers and fishermen will spend many winters crafting their own variations, types, and sizes of flies. They would also agree, that there is great satisfaction when catching a fish with a fly that has been crafted by oneself. There are those who use live bait to lure fish to a hook and those who take time to make or selectively buy flies. Flies are very unique and individualized, each one designed to mimic bugs of a certain area that fish are likely attracted to. Another breed of fishermen (skilled or not) also exists, those who poison fish and [cheat](#) with unnatural baits such as Powerbait.

Powerbait is a SPL (soft plastic bait) that is scented, flavored, or both. In smelling this scent or tasting it, fish can hardly resist consuming it as they would a live insect. Fishermen can simply toss this colorful bait into the water and almost always catch a fish.

Despite the simple and enjoyable qualities of fishing, companies like [Berkley](#) have found ways to ruin the traditional craft and execution of fishing. They enable fishermen to shortcut more traditional methods of catching fish. Powerbait is an effective and

popular bait for simple and lazy fishing; however, it leaves [detri-mental effects](#) on the fish.

In the study “Size Selectivity, Injury, Handling Time, and Determinants of Initial Hooking Mortality in Recreational Angling for Northern Pike: The Influence of Type and Size of Bait,” scientists observed how smaller, natural baits usually went deeper in to fish, and more often killed them than artificial lures (Arlinghaus et al.) Experienced fishermen know too well of this occurrence, fish consume smaller and more natural baits with ease. Powerbait is small too but its flavors and scents make it even more enticing, so fish are more likely to take it down without much effort and are more likely to die from the resulting hook injuries.

Kurt Dolence, a fly-fishing mentor of mine, is an experienced angler and fly tier. He has grown up fishing the [Green and New Fork Rivers](#) of Pinedale, Wyoming. After more than 35 years of catching fish with various baits, he noted “usually flies won’t make it all the way down the stomach because they feel the point, and they’ll spit it out” (Dolence). Fish are attracted to naturally made and looking flies, especially those made to look like the bugs in their habitat, but it is not common that they consume them all the way into their stomach. Even if they did, the natural material of the flies would not be bad for the fish’s system whereas the chemicals in Powerbait are in no way good for fish.

[Berkley Powerbaits](#) are composed of oil-based resins (an insoluble material that makes it “doughy”) and PVC (plastic mate-

rial that helps with structure). The mixture of these with flavors and odors are all toxic components that are indigestible for fish. In the study, [*Exploring the Potential Effects of Lost or Discarded Soft Plastic Lures on Fish and the Environment*](#), researchers looked at the potential effects of SPL's (Soft Plastic Lures) and Powerbaits, "when ingested, SPLs serve as a non-digestible/non-degradable foreign object that obstructs the gastrointestinal tract of an animal." SPLs are carelessly used and harmful.

Powerbait encourages unhealthy fishing methods. When fishermen toss out, or cast, plastics such as Powerbait, they do so without any consideration of a fish's health. The non-biodegradable material will neither be successfully digested by a fish nor decompose under the surface of water.

These are hard words for a fisherman without patience to hear. By using the shortcut of scented and flavored SPLs, fishermen can catch bigger fish. However, with precise casting and accurate flies, the same result can be achieved. This comes with more personal satisfaction too. The process of learning how to cast, is not easy. Getting a particular fly to a certain spot makes the months or even years of practice it takes to get good worth it. In addition, Powerbait makes the process of casting effortless, as fish will swim to and eat it from the other side of the river without question, thus defeating the purpose of a good cast.

Good casts are not a skill required for Powerbait, and with the use of Powerbait an entire step is lost in the fishing process.

Chris Huber, an experienced angler, describes fly casting's intricacy, "...anglers take great care in not spooking the fish. They make delicate casts into just the right spot, floating the tiny fly ever so softly onto the surface of the water" (Huber). Your cast is the first step in even hooking a fish and those who either can't or don't want to have a good cast, rely on Powerbait even though it is dangerous to fish.

Tossing handmade flies could be viewed as a competition between the fisherman and himself. Knowing which variation of fly to cast is fun, and the challenge motivates a fishermen's persistence to stay out on the water longer. Fishermen who use Powerbait do not fish as long, nor can they fully appreciate their fishing accomplishments out on the water. A quote that accurately describes my passion for this sport states, "[o]ne of the [main perks of fly fishing](#) is that it provides a great excuse to spend time in nature." Even without any success, fly fishing is enjoyable. When I wade down a river with pole in hand, performing smooth casts through the air, my mind is at ease. The sport is comprised of a culture, one that requires diligence yet feels like a carefree task. Powerbait disrupts all that fly fishing has come to be. Powerbait is claimed to be the most versatile bait out there despite its disruption to fish health and the traditional fly fishing community.

In experiencing the cultural fulfillments of fly fishing, the natural route is the preferred way to go if you want to conserve the existing environment. Tossing flies made of natural material may

not yield as many fish, but the reward of safekeeping a species surmounts any other outcomes of the sport.

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About the Author

Conner Whitman was born in Laramie, Wyoming and has lived there ever since. He spends his free time biking, snowshoeing, tying flies, and especially fly fishing. While Conner has time to spare, he is outdoors. As a child, he biked to local lakes and fished with his friends. Now, he is a member of the fly-fishing club at the University of Wyoming.

When he is not fishing, Conner is working. After various jobs in the food industry Conner got his Certified Nurses Aid certification through the Wyoming State Board of Nursing in 2017. Since then, he has been a full and part time employee for the Eppson Center, a senior center in Laramie.

