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The Representation of the Environment in Children's Literature

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THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT
IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Department of Sociology

by

Becky L. Boudreaux

B.A., University of New Orleans, 2003

May, 2006

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DEDICATION

I dedicate every ounce of energy and every minute of time spent on this thesis in loving memory of my grandmother, Amelia D. Parker, who always told me that I was capable of doing anything I put my mind to and whose unconditional love and constant encouragement will always be missed.

In addition I dedicate this work to all the children of future generations who will bear the brunt of our neglect and abuse of nature.

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I would like to thank my parents for instilling in me a love of knowledge and the self-discipline to achieve my dreams. My mother passed on a love of the environment and a desire to teach; my father passed on a sense of logical reasoning and practical scientific application of ideas into empirical evidence. I would also like to thank my sister Julie, who through example and constant encouragement gave me the courage to follow my dreams. In addition, she tirelessly edited this work.

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ABSTRACT

This study is a descriptive research project which examines a purposeful census of the best selling children's books for 0-8 year olds in the United States in 2003. This cross-sectional study of these social artifacts evaluates the extent to which the ideologies of the environmental movement have been inculcated into culture. It evaluates how the environment is represented in children's literature and the extent to which children's literature meets the goals of environmental education.

Through narrative semeiotic analysis of the themes, as well as the manifest (text) and latent (pictures) content, varying degrees of pro and anti-environmental ideologies reflected by these representations emerged. Analytic induction revealed that these representations reflected ideologies of human domination over nature. In addition, in most cases, the representation of the environment did not reflect or meet the goals of environmental education. This finding sheds light on the role children's books play in the environmental socialization of America's youth.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Ted Geisel (Dr. Seuss) was asked “if, after all the messages in his books, something remained unsaid” and he responded, “The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U. S. A. would be ‘We can...and we’ve got to do better than this.’ Then he drew a line through three words, the kids of” (Henderson, et. al (2004) p.129).

One of the most powerful influences on the environment is how people cognize their environment¹. Mr. Geisel knew that and chose to send his environmental messages to the world through children’s literature. He recognized the power of children’s literature in influencing and environmentally socializing the next generation. How we think about the environment, how we frame it in our minds begins to form in childhood while we are being socialized into cultural norms. The social construction of environmental issues is shaped directly by our cultural values and the anthropocentric attitudes that surround almost every environmental issue and struggle. Human behavior towards the environment is reflective of society’s current cultural ideologies. Although children learn cultural norms and ideologies in many ways, literature is one aspect of the environmental socialization process that needs to be further studied. Children’s literature is used in schools and at home for character education. Children model the behaviors that they learn through narrative stories and pictures. Theoretically, if we want to utilize children’s literature (in school or in the home) to socialize our young to have pro-environmental perceptions, attitudes and behaviors, then we should increase their knowledge about the environment and present pro-environmental ideologies as well as the reality of human interactions with the environment and the resulting environmental social problems that occur. This study intends to explore this area of environmental socialization to determine the representation of the environment in children’s literature. Using semiotics to analyze the best-

selling children's books of 2003, my study looks at the representation of the environment to uncover the cultural ideologies associated with the environment in children's literature.

Throughout the entire twentieth century there have been competing orientations toward the environment within Western cultures. Articulation of an awareness of human impact began at the beginning of twentieth century with the preservation/ conservation debate. The latter has been interrelated to the Manifest Destiny/Human Exemptionalism ideology that has been evident since the eighteenth century. When the Environmental Movement took shape in the 1970's there appeared to be developing a more robust strain of the preservationist movement including components that reflected the other social movements of the time, eco-feminism (from feminist movement) and Deep Ecology (from the Hippie Movement). Activities reflecting these movements have been evident since the 1970's.

Cultural ideologies are "sets of beliefs about action[s] surrounding an important human activity and a perceived set of problems" (Harper 2004, pp. 360-361). They function in society as a means of establishing social perceptions and norms concerning human interactions by defining social reality as well as being utilized as catalysts for social change. Environmental ideologies are social constructions that shape how we think and feel about, as well as how we interact with, the environment. The construction of cultural symbols to represent the environment influence ideological perceptions, morals and subsequent behavior more than the actual physical environment in which we live. As Harper (2004) argues, "human choices and policies are more directly related to our definitions of that reality than to what [that] reality 'really' is" (p.38). At the same time, prevalent cultural ideologies shape and in fact produce cultural symbols. Society, at any given point in history, constructs certain symbols, images and

¹ Cognized environment is defined as "human definitions and interpretations of the biophysical environment" (Harper p.39).

language that reflect and even promote its' ideologies. In this way, the relationship between ideologies and the social artifacts that they produce is a reflexive one.

Therefore, in this study which examines the best-selling children's books of 2003, it follows that the cultural symbols and ideologies contained within them were shaped by and are reflective of the cultural ideologies dominant at the time they were written. In addition, these social artifacts produce cultural symbols and ideologies. The books analyzed in this study are not only products of the time they were written, but also shaped in some way part of that culture. If they are still popular today, although some of them were written several decades ago, then something about the ideology within the book is still popular.

Environmentally socializing our children involves teaching kids about the environment as well as setting a good example for them by modeling positive perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards the environment. Aristotle observed that "morality and character are not random acts but habits, which have been described as habits of the mind, habits of the heart, and habits of action" (Edgington 2002, p. 5). Acknowledging this, environmental education programs are usually modeled after Matthews and Riley's (1995) assertion that increasing knowledge leads to attitude changes and consequently, behavioral changes. A core example of this is the use of literature for character education in the U. S. School system to teach cultural values.

The environment is omnipresent in children's literature, meaning that it is represented in some way. How and what is presented will reveal an underlying meaning or ideology and will contribute to the child's environmental socialization. Marriot (2002) analyzed how nature is portrayed in picture books, finding that it is usually represented "fictitiously perfect" with no anthropogenic² environmental problems addressed. He focused on the depiction of animals and found that they were usually portrayed as domesticated and anthropomorphized. Following his

conclusion that anthropogenic environmental degradation is not represented, this study examines more deeply the depiction of nature and human interaction as portrayed in children's literature ages 0-8.

Henderson, et. al (2004) in their *Pedagogical Response to The Lorax*, "seriously acknowledge the power of children's literature to educate and positively influence kids, to environmentally socialize them into eco-literate citizens; something exemplified by Dr. Seuss' *The Lorax* (pp. 129-130). My study analyzes the representations of the environment shown in children's books and the underlying cultural ideologies that are produced from those representations. I will also evaluate the extent to which these ideologies present or reinforce pro or anti-environmental values. This is important to establish because the extent to which children can identify with pro or anti-environmental settings, morals, themes, attitudes and characters will affect whether or not they model those behaviors. Although this study does not look at how children perceive literature, it is important to remember that they will interpret it in some way and will form attitudes and behaviors partly from it

I chose children's books as representative social artifacts for textual analysis because of the nature of childhood in society and the fact that children are still being socialized into societal norms. They are still learning, observing, modeling and negotiating appropriate perceptions, attitudes and behaviors. By the very nature of childhood, they are incomplete subjects who are learning to become "cultured persons" (Hall 1997, p. 22). The process of socialization necessitates, on a fundamental level, that children learn "the system and conventions of representation, the codes of their language and culture ... to function as culturally competent subjects" (Hall 1997, p. 22). Once they have learned and internalized the signs/symbols and the

² Anthropogenic environmental problems are those that are human – caused.

concepts that they signify - the system of representation - they can express and interpret ideas. In other words, they can effectively communicate with others (Hall 1997, p. 22).

Children's literature is a tool in the socialization process. It is a method for introducing children to new concepts and teaching them about cultural norms and social practices. In this way, children's books are not just artifacts that reflect current ideologies, morals and values about everything (not just the environment) but the representations contained within them are often models of what society values as important and thus indeed hopes to pass on to the next generation. Such social constructions directly influence a child's environmental socialization, be it pro or anti-environmental. This, in turn, effects how they will interact with the environment now and in the future.

So how are we environmentally socializing American children? How are we representing nature and human interaction with it? What ideologies are represented in the literature? Are we equipping them with the necessary tools and knowledge to deal with environmental problems?

There have been surprisingly few studies that focus on the representation of the environment in children's literature (Holton and Rogers 2004, p. 151). While there are some studies similar in nature to this one, all either examine the changing depiction of nature over time or focus on just one book (typically *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss). In addition, some studies have examined the depiction of the environment in award winning books [Kirk and Karbon (1986)] or children's literature specifically focused on the environment [Lenz (1994); Sigler (1994); Henderson, Kennedy and Chamberlin (2004); and Lebduska (1994)]. This study differs in that my analysis examines the best-selling, most popular³ children's literature in 2003, regardless of whether they focus on the environment or merely depict it. There are some award winning

³ Most popular by middle class standards (see the Sampling Procedures section in the Methods section).

books in my census such as (Where the Wild Things Are) (See Appendix) but my focus is not on the best books but on the most widely read.

Holton and Rogers' (2004) and Glenda Wall's (1999) studies look at how media representations of the environment changed over a thirty-year period in a nature oriented Canadian magazine and T V show geared towards children. In contrast, my study differs in that mine looks at popular books (versus specifically environmental ones) and children's books (instead of the media – magazines and television). In addition, my study is focused on only a one year time frame; in America; with a younger target age group (in Holton and Rogers' case they target nine years old and up). Despite the methodological differences, some of their findings are relevant to my study. For example, Sigler's (1994) research and Holton and Roger's (2004) study both found that books generally reflect the prevalent ideologies of the time. They conclude however that research with a more restricted time frame could “provide a different view of the discourses enacted in children's literature” (Holton and Rogers 2004, p. 151). Following this notion, my study examines the representation of the environment in a one-year time frame to ascertain what ideologies are most popular and if; indeed, we have become more pluralistic, perhaps even post-modern in our cognition about the environment. If multiple environmental ideologies are being represented in books popular at the same time then one could argue that it signifies that there has been a cognitive shift in the ways society views the environment.

Interestingly enough, many of the books in my census were published over several different decades. Several of Dr. Seuss' books show up in the census despite the fact that they were published 40-45 years earlier! This raises the question whether the environmental ideologies of the 1960s and 1970s still popular and relevant today despite other major changes in

society? Following Sigler's argument that "current environmental children's literature has begun to reflect the views of various groups," I argue that since the most popular books of 2003 do include books from the late 1800's through 2003, this study expects to find multiple environmental ideologies represented within them (Sigler 1994, p. 151). This is expected not only because of the range of decades in which these books were written, but because of the nature of a post-modern society which encourages multiple representations.

My study will also examine if environmental ideologies within today's most popular books reflect the dominant ideologies of contemporary society. While modernist ideologies embrace the domination of man over nature and the manifest good of maximum production, they have been challenged by a more postmodern view which incorporates environmental concerns. Hence late capitalism creates an ideology of compatibility between capitalism and the environment, suggesting that we can both respect the earth and sustainably manage her natural resources. I hypothesize that the representation of the environment will simply mask the underlying ideologies of Human Exemptionalism, control, domination and destruction of nature.

Comprehending how societal ideologies and perceptions about the environment are represented in children's literature leads to an understanding of human cognition about the environment. This can help us improve how we socially construct the depiction of the environment in children's literature in order to affect positive environmental change in the future.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Have the values of the environmental movement affected the way American children's literature depicts the environment and humans to the environment or has the dominant ideology (Human Exemptionalism) remained the most influential?

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this exploratory study is to examine how the environment is represented in current best-selling children's literature ages 0-8. This study will focus on how the text and pictures produce cultural meanings and contribute to cultural ideologies about the environment and how they are also reflexive of them. It will focus specifically on which cultural ideologies are produced by the representation of the environment. How human interaction with the environment is represented to children effects how they form perceptions, morals, values and attitudes which lead to certain behaviors towards the environment. In essence, children's literature is used to teach children about social and cultural morals and practices (in and out of school). Since education and the learning process in general are main facets of socialization, part of this analysis includes an examination of the extent to which this literature is representing ecological concepts, utilizing the tools of and meeting the goals of environmental education. In order for future studies to test how much each of the above factors are influenced by and shaped by children's literature, it is imperative to first explore, describe and analyze how they are represented. The intent of this study is to discover how we are environmentally socializing our children through literature.

CHAPTER 2: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The US remains one of the largest markets for the publishing of children's literature, with 49, 813 children's books currently in print and approximately 3,000 new trade books added each year (not including textbooks). Despite this phenomenal production and consumption, "research on children's literature is a relatively new academic field" (Hearne 1988, p. 27). It is important to recognize that the study of children's literature is an interdisciplinary subject (Hearne 1988). My study therefore, reviews and incorporates theories and research from the disciplines of Environmental and Cultural Sociology, Environmental Education and Literature.

In this chapter, therefore, I review the ideologies that have been dominant in American society and the transformation that occurred as a result of the environmental movement of the 1970s. Part of the contribution to this metamorphosis stems from the new sub-discipline of Environmental Sociology that was itself spawned from the Environmental Movement. The academic work from this discipline frames the environment as a social problem.

Cultural Ideologies:

As outlined below, different worldviews produce different social constructions of the environment and environmental issues. Environmentalism, as an ideological mindset, views anthropogenic impacts on the earth as social problems not only because of the degradation of the intrinsic values of natural resources but because of the negative impacts on people. Modernism, as an ideological mindset, however, takes the antecedent position seeing destruction of nature as necessary for human expansion and survival. Natural resources, in this view, are there specifically for human use. Humans are seen as having the right to control and dominate the environment and to deplete natural resources as needed to feed the treadmill of production and

consumption (Schnaiberg and Gould, 1994). At the same time, people in today's American society also claim to have concern and respect for the environment.

Modernism, at its core incorporates the ideology of Manifest Destiny. Prevalent from the 1620s to approximately the mid nineteenth century, this mindset saw no intrinsic value in nature. Instead, the ideology served as "a moral and economic rationale" for the destruction of natural resources in order to benefit and sustain the human way of life (Brulle 2000, p. 115). Furthermore, the idea of Manifest Destiny viewed natural resources as infinite and humans as above nature with the ability to solve any problem with technology (Harper 2004, p. 363). Today the manifestations of this ideology can still be seen in the practices of modern capitalism, which holds many of the same anthropocentric beliefs about exploiting nature.

A later (modern) ideological offshoot of the concept of Manifest Destiny is the Human Exemptionalism Paradigm (HEP). This ideology refers to people considering themselves superior to all other creatures on earth (Catton and Dunlap 1978). This generates anti-environmental behaviors. Such androcentrism is a product of the European Enlightenment which promoted science and empirical reasoning as the answer to society's problems, as well as a faith in "the ability of humans to rationally control nature through systematic innovation and experimentation" (Harper 2004, p.). This dominant paradigm allowed for "the earth and other species [to become] cognized as a huge resource base and facility to be used, developed, and managed for human needs and desires" (Harper 2004, p.). Many other ideologies have also contributed at different times in history to the current cultural practices, which continually degrade and deplete natural resources. Today's environmental degradation and future trend projections are evidence that this cognition of the environment is pervasive throughout almost every society (historical as well as current) and is a socialized value in almost every culture on

earth, especially in the U. S. (Harper 2004). The rebirth of Preservationism in the 1970s (be it in a slightly different form) was the first strong attempt to overcome the HEP ideologies.

The Environmental Movement of the 1970s has had many profound and lasting effects on society. It spurred on the development of new laws which take into account and regulate our treatment of natural resources (NEPA). The Environmental Protection Agency was created, as well as a myriad of other government, private and non-profit environmental organizations. Earth Day and other environmental events have been established to continually raise awareness and address environmental concerns. In addition, contemporary sociology and education have been significantly transformed by the environmental movement spawning the new disciplines of environmental sociology and environmental education. As a result, a new paradigm emerged, the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) which takes into account environmental factors which would be expected to contribute to cultural socialization.

In contrast to the HEP, the NEP highlights how humans are interdependent with the ecosystem. Recognizing that the Earth has finite resources, this view advocates constraints on human consumption of natural resources and frames environmental issues as social problems (Catton and Dunlap 1978). The NEP has produced many branches of environmentalism, as well as reviving some earlier ones from the past.

Brulle (2000) tracks the progression of these environmental ideologies over time, establishing that certain periods of time brought changes to the dominant ideology. His research established the dominant pro and anti-environmental ideologies at certain periods in Western history. They include: Preservation (1830s), Conservation (1860s), Wildlife Management (turn of the century), Reform Environmentalism (1870s and 1960s), Environmental Justice (1970s), Deep Ecology and Ecofeminism (1980s) and Ecospiritualism (1990s) (Harper 2004, p.362).

According to him, Environmental movements have been and continue to be fueled by environmental ideologies which are in fact shaped not only by historical environmental events, but quite specifically by the literature of the time that address or bring forth these concerns (Harper, 2004)

He purports that in the 1860s the writings of George Perkins Marsh, John Muir and Aldo Leopold transformed environmental ideology from Preservationism to Conservationism. Influenced by concepts of deforestation, forced decline of species (Marsh), anthropocentrism (Muir) and “an interactive global ecosystem” (Leopold) this ideology argued for the scientific management of natural resources “to provide for the greatest good for people over the longest period of time” (Harper 2004, p. 362 & 364).

The rebirth of this environmentalism was, according to Brulle, a direct ramification of the literature of the 1960s. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962), Garret Hardin’s *The Tragedy of the Commons* (1968) and Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb: Population Control or Race to Oblivion* (1968) among others, brought attention to environmental issues and constructed them as social problems. The raised awareness provided by Reform Environmentalism lead to the Environmental Justice ideologies of the 1970s. This ideology not only viewed environmental issues as social problems but also linked them to the power structure in society.

Brulle (2000) also posits that the social construction of the earth shifted in 1972 when the Apollo 17 astronauts snapped the first pictures of planet earth in space from 22,000 miles. In one instance, with one glance, the concept of the environment changed forever in the minds of all humans on earth. How did this happen? How could one image change global perceptions and skyrocket (pardon the pun) an entire movement? For the first time, the concept of the earth and the environment was seen as having, “a finite limit and delicate natural balance – to which the

fate of humanity is collectively linked” (Brulle 2000, p. 187). This shift in environmental perceptions and ideologies resulted in a raised awareness of the global finite nature of the earth and the extent and importance of environmental problems because of that reality. This new awareness ignited the environmental movement of the 1970s. So how did a picture become an icon? How did one image “say” – depict all of that? What cultural practices and ideologies were involved? How did one image convey meaning and change the mental representation of the environment? Meaning about the environment was produced in 1972 from the representation of the environment (the earth) using the same social processes and practices that just took place as you read this paragraph.

Chances are, as you read the above description of the famous photo, you conjured a mental picture or representation of what I was talking about. The words symbolized or signified a concept in your mind, which produced meaning. In that same way, two-dimensional images on paper (visual representations) produce mental conceptions or representations of what the image/thing you are looking at looks like in reality and what its meaning. This concept/mental image then symbolizes or signifies an ideology or way of thinking about the earth, perhaps that it is a closed and unique system in space. This image as a cultural symbol and icon is indeed so powerful that many of those born after it was taken cannot conceive of the earth (the world) in any other way. Such new awareness ignited the environmental movement of the 1970s.

Since literature (text), as well as the environmental representations therein (pictures) are not only catalysts for environmental movements but also a result of them, it follows that the cultural effects of the Environmental Movement of the 1970s should be reflected in children’s literature. The environmental representations within them (and the corresponding ideologies that they produce) should therefore theoretically reflect one or more of the above mentioned

environmental ideologies. For example, the 1980s saw the birth of Deep Ecology, a fundamental environmental ideology. The intrinsic value of nature was the main emphasis of Deep Ecology along with the notion that human impact was negatively affecting this. In addition, it advocates green consumerism (minimal material consumption), green politics (having ecologically driven political parties), small scale communities, and the development of, “an ecological consciousness” (Harper 2004, p. 378). Some of these concepts should theoretically show up in my analysis. However, since HEP ideologies have not been abandoned, my analysis will take into account not just the existence or absence of ecological lessons and ideologies, but if and how they are coupled with the continuing Human Exemptionalism ideologies indicative of modern capitalism.

Environmental Sociology Research

The discipline of environmental sociology has evolved over the last thirty years to examine the mechanisms through which society and the environment interact and affect each other. Many social scientists have concentrated their efforts on determining the social bases of environmental concerns. This has varied from studying environmental quality to tracking how levels of environmental concern change over time. The main focus of environmental research has been on the effect of the following social and demographic characteristics on levels of environmental concern: “age, sex, race/ ethnicity, income, education, occupational prestige, residence, political party, and political ideology” [Mohai and Bryant (1998) and Van Liere and Dunlap (1980) p. 181-182].

Most relevant for my study is the Age Hypothesis which states that “younger people tend to be more concerned about environmental quality than older people” (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980, p. 182). With the exception of a few studies (Koenig 1975, Constantini and Hanf 1972,

Mc Evoy 1972, etc.), research supports this hypothesis. Studies have shown that age is negatively correlated with environmental concern (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980). Grossman and Potter (1977b) and Hornback (1974) conducted longitudinal studies that also supported this. Basically, the younger you are the less you are socialized and integrated into the dominant social order (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980 - 183). Therefore pro-environmental ideologies and changes to the current social order, which could be perceived as threatening to older people who are more integrated into the “system,” are more readily accepted and supported by youth. In addition, it logically follows as possible that younger people either are now or will be more concerned about environmental issues than older people if they are exposed to pro-environmental concepts in their learning experiences.

A person’s cohort has also been theorized to explain the age hypothesis in the theory of generations (Mannheim 1952). Mannheim argues that a cohort can be permanently affected by the historical events that occur during, “the crucial adolescent and young adulthood phase of the life cycle” (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980 - 183). It could also be logically deduced that youth who are exposed through media, books and education to the problem of environmental degradation will become “ecology-minded” citizens and those attitudes will remain throughout life.

If the age hypothesis is correct, then it supports the proposition that the younger the person is, the easier it is to influence them into pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, if society wants children to be “ecologically-minded” citizens, children’s books should include environmental themes and issues as a way to educate young children in these values. This study examines the levels of environmental concern (if any) represented in children’s literature.

The Social Construction of the Environment as a Social Problem

The construction of the environment as a social problem stems from the ideologies established in the discipline of environmental sociology. In order to analyze if the environment is being represented as a social problem in children's literature, it is crucial to understand what our current environmental problems are and how they are socially constructed. Looking at the environment as a social problem means examining the relationship between humans and nature, specifically how anthropogenic degradation to the earth is depicted. It strives to evaluate the extent to which we socialize children into ideologies about how humans interact with the environment. Outlining the construction of some of the main environmental issues gives a starting point in accessing if any of these issues are addressed/represented within children's literature. If the Environmental Movement has truly been inculcated into our culture and we are actually going to utilize children's literature as a tool to teach children about the reality of society's current environmental problems - and especially if we want to use literature to teach character education and morals concerning the environment - then the environmental social problems discussed below should be represented in the literature. My study assesses if they are included and how these problems are socially constructed.

It has been said that, "Human activity is such a pervasive influence on the planet's ecological framework that it is no longer possible to separate people and nature (Revkin 2003)." While the earth's ecosystems have always been susceptible to systemic changes, these natural phenomena combined with ongoing ecological succession⁴ were not limiting factors to the earth's capacity to sustain life. The anthropogenic impacts of the last hundred years, unfortunately, have negatively affected the planet's innate ability to maintain homeostasis.

⁴ Ecological succession is defined as "a process in which species replace one another in gradual changes...until an equilibrium between the physical environment and biological organisms is reached" (Harper 2004, p.22).

People's influence on ecosystems today is unparalleled in human history, having significantly and permanently altered every aspect of the biosphere. We are impacting the earth more than we ever have before, yet we are also in the most advantageous position historically to use our technology to lessen environmental degradation. The decisions made in this era of transition will have long lasting effects on every living species that she sustains. Homo-sapiens have truly become "the machinery of evolution," and are threatening to overtax the earth's carrying capacity⁵ (Revkin 2003, p.).

For the first time in the history of the planet, technological advances combined with sociocultural changes have enabled humans to expand the ecosystem's carrying capacity at the expense of other species (Harper 2004). Humans have become agents of change, a "biological blender" (Revkin 2003, p). This study strives to determine the extent to which any of these environmental issues are represented within popular children's literature. An analysis of current environmental degradation reveals that there are a number of different factors contribute to existing conditions. Each of the issues stated below will be examined within the census books as a way of measuring or indicating a level of representation of an environmental social problem:

Although some of the anthropogenic changes have been suddenly imposed, as was the case of the Chernobyl accident⁶, many are products of chronic technological disasters that take time to become evident (Harper 2004). Overpopulation and poverty have become increasingly critical facets of current degradation trends (Revkin 2003). When the earth's carrying capacity is overtaxed it simply cannot provide enough space, clean air, water and food to support a quality

⁵ Carrying capacity is defined as an ecosystem's "limits in terms of size of various populations that it can support. If any population gets too large, the ecosystem is overloaded and cannot provide the basic needs of every organism" (Catton, 1980) (Harper p. 20).

⁶ The Chernobyl accident refers to a nuclear meltdown that took place in the former USSR in 1986.

existence for humans (at least not the modern human lifestyle) (Harper 2004). The current alarming rates of deforestation, fourteen million acres each year, are impacting the ecosystems and the species that live in them (Revkin 2003). Failure of economic and political systems to manage available resources has lead to complete depletion of priceless ecosystems and catastrophic accidents. Poorly managed industrialization activities have been the main contributor to pollution and a myriad of other social and ecological problems. With few exceptions, every natural resource including the air, land and water has been affected by pollution. Another aspect of pollution is municipal waste that humans produce through production and consumption (Revkin 2003).

Literature has been influencing societies for nearly four hundred years (Gergen 2004). Since Western lifestyles are more centered on urbanization and technology (more distant from nature than in previous centuries) a child's perception of nature is limited. In modern American society most of a child's knowledge and understanding of the physical environment is "dependent on words and images" (Marriott 2002, p. 176).

Hypothesis: If the environmental movement has been successful in modifying the values of the society these changes should be reflected in one of the most important means of transmitting cultural values, children's books.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

This study is based on theories of cultural representations, cultural transmission, educational learning as well as discourse theory. In order to understand how depictions of the environment produce cultural meanings, one must understand the production of ideologies through social practices of representation. In addition, it is crucial to examine which ideologies are represented and how they are related to the societal power structure. Hall (1997) argues that utilizing the semiotic approach (as this study does) means focusing mainly on “how language produces meaning,” while the discursive approach examines the “effects and consequences of representation – its politics” (p. 6). Although this study does not look at the effects or consequences of how the environment is represented to children, I argue that some facets of the discursive approach are relevant to my work. Political ideologies impact which environmental representations do or do not show up in children’s literature.

Representational Theories:

There are two theories of representation that make up the theoretical framework for this study, the reflective or mimetic approach and the constructionist approach. The reflective approach places the essence of meaning in the actual, “object, person, idea or event in the real world” and sees this meaning as fixed (Hall 1997, p. 24). Language (in its broadest sense – including visual signs) is thought to simply reflect this innate and true meaning. In this sense, ideologies, themes, morals and values contained within pictures and narratives are reflections of the ideologies already present in society. Following this notion, any depictions of nature, animals, environmental ideologies and problems reflect the reality of society’s current environmental notions and situation.

To an extent, the reflective approach has some merit. A realistic picture of a bear, for example, as a visual sign, does mimic the shape and texture of a real bear. However, since it is a two-dimensional image, it is considered to be a sign which refers to what we conceptualize as a real bear (Hall 1997, p. 25). The reflective approach also does not account for the myriad of signs and concepts that are fictional, fantasy or imaginary. So in the case of children's literature, the physical characters, animals and settings portrayed that do not exist in reality cannot theoretically be thought to reflect reality. On the ideological level, however, the approach holds relevance to this study in that ideologies are not tangible, physical objects but are represented through meaning. Even fictional and imaginary representations signify ideological meaning. In this way, it is quite possible that environmental symbols reflect the real and dominant ideologies present in today's society.

The main theoretical underpinning for this study comes from the constructionist approach to meaning in language. This theory views representation as a system of socially constructed practices. The words and images that we use are seen as signs, which are not fixed. This differs substantially from the reflective theory that sees meaning as fixed to certain signs because of their innate qualities. Constructivism purports that signs are arbitrary and culturally specific, used to signify whatever the particular society or culture designates them to reflect. They function within the system or process of representation in a very complex and arbitrary way. The sign signifies whatever concept society has socially constructed them to mean (Hall, 1997). In the case of the representation of the environment in children's literature, how we represent environmental themes, morals, values and predicaments is socially constructed according to Western society's cultural codes (signs and symbols) and produces ideological meaning accordingly.

Discourse Theories

While the social construction of environmental representation and the subsequent production of meaning are the main focus of this study (utilizing semiotic methodology) discourse theory was taken into account during the formulation of this project. Discourse is the language and knowledge that we use to communicate about the world. Discursive representations like children's literature are used to transmit this knowledge. In this study, children's literature is analyzed to understand how we represent knowledge about the environment to kids. Discourse theories involving Foucault were utilized for their overall concept of the power relations involved in discourse which were found to be an important and imperative part of the theoretical framework.

Parts of discourse theories which focus on effects – although an important reason for doing this study (to lay the groundwork for future studies) – are not applicable to the theoretical framework of this study. It is not an aim of this study to analyze effects or reproductions of power or how representations reinforce behaviors, etc. – only how cultural signs and symbols produce environmental meanings and ideologies.

Discourse theory does make a valuable contribution in that it examines the power dynamics that surround cultural representations. If my hypotheses are correct and the environment is not represented realistically or as a social problem, then discourse theory allows me to ask why not. If the environmental depictions were represented realistically, with ecological concepts introduced (animals shown in their natural settings without being anthropomorphized, for example) and real environmental problems were shown, this would contradict HEP ideology. To socially construct the environment as a social problem within children's literature would require the author to go against the societal power structure which

holds the dominant capitalist ideology in place. So discourse theory allows my analysis to go slightly further than semiotic representations to understand how those representations reflect or counter dominant Western ideologies.

Environmental Education Research

Research in the burgeoning field of Environmental Education has examined and begun to establish the objectives, methods and content for successful environmental education. These elements inform my study in so far as they demonstrate what children's literature should contain if it is to be used as a successful tool in producing environmentally literate citizens. This study examines these elements and the ideological meanings they produce as a means of ascertaining the extent to which children's literature is an agent of environmental socialization.

Rachael Carson's book *Silent Spring* was one of many catalysts of the environmental education movement. It has had a lasting impact on education and environmental consciousness in America. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the National Environmental Education Act of 1970 both view education as the key mechanism "for improving the quality of the human environment" (Council 1996 – 3). The National Environmental Education Act of 1990 restates the goals of these earlier acts declaring an imperative for all citizens to become environmentally conscious and responsible citizens (Council 1996, p. 3).

The Tbilisi Declaration, adopted from the world's first intergovernmental conference on environmental education (1977), defined environmental education as "a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address these challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action" (Council

1996, p. 1). These ideas are evidenced in the goals and objectives that are now the framework for environmental education around the world. The five main objectives for environmental education are: awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and participation (Council 1996). In order to better understand and reach these objectives, educators have set hierarchical goal levels for environmental literacy. The first level focuses on teaching ecological concepts thereby giving people the basic background knowledge necessary to make ecologically based environmental decisions (Council 1996). The second goal is to teach conceptual awareness of how individuals and groups affect the quality of the environment and therefore our quality of life. The next level focuses on developing issues, investigation, and evaluation skills to enable thorough analysis of environmental problems as well as the ability to devise solutions. The highest level incorporates proficiency in the first three in that it advocates developing environmental action skills to positively resolve environmental issues (Council 1996). Studies have shown that exposure to all four goals is necessary to produce environmentally informed and responsible individuals and groups. My study examines the extent to which the most popular children's books meet these goals for environmental literacy.

School systems adopting environmental education ideologies and techniques usually stratify into two approaches, "infusion," and the "block" or "second-courses" approach (Council 1996, p. 8). The idea behind infusion, that environmental education is an interdisciplinary field, is evidenced in its methodology which strives to incorporate learning about the environment into existing lessons at all grade levels (Council 1996). It follows that this same technique could be utilized to infuse ecological knowledge through children's literature. This study examines how successfully this is accomplished within children's literature, regardless of topic. The "second-courses" approach focuses on the importance of distinct environmental courses to ensure an in-

depth study of the material. It follows that children's books could be written with solely environmental themes, as some are. This study looks at the extent to which any of the books within the census are principally focused on an environmental theme.

Smith and Williams (1999) point out that "ecological education," at its core, should focus on the ideology of humans being one with nature. Traina and Darley-Hill examine what they call, "bioregional education," which encourages students and teachers to evaluate their own environmental impacts. Orr was also in favor of what he called, "ecoliteracy," encouraging students to understand their surrounding communities through outdoor experiences (1). Thomashow also thinks that the focus should be on implementing curricula that promote student understanding of their own communities. He advocated teaching "ecological identity" through reflective learning focused on four concepts: knowledge about surrounding community, where things come from, connection to the earth and purpose as human beings (1). Since children model what they see in books, this study determines if and how these concepts are represented as well as their prevalence.

Albert Bandura (1976) long ago established in his Social Learning Theory that children are exposed to many experiences and observations from birth that influence their development. He asserted that children tend to model people and things they observe. This is especially true in early childhood, before they begin school. One of the venues for this socialization is children's literature. The way in which the characters (human or animal) are depicted in the books will serve as a model for the children who are exposed to them.

Since Social Learning Theory "focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context," including learning through observation, imitation and modeling (Ormrod 1999), it follows that children will learn something from the representation of the environment and the

human interaction with the environment that is presented. Whether they will or will not imitate or model the behavior is thought to be based on the expectation of the consequences. In addition, moral thinking, behavior and judgments are developed in part through modeling. Therefore, if the representation of the interaction between humans and nature produces a pro-environmental ideology – meaning that the pro-environmental attitude, value, moral or behavior is shown with positive consequences – then theoretically the child will observe and learn this from the symbolic model.

As a result of the environmental movement of the past few decades there has been a push for the educational system to better equip students to be environmentally responsible citizens. The movement has also raised awareness that this is achievable by socializing our children into having pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors.

Children's literature in schools is already being used to facilitate character education. It follows that children's literature for pre-school children is also facilitating character education. It is important to analyze children's literature to evaluate which environmental values and moral codes are being depicted. Do the books encourage compassion, respect, and responsibility toward the earth or not? Only after establishing their current representation can authors strive to make beneficial changes in the hope of facilitating pro-environmental character education. To that end, this study analyses the representation of environmental morals and the extent to which they facilitate environmental character education.

The U. S. educational system has been using books as a medium for transmitting cultural values to children for over two hundred years. Recently there has been a renewed interest in enhancing character education as part of school reform programs (Edgington 2002, p.1). Thomas Lickona's (1998, 78) study defines character education as "the deliberate effort to

cultivate virtue ... virtue in the form of core values or values [on] which a society depends to persevere” (Edgington 2002, p. 1). Gibbs and Earley (1994) identified ten core values: “compassion, courage, courtesy, fairness, honesty, kindness, loyalty, perseverance, respect, and responsibility” (Edgington 2002, p. 1). Many researchers (Bennett 1995, Lickona 1991, Wynne and Ryan 1997) and educators (Andrews 1994 and Tomlinson and Lynch-Brown 1996) have posited that, “literature [is] an essential vehicle for the transmission of such core values... [because of] the relevance to the lives of the children that literature can afford” (Edgington 2002, p. 2). These elements of character education will inform my analysis regarding their representation in relation to human interaction with the environment.

Although there are four main approaches to character education, only two, values inculcation and moral reasoning, are relevant to this discussion of children’s literature because the other two require the presence of an instructor. Values inculcation is defined as “the act of transmitting to students a predetermined set of values” (Edgington 2002, p. 2). The typical method for accomplishing this is through literature. The child reads about characters who have “worthy values or character traits” and will theoretically adopt the desired traits for themselves (Edgington 2002, p. 2). Moral reasoning is based on Kohlberg’s (1976) theory which argues that people’s ability to make moral decisions proceeds through five stages of values development. Children move to a higher stage only after they have been repeatedly exposed to and have successfully completed the earlier one. This can be accomplished by presenting moral dilemmas in children’s literature. Theoretically, children’s books could include environmental dilemmas, with appropriate positive solutions. This would help children formulate pro-environmental morals at an early age and would form the basis for higher stages of moral reasoning development (such as when they are exposed to more complex environmental

problems). My study strives to establish the extent to which values inculcation and moral reasoning are being utilized within children's literature by establishing how environmental morals and values are represented. Although Kohlberg's theory has been criticized as a mainly Western view, for the purposes of this study, which is partly focused on environmental character education through American literature, it has an advantage (Berger 2001).

Most environmental education programs are modeled after Matthews and Riley's assertion that increasing knowledge leads to attitude and consequently behavioral changes (McCarthy 2001). Many environmental studies have confirmed that children exposed to environmental education programs not only understand the concepts but have more positive attitudes toward the environment than children who were not exposed to these programs. For example, Bryant and Hungerford's research concluded that even after only one month of exposure to environmental problems, kindergartners were not only able to develop the concepts they were also able to formulate solutions that they could implement (McCarthy 2001).

This earlier research on the effect of environmental education on children was supported and expanded by Jaus' two-year longitudinal study and Hellden's ten-year longitudinal study both starting at third grade levels. Jaus' research not only confirmed that only minimal exposure to environmental instruction is necessary to produce environmentally positive attitudes; it also showed the retention of these attitudes over time. Hellden linked early exposure to environmental concepts with a better future understanding of ecological processes (McCarthy 2001). So as a medium for transmitting knowledge and culture, children's books "teach" ideologies, morals, values, attitudes and perceptions which reflect and shape cultural ideologies and values of society towards the environment. This study examines what knowledge we are representing to children about the environment in general and about human interaction with it.

This will help establish the extent to which children's literature is meeting the goals and criteria for environmental education.

Previous Studies of Children's Literature

Recent research on the influence of literature on children usually focuses on "how social and cultural values are reflected" (Hearne 1988, p. 28). While many studies have analyzed the depiction of gender, ethnicity, family roles, violence and personal problems (Hearne 1988), none have looked at how cultural symbols represent environmental ideologies in a cross sectional analysis. In addition, none have examined the depiction of the environment as a social problem in the way that my study does. Stuart Marriot's (2002) study of the depiction of animals in picture books is the closest to this type of analysis; however he does not consider in depth the depiction of the realm of nature and human's interaction with it.

Marriot (2002) studied how animals are portrayed in modern picture books. He introduces us to his main theme through a few news stories of wilderness accidents and animal attacks. He points out that the one common thread that all of the news stories had was a "bewilderment and incomprehension when confronted by the forces and inhabitants of the natural world" (Marriot 2002, p. 176). He theorizes that modern urban life has distanced us almost completely from nature or even the concept of what the natural world really is. Technology has bombarded us with so many synthetic representations of nature that we have become disconnected and distant from the real environment, its forces, and its inhabitants (Marriot 2002 and Gergen 2000). He did a content analysis of 1,074 picture books (not all specified as children's books) hypothesizing that the ways in which animals are represented would be as domesticated and thus misleading. He found exactly that (Marriot 2002).

He looked at which animals were included and excluded, as well as how they were depicted. He found a few themes that were prevalent throughout most of the books. Most of the animal characters were domesticated and anthropomorphized (portrayed as living like urbanized human beings). In addition, most of the books did not portray the animals in their natural habitats. Another main characteristic was that most of the pictures portrayed a perfect “fairytale like” world, misleading children to believe that is a true representation. Even more disturbing, Marriott argues that almost none of the books demonstrated any general or anthropogenic environmental problem.

Following his notion, my study looks at the overall ideologies represented within the text and pictures to see if we are depicting nature, animals and human interaction with the environment in a realistic way. In addition, my study looks at which animals are included and how they are represented. For example, are the pictures of the animals reflecting how the animals look like in reality and in their natural settings? Were the animals “real” animals or imaginary ones? Were they represented as domesticated, anthropomorphized, or in their natural settings?

My study differs from Marriott’s in that he looked at picture books for people of all ages while I am analyzing stories with pictures for children. I also utilize criterion for choosing a census of books. Unlike his census of 1,074 books which was based on his arbitrary selection of whatever he could get his hands on; I use a more purposeful sampling method (described in Chapter 4).

Research on the environmental ideologies in children’s literature has found various levels of pro and anti-environmental themes. Kirk and Karbon’s (1986) study looking at award-winning books from 1960-1982 found that most (66 of 72) had environmental messages. There

were a few main themes found, including, humans' dependence on nature and animals in the context of survival needs, usually in a cause and effect scenario (Holton, 2004). They also encountered the themes of good and evil at odds with the balance of nature at the heart of the struggle. Lenz (1994) found themes of anthropocentrism as well as themes of humans interacting with nature peacefully and without harming it (Holton, 2004). Sigler's (1994) research examining environmentally themed children's books from the late eighteenth century to the present found that the environmental ideologies reflected the era in which the book was written (Holton, 2004). She argues that the more recent books reflect multiple ideologies. Following Sigler's notions, my study aims to explore which ideologies are present within each book and what that says about environmental ideologies in today's society.

Other research on children's literature has examined the influence of books on children's cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors. Research has shown that, "books can help children gain insight into a character or situation, discover mechanisms of decision making and problem solving, and realize a sense of mastery and self-esteem" (Byrne and Nitzke 2002, p. 2). Musser and Diamond (1999) argue that pro-environmental behaviors and attitudes as seen in "the context of pro-social development" can be conceptualized as a general desire to protect the world we live in (Musser and Diamond 1999, p. 23). They refer to Bronfenbrenner's (1986) argument that children develop pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors at home, from parents and family, as well as at school, from teachers and peers. The authors reference Sigel's (1985 and 1991) and Stinson's and Flaughner's (1991) work that demonstrates that many social influences, such as experiences, books, and activities influence informal learning, especially "through modeling appropriate behaviors" (Musser and Diamond 1999, p. 24). They are able to back this up with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, emphasizing the influences of observation, as well as direct

and indirect experiences on the learning process. My study looks at the extent that any desire to protect the world is addressed (in attitudes or behaviors) and how it is represented.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This study is an exploratory research project with the units of analysis being social artifacts, children's books. It is a cross-sectional study with purposeful sampling of the best selling children's books in the United States in 2003. Utilizing semiotics, I attempt to uncover the signs and symbols within the images and words in children's literature that produce meaning about the environment. Following Marriott's notions, I hypothesize in this qualitative study that modern Western societies' representation of the environment as signified by the words, images and ideologies in children's literature both reflects and shape the dominant anti-environmental/capitalist ideologies prevalent in contemporary U. S. society. In addition, I argue that the pro-environmental representations in children's literature mask the underlying capitalist ideologies.

I use semiotics, which involves interpretation, clearly a highly subjective practice. As laid out in the introduction and theory sections, meaning is not fixed in any culture; it is ever shifting and arbitrary. Therefore my interpretation of what is represented could differ from how someone else interprets it. To "counter this" I have laid out a significant number of environmental indicators (objects, issues, ideologies, concepts and themes) that I will look for that will serve as "signs" which convey meaning about overall environmental ideologies and how that meaning is represented.

I outline this set of indicators – in narrative form to provide structure and objectivity to the study. I have laid out the environmental social problems, some of the pro and anti-environmental ideologies as well as the environmental education concepts that should be seen if we are attempting to environmentally socialize children through literature. It is salient to note that these indicators are not necessarily exhaustive; but definitely are encompassing enough to

provide a framework or reference for data collection. In addition, in qualitative fashion, I added any indicators not previously thought of or mentioned to the list as they presented themselves to me during data collection. Hence, this study utilizes inductive as well as deductive reasoning. The indicators will guide me to specific signs/symbols/signifiers for which I will induce the cultural meaning. At the same time I will deduce if these objects and concepts/things are present and reflective of the reality of nature and of society.

Using the semiotic method, this first order process will tell me the environmental “signs” present and how they are represented. In the second order process the sign from the first order (the combined meaning of the signifier and signified) becomes the signifier for the second order meaning, the myth or ideology behind it. This second order process is entirely inductive in that I will let the data speak to me. In the qualitative sense, I let the themes speak to me (let the signifiers inductively signify – producing the signified); at the same time, I will keep my eyes open for the indicators which I thought could serve as “signs” And should be included for effective environmental education.

Meaning about the environment is produced from the representation of the environment through the words and pictures within the books. For example, there is a picture of a tree. As you just read that, social processes and practices took place and you conjured a mental picture or representation of what I was talking about. The words symbolized or signified a concept in your mind, which produced meaning. In that same way, two-dimensional images on paper (visual representations) produce mental conceptions or representations of what the image/thing you are looking at looks like in reality and what its meaning. This concept/mental image then symbolizes or signifies an ideology (or way of thinking about the earth).

This project is structured with a longer literature section than in most qualitative studies. Normally, studies with a qualitative methodology, by their inductive nature, have a shorter literature review section laid out in advance. This study deviates from that notion. Following Creswell's recommendations for the research structure of projects that are exploratory in nature and without much other research conducted in the area, I have cast a wide net (so to speak) in the literature review section (Creswell, 82). In addition, unlike many qualitative studies; I have hypothesized about outcomes. In order to lend structure to the study, I have chosen to lay out the theories, previous research and indicators in advance of data collection and have hypothesized about the results. In addition, the academic discipline of literature is, by nature, multi-disciplined, thereby furthering the necessity of being thorough.

Census

This study will purposely census the most popular children's books, defined as books for 0-8 year olds that sold the most copies in the United States in 2003. Because such a group should have the greatest impact on the largest number of children, a census of 41 of the top selling children's books was chosen from two of AllBookstores.com's Best Selling Children's Books Lists (Baby to 3 years) and (4 to 8 years) (see census spreadsheet in the Appendix). Four of the books were listed in both categories. So the census consists of 37 books.

Many factors were taken into consideration in choosing this census. The Caldecott Medal Award Winning Books were considered because they were considered to be the best children's books for theme and word content. The Newberry Award Winning Books were also considered because they are judged by their visual images (pictures). Both of these were used in previous content analysis research. I did not choose either of the award winning lists because despite the fact that they are considered the best of the best, only one book is chosen each year

for each award. They would represent the years 1938-2003 (Caldacott) and 1922-2003 (Newberry); therefore they would not be a representative census of the current depiction of the representation of the environment in children's literature in 2003 and are not my primary focus. The New York Times Best Selling Children's Books List for 2003 was also considered. This list was not chosen because it was not categorized by age group, so all children's books ages 0-15 were included. There were very few books for ages 0-8 and therefore would not have been a representative census of what younger children versus teenagers are exposed too. The All-time Best Selling Children's Books were also considered. This also did not seem to be a legitimate, representative census of the population because obviously the books that were published fifty years ago, for example, have had more time to sell more copies. It should be noted, however, that some of the books in this study's census are from decades ago and continue to make this year's best selling list. This fact is indicative of them being cultural icons, making them almost more representative of the dominant ideologies in Western culture. The 37 books that make up the census therefore are representative/indicative of what's most popular now, what sells the most now.

After closer examination of the books I omitted four of them from the census: *Kids to the Rescue: First Aid Techniques for Kids*, *Philadelphia Chickens: Book and CD of the Imaginary Music Revue*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *A Pop-up Adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Original Tale*, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *A Commemorative Pop-Up*. I did not include *Kids to the Rescue* in the analysis because it is not considered to be literature. It is more of a how-to book, not a story. In addition, the book "is designed to utilize the adult as a child's helper." It suggests reading the book along with role playing to help the child learn. Since it's stated purpose and most effective use is specifically as a tool to be used while interacting, it

differs significantly from the other books. Therefore it cannot be part of the census for the purposes of this study. *Philadelphia Chickens* was omitted because it also is not literature. It is a book of 17 songs, not stories and is therefore not appropriate for comparison with the other books. The last two were omitted because of their three-dimensional nature (pop-up books). The books truly come to life which makes them non-compatible with the rest of my census. I do not feel that reliability can be achieved if the measurements I'm attempting to be consistent with are inherently different. The rest of the census contains two-dimensional representations and this analysis is only focusing on the representation of the environment in this framework. Please see the limitations section for a further discussion of the ramifications towards my findings.

Data Collection

Data Collection proceeded according to the following procedures. Utilizing the seimiotic method, I conducted a textual analysis of all of the books. Many pro and anti-environmental indicators (issues, themes, ideologies, animals, settings, etc.) were identified (see social problem and ideologies sections) and described within the context of the story.

In order to accomplish this, I did the following: I read all of the books multiple times thinking about how the environment was being depicted. At the same time I thought about if and how we are teaching about the environment to children through literature. According to environmental education and sociological methodology, we should be presenting the natural world and its processes (ecological concepts) as well as environmental morals, values, behaviors and themes. In addition the representation of the environment should include framing human interaction with it as a social problem. Therefore my indicators of pro-environmental ideologies were as follows: 1) depiction of nature/ecological concepts, 1a) depiction of a background at all (verses being blank), 1b) depiction of indoor or outdoor background, 1c) depiction of any

animals or not, 1d) if so – which ones (types), 1e) animals depicted in their natural setting or not, 1f) animals depicted as anthropomorphized or not, 1g) depiction of specific elements of nature or not (the moon or rain for example), 1h) depiction of ecological processes or not; 2) depiction of environmental themes or not; 3) depiction of environmental morals, values and behaviors or not; 4) depiction of human interaction with the environment or not, 4a) if so, depiction of the environment as a social problem or not. I operationalized the environment as a social problem indicator by defining an environmental social problem as the relationship between humans and nature, specifically looking at how anthropogenic degradation to the earth is depicted. The above section (within the Literature Review) discussing the environmental social problems/issues informed this part of my analysis.

Simultaneously, I looked for representations of anti-environmental ideologies (Human Exemptionalism and Manifest Destiny). My indicators of this were as follows: 1) depictions of animals or nature as objectified; 2) depictions of control of nature; 3) depictions of nature for human use; 4) depiction of division between the human and natural realms; 5) depictions of fear of nature when it is not being controlled by humans; 6) ease with which the author sees it as appropriate to anthropomorphize the animals or nature; 7) depiction of material things (made from natural resources) as rewards for good behavior; 8) depiction of nature as a reward once the character has conformed to human ways; 9) depiction of character as unnatural or wild when not conforming to social norms and behaviors; 10) depiction of bad behavior being compared to animal behavior.

After assessing the first order meaning of the pro and anti-environmental representations, I started to think about the underlying cultural meanings associated with those representations. The above section (within the Literature Review and Theory Sections) that reviews

environmental and capitalist ideologies informed this part of my analysis. In addition to uncovering the second order or ideological environmental meanings, I evaluated if and how pro-environmental concepts and ideologies were coupled with capitalist or androcentric ideologies.

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative data collection included coding for manifest content, that is, “the visible surface content...concrete terms contained in communication” (Babbie 2004, p. 319) as well as coding for latent content, “the underlying meaning...tone” (319). The actual words and story lines were analyzed for key environmental terms, themes and ideologies as well as for their overall prevalence within the book. In general, the plot and moral(s) of the story were analyzed for environmental content as well as the environmental themes that are presented in each book. Emerging themes were analyzed using qualitative data analysis to see how children are socialized into the environment in the U. S. (Babbie 2004, p. 322).

The latent content was also analyzed from the pictures representing the story in two ways. First, each environmental variable that is represented pictorially was examined to see how the environment is represented (which settings, animals, activities, etc. were depicted) as a means of establishing if the environment is pictorially represented as a social problem. For example, I noted and described if pollution was or was not shown in pictures that contained any type of vehicle or train, etc. Second, any and all environmental ideologies suggested verbally and pictorially were noted and described.

Analysis

The study examined, through narrative semiotic analysis) what environmental ideologies are present and if environmental issues are addressed in the text or pictorially, as well as which issues, themes and ideologies were most prevalent. In addition, I look at the extent to which

these pro-environmental representations are coupled with HEP ideologies. At the end of the study, the qualitative evaluation (textual analysis) of the books' content provided data to answer the research questions (see findings section). Through analytic induction and rich description of the representation of the environment, patterns or correlations among variables, themes and ideologies emerged that shed light on the role children's books play in the environmental socialization of America's youth.

Intercoder Reliability

Inter-coder reliability was checked by Julie Boudreaux, Masters of Education, UNO, 1998 and Masters of Political Science, UNO (abt). She thoroughly read all of the data and edited the entire thesis. She works as Project manager and independent contractor for educational training NGOs in Poland.

Limitations

It is salient to note that following Cooper's (2001) study, this study does not attempt to test how environmental ideologies and how portrayals of the environment as a social problem in children's literature are perceived or interpreted by children, only how it is depicted. Although this is a limitation of the research, it does not reduce its relevance. In order to understand how children perceive the environment in the literature that they are exposed to, research must first establish how it is represented. It is important to understand the ideologies, themes, images, and stereotypes depicted in children's literature in order to understand how children form early environmental perceptions and attitudes. This study is simply the first step in understanding how children's literature is an agent of environmental socialization. Future studies can strive to establish the extent of the links between how the environment is represented, what is internalized

as normative environmental behaviors and consequently what pro or anti-environmental behaviors are reproduced.

Census Limitations

A limitation of this study is that this census of books is not a representative census, in that the environmental representations are not indicative of what all children in America are exposed to because of socioeconomic differences. Although best sellers, they may not be popular among all social demographics because of access and choice. In attempting to ascertain the validity of my purposive sampling method the following questions arise. Does purposive sampling of the top 38 best selling children's books represent what all the children in America are exposed to or is there an inherent bias? Does it represent only what the dominant culture, the middle class has access to? How many kids are really read to? Who reads children's books to their kids? Do reading habits vary by different strata of society? For example, do the different cultural, ethnic and educational backgrounds of parents' effect how much they read to their children? What are the reading habits (to their children) of the average American parent of children under eight? What are their attitudes about the representation of the environment in children's books? Which stratum of society does my purposive census of books really reach and what are their reading habits and opinions about environmental children's literature? Is the best selling children's book list representative of what the average child really is exposed to? Do smaller ethnic groups have their own children's books that may be selling a large number in proportion to their population size; but are not included in the best selling list for the nation. If so perhaps a stratified or cluster sampling method may be more appropriate. Or is the best selling list only representative of the books that reach children who are read to?

It is probable that thousands, perhaps millions of children are not exposed to reading before formal education. For example, children in lower socioeconomic families may have parents who do not have the time or money to indulge in such activities. It is also possible that children in middle to upper socioeconomic families are less exposed to books, despite the availability of resources, because of the proliferation of technologies such as TV, video games, movies, computer learning programs (CDs) for kids. With these things in mind, it is recognized that this census of books probably only represents what the children in the middle or upper strata of society are exposed to.

Other Limitations

In addition, the scope of the analysis of environmental education principles is limited because of my lack of expertise in this field. So analysis was not done on educational elements such as, for example, how associations are represented. Instead, the ideological elements of education are analyzed in order to focus on the role it plays in environmentally socializing children through literature.

On a personal note, it should be mentioned that I perceive the world, and therefore this study, through a particular environmental lens which was formed by my social location as a resident of Louisiana; a state that has a long history of and current trend of environmental degradation. This is manifested in the social construction of terms like “Cancer Ally” and “New Orleans as the next Atlantis,” (referring to coastal erosion issues which bombard the public consciousness on a daily basis). In all cases I have done everything possible to avoid being biased by justifying my methodologies and having my work double-checked by more objective social scientists.

In addition, because my approach is post-structural in nature and is within the realm of interpretation, which is highly subjective; others may have different interpretations than the ones I have presented in this thesis. As much as possible I have tried to be objective and use categorical guidelines to “structure” the study in such a way that other scientists following my format would arrive at the same conclusions that I have.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS

Pro - Environmental Books

The Lorax (1971)

By Dr. Seuss

The rich textual description and pictorial depiction of nature in *The Lorax* coupled with the representation of the environment as a social problem produces the pro-environmental ideologies of Deep Ecology and Preservation. Although the animals and trees illustrated are imaginary (do not exist in nature) and are anthropomorphized, they are shown in the natural world and function as they would in reality, thereby still teaching real ecological lessons. For example, there are no such things as Humming-Fish or Bar-ba-loots, however, the fish are shown swimming in water and the latter are living in the trees and eating their fruit. As the story progresses the human interaction with the environment is constructed as a problem for both humans and nature. Environmental problems are presented textually and pictorially using ecological language (smog, for example). The Lorax, who by his own proclamations speaks for nature, serves as an environmental conscience. He not only points out the problems of deforestation, and air and water pollution; but also connects them to the negative affect they have on the health of all of the animals, eventually requiring them to leave their homes. This deepens the surface ecological lessons by creating cognitive links between the pollution from the factory and the inability of animals to survive in those conditions. So, in addition to depicting the positive elements of nature, the book addresses the negative environmental consequences of capitalism, showing the anthropogenic environmental degradation that occurs as a result of technological advancements, production, consumption and apathy towards the environment for the sake of making money or having material possessions. Representing both the intrinsic value

of nature and the devastation of human impacts deeply enriches the pro-environmental ideologies.

The book begins with a young boy walking around a devastated landscape, “where the Grickle-grass grows and the wind smells slow-and-sour when it blows and no birds ever sing.” He wants to know about the Lorax that used to live there. The Once-ler agrees to whisper the secret story to him, but will not show his face. In fact, we never see what the Once-ler looks like. As the story unfolds we discover that the devastation was directly his fault, revealing why he won’t show his face and doesn’t want anyone to know what he’s done. He is ashamed. This shows that the Once-ler has remorse and that he has changed his views to be more pro-environmental.

As he begins telling the story, the background setting changes to a beautiful flourishing outdoor environment with lots of colorful trees and animals. This is also represented textually, “Way back in the days when the grass was still green and the pond was still wet and the clouds were still clean, and the song of the Swomee-Swans rang out in space... bright colored tufts of the Truffula Trees! Mile after mile in the fresh morning breeze.” The anthropomorphized Brown Bar-ba-loots (small bear or dog-like creatures that walk on two feet) are shown playing in the shade of the trees and tossing the Truffula fruit to each other and catching it in their mouths. We see the “Humming-Fish” swimming around in the “rippulous pond” as the Once-ler happens upon this bounty of plenty (as he sees it) “All my life I’d been searching for trees such as these.” As if he has just struck gold, his first instinct is to build a small shop so he can harvest the trees, “[he] chopped down a Truffula Tree with one chop.” He takes the tuft and knits a “Thneed” (a sweater-looking thing) in order to sell it and make money. The underlying meaning is that it is ok to harvest natural resources to make material goods for capital gain. However, this is

immediately countered by the appearance of the Lorax who “pop[s] out of the stump of the tree [he] chopped down.” The Lorax is quite upset, “I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees, for trees have no tongues.” He demands to know “What’s that THING you’ve made out of my Truffula tuft?” The emphasis on the word “THING” signifies that it is a material possession, a human social artifact made from natural resources. The Once-ler’s attitude of complete apathy towards the environment is clear, “There’s no cause for alarm. I chopped just one tree. I am doing no harm. I’m being quite useful. This thing is a Thneed. A Thneed’s a Fine-Something-That-All-People-Need!” The attitude of the Once-ler reflects the Human Exemptionalism ideologies of capitalism, that in our modern society we place value on the material goods we want and think we need. The Lorax does not think anyone will buy it and says, “Sir! You are crazy with greed.” But “the very next minute” someone does purchase it signifying the concepts of supply and demand: the more we produce, the more we will consume. In true capitalistic fashion the Once-ler ignores the Lorax’s advice, “Shut up, if you please.” He builds a “radio-phone” and calls all of his relatives to tell them about this opportunity. “Here’s a wonderful chance for the whole Once-ler Family to get mighty rich!” He builds a huge factory and the entire family comes to work there signifying the ultimate goal in modern America, the American dream, to become wealthy.

At this point the background landscape starts to change and continues to be degraded throughout the rest of the book. As the factory and production increase in size and amount of pollution, the natural resources decline and the pictures become more dark and gloomy. The number of trees shown lessens as the number of stumps and machines increase. We see axes chopping and trees falling and a horse drawn cart transporting the tufts to the factory for processing. “We were all knitting Thneeds just as busy as bees, to the sound of the chopping of

Truffula Trees.” As his business grows the text tells us that “Now, chopping one tree at a time was too slow... So I quickly invented my Super-Axe-Hacker which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker.” The picture shows a machine with a long rod and four axes simultaneously cutting the trees. There is smoke (pollution) coming from it, signifying that business is growing at the expense of nature and that we need to produce faster and faster destroying more and more of nature to meet society’s demands.

The Lorax stays a way for awhile but then comes back to again stand up for nature and try to convince the Once-ler to stop the destruction, this time because of the effect it has having on the animals. “I’m also in charge of the Brown Bar-ba-loots who played in the shade ... and happily lived, eating Truffula Fruits,” he says. “NOW ... thanks to your hacking my trees to the ground, there’s not enough Truffula Fruit to go’ round.” The Bar-ba-loots are pictured standing holding their stomachs with droopy eyes, looking very sick. In the background there are more stumps than trees. The Lorax sends them away saying, “They loved living here. But I can’t let them stay. They’ll have to find food.” The picture shows all of them leaving in a procession. This teaches an important ecological lesson, that when humans consume too much of nature, they are actually depleting what animals use and therefore destroying the habitat essential for survival. The text tells us that at this point the Once-ler has some misgivings about what he has done, “I, the Once-ler, felt sad as I watched them all go. BUT ... business is business! And business must grow.” However, he sees this degradation of the ecosystem and the displacement of the animals as necessary for the treadmill of production which is clearly more important to him. “I meant no harm. I most truly did not. But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I got.” This acknowledges that humans can degrade nature, even if they don’t mean too; but that even once

this is recognized, human desires and needs which demand continual growth, are still considered more important than the negative effects on nature.

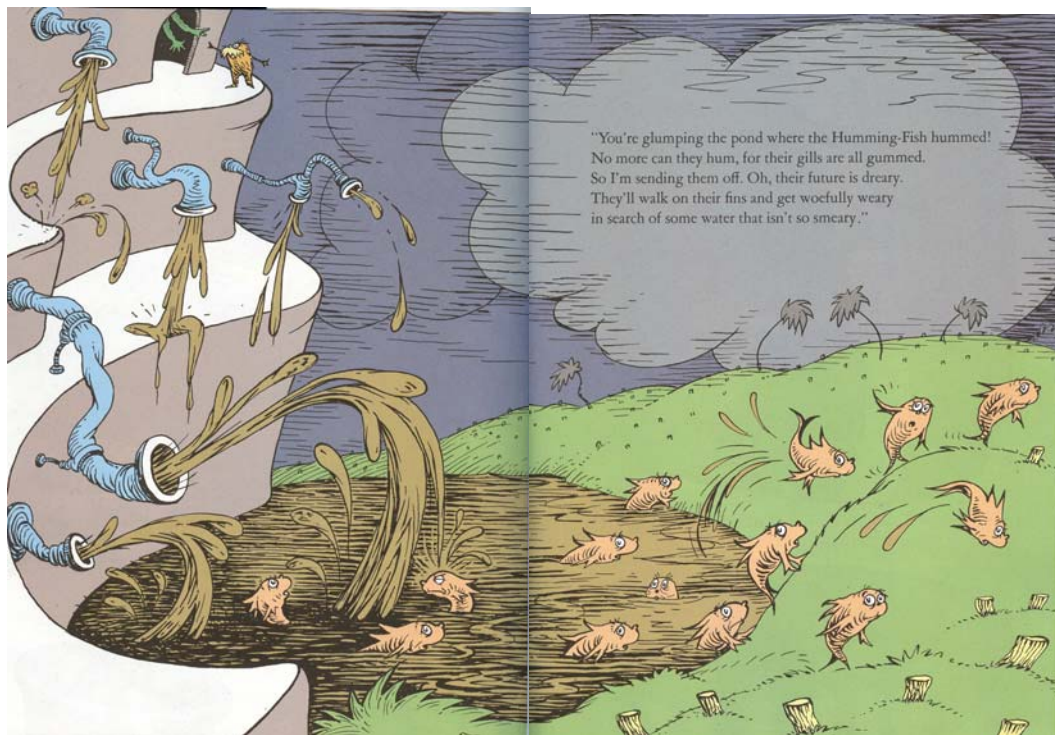


Illustration 1: *The Lorax*

To achieve his dream (of being wealthy) the Once-ler will proceed at any cost. He is displaying extremely anti-environmental attitudes and behaviors. He tells the reader that he “biggered my factory. I biggered my roads. I biggered my wagons. I biggered the loads... I went right on biggering...selling more Thneeds. And I biggered my money, which everyone needs.” The picture shows a huge factory with an enormous amount of smoke coming out of four pipes at the top. There is a cart on wheels on a track coming to the plant full of trees. He has advanced his technology again (no longer using a horse and buggy) which enables him to produce more and more, signifying how technological advances can enhance production and consumption. There are two mechanical cranes that empty the cart into the plant. In addition, there are boxes packed and waiting at the door to be picked up and delivered. There are three

vehicles packed and heading away to deliver the goods with smoke coming from their exhaust pipes and advertisements on the sides of the vehicle that say “You Need a Thneed.” The Lorax comes back again, this time to inform the Once-ler of the effect his business is having on the birds and the fish as well as showing the effects it is having on human health. He is coughing and sneezing as he says, “Once-ler! You’re making such smogulous smoke! My poor Swomee-Swans... why they can’t sing a note! No one can sing who has smog in his throat.” The picture shows that the air pollution has spread everywhere and the birds look very decrepit. As he sends all of the birds away they look sad and the text reads, “They may have to fly for a month...or a year... To escape from the smog you’ve smogged-up around here.” Utilizing environmental language and revealing true ecological effects again reinforces the negative effects of pollution on animals and humans. He continues saying, “Your machinery chugs on, day and night without stop making Gluppity-Glupp. Also Schloppity-Schlopp. And what do you do with this leftover goo?” The picture then shows brown liquids coming from multiple pipes being pumped into the ground with the fish walking on their fins out of the water to escape the hydro-contamination. He sends the fish away saying, “You’re glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed! No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed.” They are now, “in search of some water that isn’t so smeary.”

At this point the Once-ler again displays anti-environmental attitudes by getting really angry, “Well, I have my rights, sir, and I’m telling *you* I intend to go on doing just what I do!” He is not concerned with the harm he is inflicting and is intent on, “BIGGERING,” to make more Thneeds, “which everyone, EVERYONE, *EVERYONE* needs!” Right then the last Truffula tree gets cut down and having completely depleted the natural resource, he is forced to close down and the Once-ler family, “drove away under the smoke-smuggered stars [and the]

bad smelling sky.” The Lorax, having nothing left to protect, flies through “a hole in the smog,” leaving behind a pile of rocks with the word “UNLESS” written on it. Although the Once-ler doesn’t understand, he starts to feel bad and perhaps even have an environmental conscience, demonstrated textually, “I’ve worried about it with all of my heart.” Unfortunately it seems this environmental concern only comes about because he is feeling the effects of what he has done (having to close down his business).

Now that the little boy is there, the Once-ler finally understands what the Lorax meant and he explains to the boy who is standing on the rock platform that, “UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” The Once-ler throws down the last Truffula seed telling him he is in charge of it. He has a new pro-environmental outlook, “And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs. Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care. Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air. Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack. Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back.” This produces an ideology of Deep Ecology and Preservationism in that he is recognizing the intrinsic value of nature and encouraging protection of it instead of consumption. Him giving the seed to the boy signifies that the responsibility for protecting nature and preventing future environmental degradation lies in human hands and more specifically in the next generation – the child.

The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV (1984)
By Stan & Jan Berenstain

The representation of the environment in this book produces pro-environmental ideologies, despite the undertones of animal objectification and anthropomorphosis. The Berenstain Bears live as humans, in a house with electricity, with a TV (and a stand made out of a tree trunk), with the cubs attending school, riding bikes, eating dinner at a table and displaying human emotions when they are unable to watch TV for a week. It is no coincidence, in my

opinion, that the authors, Stan and Jan Berenstain, have the same last name as the family of bears. It infers that the story is somewhat autobiographical (based on their own family problem – kids watching too much TV). However no humans are shown in the book. At the same time that the bears are anthropomorphized, they live in the forest and their house is literally one with the tree. The tree is alive and well and it is depicted as a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship between the family of bears and the tree, signifying harmony with nature. In this way, the animals are supposed to represent humans and to portray and teach about a human problem. At the same time, the bears are objectified, used as a median to convey this lesson. As the story progresses, however, the environmental representation still produces pro-environmental ideologies because the human problem is presented as a call to return to nature. It is specifically trying to teach about getting away from modern society, the synthetic postmodern world – to get back to family and nature! In addition, a good portion of the book shows the outdoors, the forest and more significantly, the depictions of the family returning to the outdoors are pleasant, magical experiences. This reinforces the pro-environmental ideologies of deep ecology. Nature is a wonder, a beauty which holds all sorts of incredible secrets that should be experienced and appreciated!

The anthropomorphosis in this book is incredibly real in its depiction of human relationships and textually frank about the message it is conveying. The mother bear is the most vocal about her annoyance with the family's complete immersion in the synthetic world of TV and the need for a return to reality and to nature. There are underlying messages here about women being more in tune with nature and having a more caring, nurturing essence, like Mother Nature. Mama bear has more appreciation for nature. "There's a lot more to life than TV – like homework, for instance. And fresh air and sunshine..." When Papa bear wants to watch the

news because he “won’t know what’s going on in the world if I don’t watch the TV news!” she becomes downright sarcastic, “It’s called the newspaper.” When Papa argues further, “And the weather... How will we know what the weather will be?” (without watching TV) Mama bear says, “Try this. It’s called putting your hand out the window to see if it’s raining.” She is shown demonstrating this to them! These representations signify an ideology of opposition to modern human lifestyles. Mama bear is upset that the family has been so removed from real life and nature and drawn into modernity.

Mama bear goes beyond opposition to this artificial reality and advocates that they experience the wonders of nature. This is evidence of deep ecology, an effort to teach about the intrinsic value of nature. When the Baby bears want to watch a special on TV, Mama bear refuses saying, “Mother Nature has a much bigger special waiting for us. We’re going to sit outside and watch the stars come out.” Despite the fact that the cubs don’t really want to go outside, they are depicted textually and pictorially as becoming aware of and appreciating nature. “But as they sat out under the great sky, a spell came over the bears. It was all so big and beautiful.” During the week they aren’t allowed to watch TV a transformation occurs within the family as they are portrayed returning to and enjoying the outdoors. “And after a while the whole sky was full of stars. And it was very special – more special than anything they’d ever seen on TV.” The family is also shown going on “nature walks” during which they “watch tadpoles hatch out of eggs [and] an orb spider spin a magnificent web.” Again, the presentation of real natural life and peaceful human interaction with and appreciation of nature reinforces pro-environmental ideologies.

These meanings are further reinforced by the other textual and pictorial representations of nature which teach ecological concepts and illustrate the bear family’s metamorphosis. The

reader is told it is “Spring in Bear Country [and the] air was sparkling clean.” The outdoors, a forest, and many animals are shown (bluebirds, trout, tadpoles, spiders, flowers, butterflies, bats, a stream, the sun, moon and stars). The kid bears are referred to by their real biological identity: cubs; spiders are spinning webs, tadpoles are hatching and bats are “out for their breakfast of insects.” Papa bear even explains that “Bats sleep during the day, so this is their breakfast time.” As the story progresses the family is slowly reintroduced into the natural world through these encounters with nature. The reader is told that the cubs used to have fun outdoors before they began watching too much TV. When the cubs ride their bikes we are told that “while it seemed strange not watching television, it was fun riding bikes and trikes again. Sort of...” indicating the transformation process. Underlying this is a statement on how far away from nature the bear family had really gone. They were so into the synthetic world they had to re-learn the natural one. Mama bear even points out that it is the habit of watching TV that she is against, “sitting in front of it day after day like old stumps waiting for dry rot to set in.” Her message is that the modern world has completely separated the bears (her family) from nature and this is a negative thing.

So despite the anthropomorphosis and objectification of animals to teach about modern life, the story really produces pro-environmental ideologies. It accomplishes this through its representation of the intrinsic value of nature and the need for humans to return to the natural world.

Middle Ground

***The Sneetches and Other Stories* (1961)**

By Dr. Seuss

This book uses an imaginary animal (the Sneetch) to teach a human lesson about discrimination based on physical attributes. The Sneetches are anthropomorphized bird-like

animals that walk around upright on two feet. Although the setting is identifiably outdoors, there is no significant nature shown. The one animal shown, a fish, is depicted standing in water looking at the Sneetches. The story focuses on the Sneetches with stars on their bellies ostracizing the Sneetches without stars until one day the “Fix-it-Up Chappie,” Sylvester McMonkey McBean roles into town with a machine that can fix their problem. He charges the Sneetches without stars to add stars on and charges the Sneetches with stars to take them off. The machine runs all day removing and replacing stars until “neither the Plain nor the Star-Bellies Knew whether this one was that one... or that one was this one.” Using the anthropomorphized imaginary animals to portray a human problem without depicting humans objectifies them. The lack of a significant natural setting while depicting a human problem contributes to this objectification producing an underlying ideology of androcentrism.

Bob Books First (1976)
By Bobby Lynn Masalen

There are twelve books encompassed in *Bob Books First*. Since they are all very basic and similar in nature, I will analyze them together. The books are for beginners designed to teach basic reading, for example, “Mat sat.” The entire book has a white background with black line drawings that are not filled in. The depictions of all characters, Mat and Sam (for example in the first book) are always shown outdoors. Outdoors is depicted very simply with a few squiggly lines for grass, a flower, a tree, a fence and a smiling sun. There are no animals shown in the first book, but some of the others in the series do introduce the reader to some animals (a cat, dog, pig, hen and a lion (described as a big cat and shown in captivity). The animals are all depicted textually and pictorially as pets. The use of domesticated animals, the portrayal of them as pets, and their anthropomorphosis which shows them to be happy about being pets, objectify the animals. Although the books do show the characters outside, in nature, the animals are used

to teach about human life. Therefore, I would not consider the books to be pro-environmental in that they produce an underlying ideology of androcentrism. There is no focus on nature and no significant environmental or ecological concepts are shown.

The Going to Bed Book (1982)

By Sandra Boynton

This book uses animals to socialize children to human bedtime habits. The story centers on human lifestyles by depicting animals doing human bedtime activities: taking a bath, hanging towels, brushing their teeth, finding pajamas, and when the moon is up, exercising. The animals are depicted in a realistic enough fashion to identify what they are (an elephant, rabbit, moose, pig, rhinoceros, lion, dog and hippopotamus), but are obviously not in a realistic setting. Not only would it be unrealistic for all of these animals to be sharing the same habitat, they are depicted on a boat! So even though they are in the middle of the ocean, most of the scenes depict the animals in an interior setting with stairs, a chest of drawers, weights and a bathtub. In the end, it is the calm image of nature, with the boat floating along the deep blue ocean which conveys that they will get peaceful sleep because they did what they were supposed to. This is reinforced as the text reads “The moon is high. The sea is deep. They rock and rock and rock to sleep.”

Guess How Much I love You (1994)

By Sam Mc Bratney

Abby Award 1996

In this book, animals are used to portray a parent – offspring/child relationship with Little Nutbrown Hare (the young rabbit) continually saying how much he loves Big Nutbrown Hare (the parent rabbit) and vice versa. The rabbits and nature are depicted realistically as “Big Nutbrown Hare settled Little Nutbrown Hare into his bed of leaves.” The entire story takes place outdoors with illustrations done in beautiful watercolors depicting trees, shrubs, grass, butterflies

and flowers. While the rabbits are shown in their natural habitat and some of their activities are natural (what rabbits actually do – jumping and hopping) many of their activities and behaviors are human. For example, Big Nutbrown Hare stands holding the little one in his arms (much like humans hold a baby). He kisses him goodnight and tosses the little one up over his head in the air. This anthropomorphosis produces the underlying message that the story is about more than just the rabbits.

It is the (human) parent – child relationship which is actually being depicted. The animal relationship is used to teach about human relationships. This is reinforced by showing human artifacts (fences, a dirt road and once, a house in the far distance) without depicting any humans. In addition there are several pictures that have a stump of a tree, showing the human impact on nature. So despite the natural setting presented, the rabbits are still really just a median to teach about human life. Even if it was argued that depicting the animals in such a kind and loving way is pro-environmental, the loving relationship between the rabbits is modeled after and for the purpose of teaching about human relationships.

It is also important to note that Big Nutbrown Hare is referred to as a “he” in the text, indicating that the rabbit is male, and the father. There is no female bunny shown and the only depiction we see is that the father is the sole parent responsible for the care of his child. Not depicting the mother as the primary care giver signifies a pro-feminist ideology. Showing that father child relationships can be like mother child relationships, that males can be nurturers goes against societal norms.



Illustration 2: *Guess How Much I Love You*

***Animal Kisses* (2000)
By Barney Saltzberg**

Animals are used in this book as objectified medians to teach children about the human sense of touch. This is done, however, with little human representation throughout the book. Except for the last page which has a picture of a child, the reader is the only human presence, acknowledged through the text which specifically asks the child if he or she likes a certain kind of kiss from a certain animal. The reader is then supposed to feel the nose of the animal (each has a specific texture) in order to answer the question. The text describes the surface that they are feeling (for e.g. “fuzzy bear”). The overall lack of a realistic background (not depicting the animals in their natural settings) focuses the reader’s attention onto just the animals. The change in texture on the animal’s nose or tongue further focuses the reader on just that aspect of the animal. The fact that these depictions are to teach children how to identify the nuances in the

human sense of touch and not to teach about the specific animal that is focused upon is significant. In addition, the entire plot focuses on the animals giving affection to humans (in human ways – through kissing) with the reader (the child) deciding if he or she likes it or not. This representation produces underlying ideologies of human domination and androcentrism. Not only are the animals objects for human use, but humans choose which animals will be used for which purpose.

Although all of the animals are identifiable (even though they are simplistic drawings) it is the way in which they are presented that produces their objectification. The depictions are basic drawings (as opposed to real photographs) in which the animals are drawn on a large scale (taking up two pages) with solid backgrounds of only two to three colors, focusing the attention on just the animal. The cow is the only animal depicted in a somewhat realistic setting, standing on green with a blue background with white puffs (seemingly standing outside with a blue sky and white clouds). In addition, two of the textures do not correspond realistically to what the animal's nose would feel like in real life. Three of the animals, the cat, fish and bear, are presented with textures that are realistically reflective of what they would feel like in real life. The “scratchy cat kisses” are depicted with a sandpaper feeling tongue. The “rubbery fish kisses” correspond to the rubbery feeling fish lips. The fuzzy bear has a soft fluffy feel corresponding to how fur really feels. The velvety cow nose and squeaky pig nose (which you can push and it squeaks) were not realistic depictions of touch since neither a cow nor a pig's nose feels like velvet in real life. This manner of representation makes it clear that the lesson is not focused on teaching real biological concepts (true features of different animals) but rather on teaching about human touch using animals as objects and medians for learning.



Illustration 3: *Animal Kisses*

Once the reader has felt the different textures, they are asked to rank which animal kisses are preferred, signifying human superiority over nature. The animals want to give affection but it is the human that is asked, “What kind of kisses do you like best?” It is the human who will decide which animals they would like to interact with. The picture reinforces this ideology by showing all of the animals completely surrounding and kissing a child. This is the only time that a human is actually shown in the book and the interaction depicts the animals centered on human needs or desires.

***Counting Kisses* (2001)
By Karen Katz**

Focusing on teaching numbers, counting, and body parts, the depictions all take place indoors with very little nature shown. The adults and pets in the story kiss a designated number of the child’s body parts, “ten little kisses on teeny tiny toes,” or “five quick kisses on an itty bitty nose,” progressively counting fewer and fewer on each page. The depiction of the outside

world is seen through a window three times and functions to denote the time of day. When the text says that the child is tired, the view through the window shows the sun rising, letting the reader know that it is morning. When the text says, “two gentle kisses on tired closing eyes,” the view through the window is a dark sky with stars and a moon. There are two animals shown, a cat and a dog, who also kiss the children a certain number of times on specific body parts. The focus on only humans with very little of the natural world shown coupled with the depictions of domesticated animals produces an ideology of androcentrism.

Toes, Ears and Nose (2002)

A Lift –the-Flap Book

By Marion Dane Bauer

This book is focused completely on teaching the reader about human anatomy. The fact that no nature is shown produces an ideology of androcentrism. Each picture is a close-up of a child and the reader discovers each part of the body by lifting a flap to see that “Under my hat are two ... [lift flap] ears.” Each flap finishes the sentence, showing and textually saying the body part (fingers, toes, ears, nose, elbows, knees, back, belly button, teeth, tongue and eyes). The ideology is emphasized by the last depiction of the whole child covered with the caption, “But the very best secret of all ... [is] me.”

Anti-Environmental Books

The Little Engine That Could (1930)

By Watty Piper

Technology (machines), toys (social artifacts) and animals are anthropomorphized centering the book on modern human life. Despite the fact that it is set mostly outdoors, and real animals are shown (a dog, bunny, squirrel, bull in a fence and an elephant) the focus is on human life. Nature is the obstacle (literally going over the mountain) to ongoing progress. The entire plot and dilemma of the story revolves around the importance of technology for the treadmill of

production in a capitalist system. There are underlying ideologies of individualism and the modern American dream (that an individual's hard work will lead to success). This ideal, that hard work will bring success no matter what the obstacle (in this case nature – the mountain) is epitomized by the Little Engine that “thought [he] could” and then does go over the mountain (even though he had never done so before). The underlying ideology is of human success being equated with human domination of nature.

The story centers on a train carrying “every kind of thing boys or girls could want” that breaks down before it can deliver “all these wonderful things to the good little boys and girls on the other side of the mountain.” The wonderful toys include objects to play with (dolls, toy animals and engines, airplanes, tops, jack-knives, picture puzzles, and books) as well as “good things for boys and girls to eat” (big golden oranges, red-cheeked apples, milk, fresh spinach, peppermint drops and lollipops). The background setting changes from outdoors (when focusing on the dilemma – the train breaking down) to a completely blank white background with just a picture of the toys for the kids. This highlights the social artifacts. It is as though these human things must travel through nature. Nature is a means to an end - a necessary evil. The focus throughout is on trying to get the goods to market (delivered to the kids) over the mountain. When the engine finally does succeed in helping them, the picture shows the train cresting the mountain with an enormous sun in the background. This is very reflective of capitalist ideologies in that modern society relies heavily on technology to meet everyday needs and desires (the human way of life) and dominates nature. In addition, it is the good boys and girls who are rewarded with material things, also reflective of capitalist ideology. The focus on needing to and trying to get over the mountain for a happy ending – to have success, signifies that humans must conquer nature (dominate through technology) in order to succeed. The smoke

(exhaust) that is depicted coming from the trains is therefore a good sign, an engine working. Pollution is a necessary evil for success of the treadmill of production.

This is again exemplified through the anthropomorphized toys who are trying to get help for the train to go over the mountain to the children. It is not a human attempting to help the shipment get to the kids; it is all of the toy dolls and animals that are asking for help. The human-like “dolls with blue eyes and yellow curls,” the “dolls with brown eyes and brown bobbed heads,” the toy soldier and clown, humpty dumpty and all of the “toy animals” (giraffes, teddy bears, baby elephant, monkey, duck, and rocking horse) are very concerned about the children and want to be delivered to them (owned by them). They all walk around and talk and try to convince another engine to help them. The animals are first objectified (as toys), then anthropomorphized to act on behalf of the children (humans) by attempting to persuade the trains (technology) to help them dominate nature (go over the mountain).

Trains (technology) are anthropomorphized, just like the animals and toys. In the beginning of the book the train is smiling as it chugs along, until it breaks down. The many different trains that refuse to help are making judgments just as humans do. They are the superior because they have the power to go over the mountain – to conquer nature. They decide who and what is worthy of making the trip. The passengers and the big machines for human production are worthy – not a few toys and treats for a small group of people (children). It is more important not to deviate from their schedules of mass production. The shiny new engine (the passenger train) is transporting large groups of people. Meeting human needs is more important than helping a small group of toys. This is depicted textually as he says “I pull the likes of you? Indeed not!” The “big strong engine” (the freight train) is carrying “big machines over the mountain... These machines print books and newspapers...” (machines for mass

production). This image reflects a core principle of capitalism: the benefit for many over a few and the concept of mass production. The “dingy, rusty old engine... [that] looks very old and tired... with weary wheels” wants to help them but can’t. Even when the toys ask, “Please Kind Engine” he responds “I can not. I can not.” The underlying meaning produced is the need to constantly be producing new things, the need for new technology to replace old technology to “keep up with the Jones,” to make more things faster, to keep the wheel of production turning. It is not acceptable to the treadmill of production for the train to break down before the goods arrive at their destination.

In this case, technology has failed us and at the same time – taken over. There is no human conductor driving the train, it is the train in control of itself. Society is so dependent on technology that there is a crisis if it fails. In this way, technology is what controls us. What we have is based on which technology is functioning at the time, determining which goods can be provided. This is reinforced by the trains’ ability to decide if they will help or not and the consequences of not providing help (the children don’t get their toys and food).

The little blue engine that finally helps them exemplifies the modern American dream – achievement of one’s goal through hard work. He didn’t think that he could. “I’m not very big... They use me only for switching trains in the yard. I have never been over the mountain.” Even though he had not experienced the outside world, he was able to conquer nature. Not only was he able to go over the mountain, he is even shown picking up speed as he ascends the mountain side. The underlying ideologies of the American dream – that one can grow up without opportunity and can still succeed – are shown by the hard work and success of the little blue engine. This is reinforced by the depiction of children running towards the train with the caption reading, “The good little boys and girls in the city will be happy because you helped us,

kind, Little Blue Engine.” So the anthropomorphized train teaches about the American way of life. It encourages and teaches kids that if they think they can do something and try really hard, they can achieve it. The toy animals and the little blue engine are used to teach this lesson.

Goodnight Moon (1947)
By Margaret Wise Brown

The book is focused on specifically teaching children the names of objects encountered by humans in an urban setting. This is done, however, without depicting any humans within the book and utilizing animals as objects to be identified along with other human artifacts (objects). In addition, most of the animals in the room are either anthropomorphized or domesticated, including the main character (the young rabbit) that lives in the room and is pictured getting into bed and saying goodnight to each object. The unrealistic depiction of animals (as objects, anthropomorphized and not in their natural settings) signifies the importance of material objects and modern human life over nature. These underlying ideologies of androcentrism and domination are produced by this objectification of nature and the almost complete depiction of the natural world as separate from human life.

This ideology is produced by setting almost the entire story inside bunny’s room, with the outside world seen only through the windows and by stressing human artifacts without showing humans. The absence of humans is highlighted when bunny says “Goodnight nobody,” depicted on a completely blank page. In addition, bunny says “Goodnight noises” while inside the room, inferring at least the possibility that the noises came from human activities (Noise pollution?). With only two exceptions, all of the objects are shown over and over again in “the great green room,” separate from nature. The reader is introduced to a telephone, a red balloon, a pair of mittens, a little toy house, a comb (which has the word bunny on it), a brush, two clocks and a pair of socks. The focus is shifted to a specific object by textually identifying it and then

depicting only that object on a blank page (only a white background). After the book identifies most everything depicted, then it systematically goes through those objects again, specifically saying goodnight to each. The only two times we see the natural world, the outdoors (when bunny says goodnight to the stars and to the air) there is nothing else shown (no animals or people). The stars, air and moon, however, are objects that bunny says good night to. Social life is depicted as separate from nature signifying androcentrism and human domination over nature.

These ideologies are further produced by anthropomorphizing the animals shown or by depicting them as objects for human use and pleasure. Part of the room's decoration includes a zebra skin rug on the floor by the bed, clearly signifying animals as objects for human use. A giraffe and an elephant are the only other wild animals depicted and are toys on a shelf, objects to be played with. The only animals which are depicted as alive in the story are the old and young rabbits that live there, the kittens (domesticated animals) and a mouse. The décor also includes three pictures on the walls: one of a cow jumping over the moon, one of "three little bears sitting on chairs" and one of a rabbit tempting a smaller rabbit with a carrot on the end of a fishing pole. The animals are objects in pictures that are hung on the wall as art. It is important to note that the third picture was not mentioned textually as were the first two. The old and young rabbits in the book are clearly parallel to humans in that they live indoors, in a human room, bunny sleeps in a bed. The older rabbit is depicted sitting in rocker knitting with text referring to her as "a quiet old lady." This is important because the picture on the wall depicts a large rabbit sitting with a fishing pole – trying to catch a smaller rabbit. The depiction of the rabbits as anthropomorphized in bunny's room gives meaning to the picture on the wall. The underlying message is nature for human use. In addition, the large rabbit in the picture on the

wall is attempting to lure the smaller rabbit, suggesting that the smaller rabbit is prey. Again, this reinforces ideologies of androcentrism and human domination over nature.

Harold and the Purple Crayon (1955)
By Crockett Johnson

The story revolves around Harold who creates the world around him by drawing it with his purple crayon. The background is blank/white throughout the entire book. The underlying ideology is of human domination over nature. Harold creates and controls the environment around him. In addition, when Harold loses control of the situation, when he accidentally creates something he can't control, there is a fear of nature depicted. This fear goes away as soon as he draws something that controls the situation. There are underlying ideologies of human superiority and androcentrism. This androcentrism can be seen in the depiction of the moon (which he drew/created) as always with him. We are told that the "moon walked with him." It moves with him everywhere he goes. The underlying meaning is that nature is there for human use. It is centered around Harold. The background being blank is significant because it focuses the reader on Harold and what he creates. He has God-like powers to create a perilous nature and then is depicted as smart enough to figure out a way to escape her danger. This ideology of domination is further depicted when we learn the reasons Harold has for creating nature – for his own personal use. Harold is shown drawing a moon and the text says "There wasn't any moon, and Harold needed a moon for a walk in the moonlight." The underlying message is that natural resources are for human possession and consumption.

As Harold continues on his journey it becomes clear that he is afraid of nature until he can control it. His first concern is that "He didn't want to get lost in the woods. So he made a very small forest, with just one tree in it." The underlying fear of the power of nature is clear. He makes sure that nature will not overtake him by controlling it first, thus limiting it to only one

tree. This fear is overcome when he decides what is appropriate for nature, how it should be.

The text tells us that he was drawing and therefore creating the forest because that's "where Harold thought a forest ought to be." Nature revolves around his choices.

When Harold realizes that the apple tree could benefit him, "the apples would be very tasty," he then creates a "frightening dragon under the tree to guard the apples." The underlying message is that nature is a possession – he created it for his use – and one that needs to be guarded. Then even Harold becomes afraid of what he created!! His hand starts shaking and he inadvertently draws a squiggly line and "suddenly...Harold was over his head in an ocean." Nature has overpowered him until he draws a boat to save himself. The underlying message is that human ingenuity can conquer nature. He can escape the perils of nature by harnessing her power, the power of the wind, by taming her. This is depicted as Harold draws a sail and "the moon sailed along with him." He was afraid of the ocean until he dominated it. When Harold gets tired of sailing he "made land without much trouble." He is shown drawing a beach, signifying that Harold/humans can and do decide topography. Humans decide which areas of land will be used for which purposes. We decide what can and can't be touched (National Parks).

The beach that Harold created reminds him of picnics and he gets hungry. He draws lunch, his nine favorite pies, eats his fill and draws a hungry moose and a "deserving porcupine" to eat the leftovers. Harold's over production of the pies is reflective of modern capitalist society which overproduces and then decides what to do with the waste. Still looking for his bedroom window, Harold draws a hill and then "He decided to make the hill into a mountain." He climbs to the top of the mountain, slips and falls, but "luckily, he kept his wits and his purple crayon." He draws a hot air balloon and saves himself again. Again he conquers nature/survives her perils because of human ingenuity. When he still can't find his house, he draws one with windows but

it isn't his. He draws many buildings "a whole city" with windows and still can't find his. "And he walked along with the moon, wishing he was in his room and in bed." Until it suddenly occurred to him that he knew all along that the window "was always right around the moon." He is pictured drawing a window around the moon. He has found his room by creating it; he builds his environment. The underlying ideology is that nature is for human purposes.

The Cat in the Hat (1957)

By Dr. Seuss

The representation of the environment in this book focuses on urban life as separate from nature by highlighting the differences between the wildness of nature (the cat) and the expected behavior of civilized humans. The weather outside is cold and wet (shown raining) so Sally and her brother must stay inside all day, setting the entire story indoors. The house is shown as neat and clean as the children sit and stare longingly out the window. They want to be outside in nature having fun. Focusing on modern human life, the book introduces the reader to many social artifacts (an umbrella, ball, book, cup, cake, milk on a dish, little toy ship, rake, little toy man, red fan, kite, dress and bed) and very few animals. In fact there are only two animals shown, a goldfish in a bowl and the cat in the hat. Both are anthropomorphized but appropriately have different values. The pet fish continues to warn that the cat in the hat should be gone – that he isn't allowed in the house while their mother isn't home. He wants order and a controlled setting reflecting his existence. His views throughout the book represent civilized human behavior as he advocates that the children follow the rules so that they do not get into trouble with their mother when she comes home. The cat, however, consistently advocates that they have fun and be wild, causing complete chaos and disorder. The cat represents fun and childhood, playing and being wild (animal-like). The underlying message is that humans are

supposed to be civilized and orderly – separate from nature. The cat is definitely not orderly and therefore the fish wants him gone.

This ideology is again reinforced when the cat brings in a locked box which contains two wild creatures, Thing One and Thing Two that come speeding out and create even more disorder. Again the fish wants them gone and the cat reassures him saying, “Have no fear little fish... These Things are good Things ... They are tame. Oh so tame!” But clearly they are not tame. Not only do they come from a locked box, inferring that they need to be contained; but the pictures show them running up and down the hallway flying kites knocking everything over. The underlying ideology is clear, nature (wild things) need to be tamed or controlled if humans are to maintain social order. This is reiterated by the fish shaking in fear when he sees the mother coming home while the house is in disarray. Quickly the boy chases and catches Thing One and Thing Two with a net and orders the cat to leave signifying humans getting control of nature. The house, however, is still out of control until the cat in the hat comes back in driving a car with many mechanical arms that clean up the whole mess. “Have no fear of this mess,” he says, “I always pick up all my playthings.” The underlying message is that there is no reason to fear the wildness of nature (the mess) because human technology will save the day (get things under control). The representation of the wildness of nature (the cat and the Things) signifies the nature of childhood while growing up and becoming an adult is represented through the depictions of the fish advocating being civilized, orderly and following the rules.

Green Eggs and Ham (1960)
By Dr. Seuss

Although the natural environment and identifiable animals are depicted in *Green Eggs and Ham*, they are not represented realistically. They are used by Sam to attempt to coerce the unnamed character to try green eggs and ham! In this way they are objectified to teach a human

lesson about not being afraid to try new things. All of the animals are centered on whether he will try them or not. They follow him around the entire book with Sam. In addition, almost every outdoor landscape shows some sort of human social artifact (a structure, technology or tool). These representations produce ideologies of human superiority and androcentrism. The unnamed character that has never tried green eggs and ham (but says he doesn't like them) is an anthropomorphized creature. He is depicted in a very human-like way, having two arms and two legs, standing upright (like humans) with human facial characteristics, rabbit ears and a top hat. In addition he is furry and seems to have hands and feet with ten fingers and ten toes. He looks a lot like Sam, just taller with different ears. He and Sam are equivalent to a human presence in the book. It is important to note that ham and eggs are a typically human food (of course not usually green eggs) and happen to come from animals (pig and a chicken). Therefore the animals that Sam tries to get him to eat green eggs and ham with are just objects of fascination and pleasure (for humans), rare treats to entice him with. This objectification, and unrealistic depiction of the animals coupled with human social artifacts and technology entwined in the outdoor settings produces an ideology of human domination over nature.

Despite the fact that most of the story is set outside in a natural landscape and that all of the other animals (the mouse, fox, goat and cat) are identifiable, the representations produce androcentric ideologies that reinforce domination. When the reader is introduced to Sam, for example, he is pictured standing on the back of a huge cat-like animal, going for a ride, signifying animals for human use. To say the least, the animals are not in their natural settings, would rarely be together and they certainly would not be riding in their own compartments in a car that is on top of a train which lands in a boat! Sam seems to conjure them up from thin air and then they stay with him no matter where they go. At the end they all surround the unnamed

character completely focused on if he will try the green eggs and ham or not. So although the reader is exposed to rain, trees, mountains, bodies of water and animals, they are traveling through the landscape on and in human structures. We see them in a car which drives up the tree as the text reads, “You may like them in a tree.” The car then lands on top of a passenger train which goes through a mountain into a tunnel. Then the train tracks are going across the peaks of a mountain supported by tree looking rods and suddenly end sending the train and car flying off a cliff onto a boat which sinks. All of these images of technology signify human ability to conquer nature through technology. The passenger train is not stopped by the mountain; humans have cut a tunnel through it and then a bridge over its peaks. In this way (through social artifacts – technology) human presence is depicted in the book as dominating nature without ever showing humans.

One fish two fish red fish blue fish (1960)

By Dr. Seuss

Despite the title and cover picture showing fish, the book revolves around the “funny things [that] are everywhere” in order to teach about human concepts (colors, numbers, objects and emotions). The “things” include many identifiable animals (a fish, elephant, turtle, lion, elk, rabbit, snail, bird, sheep and cow) as well as other imaginary creatures. Referring to them as things clearly objectifies them and produces an ideology of androcentrism (since they are showing human concepts, not ecological ones). This is evidenced not only by their unrealistic depictions but also by the fact that they are all anthropomorphized. The human characters in the book (a boy and girl) observe and interact with the “funny things” they encounter. So the children in the book are observing and learning just as the reader is. More saliently, the interactions are mostly displayed with the animals and creatures serving a need that humans have or as their pets. Although there are a myriad of identifiable animals introduced and a variety of

outdoor backgrounds, their anthropomorphosis coupled with their depiction as possessions that serve humans signifies human dominance over nature.

In spite of a few realistic depictions of animals (textual and pictorial), they are not usually in their natural settings or behaving as they would in nature. For example, when the reader learns about “What a lot of fish there are”, the fish are not shown swimming in water. They are standing on top or on the side of it and are pictured with human attributes. There are old fish (shown with glasses and a beard), new fish (shown in a baby carriage being pushed by an older fish walking behind it), and one has a car and is pictured driving fast! There are also fish that are sad, glad, bad, thin and fat. In addition, we see an entire procession of animals and creatures with different numbers of feet and we are told that “none of them is like another”. Some are fast, slow, high and low. While the snail is correctly pictured as slow, the bird is flying high with an engine strapped to his back. The sheep are pictured walking on two legs in a line but clearly would prefer to really be even more like humans, “I would never walk. I would take a car.” The “Nook” (imaginary creature) is trying to learn to cook. It is pictured with a cookbook and two hotdogs on a stick over a fire. All of these examples of anthropomorphosis objectify the animals in order to teach human concepts and emotions.

Furthermore, the human interaction with them throughout the story produces an underlying ideology of human superiority and domination. The humans (mainly the boy and girl) in the story are mostly depicted as physically above the animals and as owning them as pets. The text tells us and the pictures demonstrate that having pets is advantageous to humans since they provide a necessary service. The children are shown looking down on the fish as they observe them from land. The boy is shown milking the cow and five kids are riding Mr. Gump’s “seven hump wump” as he holds the reins. The children tell us repeatedly why they like and

want their pets, “I have a bird I like to hold.” When Mike (imaginary creature) is shown first riding on the back of a bike with the kids and then pushing them up a hill the caption reads “We like our Mike and this is why: Mike does all the work when the hills get high.” So they have him as a pet to help them. When the kids need to open cans they turn to their pet Zans, “We have to open many cans. And that is why we have a Zans. A Zans for cans is very good. Have you a Zans for cans? You should.” The reader is then shown a very small creature with hair ten times the length of its body with the girl carefully grooming it as the text says, “All girls who like to brush and comb should have a pet like this at home.” Although the pet is literally depicted on a pedestal, the underlying message is still that the pet is for her pleasure; she enjoys doing it and possesses it specifically for that reason. When the children want to play they are shown throwing rings onto the horns of an imaginary animal with big horns; they are playing “Ring the Gack.” The kids then go to the park and seeing a wild creature they like and want, they name him Clark and carry him home to have as a pet. Clark is pictured in a huge container of water with his head just sticking out of the top. The humans are the ones deciding which animals they will capture and domesticate based on what their needs and wishes are. Finally, the children are tired and are pictured going to sleep resting against their pet Zeep. All of these images of animals as pets to be owned and domesticated for human use further the ideologies of androcentrism, human superiority and domination over nature.

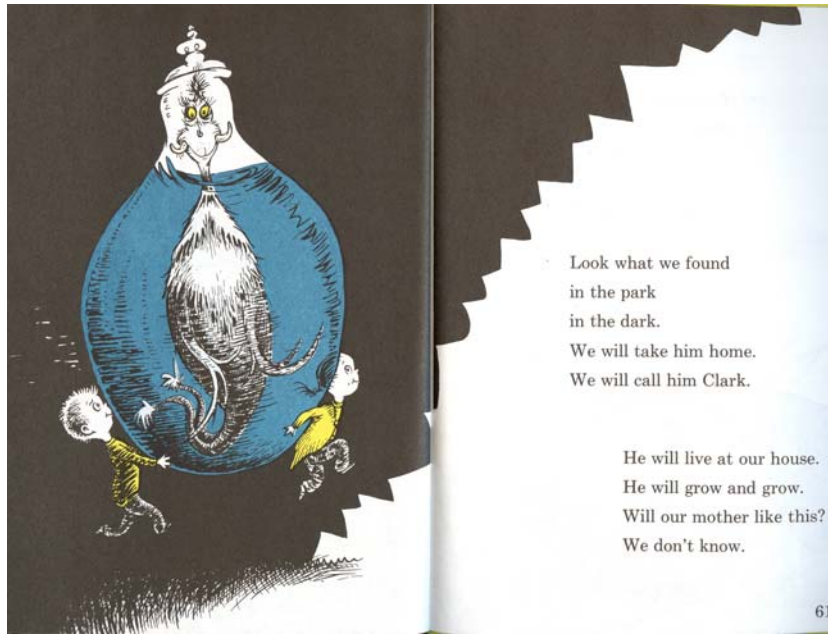


Illustration 4: *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*

***Pat the Bunny* (1962)
By Dorothy Kunhardt**

Pat the Bunny, the title, is also the picture on the front of the book. We are introduced to Paul and Judy who can “do lots of things.” It goes on to say that “you [the reader – therefore a child] can do lots of things, too.” Every time Paul or Judy do something, the text instructs the reader, “YOU,” to model that behavior. The reader is supposed to pat the bunny, play peek-a-boo, smell flowers, look in the mirror, feel a scratchy face, read a book, feel a ring and wave bye. These depictions of human activities are specifically supposed to teach the reader through modeling, how to be civilized, socialized beings in a modern world. Although the title and cover focus on Pat the bunny, Pat is only seen four times and is the only animal shown. Animals are used to teach the sense of touch and smell as well as to teach reading. Other than these few pictures of Pat and the two pictures of flowers, there are no other depictions of nature. Only an urban way of life is portrayed. We don’t see the outdoors in the background ever, despite the few different times the bunny is shown. Even when Paul is seen smelling flowers, there is only a

blank (white) background, no outdoors. Flowers are the only other part of nature that is shown and they are also presented with a blank background. The representations of the bunny as an object for human use, a living (anthropomorphized) object, apart from nature (not depicted in its natural setting) reinforces the ideology of nature and animals as inferior to and for human use. Pat is a domesticated animal in the story signifying human domination over nature. Pat is used as a model within the book to teach reading (a model – physically) for children to learn from. The underlying meaning of this book is to help socialize kids into model citizens.

Judy is shown patting the bunny – (the bunny’s name is Pat and the first thing she does is pat it). The action of patting something denotes superiority. The child is patting the bunny confirming the underlying message of human domination over nature. In the picture however, the girl gets down to the bunny’s level to pat Pat. So while on the surface the child is on the animal’s level – seen as an equal, underneath there is the message of human superiority. On the next page the child can feel a spot of fur. It could be argued that the synthetic fur on the next page represents a real rabbit’s fur to teach children about how rabbits really feel. If you actually get that message across – then underneath, the message is that it is ok to kill and skin an animal – because that is how the child is able to feel it in the book. The author could have depicted a fox or a bear, for example, or any other animal that we do not utilize for fur coats, as food, or as a domesticated pet. The goal was not to teach them about bunnies but to teach them about a human thing, the sense of touch - using nature, the bunny, to do so.

The last depiction of the bunny (the natural world) is within a book that Judy is pictured as reading. When Judy reads her own book in the story – it is a book about a bunny hearing the ticking of a clock and then going to sleep! The bunny is used to teach the concept of time to go

to sleep. Sleeping at a certain time and telling time is indicative of modern social life. Training children to regulate the body around time schedules is a part of modern life.

Dr. Seuss's ABC (1963)

Dr. Seuss' representation of nature and of the animals in this book produces ideologies of human domination and separation from nature. He uses human, animal and imaginary creatures (human-like and animal-like) to teach the reader the English alphabet. The text shows capital and lower case letters as well as which words begin with which letters. The focus is clearly on learning this social artifact and all of the creatures depicted are utilized as objects to teach this lesson. Despite the numerous identifiable animals depicted (an alligator, bumblebee, camel, elephant, goat, hungry horse (looks like a horse-pig), hen, kitten, kangaroo, lion, "quacking quacker-oo" (a duck), rhinoceros, turtles, fox, ostrich and puppy) they are not depicted realistically (in color or in activity) and there is almost no visible outdoor environment. The background is almost always blank white with a few squiggly lines occasionally inferring that it is taking place outside. Depicting the animals and humans as well as their interactions as separate from nature produces their underlying objectification. In addition, most of the time when the animals are shown, they are anthropomorphized and are represented as inferior to the human characters in the picture.

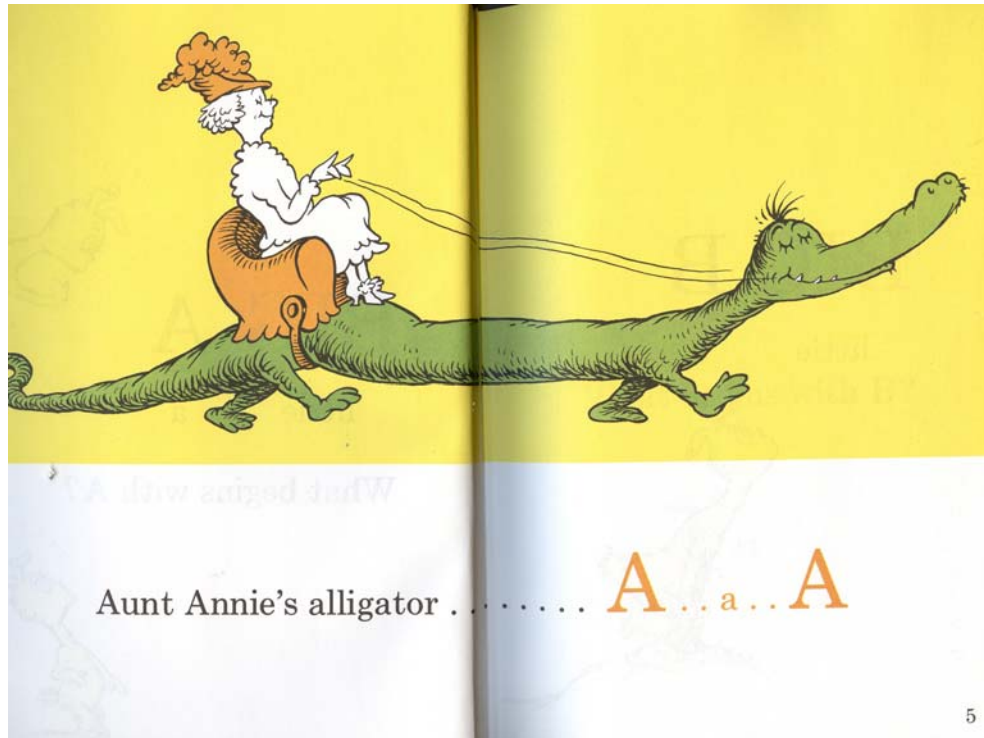


Illustration 5: Dr. Seuss' ABC

Not only are the animals physically depicted as beneath the human characters, the animals are for human use (transportation and amusement). For example, when the text says “Aunt Annie’s alligator,” Aunt Annie is pictured riding in a seat strapped on the alligator’s back with reins. When we are introduced to the “Red Rhinoceros,” Rosy is walking up a ladder on its side to ride on top and the goat is depicted as following the little girl. There is also a “yawning yellow yak” pictured with a girl standing on his back yelling. All of these images produce an underlying ideology of human superiority and domination. The unrealistic depictions of the animals (out of nature) coupled with their objectification and anthropomorphosis continually reinforce these ideologies. The camel is pictured upside down on the ceiling, the hen is completely covered by a top hat, the “lazy lion licks a lollipop,” the mice are making music; there is an orange owl, a fox carrying a huge ax and “Tired turtles on a tuttle-tuttle tree.” None of these are realistic depictions of how these animals exist in nature thus emphasizing that they

are specifically being utilized to teach about the alphabet (a human social artifact). The imaginary creatures depicted (those not found in nature) like the “fifer-feffer-feff” and “a duck-dog” are also simply creatures which have been objectified to teach these human lessons signifying human superiority.

Where the Wild Things Are (1963)
By Maurice Sendak
Caldecott Medal Award 1964

The representation of the environment, the creatures and human interaction with them produce an ideology of fear and control of nature. The message is clear right from the start of the story when Max is punished for behaving like an animal – he “wore his wolf suit and made mischief” and his mother called him “WILD THING.” When the boy behaves uncivilized (wild) he is sent to bed without supper. This is represented pictorially by Max wearing a wolf costume and chasing the dog. There is message of fear here, fear of nature when it is not controlled. This ideology of androcentrism and human domination over nature is seen throughout the book as Max escapes to “Where the Wild Things Are” and is able to tame the creatures.

From the start of Max’s journey to the end, nature conforms to his needs. “That very night in Max’s room a forest grew... and the walls became the world all around.” We see the room transform into a forest – nature conforms to what Max (humans) wants. He wanted to be wild so his urban surroundings become a forest. There is no more sign of a bedroom only an uninhabited forest and Max, still in his wolf suit, is shown pretending to be scary. Suddenly “an ocean tumbled by with a private boat for Max.” The ocean (nature) comes to him. It is there for him to use. The androcentrism produced by these depictions is emphasized by the fact that we are told that it is a private boat and the picture shows us that “MAX” is written on the side.

Max sails for over a year until he reaches “where the wild things are.” The big scary creatures are standing on shore with big horns, claws and teeth. The caption reads “they roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth... and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws.” The wild animals are all shown scarily advancing toward Max. The pictorial meaning and text both send the message that nature is wild and terrible and scary.



Illustration 6: *Where the Wild Things Are*

The ideology of domination over nature becomes completely clear when Max takes control. Max says “BE STILL!” and the text says that he “tamed them with the magic trick.” He is pictured raising his arms and the wild things calm down. The underlying meaning is that humans can harness the supernatural powers of nature to control nature. Humans are dominant and “tame” nature. It is important to note that Max is still wearing his wolf suit suggesting that he had to be super aggressive to tame nature. His power frightened them and therefore tamed them “and [they] called him the most wild thing of all.” When they see him as wilder than they are, they become tame. His display of dominance produces the submission of the wild things. The underlying message is that wild creatures (nature) will only respect what is more powerful

than them, so humans need to dominate. Nature's submission is again depicted as the text reads that they "made him king of all wild things." The picture shows them all bowing to Max with his scepter raised above his crown.



Illustration 7: *Where the Wild Things Are*

After Max tames them and they accept his dominance, Max decrees that they will play. The wild things are then shown playing with Max. They are not scary or vicious. They are docile as they play, wildly dancing and swinging from the trees and following Max around – nature is centered around him (humans). He rides on their backs (domestication). The underlying meaning is that co-existing with nature is acceptable once it is under human control. As long as they are tame, then he will play with them, but only on his terms. He decides when and what they will play, as well as when they will stop.

Suddenly Max says "Now stop" and sends them to bed without supper! With this he has proven his complete authority. Even though they did exactly what he wanted, were completely submissive and centered on him, he does to them what was done to him by his parents. So even though Max was the leader of the decreed "wild rumpus" he still punishes them at the end – because that is the lesson his parents taught him – that if you act wild you will be punished (even

if you really wanted to act wild – as he did in the beginning of the story and as the wild things wanted). He is punishing the wild things for, in essence, being wild.

He was still lonely “and wanted to be where someone loved him best of all.” He smells good food elsewhere and decides to leave. He has taken everything he could from nature (has played all he wants with the wild things) and it wasn’t enough. He wants to return to civilized, urbanized life. When he decides to end this fling with nature, the wild things don’t want him to leave and beg him to stay. When they realize he is really leaving them – abandoning nature – they become angry and start roaring and gnashing their teeth again. This does not seem to faze Max who says “no” and leaves.

He sails back “into the night of his very own room.” This is when the reader discovers that the entire story was Max’s fantasy that all took place in one night. He fantasizes that his room turns wild and that he can go far away for a long time and be king of wild things. His escape from punishment is nature. He turns to nature to feel better. However he feels better only once he has conquered nature. Once he has dominated, he is ready to return to civilized life (away from nature).

***The Giving Tree* (1964)**
By Shel Silverstein

While on the surface, *The Giving Tree* seems like a pro-environmental story about humans having a good relationship with nature and the goodness of Mother Nature; the underlying ideology promotes human domination over nature. Although the book specifically focuses on human interaction with nature, specifically about a tree, it really teaches that the purpose of the tree is for human use, to meet human needs.

Overall, nature is presented very simply in the book. There is no color and the pictures of the tree and the boy are hand-drawn black lines on white pages that form an outline without

being filled in. In addition, only that tree, the boy's nameless girlfriend (only her legs and feet shown) and the boy are ever shown. There are no pictures of other trees, humans, wildlife or any urban structures. This reduces the focus to the interaction between the boy and the tree; humans and nature.

The reader is first presented with the anthropomorphized tree that "loved a little boy." On the surface, the relationship presented is a good one, with the boy visiting daily and playing with the tree. He makes crowns out of her leaves, climbs her trunk, swings from the branches, and eats her apples. They play hide and seek; he sleeps in her shade; he hugs her and we are told that "the boy loved the tree." Underneath this representation it is clear that all of these activities are human activities, ones that are obviously about occupying the boy's time with what he would like. In addition, all of this fun stems from using the physical parts of the tree. This symbolizes the use of natural resources for human pleasure. In fact, the tree helps him play "king of the forest" utilizing her resources (her leaves) to provide him with a means of conquering her! This shows us that nature not only accepts human domination, but also encourages it. She is a willing participant.

In addition, a parallel can be drawn between culture dominating nature and man's domination of women. The tree is feminized in the story and is giving to a boy. She provides a house and luxuries for him, receiving nothing in return, much like the unwaged labor of American housewives. He is her entire world. The boy as the center and as an individual is further accentuated by the girlfriend who is depicted without a face or a voice. She is constructed as 'less than' the male in the story. Although she was significant enough to the boy that he carved her initials with his, in a heart in the tree, only her legs are shown. The cultural meaning can be drawn from his depiction as the dominate character in the story – she is only

shown as half a person. This rugged individualism and domination defines masculinity and is central to the ideology of manifest destiny as well as to the construction of hegemonic masculinity. Both hegemonic forms of masculinity *and* manifest destiny are about domination over nature - the faceless woman represents nature.

The boy shows his love for the tree by carving a heart into it. Even his manner of showing love and affection towards nature is by harming the tree. Yet we are told that “the tree was happy.” It is all worth it to the tree in what seems on the surface to be a mutual – symbiotic relationship where both benefit equally from the relationship. The “giving tree” is getting pleasure from the giving of herself (literally) to the relationship though she does not receive anything physical (like an apple) in return, only some affection and time with the boy. This theme is reiterated throughout the story except that the amount of time they spend together and the amount of affection towards the tree gradually diminishes as the story progresses.



Illustration 8: *The Giving Tree*

This gradual decline starts as soon as the boy grows up. The boy’s relationship with the tree becomes more distant and based on his material needs and desires instead of companionship

as soon as “the boy grew older.” This suggests the underlying message that only young people get along with nature but as they grow older they are supposed to go away from nature “far, far away” and only come back to nature when they need something from it, be it basic necessities like food and shelter or luxuries, like a boat. This is repeatedly illustrated as the boy stays away for longer and longer periods of time, “and the tree was often lonely.” The boy comes back to visit the tree to first ask for money, “to buy things and have fun.” The tree offers her apples for him to sell. The meaning underlying this is human consumption at the expense of nature. And indeed the boy who had just said he was “too big to climb and play” is shown throwing apples down from the top of the tree. We are then reassured that, “the tree was happy.”

The boy returns each time with a request and each time it is the tree who suggests that he take her branches for a house and her trunk to make a boat. The boy in fact does take her branches and cuts the tree completely down! Each time the tree urges that if he accepts her gift to him, “then you will be happy.” The tree’s urgings signify that material possessions will bring you happiness and not only is ok to take from nature and actually kill nature (that you supposedly love) but that she is going to willingly comply in her own demise! And each time we are reminded that the tree is happy to do it. She was also willing to give her entire self to him: her core, her base, literally her trunk because he wants to sail, “far away from here,” from her. The pictures show him chop her down, carry her trunk away and leave only a stump and then on a completely blank page (no pictures, only words) we are told that “the tree was happy...”. The next page however shows only the stump and says, “but not really.” This is the only time that it actually says that she wasn’t really happy with the outcome other than when it says that the tree was lonely. The stump is still referred to as “the tree.” When the boy returns again the tree automatically assumes that the boy wants something and before he even has a chance to ask for

anything, the stump apologizes for having nothing to give him. It is at this point that the tree refers to herself as “an old stump.” The boy declares that he doesn’t need much anymore - just a place to rest. Again the stump now does her best to accommodate his needs by “straightening herself up as much as she could” and encouraging him to rest. And he did and of course, “the tree was happy.”

Throughout the story, the pictures of the boy progressively age him until he is a hunched over old man talking to a stump, yet he is referred to as “the Boy.” At the same time, the tree becomes physically smaller, is in fact killed (cut down) during the story, but her essence does not diminish. She has just as much emotion and speech as she did in the beginning (when she was a whole tree). She never loses her love for the boy or her personality. Her character remains strong. This suggests that the man that the boy becomes still has the same feelings for and relationship with the tree just as the tree still loves the boy and still wants to give him things. The stump at the end – it is still the tree and the old crippled tired man is still the boy.

Although on the surface the relationship between the boy and the tree/humans and nature is depicted as mutually beneficial with both the tree and the boy being happy, there is an underlying ideological meaning. Human domination over nature is depicted throughout the book. Another example of this is that every time the word “tree” appears the “t” is lower-case, while every time the tree talks to the “Boy” the “B” is capitalized. From the pictures to the actual words, natural resources are represented as not only here for human consumption, but nature is depicted as a willing and happy participant in her own destruction. By not presenting any other animals living in or around the tree, or interacting with it, the ideology that nature is only for human consumption is reinforced. Furthermore, the fact that the essence of the tree does not diminish reinforces the ideology that natural resources are infinite. The tree is always there

for him, even when she is a stump, she provides. As many times as he comes back and takes from her, he never uses her all up, she still is giving. This is so even though we never see the boy plant any of her apple seeds or attempt to replenish what he has taken. The fact that the tree is always able to solve his problems and provide what he wants and needs by giving of her physical self again reflects the modernist ideology that exploiting nature is a way to solve our problems as well as a way to get the material possessions that we desire. Finally, the boy never thanks the tree or shows any type of appreciation for the sacrifices she makes, the gifts she gives him. This implies that he had the right to take what he wanted because it was there and he needed it. He does not have to treat her with respect or gratitude.

So even though the book exposes children to nature and the human interaction with nature, even presents the issue of deforestation (an environmental social problem) the underlying ideology is still human domination over nature, thus sending an anti-environmental message.

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? (1967)
By Bill Martin Jr. (Illustrations by Eric Carle)

On the surface this book seems to be presenting different animals for kids to learn about; however it does not depict them as they really are in nature. For example, a duck sees a blue horse and a frog sees a purple cat. The title infers that the reader will be introduced to things that the bear encounters (things in nature) however, not all of the animals presented/seen in the story would actually encounter the ones the text says they are seeing. For example, a sheep does not typically see a goldfish. The unrealistic depiction of the animals on a blank background (not in their natural setting) objectifies them in order to teach human concepts – shapes and colors. The large depiction of each animal (each taking two pages) on a blank background focuses the reader on just that object, the animal. There is an underlying ideology of animals as objects separate from human life.

Humans are only shown at the very end of the book and are not shown as interacting with the animals, only viewing them as objects. The goldfish sees the teacher who sees the children. The children are all depicted on a separate page. The text says that the children see all the animals and the teacher “looking at us.” For the first time all of the animals are on the same page. They are all depicted and labeled as objects – not interacting with each other or with the teacher. The children are never pictured as interacting with the animals. The objectification of the animals through unrealistic depictions and lack of human interaction in order to teach social concepts produces an ideology of humans as separate from nature.



Illustration 9: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?*

***The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (1969)
By Eric Carle**

In this story about a hungry caterpillar the reader is shown the natural lifecycle of a caterpillar. The story teaches an important ecological concept – the transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly. The title conveys the overall backbone of this metamorphic process.

The caterpillar, which starts as an egg and ends up as a butterfly, must eat a lot of the correct foods to be able to go through this life process. When the picture has a background (as opposed to being blank) it is of a natural setting, with vibrant colors, showing the beauty and wonder of nature. In these instances, showing natural settings and cycles, it represents nature realistically. The pictures and text are focused on only what the caterpillar does with no human characters. In addition, the caterpillar is unnamed and not anthropomorphized (yet is referred to as “he”). He does not talk or express himself in any way. He simply goes through his lifecycle. Despite the realistic representation of the environment and the teaching of an ecological process, there is an absence of human interaction. At the same time the caterpillar does interact with human social artifacts (human food). The absence of human interaction with nature, while the caterpillar gets sick from the interaction with human foods denotes an underlying ideology of human superiority over and separation from nature.

The way that these social artifacts are utilized within the story highlight the differences between humans and animals and convey an underlying message that humans and nature are separate and inherently unequal. The author could have shown only the transformation to a butterfly, but chose instead to interject a lesson that human food is not appropriate for caterpillar consumption. While that is an important concept for children to learn, he chooses not to incorporate humans into the story. No human characters are seen or talked about. The only human social artifacts shown are the food items which are clearly made by and for people (cake, etc.). There is no mention of the human consumption of the fruits (or naturally grown food) which humans do consume from nature. We only see the caterpillar try to eat our food and then he “has a stomach ache.” When he is in nature eating a “green leaf” we are told that “after that he felt much better.” The underlying message is that if nature attempts to take from us –

consume what humans' need or desire, there will be negative consequences. By not addressing humans taking from and consuming nature (especially as our food supply comes from nature) it sends the message that humans are superior, are entitled to what we want from nature, so much so that it is a given. Nature being depicted as totally separate reinforces the cultural ideology that humans and animals are different and shouldn't mix together.

This ideology is also revealed by the way in which the background changes from the outdoors to completely blank depending on what the caterpillar is doing. In this way the environment is used to either convey which activities are natural processes or as a way to change the focus of the story. When natural processes are occurring, when the egg hatches and the caterpillar begins to explore the world, the background shows green trees, leaves and a bright smiling sun. As soon as he finds food the focus shifts by showing only the fruits and human foods he is eating with only a white background. As soon as he eats a green leaf again he is pictured crawling on the branch of a tree. This reinforces that eating the leaf is a natural process. It changes again immediately to a blank background when he is shown as not hungry anymore and stays blank as he is shown building a cocoon and changing into a butterfly. Although the background is blank in those last few pictures, the caterpillar, cocoon and butterfly are shown as huge, taking up almost the entire page. This changes the focus back to what is happening specifically to him, again highlighting the natural processes.

So although the realistic depiction of the environment and natural cycles are the focus of the story, the underlying ideologies of human superiority and separation from nature are produced by the way in which it is presented.

Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can you? (1970)
By Dr. Seuss

The book specifically teaches humans about the noises that animals make as well as about the noises that occur in the human world. This is done by contrasting the noises of the natural world to those in the human world. Mr. Brown, the only human shown, is imitating all of the noises while asking the reader directly, “Can you?” The text says he is smart because he can do this. There is an overall underlying message of human domination over nature produced by the book. It is Mr. Brown (a human) who is able to mimic nature and the book encourages the reader (the child) to learn to make these noises as well. Although some of the animals are anthropomorphized, with human emotions, for the most part the pictures do show them as they would really look and making the noises they would really make. The only exception to this is the hippopotamus chewing gum.

There are multiple drawings shown on every page, each with an appropriate background for the different noise it is showing. The animal noises (of the cow, bee, horse, rooster, owl and butterfly) are therefore shown with an outdoor background (in nature). The noises that only occur in the human world (the cork, shoe, train, horn, clock, door, and egg frying) are all shown on either a white (blank) or urban background (inside a structure). The cat and the goldfish are the only two animals shown indoors, in the human world. They are both shown as content even though they are clearly domesticated. The cat is drinking from a bowl and the fish are kissing in a bowl. The underlying ideology is human separation from and domination over nature. Animals are shown in their natural setting and social (human) artifacts are shown in an urban setting except for the animals that humans have chosen as pets. This ideology is further reinforced by the depiction of the sounds that nature makes.



Illustration 10: *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?*

The depiction of Mr. Brown imitating the noises that nature makes (the rain, thunder and lightening) are so realistic that it seems as if he has actually created the thunder and lightening (nature) just by making the sounds. The concept of human power over nature is produced by depicting huge lightening bolts shooting from Mr. Brown with the animals around him fleeing in fear. The caption reads “BOOM BOOM BOOM ... Mr. Brown is a wonder! Mr. Brown makes thunder!” So despite the fact that the realistic depictions of nature do teach about the real sounds of the natural world, the underlying ideology of human domination of and separation from nature is still produced.

***Moo, Baa, La La La!* (1982)
By Sandra Boynton**

While on the surface the book seems to be teaching an ecological lesson, depicting animals and the noises they make, there is an underlying message of human domination over and separation from nature produced by the representation of the environment. This book shows

many different animals and the noises that they make to specifically teach children about animals. Each page shows an animal and the text tells you that “a cow says moo.” When the “three singing pigs say la la la!” instead of “oink,” they are corrected. However, the pictures show only the animal with no background environment, no other depiction of nature and no humans shown, narrowing the focus to being on just the animals. The underlying ideology is reflective of modern life, where humans are usually separate from nature unless it is controlled. If children do see these animals in real life it is in a controlled setting (like a zoo or a farm) or the animal is tamed or trained (like a pet).

This ideology of domination is also exemplified by the types of animals shown. Many of them are domesticated animals controlled by humans as pets (the dogs, cat and kittens) or farm animals for human use and consumption (the cow, sheep, pigs and horse). The duck could be considered non-domesticated, but it is still a creature that humans hunt and eat. So the ideology is still the same – domination over nature. The rhinoceroses are the only wild or exotic creatures shown. However, the only time American children would actually see a rhinoceros would be at a zoo. This representation is very reflective of modern, urban lifestyles in that all of the animals shown are ones that children could be exposed to, but only in controlled settings.

The last page of the book shows all of the animals together looking at the reader and the text reads, “It’s quiet now. What do you say?” This anthropomorphosis is important because the animals are reaching out to humans. It is the only time that there is an interaction (or an attempt at one) between the humans and the animals in the story. It reinforces the ideology of humans as separate from and superior to nature. Humans will decide if they will or won’t answer the question, if they will interact with the animals. The animals are modeling human behavior; they want to know about and be like humans. They are asking humans what they will say.

Although the book seems to be pro-environmental (because of its surface content and transmission of environmental knowledge) the underlying ideology of human domination and control emerges from the representation of the environment.

Love You Forever (1986)
By Robert Munsch

The story centers on unconditional love in human relationships and urban lifestyles with very few images or references of the natural world. Focusing on human interactions through the life cycle, the underlying environmental message is that human life happens without much interaction with nature. This is reinforced by the background setting of the story being indoors except for one outdoor picture when the boy is moving from home. The only other views of the outside world are through windows in the background of the picture. The only animals shown are the pet cat (inside) and some birds (outside). This underlying message of humans being separate from nature is furthered by his mother's reactions to his wild stages of childhood.

As the story unfolds the boy grows up, going through the typical stages that children go through while being socialized into modern urban life. The story describes some trying times as the boy struggles to learn to be a civilized, controlled human being. As a toddler he makes a mess of the house. A few years later "he never wanted to come in for dinner, he never wanted to take a bath." The child does not want to follow all of the rules and learn how to be a responsible controlled adult. He wants to stay in nature. Nature here symbolizes the uncultured youth. Being a socialized person therefore means being away from nature, inside. When he does not comply, we are told that "Sometimes his mother wanted to sell him to the zoo!" When as a teenager "he wore strange clothes and he listened to strange music" (not conforming to social norms) the text reads, "Sometimes the mother felt like she was in a zoo!" This depiction suggests that if you behave in an uncivilized manner then you need to be controlled. He was

acting like a messy, dirty animal and his mother wanted to put him in a zoo (where wild animals are contained and controlled).

Oh the Places You'll Go! (1990)
By Dr. Seuss

The book focuses on humans making their way in the world and uses the environment to show the change in mood and predicament of the human character. Whenever he is confused, depressed, lonely, in potential danger or when he encounters an obstacle in life, nature is depicted as ominous and overwhelming. In contrast, when he continues on his life's journey, faces his problems or is successful, he is depicted as dominating the animals and his physical environment. Fear and not succeeding are thus associated with nature being out of control and human success is depicted as domination over nature. In addition, there is a strong ideology of individualism and personal choice which signifies androcentrism and human superiority.

This mantra of individualism is evident from the very beginning of the book as the boy starts his journey to "Great Places." "You're on your own... You can steer yourself any direction you choose.... And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go." The textual emphasis on "YOU" signifies an underlying ideology of individualism which is also displayed pictorially as he is alone throughout his entire journey. He decides he can go anywhere that he wants (in the world). Making your way on your own, American individualism, is part of capitalist ideology that individuals can achieve the American dream (success) by working hard.

In some ways a surface reading of the book makes it seem pro-environmental because the entire book is set outside. Foreign lands are shown and there are identifiable animals that the reader is introduced to (elephants, cats, dogs, bull, birds). We know that he is in a foreign land by the architecture of the buildings depicted (Middle-Eastern style). In addition there are references to leaving urban life and exploring the world (nature). The text, "you may not find

any [streets] you'll want to go down," suggests that in such circumstance you'll leave town. This signifies that some urban surroundings may be uninviting and perhaps exploring nature or other surroundings would be a better choice. The picture shows only the boy walking with an open landscape (mountains in the far distance). The setting is identifiably a desert even though the depiction is in pastels and does not look like sand. The caption reads, "It's opener there in the wide open air."

Despite these surface pro-environmental messages, the underlying ideology is one of human domination and animals existing for human use. The animals are not shown in their natural habitats and are depicted as inferior to humans. For example, the page after he is walking "in the wide open air" we see a picture of four elephants each with a harness on their backs with poles going straight up holding a tarp over the boy's head (sheltering him from the sun) as he walks. In addition, there are non-identifiable scary animals, depictions of nature as overwhelmingly ominous when bad things happen and depictions of the boy as either fearless of nature or conquering it when he is back on track (in life).

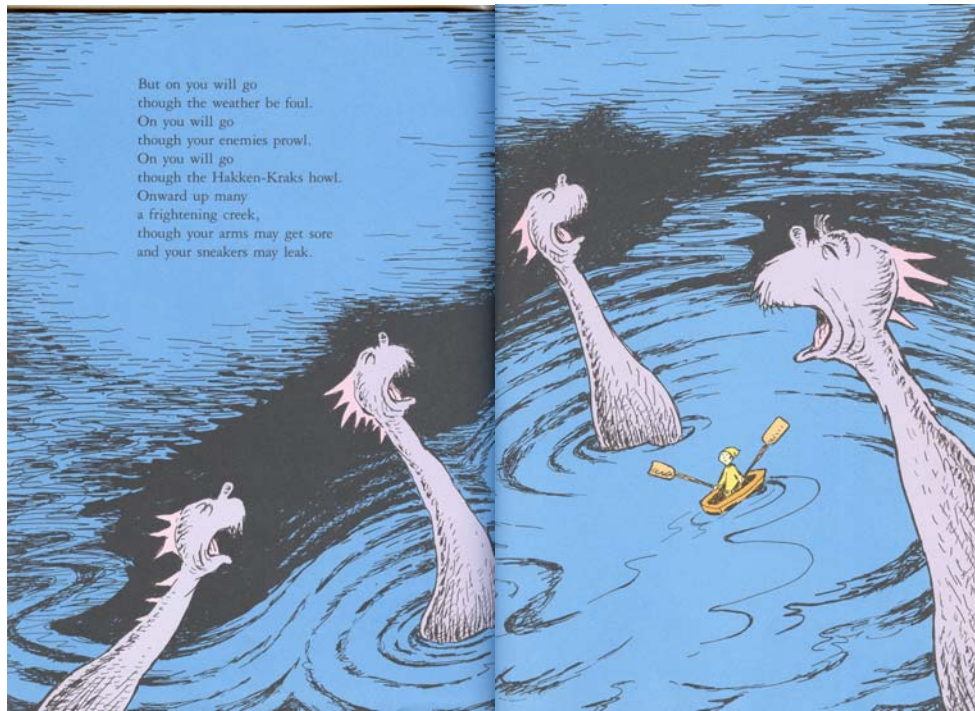


Illustration 11: *Oh the Places You'll Go!*

As the story progresses it flips back and forth from success to setbacks – each time using the environment to depict this. When the text says, “you’re too smart to go down any not-so-good street,” the picture shows a scary dragon-looking animal coming out of a hole in the ground. The intimidating animal is used to show that bad things will happen to you if you choose to go down a “not-so-good street.” Then the boy is depicted in a hot air balloon as the caption reads, “You’ll be on your way up! ... [you’ll] soar to high heights.” The underlying message is that success equals flying high in the sky – defying the laws of gravity - conquering nature. He continues until his balloon gets caught on a dead tree on the edge of a cliff signifying that nature is physically stopping him, “Bang-ups and Hang-ups *can* happen to you. You can get all hung up in a prickly – ly perch.” Again, something bad happening is depicted as nature overpowering him. He must overcome this and escape the perils of nature in order to continue on successfully.

When he does finally get past the set back the text says, “you’ll be in a slump.” Being depressed is shown by changing the background to a very portentous scene with the little boy looking scared as he walks around toward the edge of a cliff with darkness all around. He is then confused (about where to go in life) and the text again associates this with being lost in nature, saying that he will, “race down long wiggled roads... and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space.” When he is back on track, however, the picture shows a herd of elephants walking proudly with flag poles with the boy riding on top of an elephant’s head. The caption reads, “With banner flip-flapping, once more you’ll ride high!” Again, however he is shown alone with dead trees and fearsome monsters all around and the text explains that sometimes you’ll be “*All Alone!* ... and you’ll meet things that scare you right out of your pants.” The text encourages him to keep trying, “But on you will go though the weather be foul. On you will go though your enemies prowl.” The enemy depicted is nature. The little boy is pictured in a small boat in the middle of the ocean with menacing monsters all around him. Suddenly though he decides to face his problems and is depicted standing face to face with what appears to be an enormous rat. The rat takes up two pages while the boy is not even as big as the rat’s head and yet the boy is confidently pointing at him, unafraid.

The last picture of the book is perhaps the most powerful depiction of human domination over nature showing the entire top of a mountain cut off, raised up and supported by a bunch of cranks and wheels (human technology). The little boy is in the far right corner of the page (approximately an inch tall) but is pulling the top of the mountain behind him!! The bird flying above is looking down shocked and confused by what is happening as the caption reads “And will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed! ... KID YOU’LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!” The next

page shows just the boy and says, “Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting.” The underlying ideology is clear: success equals human domination over nature!

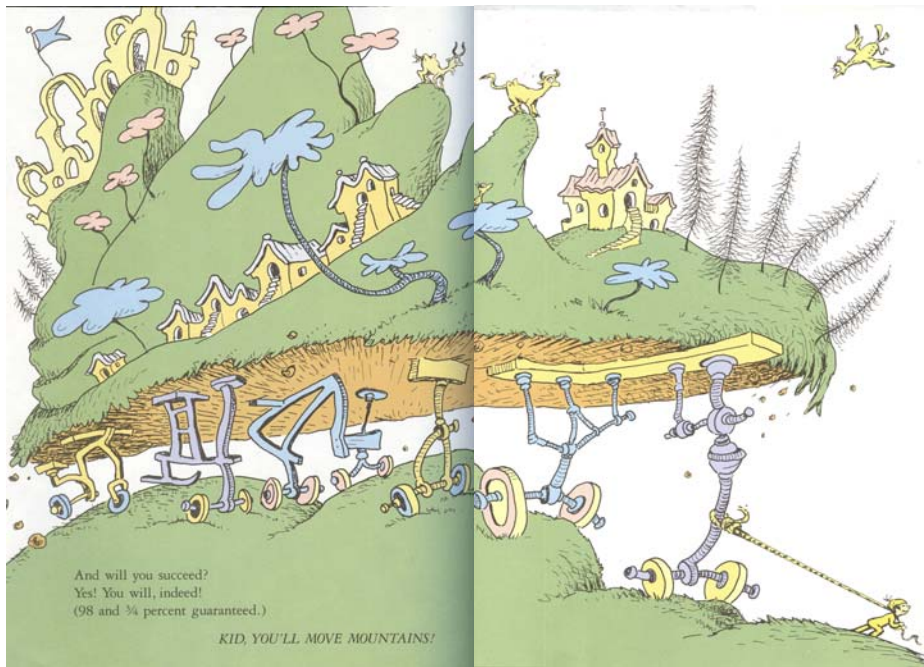


Illustration 12: *Oh the Places You'll Go!*

***Everyone Poops* (1993)
By Taro Gomi**

On the surface, the representation of the environment in *Everyone Poops* seems appropriate because it depicts many different types of animals and ecological processes. The ecology shown, however, is only to teach a lesson about how to be a civilized human; how to live an urban lifestyle. The underlying ideology is human separation from nature. This meaning is produced by constantly contrasting how animals poop and how people poop. It teaches what is appropriate behavior for humans versus animals by emphasizing not only the differences in the types of poop but by also showing the different manners of pooping (the different behaviors associated with it). Humans are depicted as being civilized; the father is pictured reading and smoking a pipe while pooping on a toilet. This is also reinforced by the absence of any outdoor

background to the pictures. The backdrop is always blank focusing the reader's attention on just the animal and its poop. When the humans are shown pooping it is shown happening in a bathroom (inside a human structure) or through a door in "a special place." Humans decide where it is appropriate and set aside an area for that, emphasizing a major difference in lifestyle between animals and humans. Animals poop wherever they are shown standing, which is not shown in their natural setting, outdoors. Humans control their urges and designate where it will happen. Despite the underlying ideology of humans as separate from nature, the book does teach about the environment and ecological processes.

There are a wide range of animals depicted realistically. While some are animals that children would see at zoo (the elephant, camel, hippo, rhino, giraffe, lion, gorilla, zebra and penguin), others are seen in everyday urban life as pets or in nature (the mouse, fish, birds, bug, snake, deer, rabbit, armadillo, cat, pelican, pigeon and pig). There is also a whale, an animal that is not often seen by modern American kids. Many times only the rear end of the animal is shown pooping, thus focusing on the act of pooping, where it comes from (literally – the rear end) and the different types. It teaches that different types of animals have different types of poop. The reader is presented with differences in size, shape, color, smell, location and method of pooping! The reader is asked "Which end is the snake's behind?" So while the book does present real animals and accurate differences in pooping, it does it in a way which emphasizes humans as separate from nature.

This ideology is also seen in the depictions of ecological/life processes. The reader is told that "All living things eat, so everyone poops." The animals are again shown realistically eating what they would in nature. The giraffe is shown eating leaves of a tree; the lion is tearing meat from a skeleton; the gorilla is eating a banana; the zebra is eating grass and the pelican is

eating a fish. They are all eating in a row, next to a child who is eating from a bowl at a table. The next page shows the entire row of animals pooping with the child next to them pooping on a toilet. So while the pictures and text depict an important ecological concept about living things, that we are the same as the animals in that we all eat and therefore all poop, it is done by highlighting the differences in the way humans do it from how animals do it.

This theme is seen throughout the book as the pictures flip from wild animals who “poop here and there” or “pay no attention” to the humans who go in a “special place.” The underlying meaning is clear: animals are unruly and uncivilized, pooping wherever and modern humans are supposed to poop in a civilized manner, in the toilet. In addition, the animal poop always stays where it falls, while the child is shown with toilet paper and flushing the toilet as the text reads, “He wipes himself with paper, then flushes it down.” Modern technology is what separates humans from nature. Plumbing has allowed us to not have to live around our own waste as animals do. Interestingly, the reader is not shown where the human poop is going. There is no presentation of how it is usually processed and released into nature.

The Potty Book for girls & The Potty Book for boys (2000)
Both by Alyssa Satin Capucilli

The Potty Book for Girls and The Potty Book for Boys are absolutely identical except that one is about Hannah and one is about Henry. The pictures and words on every page are identical except for there being a picture of a girl, Hannah in the book for girls and a picture of a boy, Henry in the book for boys. Therefore, an analysis of the representation of the environment in one of them will serve for both.

The potty books depict modern urban life, completely separate from nature. The outdoors, the natural environment (vegetation, animals, etc.) is almost completely nonexistent. The book itself is attempting to teach children how to use the toilet without ever presenting anything about

where what we flush actually goes. The few images of nature that are present reveal an underlying message of human domination over nature or an association of the environment with reward and success. The book begins with Hannah saying that she needs to have her diaper changed in order to go play. The fun she will have is immediately established as dependent on the diaper status. Her success will be determined by her ability to be socialized as an urban human being. In the end, her reward for this success will be to be able to play outside.

The few depictions of animals that are within the book are not shown in their natural settings and denote control of nature. From the start and through out the book, Teddy, the anthropomorphized teddy bear, is in every picture that the child is in and is depicted as imitating, following or doing everything that the child does. The bear's entire existence is centered around the child's needs and actions. This symbolizes the androcentric ideology of nature as a resource specifically there for human needs and desires. Nature has no purpose or function except to revolve around human use and to do what we want. In addition, the fact that the bear is shown as a teddy bear (with human qualities) represents culture conquering nature. The bear is turned into something for human pleasure, a teddy bear, through cultural processes.

There are a few other depictions of animals and nature that further reveal an underlying message of human domination. For example, in the first scene, Hannah is wearing rabbit slippers. More importantly, when her parents give her a wrapped present (the potty) and she imagines what it could be, her first thoughts are of animals and nature. First she imagines that the gift is a fish in a bowl. So although her first thought is of an animal, it is one that is domesticated, a pet, symbolizing containing nature for human amusement. The picture shows the fish smiling despite the very small bowl, symbolizing that it is happy to be there, happy to be contained. Her next thought is that the present is a big boat "to sail across the sea." This is the

first of only two times that Hannah is pictured in the outside world. Again it is a depiction of a human invention, a boat, technology which enables humans to conquer the sea. Nature is depicted here as a reward, a gift. Since Hannah is picturing nature as a reward, as something that she would want, the underlying message is that she must conform to cultural norms (pooping in the potty) in order to receive the reward.

There is also a message about the way that children perceive the environment as a good thing that changes when they reach adulthood. Hannah wants to be with nature which is parallel to being uncultured (pooping in her pants). Her parents however want her to be socialized into cultural norms, which is parallel to pooping in the toilet. It infers that as children we perceive nature differently than we do as adults, that in order to be a cultured conforming adult you must reject the ways of nature.

In addition to nature being shown as a reward, the pictures also positively associate it with her attempts to model the appropriate behavior, using the potty. Both times that she is depicted as attempting to use the potty, the background of the picture has a wallpaper border of flowers and bunnies first and then a border of ducks. These are also the only two pictures in the book that have a window showing the outside world. When Hannah succeeds in using the potty, the background border has teddy bears and hearts (things that are not found in nature but are part of culture) visually signifying the change in Hannah to a more socialized human being.

When Hanna finally uses the potty she is rewarded by being taken out shopping to pick out her own “special underwear” and by getting to go play outside. The underlying message reinforces modernist capitalist ideologies that purport that hard work will bring success which will then be rewarded and measured in the form of material possessions. The underlying symbolism also reinforces American ideologies of individualism and consumerism – Hannah’s

parents not only buy her something as a reward; they let her pick it out, allowing her to show her individualism. Although the shopping trip is the first time in the book that Hannah actually leaves the house, we still do not see her outside. In one picture she is inside her house and in the next one she is at the store. The only time we see her outside is at the end of the story. Her ultimate reward is that she “can run and jump and play!” – and for the first and only time in the book Hanna is pictured as actually outside on a slide playing. The meaning is clear, getting to play outdoors; being in nature is the positive outcome of successfully modeling behavior considered appropriate to living an urban life. Hannah can only go outside and be with nature once she has been appropriately cultured so that nature does not take over.

Baby Einstein: Dogs (2001)
By Julie Aigner-Clark

This book directly teaches about dogs and their needs. Underneath there is an ideology of human domination over nature in that dogs are domesticated animals which function as pets for humans. The book teaches about responsible dog ownership. The ideology of nature as a possession is first produced by the depiction of the dog with its name and age on the first page. The name is given to the dog by humans; it is a named possession. It’s not a story of how dogs run wild in packs; it is about teaching the basics so that kids will know how to interact with and take care of their pet dog. For example, the two times that the dog is shown with a child it is inside a house (an urban setting) and then outside on a walk (on a leash). The dog is contained in both cases denoting domination of humans over nature. In addition, the text tells us that dogs love to go for walks while Gabby is pictured on a leash.

The representation of the environment – the actual format of the depictions- produces this meaning throughout the story. When the story teaches textually about the true biological concepts, like the different breeds of dogs, what a puppy is or that “Dog’s pant when they are

warm”, the pictures are real photographs of dogs. When the text tells us that the dogs can do tricks (for human amusement) the picture of the dog is hand drawn on a white background. Images switch throughout the book from a rudimentary drawing of the dog with a blank background (when teaching about activities that are more human-like) to a realistic depiction (actual photograph or a more realistic drawing with an outdoor background) when it is more dog-like (biological) – like sleeping. The depiction of the environment in this way reinforces real natural animal behaviors and characteristics by showing a real photo. At the same time, when the message/lesson is about dogs being domesticated/interacting with humans, the picture is hand drawn signifying human control of nature, possession of the dog.

Walter the Farting Dog (2001)

By William Kotzwinkle and Glenn Murray

The book centers on a human family adopting a dog, Walter, from the pound and the problems they encounter in having him as a pet because of his “rectal flatulence.” The book focuses on modern human life showing the entire setting is indoors (except for two scenes) and through ostracization for being different. Before the story begins there is a picture of a dog in a cage with a caption that says, “For everyone who’s ever felt misjudged or misunderstood.”

Walter is anthropomorphized to express human emotions. On the surface, the story appears to teach the reader about responsible pet ownership and some of the natural bodily functions pets have. Even this surface depiction denotes an ideology of human dominance over nature since the first picture is of a caged dog. The other animals living with the family (the dog and cat) are both domesticated for human pleasure. This underlying ideology, as well as animals for human use, is emphasized even more as the story progresses and the father threatens to return Walter to the pound because his farting problem is unacceptable.

From the moment that Betty and Billy bring Walter home there is a problem with the way he smells and throughout the book the family does everything they can to figure out and solve the problem so that he can become more acceptable for human living space. They try giving him a bath, spraying “fart buster” aerosols, changing his diet and taking him to the vet, all to no avail. The underlying message is that animals are different (and somewhat nastier than humans) and need to conform to human standards to live as pets indoors. The differences between humans and animals (as well as between different types of animals) is further emphasized by the types of food they try to give Walter to solve his farting problem. They give him “every kind of dog food,” cat food, hot dogs, hamburgers, lettuce and tomato sandwiches, fried chicken and “rabbit food.” Even when “they made him a vegetarian,” he still farts. In addition, Walter is used as scapegoat to cover up when a human farts, “Walter got the blame for everybody else’s farts too.” The animal (Walter) is therefore not only for human pleasure (as a pet) showing human dominance but the image of him in a cage and as a scapegoat denotes that he is inferior. In addition, farting is considered uncivilized and it is better to blame the animal for doing so, than to admit that you (the human) were actually responsible.

There are images of nature in the book (inside the house) as well as of the natural world (outdoors), however the images produce ideologies of human domination and animals for human use. Two of the times that the outdoors is depicted (when the children go get the dog and when the robbers are caught) the underlying message is a negative association with nature. The children only leave the house to go into nature to retrieve something from it and the robbers are arrested when they are outside. In addition, there are other images of nature within the house that denote human superiority. There are designs of bugs and watermelon slices on the bedding, stars on the boy’s pajamas, birds and a dog in the picture on the wall, a toy dinosaur, a zebra

puzzle on the floor, rabbit slippers and a mouse-looking puppet hanging on the wall. All of these ecological things are objects to amuse the children producing an ideology of animals and nature for human use. The only live animals shown (other than the pets) are a bird flying outside a window and a spider on the floor.

When the father has had enough of Walter, he decrees that they are bringing him back to the pound. The underlying message is that humans decide which animals they will keep and which ones serve no purpose. There is also a message here about how bad behavior (being uncouth, being animal-like) will result in going to jail (caged at the pound). The children are very upset and Walter gets quite nervous. He does not want to go back to the pound. He wants to stay with the family and be their pet. In an effort to avoid this, he “resolved [to] never fart again. His future depended on it.” He is pictured attempting to hold in his farts. This denotes that in order to be civilized humans, we must contain our bodily functions. As he is uncomfortably holding in “a gigantic gas bubble,” two robbers enter the house and muzzle him. Walter, not being able to hold it any longer, “let[s] it fly,” incapacitating the burglars! The family, seeing that “He saved the silverware [and] the VCR,” decides that he can stay despite his disgusting habits. The dog, therefore, only has value and is kept because he saved their material possessions. The last page depicts a possible human use for Walter’s farts, depicting an amusement park named, “Walter’s Wonder Park: 100% natural gas powered.”

Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! (2003)
By Mo Willems

From the very beginning of the story the depiction of the anthropomorphized pigeon reflects human superiority over and separation from nature. It starts with the bus driver asking the reader (the child) to watch things while he is gone and reminds them “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!” The warning suggests a fear of nature taking over the moment we aren’t

guarding and controlling it. The pigeon talks directly to the reader. He has been waiting for the driver to leave and asks to drive the bus... "Please" (as he is pictured bowing). The depiction clearly shows submission to humans – he is asking permission. In addition, the pictures of him dreaming of driving the bus let us know that he wants to be like humans. The underlying ideology of androcentrism emerges as we see that nothing about the pigeon is depicted realistically (as it would be in nature). His behaviors are completely human-like and he even behaves like a child, especially when he does not get his way. His entire world revolves around getting to drive the bus and he will do anything it takes to achieve this. Beyond the message of nature being centered on humans is the message that nature will conform to human ways (he acts completely like a human) to achieve what he ultimately desires – which is to do what humans do. He even says "I have dreams you know." The background on all pages is blank/white. This removes us from nature even more, reinforcing further the concept of human separation from nature and the domination of humans over nature.

This is exemplified through the story by the entire plot being centered on the pigeon's desire to use human technology (to drive the bus). The underlying meaning is that the natural world (animals) needs to be kept separate from the human world. Humans control the technology and decide who uses it. Humans have the power to decide what is appropriate. Technology is for human use only, much to the dismay of the pigeon. His feelings are never considered or responded to in the story. The lack of response shows the lack of consideration for nature in the face of technology.



Illustration 13: *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*

The reader (the child) is parallel to a parent (an authoritative figure) while the pigeon is acting like a typical child. The reader clearly has the dominant position in that he or she is supposed to keep nature under control. The underlying message is that part of learning to be a responsible adult is learning to control nature and keep it separate from humans even when it doesn't want to be. This is conveyed through the pictures and text which show the pigeon trying to convince you (the reader) to let him drive by promising to be careful, saying he will just steer, and by saying that his cousin does it everyday. Much like a child would try to bargain with an adult into getting something he is not suppose to have, the pigeon attempts to talk the reader into giving in. He goes on to attempt to win your trust by placing his hand over his heart and saying "true story". He wants us to trust him and is extremely disappointed when we don't just take his word for it. He tries new strategies, suggesting playing a game called "Drive the Bus...c'mon! Just once around the block!" He offers friendship and money and says that your mom would approve before demanding and begging to drive it – all to no avail. The underlying message of human superiority over, separation from and domination of nature is further reinforced by the fact that the reader does control nature; the pigeon never gets to drive the bus.

***The Man Who Walked Between the Towers* (2003)**
By Mordicai Gerstein
Caldecott Medal Award 2003

Set in New York City, and based on a true story, this book focuses on technology in urban life as the reader learns about a tight rope walk during the building of the World Trade Center Towers. Despite the incredible illustrations which set almost the entire story outdoors, it is all in an urban environment (mostly depicting buildings and streets) producing an underlying message of human superiority over and domination of nature as well as nature being separate from modern human existence. The fact that the story focuses on this major accomplishment of human engineering is a statement in and of itself since constructing buildings that are “one thousand three hundred and forty feet” tall signifies human ability to go against the laws of nature. There is of course the underlying knowledge that humans not only built them but blew them up as well. In addition to modern technology which enables humans to create such a wonder, Philippe manages to set up a cable between them, in the dark and then defy gravity by dancing on the wire that was “seven-eighths of an inch thick!” He is not only depicted as special for being able to defy nature (since everyone else is afraid) he is instructed to perform for the children so that they can witness his amazing feats. The underlying meaning is that it is important to show kids that nature can be conquered by certain humans.

The entire story takes place in an urban setting with the natural world set apart from the buildings (modern human life) in a park. The underlying message is that nature is something to enjoy separate from normal human activities. The only animals seen are the birds flying around Philippe high above the city signifying that nature is very far away and only special people can reach it. Philippe is a “street performer” by trade, but we are told that “most of all he loved to walk and dance on a rope he tied between two trees.” The trees (shown in the park with a rope

tied between them) are there for human use and pleasure. They not only allow him to do what he enjoys and amuse others, but physically portray nature as a tool utilized to accomplish these goals. He is happy with the height that nature provides until he sees something better, tall buildings (human technology), which he instantly recognizes as more exciting. In this way human technology is depicted as superior to what nature can provide.

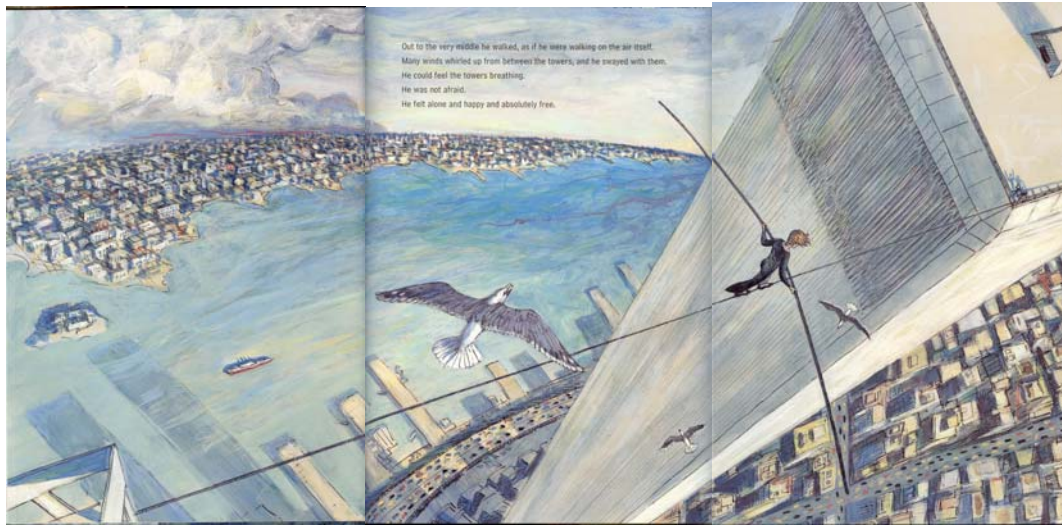


Illustration 14: *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*

This ideology of human superiority over nature through human ingenuity (seen in technological advances) as well as how that enables us to conquer nature is seen throughout the book. The focus on this technology and on Philippe's amazing ability to defy gravity is evidenced by the myriad of social artifacts depicted (buildings, cranes, elevators, stairs, cable and measurements) which aid him every step of the way. The text tells us that he "danced on a wire between the steeples of the Notre Dame Cathedral ... in Paris" as the picture shows us this other amazing feat of human engineering. In addition, people come to see him defy nature in the park as he is shown juggling balls and "fiery torches" while riding a unicycle. He uses a bow and arrow to get the cable from one tower to the other and is able to climb down one tower fifteen feet without falling to retrieve the end of the cable that did not make it completely across.

When they are finished setting up and he steps out onto the rope, he is pictured above the city, walking where the birds are flying, “as if he were walking on the air itself.” In addition, the power of the wind has no effect on him, “Many winds whirled up from between the towers, and he swayed with them.” He has no fear, “He felt alone and happy and absolutely free.” As he lies down to rest on the wire, he has become one with nature, “The sky surrounded him. Seagulls flew under and over.” The underlying message, however, is that although nature can be a wonderful, freeing escape from urban life, it is so far away that it is out of reach for most people. The only way to experience nature and be free (of modern life) was to go “a quarter mile up in the sky.”

This is reinforced by the depictions of the police on both towers who are yelling that he is under arrest! He is going against the social order, breaking the law; but “as long as he stayed on the wire he was free” because the police were too afraid to go out there and get him. This fear of nature is reiterated throughout the story by all the spectators who witness his stunt. The underlying meaning produced is that modern urban social life is separate from nature and should be. In order for him to become one with nature, and be free, he had to break the law. He is arrested, but the judge “sentences him to perform in the park for the children of the city.” So the punishment is not really a punishment because he is required to do something that he loves to do. This positive reinforcement for breaking the law is justifiable because he was so amazing and could defy gravity (something few humans can do). The underlying meaning is that not only is it important for children to see how he can conquer nature but that that achievement (seemingly walking on air) is specifically for human amusement (Philippe’s and the crowd’s).

This story and pictures are clearly trying to present the towers in a positive light to perhaps help children to remember something good about them instead of only what happened on September

11, 2001. The text says that “Now the towers are gone” and the picture shows the skyline without the towers. “But in memory, as if imprinted on the sky, the towers are still there. And part of that memory is the joyful morning, August 7, 1974, when Philippe Petit walked between them in the air.” The underlying message is that human technology changed that physical landscape and although they aren’t there anymore, it has made a permanent imprint both physically and in our memories.

Slithery Jake (2004)

By Rose-Marie Provencher

In *Slithery Jake*, the idea of having a snake as a pet is explored. The pictures and story depict modern urban life separate from nature. Urban life and nature clash when a wild animal, a snake, is brought into the house. While on the surface the story seems to convey in words that snakes are not meant to be in the house, in the end Jake becomes part of the family, another pet, “My best pet yet.” Underneath however, the message is a fear of nature. Once Jake (the snake) is found and controlled however, it becomes desirable (the children are shown playing with it) and is allowed to cohabitate with the family, under the master’s (the human’s) will. The androcentric mindset central to the ideology of domination over nature is seen throughout the book which is mostly about being afraid of the snake once he escapes.

It begins with Sid (the boy) running in the front door from outside with a snake that he found and named Jake. The parents, the cat and the dog all look surprised. The family is ok with this new pet because Jake is in a box. The underlying message in this first image is very powerful. It signifies man’s complete superiority over nature. The boy finds something he likes (a living thing) in nature and decides to keep it. This signifies that nature is there for human use and purposes. Humans are entitled to take whatever they want from nature and own it. It is a possession for our own pleasure which we restrict and contain to fit our lifestyle. This is also

signified by the fact that although the mother is worried about having a snake as a pet, she and the father allow him to keep it.

The outside environment is only shown in one picture throughout the entire book. This depiction of the natural world is an urban neighborhood. It is dark and gloomy and scary. A dead looking tree stands ominously and there are no wild animals shown. Only the family's domesticated pets (the dog and the cat) are shown. This signifies a complete urban existence, separate from nature. More importantly, the only reason the family goes outside is to camp out to be away from where they think the snake is! "We'll sleep where he ain't till we know where he is." There is an underlying message here about fearing what we can't control in nature and avoiding it until we can control and dominate it. The fact that only domesticated animals are shown, reinforces this message. The dog and cat are typical domesticated animals that live with humans as pets – master and owner. The snake – which is not a typical pet, is not under control; he has escaped. In the end Jake does in fact become domesticated as the family pet but only after acting like a human "stretched out and relaxed" on the hammock. Humans are the center of the natural world and modern human life is separate from nature.

Throughout the story there is an obvious fear of nature. This is first seen in the title "Slithery Jake." There is a negative connotation with the word "slithery". It symbolizes sneaky, elusive and hard to control. We usually fear things that are sneaky and beyond our control. This is exemplified by the entire family running around screaming, fainting, jumping on chairs and falling down stairs when Sid announces that Jake escaped from the box! Even the dog is pictured as afraid. It is also relevant that snakes are one of the animals that most American children and adults are afraid of. The entire reason they don't want the snake in the house is because they can't control it. It has the ability to evade them. He escaped while they were

sleeping – in the dark. Also it sends a clear message that the snake is dangerous and not supposed to be a pet.

It could be argued that this is an accurate representation of the environment because it encourages the reader (through text and pictures) to leave snakes alone in their natural habitat (outside), or at the very least shows where they should live. However, the snake's natural habitat and his eating habits are never shown. When they are trying to find him and coax him out, domesticate him, the family puts out cookies and cake to tempt him, "But it seemed as if nothing was tempting to Jake." The family clearly knows nothing about snakes and therefore they offer him what humans would be tempted by, cake. In addition, it is clear that the reason the family wants Jake outside is only to serve their purposes. There is a message underlying this that advocates a certain amount of distance from nature as well as the right as a human to control what happens on the land that you own. When the snake is found in the hammock, again there is screaming and fear, but also the revelation that "the snake preferred the outdoors." Then the picture shows all the kids rushing to play with it and touch it and pet it- wanting to interact with Jake. So as soon as the snake showed the family that he could be like humans (sleep on the pillow on the hammock), then they want to be around it. The story ends on the next page which shows a family portrait at the beach with Jake in it. So the snake was incorporated into the family as a pet – like the dog and the cat. In reality people do "domesticate" snakes – but they don't usually take them to the beach.

Emphasizing that snakes should be outside, "Houses and snakes don't mix" reinforces the idea that there is a barrier between humans and nature. It also symbolizes the ideology of human superiority, that nature should know its place – it isn't allowed in the house. However humans not only obviously enter into nature and into the snake's territory without even considering it the

snake's territory. Sid takes what he wants from what he perceives to be his family's territory. The underlying message is that humans choose which animals they will or won't own. Those animals that are considered undesirable as human companions (those we are not able to domesticate) are not permitted to cross the barrier. The message of human superiority is also exemplified textually by Sid's aunt's comment "I hear they exterminate snakes." Sid shouts "No! No! He's my own special pet!" Not only is the message that humans choose which natural resource they will or won't harvest, or own, it is depicted as a human right, as a superior being, to kill animals that they fear or that don't serve a purpose for them.

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS

My analysis of 33 of the most popular children's books of 2003 not only demonstrates that the values of the environmental movement have not positively affected the way American children's literature depicts the environment and the human relationship to it, but that the dominant ideology of Human Exemptionalism continues to permeate. Pro-environmental ideologies do appear in two of the books in the study, but only in the *Lorax* is there a clearly pro-environmental message with the environment presented as a social problem. Although the remaining books do contain a wide array of pro-environmental indicators, the representations mask anti-environmental messages which epitomize the ideology of human dominance over nature. Even in those examples where nature and animals are present, there is an underlying modern/Human Exemptionalism ideology which is one reason books from many decades remain popular today. In fact, in many cases, it is the inclusion of the ecological concepts that make the book anti-environmental because of the way they are portrayed. Thus the goals of environmental education are not being achieved through literature as ecological concepts and processes as well as human interaction with nature are not being appropriately presented.

As an environmentalist, I had hoped that my results would be different; however, overall, the overwhelming ideology of human domination over nature comes through. Confirmation of this proliferation is reflected by the sheer amount of anti-environmental ideologies within the census. In fact, I have more confidence that this is the case because of the census – the most popular books. The representations of the animals and nature continually produce anti-environmental ideologies and perpetuate cultural myths. For example, despite the surface depiction of a loving relationship between humans and nature (the boy and the tree), *The Giving Tree*, perpetuates the idea that nature is an infinite resource for human use. It does this by only

showing human interaction with nature on a need to harvest basis. The boy continually takes from the tree, never replanting, in order to make money, build a house and a boat. In addition nature (the tree) is complicit in this, further perpetuating the ideology of human superiority over nature.

My research yielded the interesting finding that due to the manner of portrayal of ecological concepts, their inclusion, in fact, is often what made a book anti-environmental. When animals and nature are used to depict human emotions and are objectified, depicted as inferior, this makes that book anti-environmental. In addition, showing animals unrealistically, or only those which are domesticated or those that would be seen in a zoo infuses the wrong information and misses the opportunity to teach an ecological lesson. A book that has no representations of nature and focuses on just urban life or a human dilemma is not automatically anti-environmental. It can be considered androcentric and though it does not show humans as one with nature, it does not necessarily stand against the environment or advocate the destruction of nature. Its fault lies in omission. In addition, showing imaginary animals or anthropomorphizing them is not necessarily anti-environmental. Again, it depends on how they are depicted. For example, the animals in *The Lorax* do not exist in nature, yet Dr. Seuss still represents true animal needs and the real impacts humans have on animals and nature, thereby producing pro-environmental ideologies. Anthropomorphosis produces anti-environmental ideologies when it is done only to teach a human lesson coupled with something else: like utilizing the anthropomorphosis to objectify the animals or coupled with teaching a human lesson without a human presence.

By the same token, showing only animals and no humans does not make the book pro-environmental. It depends on the portrayal. If the animals are not depicted realistically (as doing

what animals do) or if they do not inhabit their natural setting, then the book isn't pro-environmental, because it is not teaching real ecological concepts and in fact does just the opposite. Even if the representations of the animals are realistic and in their natural settings, this does not make it pro-environmental because it is not showing any relationship with humans or a oneness with nature (a core of environmentalism and environmental education). So while presenting ecological concepts is important, it does not automatically produce pro-environmental ideologies. It is most certainly not anti-environmental because it at least attempts to present something ecological which will theoretically be infused. Also, the types of animals shown, in part, determine if it is pro-environmental. If we mainly see domesticated animals, pets, or animals that would be seen in captivity, then the underlying ideologies of human superiority and domination emerge because they are representations of nature for human use and pleasure.

It may be that the use of animals is just for fantasy development for children or to encourage the development of their ability to control their own behavior and to develop empowerment. However, it is important to ask if it necessary to objectify animals to accomplish that goal.

It could also be argued that fantasy (unrealistic depictions) is in essence reflective of anti-rationalism and is therefore going against the social control of Western narratives, thereby making it more pro-environmental. I would argue, however, that when the fantasy/story pointedly shows humans dominating nature, then it inherently is not pro-environmental. In these cases the fantasy simply incorporated dominant ideologies. Fantasy or imaginary worlds could be depicted as lush, green, incredibly beautiful worlds where everyone dedicates their lives to being good ecological citizens. It could be a world with flowers everywhere, no pollution and humans in harmony, one with the Earth! Talk about a fantasy!

Only two of the books can be considered pro-environmental: *The Lorax* and *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV*. The environmental representations (text and images) within *The Lorax* clearly produce the most (and the most consistently) pro-environmental ideologies of all of them. The latter, while still exhibiting pro-environmentalism, does contain some anti-environmental indicators. However, they are not enough to overpower the positive environmental representations within it. *The Lorax* not only presents real ecological concepts and sets the entire book in a natural setting; but it also constructs the human interaction with the environment as a social problem. It accomplishes this despite the fact that the animals are imaginary and anthropomorphized. In addition, the intrinsic value of nature (Deep Ecology) and the desire to protect and preserve it (Preservationism) are prevalent throughout. *The Berenstain Bears* has much more anthropomorphosis than *The Lorax*, with the bears living like humans (watching TV, eating at the dinner table and the cubs going to school). However, the overall ideology produced is a call to return to nature, with the wonders and intrinsic values of nature emphasized (Deep Ecology). If the human problem addressed had not been related to nature, it would definitely have produced an anti-environmental ideology due to the use of animals as a median thereby objectifying them.

It is worthy of note that these two pro-environmental books were published after 1970, *The Lorax* in 1971 and *The Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV* in 1984. The fact that the latter was written after the environmental movement and the New Ecological Paradigm came to be is significant. Perhaps those writers were affected by the societal changes which are now reflected in their work. It is salient that the most pro-environmental book in my study, *The Lorax*, was written at the very beginning of the movement, signifying that it may not necessarily be pro-environmental as a result of a cognitive shift stemming from the movement. The book does,

however, represent a significant change in Dr. Seuss' representation of the environment (at least as compared to the other seven books of his that are also in this study).

Eight of the 33 books on the best seller list of 2003 are by Dr. Seuss, despite the fact that they were written decades ago (1957, 2 in 1960, 1961, 1963, 1970, 1971 and 1990). More than any other author, he introduces children to a myriad of natural and imaginary animals and settings. In addition, he depicts landscapes that are indicative of other countries, other worlds. Despite this, however, the representation of the environment in all his books (in this study), except for *The Lorax*, produce anti-environmental ideologies, including *Oh the Places You'll Go!*, which was published decades after the environmental movement. The representations of the environment in these seven do in fact produce stronger anti-environmental ideologies (than some of the other books in this study) because of the way he incorporates animals and nature. The anti-environmental ideologies within the Dr. Seuss books in this study (other than *The Lorax*) coincide with the majority of my findings.

There were a few books that fall into a middle ground category, containing both pro and anti-environmental indicators and thereby not producing strong enough pro or anti-environmental ideologies to be classified as either. The best example of this is *Guess How Much I Love You* (1994) which depicts a parent/child (human) relationship through the rabbits' anthropomorphosis. This, however, is kept to a bare minimum with them being depicted mostly realistically and in a natural setting. In addition there is a strong pro-feminist ideology produced by showing only the male parent as solely responsible for the care of the young rabbit, adding to the underlying message. It could also be argued that the parent/child relationship depicted could apply to both animals and people, perhaps pulling it slightly more to the pro-environmental category. So within this middle ground, the amount of pro or anti-environmental indicators

ultimately cancel each other out, with perhaps one or two left over, producing a slight leaning towards one side or the other. There are several other books that also fell in this middle ground including: *The Sneetches and Other Stories*, *Bob Books First*, *The Going to Bed Book*, *Animal Kisses*, *Counting Kisses* and *Toes Ears and Nose*.

Main Ideologies:

By the same token, although the main ideology produced was human domination over nature, this was produced by different mechanisms and to varying degrees. This is the case even when the surface depictions contain pro-environmental indicators and perhaps especially because they do.

It is not necessarily the existence of one anti-environmental or pro-capitalist ideology that determines the environmental leaning of the book. It is the extent to which said ideology permeates the book, the degree of domination shown and the strength of the textual or pictorial representation. For example, the depiction of the top of a mountain cut off and being pulled by a small human (*Oh the Places You'll Go!*) or cutting down a tree (*The Giving Tree*) is a more powerful message of domination than simply omitting nature or showing a caterpillar eating human food (*The Very hungry Caterpillar*). In addition, there is usually more than one indicator. Thus the ideology is determined by a dominant indicator or by a combination of less significant indicators be they pro- or anti-environmental. A few pro-environmental indicators (which would normally produce pro-environmental ideologies) can produce anti-environmental ideologies (domination) depending on their usage. In such cases the book is considered anti-environmental.

The ideology of human domination over nature was found to varying degrees in all of the books except for the two I classify as pro-environmental. This domination was produced in different ways and can be classified by the following four sub-categories or sub-ideologies:

androcentrism, human superiority over nature, humans as separate from nature and pro-modernity. These sub-ideologies were sometimes produced in a similar manner in many books. For example, human superiority over nature was produced by showing humans riding on top of animals (*Dr. Seuss' ABC book* and *Where the Wild Things Are*). Sometimes, however, the same sub-ideology was produced in different ways. For example, human superiority was also produced by depicting domesticated animals and pets (*One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* and *Baby Einstein Dogs*). In addition, the same anti-environmental indicator was also used variously to produce diverse sub-ideologies. For example, the fear of nature unless it is controlled sometimes produces the sub-ideology of humans as separate from nature (as in *Slithery Jake*) and sometimes it is used to produce the sub-ideology of androcentrism or human superiority (as in *Harold and the Purple Crayon*). To further complicate matters, it was usually a combination of more than one of these sub-ideologies that produced the overall underlying meaning of human domination over nature.

Human Separation from Nature:

Human separation from nature was produced by the existence of many of the following indicators, usually in some combination. Utilizing a blank background to emphasize modern human life as in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*, or to emphasize social artifacts as separate from nature as in *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was very common. Only showing modern urban life was used to focus on a human lesson, as in *Love You Forever*. It is salient to note that a blank background is not necessarily anti-environmental in and of itself. It is when it is coupled with a focus on human life and or without showing humans and or when animals are objectified to teach these lessons. Objectification of animals and nature to teach a human lesson (without showing humans) as in *Goodnight Moon*, was a theme in many. The type of animal usually

included only domesticated animals, pets or ones typically seen in a zoo as in *Moo, Baa, La La La*. Nature was depicted as far away or unreachable in *The Man That Walked Between the Towers*. The ecological differences between human life and animal life were emphasized in *Everyone Poops* and animals were only shown in natural settings and humans in urban settings in *Mr. Brown Can Moo Can You?* Additionally, a barrier can be seen between humans and the natural world by a lack of interaction between the two in *Brown Bear Brown Bear What Do You See?* Associating being uncivilized with being like an animal and civilized with being human is found in *The Cat in the Hat*, and associating being civilized with being away from nature and uncivilized with being in nature is seen in *The Potty Book for Girls (and Boys)*. Both are effective methods for producing this ideology. Fear of nature that is not controlled was also a common indicator which in *Slithery Jake* emphasized the necessity of humans being separate from nature.

Pro-Modernity:

Pro-Modernity ideologies are revealed by the existence of some of the following indicators. Associating success with conquering nature (often connected with conquering mountains) as seen in *Oh the Places You'll Go!* was a very powerful indicator. In that same vein, success is equated with being high, above urban life as in *The Man That Walked Between the Towers*. Technology controlling and conquering nature is seen in *The Little Engine That Could*. Nature is shown as an infinite resource for human use in *The Giving Tree*. The use of material possessions and nature as a reward for civilized behavior occurs in *The Potty Book for Girls (and Boys)*. Individualism was also an indicator within the above-mentioned books. So not only are ideologies of pro-modernity produced by depictions of social artifacts; but by linking them and domination of nature with human success.

Human Superiority over Nature:

The ideology of human superiority over nature is produced by the existence of several of the following indicators. Animals for human use, as domesticated, pets, transportation (riding) and/or for human pleasure, is seen in *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* and *Dr. Seuss' ABC*. Nature for human use, usually coupled with a theme of human entitlement to take from nature (resources or animals) is a strong theme in *The Giving Tree*. Technology conquering or harnessing nature is in *The Man That Walked Between the Towers*. Objectification of animals takes place in *Animal Kisses*. The types of animals shown are usually as pets, as in *Baby Einstein Dogs*. Nature is created in *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. Control of animals and nature, usually coupled with a fear of nature unless it is controlled shines through in *Where the Wild Things Are*. Humans choosing (which animals to possess and whether they will interact with nature or animals) are a message in *Slithery Jake*. Highlighting differences between animal and human life (usually the animal is inferior and anthropomorphized) is seen in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*. Anthropomorphosis, usually objectifying the animals and revealing that they want to be owned and controlled by humans comes through in *The Little Engine that Could* and *Walter the Farting Dog*. Depicting nature as conforming to the human world is found in *Harold and the Purple Crayon* and *Walter the Farting Dog*. Wild human behavior is seen as negative, uncivilized and associated with being like an animal in *The Cat in the Hat*.

Androcentrism:

Centering on human life, androcentric ideology was produced by the existence of many of the following indicators. Showing only indoors (no outdoors) while focusing on human life is found in *Toes, Ears and Nose*. Very little or no nature shown at all is visible in *Counting Kisses*. Animals for human use (domesticated, pets) or pleasure is revealed in *One Fish Two Fish Red*

Fish Blue Fish. Showing only animals to teach a human lesson coupled with either no humans or with unrealistic depiction is found in *The Going to Bed Book*. Individualism is a main theme of Pat the Bunny. Objectification and anthropomorphosis of animals (or nature) as a median to teach a human lesson is used in *Goodnight Moon* and *Green Eggs and Ham*. Nature is shown revolving around humans in *Harold and the Purple Crayon*.

At the same time that combinations of indicators reflect these sub-ideologies it is the coupling of sub-ideologies that produces the overall degree of anti-environmentalism in a book. For example, Androcentrism is not considered a severe anti-environmental ideology. It is, by definition, human centered, but it is only when those representations are coupled with another sub-ideology, like Human Superiority over nature or Human Separation from nature that it reflects a stronger ideology of human domination. Many times the same indicator produced multiple anti-environmental sub-ideologies and many times different indicators produced the same or multiple anti-environmental sub-ideologies. Some of the books within this category (Androcentrism) could therefore fall into the middle ground category (*Animal Kisses* and *Toes Ears and Nose*) since they are not reflecting pro-environmental ideologies but are not significantly anti-environmental.

Although the original publication dates of the most popular books of 2003 span more than one-hundred years and represent almost every decade, I would argue that, in fact we have not become more environmentally pluralistic, at least not as seen by the results of this study. Instead, I propose that underneath the pro-environmental representations (indicators) within most popular children's literature today, there is really an ideology of human domination.

In addition to the myriad of sub-ideologies found in the literature, another finding that has emerged that informs the Age Hypothesis is that there does seem to be an ideological correlation

between the environment and childhood represented in the literature. The hypothesis purports that younger children are more concerned about the environment and are easier to influence into pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors since they have not been socialized into the dominant culture. The representations within my study support this. As seen in *Where the Wild Things Are*, *The Cat in the Hat* and *Love You Forever*, behaving like a child (being wild or uncivilized) is associated with being animal-like and part of the natural world, whereas behaving like an adult signifies the human civilized world. In other words, children are seen as closer to nature. The other side of this is the message that to become a civilized, socialized, mature adult necessitates being away from nature and controlling nature.

Environmental Education:

Overall, as shown by this study, the representations of the environment in children's literature do not produce ideologies that meet the goals of Environmental Education. They do not depict ecological concepts and processes nearly enough and when they do, they are coupled with domination. In addition, except for *The Berenstain Bears* and *Too Much TV* and *The Lorax*, none of the books present the ten core values of ecological character education (compassion, courage, courtesy, fairness, honesty, kindness, loyalty, perseverance, respect, and responsibility). *The Lorax* obviously does a better job of this, presenting more of an environmental conscience and more of a deliberate effort towards this than all others. It is also the only one that not only attempts to infuse ecological knowledge, but has taken the "block" or "second courses" approach in that the story is focused specifically on the environmental problems associated with capitalism. Showing human interaction with the earth and the impact of humans does meet all of the objectives and goals for environmental education. Not only does Dr. Seuss raise awareness and present ecological knowledge, he goes a step further to present

environmental concern, pro-environmental attitudes, as well as environmental problems. He investigates the different facets of the issues, presents solutions and advocates action. None of the other books take these extra steps. While some do present ecological concepts, they are usually coupled with ideologies of separation from nature which goes directly against a core principal of environmental education namely showing humans as one with nature. The two books mentioned above are classified as pro-environmental because they meet some of the goals of environmental education, with the *Lorax* accomplishing them to the greatest degree.

Since studies have shown that exposure to all four goals is necessary to produce environmentally informed and responsible individuals and groups, I argue that that in order to environmentally educate we must represent the environment as a social problem, with solutions, in order to produce eco-literate children with pro-environmental values, morals and attitudes (Council 1996). For the most part (except for *The Lorax*) this is not being done sufficiently. For example, *The Giving Tree* is in some ways presenting the problem of deforestation, but does not frame the issue as a problem, in fact, it encourages just the opposite. Presenting the reflexivity of the environmental issues (how we affect the Earth and how nature impacts us) will become even more crucial in the future.

One of the core principles of environmental education is the assertion that educating a child about the environment (ecological education) leads to pro-environmental attitudes and consequently, pro-environmental behaviors, to being an environmentalist (Matthews and Riley 1995). It focuses on how to transmit the information to the children in the best way so that they actually learn it. Therefore environmental education literature *assumes* that if children learn about the environment, it is a positive influence because they'll become environmentalists. In this way, there is a gap in the education literature. My work (this thesis) challenges that notion.

Even though I do not test how these representations are perceived by children, I would argue that even if they learned one hundred percent of the ecological lessons and actually changed their attitudes and morals to being pro-environmental that does not mean that their behavior will be pro-environmental. My analysis addresses this issue. Simply showing the environment isn't necessarily positive – or going to produce pro-environmental attitudes, behaviors, cognitions, morals, values or environmentalists. They can be aware of the environment, of environmental problems and even understand that the problems are anthropogenic and still behave in ways which are harmful to the Earth because of the underlying capitalist ideologies that permeate literature. As this thesis has shown, there are anti-environmental ideologies imbedded in representations of the environment (*The Giving Tree*). Even when the environment and animals were depicted realistically, (thereby at the very least infusing an ecological lesson) or when it was represented as a social problem, there was still an ideology of human domination over nature. So it is HOW we teach these lessons that really matters. How these lessons are presented that will ultimately determine the outcome.

The earth and humans are at a time of transition in which we are struggling to achieve and maintain sustainability (Revkin 2003). Humans are striving to balance their needs with the demands of the ecosystem. It is going to be necessary for people to live environmentally conscious lives on every level, keeping future generations in mind to successfully complete the transition to an environment friendly earth. To do this we must consciously strive to environmentally socialize children by making the images, text, *as well as the underlying ideologies* within literature pro-environmental constructions. The cultural ideologies that are presented to children about the environment obviously shape their cognitions, perceptions, attitudes and actions/behaviors towards the earth. Unless we attempt to do a better job of

inculcating the values of the environmental movement through children's literature, we don't even have a chance at producing ecologically-minded citizens with eco-identities. As this study has shown, so far, the ideologies of the environmental movement have not been inculcated as values in society today as reflected in the most popular in children's literature of 2003. As Dr. Seuss advocated, "We can ... and we've got to do better than this" (Henderson, et. al (2004) p.129).

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APPENDIX A: CENSUS OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

BEST SELLERS 2003		Allbookstores.com				
** denotes books that received an award		Bold face denotes books that were omitted from the sample				
TITLE	AUTHOR	ILLUSTRATOR	Baby to 3 years	4-8 years	Original Year of Copyright	Year of Publication of Version on Best Seller List
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: A Pop-Up Adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Original Tale	Lewis Carroll	Robert Sabuda		X	1865	2003
Animal Kisses	Barney Saltzberg	Barney Saltzberg	X		2000	2000
Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV, The	Stan Berenstain Jan Berenstain	Stan Berenstain Jan Berenstain		X	1984	1984
Bob Books First!	Bobby Lynn Maslen	John R. Maslen	X	X	1976	2000
Brown Bear Brown Bear What Do You See	Bill Martin	Eric Carle	X		1967	1996
Cat in the Hat	Dr. Suess	Dr. Suess		X	1957	1957
Counting Kisses	Karen Katz	Karen Katz	X		2001	2003
Baby Einstein Dogs	Julie Aigner-Clark	Julie Aigner-Clark	X		2001	2002
Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus	Mo Willems	Mo Willems	X		2003	2003
Dr. Suess's ABC	Dr. Suess	Dr. Suess	X		1963	1996
Everyone Poops	Taro Gomi	Amanda Mayer Stinchecum (Translator)	X	X	1977 Japan 1993 USA	1993
Giving Tree, The	Shel Silverstein	Shel Silverstein		X	1964	1964
Going to Bed Book, The	Sandra Boynton	Sandra Boynton	X		1982	1982
Goodnight Moon	Margaret Wise Brown	Clement Hurd	X		1947	1991
Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Suess	Dr. Suess		X	1960	1960
**Guess How Much I Love You	Sam McBratney	Anita Jeram	X		1994	1996
Harold and the Purple Crayon	Crockett Johnson	Crockett Johnson		X	1955	1981
Kids to the Rescue: First Aid Techniques for Kids	Maribeth Boelts Darwin Boelts	Marina Megale		X	1992	2003
Little Engine That Could, The	Watty Piper	Doris Hauman George Hauman		X	1930	1978

Lorax, The	Dr. Seuss	Dr. Suess		X	1971	1971
Love You Forever	Robert Munsch	Sheila McGraw	X	X	1986	1986
**Man Who Walked Between the Towers, The	Mordicai Gerstein	Mordicai Gerstein		X	2003	2003
Moo, Baa, LA LA LA	Sandra Boynton	Sandra Boynton	X		1982	1982
Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?	Dr. Suess	Dr. Suess	X		1970	1996
Oh, the Places You'll Go	Dr. Suess	Dr. Suess		X	1990	1990
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish	Dr. Seuss (Theodore Suess Geisel)	Dr. Suess	X	X	1960	1960
Pat the Bunny	Dorothy Kunhardt	Dorothy Kunhardt	X		1962	1962
Philadelphia Chickens: A Too-illogical Zoological Musical Revue Delux Illustrated Lyrics Book	Sandra Boynton Michael Ford	Sandra Boynton Michael Ford	X		2002	2002
Potty Book for Boys, The	Alyssa Satin Capucilli	Dorothy Stott	X		2000	2000
Potty Book for Girls, The	Alyssa Satin Capucilli	Dorothy Stott	X		2000	2000
Slithery Jake	Rose Marie Burns	Abby Carter		X	2004	2004
Sneetches and Other Stories, The	Dr. Seuss	Dr. Suess	X		1961	1961
Toes, Ears, & Nose	Marion Dane Bauer	Karen Katz	X		2002	2002
Very Hungry Caterpillar Board Book, The	Eric Carle		X		1969	1994
Walter, the Farting Dog	William Kotzwinkle Glenn Murray	Audrey Colman		X	2001	2001
**Where the Wild Things Are	Maurice Sendak	Maurice Sendak	X	X	1963	2003
Wonderful Wizard of Oz, The (Pop-up adaptation)	L. Frank Baum	Robert Sabuda		X	1900	2000

VITA

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