

Chapter 1

Literature Review

Over the past two years, my ideas have evolved rapidly in response to the literature I have come across and because of the conversations I have had with experts in disparate fields. In this chapter, I will present and discuss some of the literature that has influenced me most.

My thoughts have been heavily influenced by reading about different approaches to conservation that have been undertaken and by what I consider to be their drawbacks. These perceived drawbacks might at times have something to do with the underlying philosophies or with the methods used, but the biggest shortcoming is that they have largely been unable to achieve their desired outcomes on a large scale. I believe that this is because these approaches do not take societies and social forces into consideration even though the issues that conservationists have to deal with seem to be a direct result of the behavior of societies. In order to address this, we need to understand how societies work; why they behave how they behave and why individuals in societies make the decisions that they do.

This chapter will provide a brief introduction to some of the major schools of thought in conservation, the methods they have used, and the shortcomings of these methods. It will also introduce social norms, which are probably the most significant of the social forces that drive the behavior of individuals within societies; and thus, of societies themselves. Through this chapter, I hope to motivate the questions that I am going to begin addressing during my time here at Princeton.

1.1 A Brief History of Conservation

The history of conservation in the US is long and complicated with a number of different actors advocating for different ideals, goals, and approaches. However, for a fairly simplistic and linear timeline, see figure 1.1.

While I will be referring to the timeline in figure 1.1 when discussing the history of conservation, it is important to note that the picture is not as simple

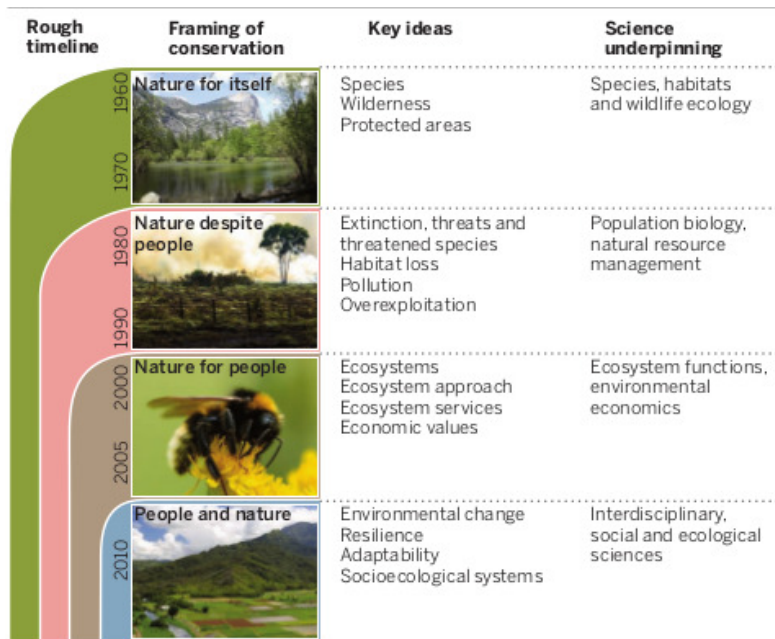


Figure 1.1: A very simplified timeline of conservation in the US[?]

and linear as the figure makes it out to be. For example, as early as the late nineteenth and early eighteenth centuries, Gifford Pinchot, Theodore Roosevelt, and many others were already advocating strongly for the 'nature for people' approach to conservation [?][?][?]. The recent debate between proponents of 'nature for itself' against those who propose more utilitarian and economic standards was already playing out between seminal figures like Pinchot and John Muir [?].

1.2 Social Norms

1.2.1 Theories of Social Norms

1.2.2 Norm Interventions in Other Arenas

Chapter 2

Are Norms Useful in Conservation?

Chapter 3

Field Studies and Experiments

Chapter 4

Models