Projecting nature: Eco-criticism and the Post World War Two Western

by

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Abstract

Environmentalism emerged into popular consciousness in the late 1960s and by the early 1980s a whole critical aesthetic of the ecological had evolved under the name of eco criticism. Eco-criticism is a critical approach of literary or filmic texts, focusing on the relationship between human beings and the natural world, and how that relationship is addressed. Within the history of American cinema, no other filmic text has dealt so frequently and explicitly with our historical understanding of and relationship to the land as does the film western. Yet, there remains little scholarly analysis of the genre from an eco-critical perspective.

This project interrogates the role of nature in the post-World War II westerns from 1945 up to 1970's earth day. Questions driving this research include: How did the undercurrent of nascent environmental thought and reason get absorbed into the popular film westerns of the era? Why did the Hollywood Western, a genre that seem so fundamental to American Cinema suddenly fade from prominence? Ultimately, I suggest

that a key aspect of the genre's decline is due to its inability to sustain the white man's manifest destiny narrative any longer.

My criteria, for choosing films was based upon their historical and cultural significance over time and the overall popularity of the film. Films had to be produced through a major studio and must have grossed at least $150 million, adjusted for inflation. The emphasis on box office success suggests that these films had an impact on the audience's social consciousness. A film that people pay money to see is a film that exhibits great hold within the public imagination. Although, not a big money maker, *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948) remains on the list because of its longevity as a film of considerable critical acclaim

As a film historian, working from an eco-critical perspective, I employed multiple, layered, and qualitative approaches, using textual analysis, visual analysis and historical review and a specific Saldaña's coding techniques which involves multiple viewing and intercoder reliability. My textural analysis included considerations of aural aspects of the films. I formed categories based on characteristics such as voice-over, natural sound, and music. I noted whether film segments had broad sweeping orchestrations or simple folk tunes. Dialogue of course was carefully analyzed. In my visual analysis I examined technical elements such as lighting, cinematography, editing, mise-en--*scène* which includes set design, clothing and make-up. I noted different types of landscapes such as forests, desert spaces, sweeping mountains, and open prairies.

Finally, given that Hollywood films are commercial entities, there is an assumption, then, that we can see Hollywood producers as keenly aware of post -war audiences' thoughts and attitudes. As such, these films must address some aspects of their social cultural world, or come across as irrelevant. The post-war mindset of Americans within an atomic age was certainly engaged in moral debates over the longevity of our planet, a significant environmental issue. I believe that these films mediate and reflect these tensions. Therefore, when we explore how the Hollywood western represents attitudes about the treatment of the environment, nature or land, we can ascertain how post-war audiences were engaged in environmental thought.

By foregrounding the role of nature within the film western one can make visible the complex ways in which non-human space has been conceived, mediated and promoted within filmic discourse. The film western frequently reflects on the relationship between human beings and the land, and as such plays a role in the cultural construction and myth making of American environmental thought.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Actually, the thing most accurately portrayed in the western is the land. I think you can say that the real star of my westerns has always been the land. -- John Ford

Within the history of American cinema, no other filmic text has dealt so frequently and explicitly with our historical understanding of and relationship to the land as does the Hollywood western. Arguably, the way in which Americans, even today, understand manifest destiny and the ideological elements behind the "conquest" of the North American West are likely due in part to these classical early Hollywood narratives of the lawless and exploitable frontier. Yet even prior to the invention of cinema, the idea of open land in need of taming served as a symbolic platform for Americans' understanding of the frontier; from Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows to Zane Grey's and Louis L'Amour's dime store novels, popular culture was already at work constructing American land narratives in relation to ideas of national identity (R. White, 1994). [1] These antecedent cultural forms crystallized the strands of manifest destiny, which placed the white man's narrative as *the* story; an ordained ideology of

[1] These Ideas are discussed in Richard White's article "Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill" (1994). Here White parallels the academic presentation of Frederick Jackson Turner's "The Significance of the frontier in American history" to Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows. Both Turner and Buffalo Bill exhibited their particular narratives of the west within a block of each other during the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition.

expansionism. As early as 1830, in his inaugural address, Andrew Jackson solicited rhetorically:

> "What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns, and prosperous farms, embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute." (p41)

To understand the significance of this concept is to understand a key force within American history and American environmental thought. The white man's land narrative, sees nature as an obstacle, or as only helpful to economic progress for its material resources. Compounding this seemingly simple view of landscape is the additional trope of Christian morality.

> "The frontier men", wilderness historian Roderick Nash suggests, "never forgot that one of their chief aims was the extension of pure Christianity: they viewed with satisfaction the replacement of the 'savage yell' with the 'songs of Zion.' Settlement and religion went together." (Nash, 1967, p. 42) [2]

The earliest Hollywood western films built upon these notions of expansionism, giving visual and rhetorical currency to the public's imaginings of American land, the natural and the frontier (Simmon, 2003).[3] However, following World War II, the narratives of some Hollywood westerns demonstrate a shift within the western frontier story. As Dorothy Carmichael says in *Landscapes of Hollywood Westerns*, of this early post World War II era:

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[2] Nash discusses notions of civilization and Christianity as linked and both equally embedded in ideas of American expansionism (42).
[3] Simmon explores the birth of the genre as built upon the tenets of manifest destiny.

> "It is as if the undercurrent had finely been stirred, as to start questioning the very foundation in which we stood. As much as Americanism was at the root of westerns now the bedrock was being challenged for cracks in the armor" (Carmichael, 2006)(viii)

These westerns, which reflect a rethinking of the genre, are frequently called revisionist westerns. Scholars have noted how these films often include more psychologically complex male and female characters, as well as more sympathetic portrayals of Native Americans (Kitses & Rickman, 1998).

While the significance of the Hollywood western has been explored from a range of perspectives, such as western historian Richard Slotkin's work on the western as American myth (Slotkin, 1985, 1992, 2000),[4] the interrogation of how land, landscape and/or nature is represented and evoked has been ignored until recently. This lack of critical attention is surprising, considering the significance of the land within the genre's setting, and how land or the landscape often functioned as a site of tension in the narrative. In fact, it is difficult to imagine a western that does not deal with fundamental land issues such as property or water rights or concerns over drilling, mining and natural resource acquisition (Carmichael, 2006).[5] As eco-critic Pat Brereton argues in Hollywood Utopia,

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[4] Slotkin published a trilogy of books, *Regeneration through Violence: the Mythology of the American Frontie*r (1973), *The Fatal environment: the Myth of the Frontier in the age of Industrialization* (1985), and *Gunfighter Nation: the Myth of the frontier in Twentieth Century America* (1992)

[5] Carmichael speaks to this in her introduction to *Landscapes of the American Westerns: Eco-criticism in an American film Genre (2006)*, "Because the human response to nature sets up the conflicts of this genre (greed for excessive profit through the rape of natural resources), landscape and environment establish the parameters of possible exploitation or enjoyment of the American in heritance of land."

> "While it must be accepted that there is little overt reference to the politics of ecology, issues like 'man's 'legitimacy to own and control the landscape, coupled with an innate urge to explore the human psyche, which involves appropriation of the natural world, remain prevalent and constitute important covert evidence of the genre's ecological antecedents" (Brereton, 2004, p. 91).

Only recently have some film theorists, such as Brereton, begun to look at the meaning-making and implications of the construction of the 'natural' within filmic texts of the postwar era. This dissertation builds upon this impulse.

This text focuses on the critical post-WWII era from 1945, marked by the use of the first atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, up to the first Earth Day, April 20th 1970, a symbolic celebration often viewed as the beginning of the modern environmental movement. A focus on the postwar era leading up to Earth Day is appropriate for several reasons. First, this historic era covers a plethora of political, cultural and social shifts. Underpinning many of these changes is the concept of the fragility of the planet. In between the bookmarks of the A-bomb and Earth Day, Cold War paranoia played out through the continued testing of nuclear weapons in Nevada and was exemplified in the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. Secondly, in reaction to American interventionist policies abroad and the continuing growth of nuclear warfare technology, social movements emerged and coalesced by the 1960s into a counter-culture movement. Issues converged within this movement, as there was a general rethinking of issues of power in the context of gender, sexuality, race, class, animal rights. Key to this project was environmentalism.

During this time, the genre of the Hollywood theatrically distributed western

underwent noteworthy changes. At the end of the Second World War, between 1946 and 1950, the major studios collectively produced more than 200 film westerns. By 1965-1970, however, the major studios produced only twenty.[6] Why did a genre that seemed so popular and fundamental to Americanism and land and a staple of Hollywood suddenly fade from prominence?[7] I suggest that for post-war audiences, the drama unfolding on the silver screen no longer connected with the drama of real life events. Beginning with the onslaught of the atomic era, and the violence and degradation of people and lands abroad in Korea and then in Vietnam fueled through the ensuing Cold War, the idea of a noble conquest became less viable. The dialog on screen did not match the dialog Americans engaged in with each other. The simplicity of good versus bad to many people ran counter to a more global view that saw world events as more complicated and nuanced.

In the end, I argue that the genre could no longer sustain the white man's land narrative. This once active and popular film genre became virtually non-existent within American cinema because of ideological shifts within the culture, such as an emerging environmental consciousness. No longer could the idea of conquest and the violence and degradation of communities and the land be justified as pure and simple in lieu of expansionistic progress.

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[6] Slotkin connects the counter-culture movement, and 'all things native' to pop culture, such as the tribal love rock *Hair* and the Life cover "Our Indian heritage' from 1971.
[7] In contrast to the Hollywood Western, the studio-made television Westerns remained popular well into the middle 1960s. However a focus on this format within the genre is beyond the scope of this project

My key argument hinges on two elements. First, post-bomb social awareness about the fragility of the planet was incongruent with black and white representations of a clean conquest narrative. Just as race and gender demanded formulation of new social realities, so too did environmental awareness require a rethinking of the land. These changes began to inform the genre. Secondly, the ideas of the frontier directly countered environmental progress, because they were inherently anthropocentric[8] and framed nature within the capitalistic model of use value and commodity. Thus, the film western, built upon this myopic history, had to adapt in an effort to stay relevant and commercially viable, and had to incorporate more nuanced post-war ideas of man's relationship to nature. Through this inclusion of a fuller landscape story, the western fed its own decline. The idea of progress as tied to material use of the land for profit alone was challenged within the very genre that promoted this type of capitalistic expansionism as noble. In short, the traditional land narrative of the Hollywood western, so at odds with major tenets of the environmental movement, became suspect.

Working from an eco-critical perspective, I investigate how certain film westerns within this period reinforced and suggest emerging aspects of environmentalism. These 'pops' or moments of environmental awakening served to undermine the overall

[8] Anthropocentric is a human-centered versus earth-centered perspective within environmental studies. See the *Ecocrticism Reader*, (1996)"in its connotations, enviro- is anthropocentric and dualistic, implying that we humans are at the center, surrounded by everything that is not us, the environment. Eco-in contrast, implies interdependent communities, integrated systems, and strong connections among constituent parts." (xx)

relevance of the genre as a social historical text[9].

Following WWII, although many Hollywood westerns continued to render the genre as a purveyor of the white man's land narrative (manifest destiny), some films began to stray. I contend that the films at the heart of my study reveal environmental themes and ideas, which can be read subversively (D'acci, 1994)[10]. The story of the Hollywood western genre is the conquest narrative. This narrative is built upon the naturalizing of conquest--a view of land and/or the 'wild' spaces as obstacles in the way of progress or land for material goods only. Native Americans within this ideological process are also seen as barriers, equally in need of taming or sacrifice. Films that deny or contradict these presumptions run counter to genre norms. In doing so, genre conventions of conquest as neat and simple are challenged through a reworking of an alternative land story.

The desire to make money through films was and is the most powerful objective in Hollywood. Although the goal of commercial success made for repetition of themes, there was also the wish for films to appear relevant. Hollywood producers, directors and writers were equally part of the American post-World War II culture. The effects of a

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[9] Film as mediated by the production aspects of the industry, influenced and shaped by society, and market driven. See Corkin; "These films [westerns] are most revealing in the way they represent the epoch of their production. That is, as all historical texts necessarily are marked by the time of their production, commercial films are more evidently and intentionally so because of their commercial intention ….As products of a particular time and cultural climate…"(3)

[10] Reading a traditional text as subversive follows in the tradition of feminist film theorist such as Julie D'Acci, who in her text, *Defining Women, Television and the case of Cagney and Lacey,* demonstrates how a popular mainstream television show can still be read as a feminist text.

long war, the anxieties of living in an atomic age, and the emerging Cold War all influenced Hollywood entities. For instance, in the 1953 film, *Shane,* there is a focus on the Teton Mountains and the pastoral setting of the farmers. Although this film is steeped in the traditional aspects of white expansionism, there are extended moments of visual attention to nature that can be read as countering the normative conquest narrative. In a way not realized prior to the war, this film reveals an aesthetic appreciation for land far and above its commodity use value. Through its emphasis on visual excess, *Shane* provides a space for post-war audiences to linger in the pastoral and to appreciate the majesty of the Tetons in the distance. I suggest that the visual splendor and poignancy of these images serve as a remedy against sites of modernity such as the city, and technological spaces of commerce and industry. Such scenes demonstrate the power of film to be visually discursive and gesture to the meaning-making role of the western during the era in which they were produced.

"*Wilderness,"* Aldo Leopold wrote*, "is the raw material out of which man has hammered the artifact called civilization."* (Aldo Leopold, 1949)

In similar ways, film, mere celluloid, is the raw material out of which editors, producers, and directors construct specific ideas of wilderness. This dissertation seeks to locate a common ground between specific Hollywood westerns within the twenty-five year period following World War II, and audience understandings during this time, of an emerging environmentalism. Tracing how Hollywood westerns represent

landscape, land, and nature provides a perspective on how popular culture can be seen as a site of ideological struggle over the ebbs and flows of environmental thinking.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout this project, I kept in mind Raymond William's statement that "the idea of nature contains, though often unnoticed, an extraordinary amount of human history" (Williams, 1980). I explore the 'ideas' of nature as constructed within the history of the Hollywood western of the post-World War II era. As such, I review literature in these areas: Eco-criticism, genre and film studies, and western and environmental history.

Eco-criticism

At its core, eco-criticism evokes a theoretical position that interrogates hierarchal assumptions with an inherent distrust for categories of place and or the natural. Eco-criticism distinguishes itself from other critical analyses of this type (critical race theory and gender criticism) in its environmental ethics and range of scientific ecological perspectives. As Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (1996) suggest, "Eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from

a gender-conscious perspective (Kuhn, 1988),[11] and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economics of class to its reading of texts, eco-criticism takes an earth-centered approach" (p. xviii). Glotfelty and Fromm are just a few of the environmental scholars who began to question the role of environmentalism in literature. Their foundational work, built upon the scholarship of Leo Marx and Lawrence Buell, informs this dissertation (Buell & Dassow Walls, 1997; Marx, 2000). How have representations and conceptions of the wild or the natural changed over time? How might metaphors of the natural influence the way we think and act upon nature? And, ultimately, what is the role of film in the meaning-making of nature? These questions share an assumption that one must regard nature, land and landscape as belonging to a category much like race, class and gender, and it is from this perspective that one can see the cultural construction at work.

An early text that contemplated the relationship between film and environmental thought is Gregg Mitman's *Reel Nature: America's Romance With Wildlife on Film (Mitman, 1999)*. Mitman focuses on documentary films and the role of zoos and wildlife. His overall argument is that even documentary films are filled with the stereotypical imperialistic presumptions of Hollywood films such as Tarzan films. First, he addresses the dilemmas of environmental thought at the intersection of art, science and commerce. Mitman also highlights the continuing role of the "symbiosis of race, empire and the evolutionary ladder of the human races" (the other) within the

[11] For discussion of feminist criticism and film, see Annette Kuhn, *Cinema, Censorship and Sexuality, (women's genre)*; she rhetorically asks, "How can something so dynamic and fluid ever be subjected to inquiry?" (p347)

projections of nature in these films. Since the Native American is the symbol of racial "other" within the western, often the 'ecological other', I build upon Mitman's connections.

Finally, it is Mitman's focus on the importance of media that informs this dissertation. Mitman presumes the significance of film as influential within the American mindset, "Whether crafted," he suggests "to elicit thrills or to preserve and educate audiences about the real-life drama of threatened wildlife, nature films then and now reveal much about the yearnings of Americans both to be close to nature and yet distinctly apart." He sees the role of film as not only mediating a "direct" relationship with nature, but also asking how we as a culture have been shaped by film.

David Ingram's text *Green Screen* (2000) is probably the first to consider the full intersection of the environment, Hollywood cinema and cultural studies in the scope of a book-length study. Similar to Mitman, Ingram points out key environmental issues neglected or conversely highlighted within film such as ideas of wilderness, rural life, and animal representations. However, unlike Mitman, Ingram focuses on popular genres. Employing methods such as close textual analysis, general survey, and genre studies, Ingram offers useful examples that are helpful to my own work. He frames his text in four narrative themes: the conservationist (reconciles the environment with human commercial exploitation), the preservationist (prefers to set aside areas from human contamination), the ecological (the balance of nature and technology), self-sufficiency and human interconnectivity, and nature as utopia. I divide this dissertation by era, yet, the delineation of the environmental themes Ingram offers is useful.

All of these environmental tropes occur to varying degree within the post-World War II western and therefore aid in constructing the scaffolding of this project. "Critical analysis of films of this type," Ingram argues, "can bring to the foreground their unacknowledged, unreflective references to non-human nature, so that their environmentalist implications can become both visible and open to question" (Ingram, 2000, pp. vii-viii). Ingram sees genre as crucial to a film's creation and reception, and in genre films such as the western, the "visual, stylistic and thematic concerns" become "a recognizable system of conventions". However, this is where he and I diverge. While Ingram's work keeps within the limits of genre, I see genre as more fluid over time and reactive to pertinent environmental issues.

In 2006 a seminal text on Hollywood westerns and eco-criticism emerged: the anthology of essays edited by Deborah A. Carmichael (2006), *The Landscapes of Hollywood Westerns: Ecocriticism in an American Film Genre.* The authors bring the tools of ecocriticism to the study of the western. The essays are varied in approach and cover the gamut of Hollywood westerns from silent films to the contemporary era. Collectively they argue that the narrative of the western plays a significant role in the way Americans view land, landscape and the natural. The authors address a range of environmental ideas already at work in most Hollywood interpretations, such as the conflict between individualism and capitalistic greed as well as constructions of space and nature as ideologically bound. "The portrayal of nature, suggests Carmichael (2006) in the introduction, "and our cultural relationships to the environmental in film

signal not only changes in ecological thinking but also ways in which social or racial communities are understood."

All of the eco-critics thus far have focused on readings of films as full narrative entities. Breaking away from this approach is Pat Brereton's *Hollywood Utopia* (2004). Brereton explores ecological tendencies in blockbuster films by focusing on narrative resolutions. Specifically, he argues that:

> Within many blockbuster films, the evocation of nature and sublime spectacle help to dramatize, often above and beyond strict narrative requirements, and serves, whether accidentally or not, to reconnect audiences with their inclusive eco-systems(Brereton, 2004, p. 5).

While Ingram suggests Hollywood is all about "green washing" and placating, Brereton argues that some Hollywood films offer more progressive environmental tropes. Brereton proposes that in the resolution of many Hollywood films there is a tension between the technological and the ecological that rearticulates the "power of nature." Brereton's approach identifies visual excess as subversion and focuses on the moments of sublime and utopian longing. Given that many post-World War II western and agrarian films engage in moments of visual excess, Brereton's insights are particularly salient. Brereton fortifies his argument through reference to film theorist Christine Glendhill's analysis of Douglas Sirk's work from the 1950s, in which she "suggests that his use of deep colors, mirrors, deep focus and multiple perspectives gives his films lingering visual memory for the viewer, long after the films contrite hegemonic closure." Brereton (2004) adds, "This critical position articulates how excessive and over- determined stylistic devices serve to rupture and critique normative

ideological readings…"

Beyond the visual excess, Brereton's attention to the dynamic of a film's time and space is useful. Visual excess can be read as offering an evocation of the natural in the same way Frederick Edwin Church (Nash, 1967, p. 82) and Thomas Cole (Powell, 1990)[12] constructed their notions of sublime forest and mountains. Rather than merely serving as a romantic genre background, landscape or nature become privileged as a raw source of beauty; an oasis from modernity and its problems. Brereton states, "these evocations of eco-nature become self-consciously foregrounded, and consequently help to promote an ecological meta-narrative, connecting humans with their environment" (2004, p. 13). Here, Brereton sees film in much the same way environmental historians view the great landscape works. When we look at Cole or Church it is their attention to the mountains, trees and rivers that catch the viewer's attention. The great epic films also feature a visual lingering on the landscapes and the land.[13] As in the great landscape works, how a film arranges the elements within the shot (*mise-en--scène* [14]), the scale of people and the overall composition can be read as evoking the environmental imaginary. However, unlike landscape work, it is this lingering, the temporal elements of focus, that work to create a purposeful "visual

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[12] See Earl A. Powell's book, *Thomas Cole*. He writes about Cole's travels across America and landmarks that inspired his paintings and writings.

[13] This is not to say that film westerns prior to the war never exhibited aspects of visual excess, for instance John Ford was already using vast landscapes within this film of this genre. However, these films prior to the war were the exception.

[14] See David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's Film Art, (p. 112) Mise-en-scene includes what is in the scene: the setting, costume and make-up, lighting, staging and movement/performance.

excess" that I concur can be read as an environmental agenda. However, while Brereton focuses on the resolution of the narrative, I venture towards the study of the entire film, focusing on more than the "feel-good," often utopian conclusions.

Sturgeon's strength as an eco-critic is her ability to navigate the matrix of issues of power, such as race and environment (Sturgeon 2008). Her interest in consumption informs this dissertation. In *Environmentalism in Popular Culture: Gender, Race, Sexuality, and the Politics of the Natural*, she positions ecocriticism in the history of meaning-making and also exposes the limits of "types" of thinking that have led to the current environmental crisis. These include Americanism in relation to endless consumption. As Sturgeon (2008) pleads,

> Social inequalities and environmental problems are connected such that we cannot solve one set of problems without solving the other, environmentalists need to be more careful about using popular narratives uncritically, not simply because they are wrong or not politically strategic, but because they may prevent us from fully understanding the causes of and solutions to environmental problems. (10)

Sturgeon suggests that an analytical framework that addresses environmental issues in tandem with other social inequalities is key.

This dissertation aligns best with the work of Robin L. Murray and Joseph K. Heumann (2011). Their text, *Gunfight at ECO-corral*, examines the juncture between environmental history and the genre of the western. The overall strength of eco-criticism, which unites their work and mine, is expressed in their introduction:

> Such an eco-critical lens gives the Western genre a richer and more culturally and historically situated reading that reveals the ideology behind representations of nature within each film. (p.19)

Although, most of their essays explore the contrast between film representations and the 'historical' renderings of certain environmental moments, their focus on films as influential, and historically important mimics this dissertation's trajectory.

The key difference in our work, beyond scope (which includes B westerns and musical versions of the genre)[15], is how we perceive the genre's history. While I see the Hollywood western as decaying by the late 1960s, they gesture to a handful of contemporary representations as examples of genre resiliency. For me, the focus is on how sociopolitical ideas of the environmental become embodied in filmic text, therefore altering the genre in a powerful way. I am guided by David Bordwell's statement on the social function of genre, "The fact that every genre has fluctuated in popularity reminds us that genres are tightly bound to cultural factors." (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 326).

Murray and Heumann's text, in general, validates many of the ideas that inform this dissertation, such as the importance of rethinking the western through an eco-critical lens, the perspective that environmental issues are more complex than assumed, and the role of the historical context in which a films is made as ultimately vastly influential.

Together, the aforementioned scholars build upon the ideas of ecocriticsm, suggesting that not only is film a source of influence, but it is also a source through which we can understand our environmental meaning-making today.

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[15] With the start of the sound cinema programming of double bills began. Studios such as Republic began to produce relatively short and inexpensive films to fill in the bottom part of the bill. A part of these double bills were the B-westerns.

Genre Studies

When we think of going to a movie, we ask our friends, what do we want to see, an action flick, a comedy, a drama? We think and talk about films in terms of categories, or genres–and films are, in fact, labeled within these same categories, which serve as a shorthand between the consumer and the film producers. For example, if we speak of a "western" (Lawrence) the viewer expects narrative elements such as cowboys, horses or a gunfight. There seems to be an unofficial relationship between exhibitors/producers and consumers, what film theorist Thomas Schatz (1977) calls an "implicit contract between studios and film audiences." But, does genre really function so simply? For instance, a film like *Blazing Saddles* (1974) is marketed as a comedy yet has elements of the musical such as dancing and singing, and signifiers of the film western. How does a film such as *Blazing Saddles* fit within established genre classifications, and in the end why does genre matter to film theorists?

Genre Theory

In 1969 British writer Lawrence Alloway questioned what he thought was the special treatment of individual films, arguing that films needed to be seen "in sets and cycles rather than single entities" and that the mode of analysis should also consider "themes and motifs" (Stanfield, p. 26). As part of the post-modern and post-structuralism mode of thought, Alloway contends film theorists and critics deconstruct

and interpret films for meaning and function.[16] Alloway's approach set the groundwork for interrogating a genre's ideological, ritualistic, mythic, and iconological meanings. He concluded that genre was socially and culturally produced and that the idea of genre emerged from three aspects: audience, industry, and texts

Building upon this framework is a description of genre through the language of "zeitgeist criticism," a school of thought that holds that aspects of popular culture, such as film, are allegorical to larger political shifts of a country at any given point in history. For example, *The Wild Bunch* and *Little Big Man* are often discussed as referencing the tensions within American foreign policy during the Vietnam era.[17] For my project, in tracing the larger political shifts of environmentalism, this extension of genre is imperative. So, while I look at audience, industry and text, to garner a close reading, I also view these films as reflecting larger conversations in society. For example, from an eco-critical perspective, I see films such as *Little Big Man,* not merely as reflecting the tension in Vietnam, but also commenting on the imperialistic desecration of people and their land, indeed, an environmental issue.

Through his semantic/syntactic model, Rick Altman more specifically argues the need to see genre as a site of discursive activity (Altman, 1999; Neale, 2000). He positions genre within its social and historical context, thus allowing for genre to be

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[16] See Regular Novelties*: Lawrence Alloway's film Criticism*, by Peter Stanfield (2011). Alloway builds upon the work of Jacque Derrida who wrote, "A text cannot belong to a genre, it cannot be without a genre, every text participates in one or several genres, and there is not a genre less text." (Derrida, 1981 p. 61)

[17] There is a danger with reflectionist history in that it negates the multiple variants at work within a culture that inform media.

seen as political, socially constructed and ideologically mediated. Altman calls this approach to genre criticism the *semantic* approach—a focus on the more superficial aspects of films that fit into a given genre. A semantic examination would point out the character types, aesthetics, plot lines, etc., which are common to the films but little else. For instance, it is interesting that cowboy protagonists wear white hats. But asking why this occurs is more meaningful. This is where Altman's second type of examination becomes significant. He calls this the *syntactic* approach; it is an approach that takes into account the relationships between the semantic elements of the genre, or between those elements and aspects of society at large. This dissertation adopts this approach.

The myth of the frontier as a noble experience was celebrated again and again in the western. Through a reading that goes beyond mere semantics, the ideological elements of the myth can be seen as indicative of cultural hegemony. Yet, when these elements are disrupted, it suggests that other social discourse at work. As film theorists like Robert Ray put it, "myths and artistic conventions, far from existing in some politically neutral realm of archetypes or aesthetics, are always socially produced and consumed, and thus always implicated in ideology" (14).

Altman offers another pair of strategies to genre criticism, which he calls the *ritual* and *ideological* approaches. Altman's describes the *ritual* approach as one that "sees Hollywood as responding to societal pressure and thus expressing audience desires," whereas the *ideological* approach defines genres as "simply the generalized, identifiable structures through which Hollywood's rhetoric flows (29)." In examining

the forces and effects surrounding Hollywood—and influence upon the Hollywood Western specifically—I inevitably see the genre in a richer, more dynamic way. Altman's holistic approach offers a useful blueprint to read the Hollywood western as more than entertaining historical fiction.

Film studies

The power of American cinema and the fact that it is a commercial culturally mediated text underpins the analysis of popular film westerns. As Bordwell and Thompson write:

> Films communicate information and ideas, and they show us places and ways of life we might not otherwise know, ""Films offer us ways of seeing and feeling that we find deeply gratifying…. "It doesn't happen by accident. Films are designed to have effects on viewers. Late in the 19th century, moving pictures emerged as a public amusement. They succeeded because they spoke to the imaginative needs of a broad-based audience…Learning from one another, expanding and refining the options available, filmmakers developed skills that became the basis of film as an art form. (2008, pp. 2,3)

Bordwell and Thompson's seminal text *Film Art, An Introduction* (2008) is a foundational book on the study and influential aspects of film as an art form and commercial product. It is one of multiple scholarly renderings from these two prolific writers that examines narrative, film style (mise-en--*scène* , cinematography, editing and sound), and genre and film history. All of these elements inform my close reading and coding of the films considered within this project.

Robert Sklar's *Movie-Made-America: A Cultural History of American Movies*

(1994) offers a complete listing of events and shifts within the era of the Hollywood studio system, which ended by the middle 1960s. It includes a useful box office listing and general insights on critical reception of iconic films such as *The Searchers* (Ford, 1956). His section on the film western prior to the war is particularly useful in setting up a contrast for the films I approached. So, while Bordwell and Thompson (2008) offer a model emphasizing stylistic and narrative analysis, Sklar's work provides the financial and industry dimensions that are the backbone of this project. To truly monitor the changes in a genre through specific films, Hollywood filmmaking must be considered as part of a nuanced commercial, artistic, and yet socially mediated process (Sklar, 1994).

Environmental and Western historians

This scholarship positions the Hollywood western within our American environmental history as a text that negotiates and advances specific ideas or discourses of and about the American relationship to land and the natural.

In *Legacy of Conquest,* Patricia Nelson Limerick (1987) connects the frontier mindset of the past to the present. Limerick shows the relationship between the justifications of nation-building and the current environmental problems America faces today. For instance, she links this frontier mentality to the overuse of pesticides and its ironic consequences-- more resilient insects. She explores the conquest narrative and frontier mindset, examining clear-cutting forestry practices and the Dust Bowl, and ultimately links these approaches to resources to what she calls the Atomic Frontier.

> Certainly, many things had changed," she writes, "between the times of the Gold Rush and Silicon Valley. The technology of communication and production presented a whole new world, a new 'frontier' as the headlines often termed it. But the pattern that shaped nineteenth-century stories continues to give shape to the stories of our time. Americans continue to try to conquer nature, transforming a variety of resources into profitable commodities, but the effort at mastery continued to trigger unintended troubling consequences. (p.153)

She also engages with the relationship of power and rationale of domination inherent in how religion, race, and gender emerge within the conquest narrative, suggesting:

> Even when they were trespassers, western Americans were hardly, in their own eyes, criminals; rather, they were pioneers. The ends abundantly justified the means; personal interest in the acquisition of property coincided with national interest in the acquisition of territory, and those interests overlapped in turn with the mission to extend the domain of Christian Civilization. Innocence of intention placed the course of events in a bright and positive light: only over time would the shadows compete for our attention. (p.36)

The post-World War II western contributed to creating the shadows Limerick describes. These films begin to steer away from the simple black and white presentation of manifest destiny-the myth of the frontier (Limerick, 1987).

Donald Worster (1994b) aligns himself with Limerick, yet enlarges her definition of expansionism to include not just resources and materials used, but also the consequences of long term environmental degradation. Both, Limerick and Worster rework the old ideas of the west that focus on notions of quaint pioneers or noble capitalists. But what makes them unique as historians is their rethinking about the old west through an environmental perspective. Their process certainly fits the strategies of my own work. The benefit of such analysis is in its ability to uncover how the popular

narratives or tropes we share as a culture have meaning that ultimately is physically expressed upon the land. Worster envisions a rethinking of the west as exposing truths about the consequences of the white man's land narrative-western conquest (Worster, 1994b).

> Driving our myth and self-deception, as we face unblinkingly the fact that from its earliest days the fate of the western region has been one of furnishing raw materials for industrialism's developement. (p.14)

Worster's work, as well as Limerick's, pair the study of the west with the study of environmental history based on shared interests such as the growth of capitalism, population, material consumption and degradation of land. Even though it seems an obvious relationship now, i.e., the link between American environmental history and western history, their approach grounds my own analysis.

William Cronon is one of a number of environmental historians who began to more specifically investigate the implications of environmental thought as reflected within artifacts of culture (e.g., paintings, books, plays, poems) and the landscape itself. In his landmark essay "The Trouble With Wilderness: Or Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," (Cronon, 1996a). Cronon starts with an essay called, "The Time Has Come to Rethink Wilderness." The provocative attitude of this essay parallels feminist theorist Judith Butler's thinking on gender formations. Butler (1990) argues in *Gender Trouble* that our conception of woman or man is a subject manifested through a discourse produced within specific historical and cultural contexts. Likewise Cronon argues that nature as a subject is a construct of history and culture. Butler suggests that this binary construction places women into a neat separate and "othered" category; Cronon makes a

similar case for the environment, contending that nature has been placed outside of humanity (Cronon, 1996a). This is the heart of Cronon's nature paradox. In *Green Screens* (Ingram, 2000), Ingram builds upon Cronon's observations,

> William Cronon observes that the culture of wilderness within radical environmentalism, which assumes 'that nature, to be natural, must also be pristine', tends to demonize even agriculture as a violation of nature. Such fantasies, he observes are an inadequate response to environmental crisis. There is a need instead for an environmental ethic that 'will tell us as much about using nature as about not using it'. The wilderness dualism tends to cast any use as *ab*-use, and thereby denies us middle Ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship. (p. 26)

Cronon's approach to history is nuanced and multifaceted. In general, as in this project, Cronon explores how concepts of nature exist within cultural context, He writes, "if we hope for an environmentalism capable of explaining why people abuse the earth as they do, then the nature we study most become less natural and more cultural."

Historian Carolyn Merchant explores the cultural context of religion and eco-feminism. A contemporary of Cronon's, Merchant (2004) argues that we can trace our relationship with nature through the biblical narrative of Eden:

> "The story of Western civilization since the seventeenth century and its advent on the American continent can be conceptualized as a grand (Eden) narrative of fall and recovery. The concept of recovery, as it emerged in the seventeenth century, not only meant a recovery from the fall but also entailed restoration of health, reclamation of land, and recovery of property" (p.135)

Merchant's examination of the religious understanding of nature is echoed in my chapter titles that reference the term "garden." I borrow the term to evoke the strength of the biblical longing within our environmental thought and the limits of such ideas.

Merchant (2004) suggests that this Edenic narrative is so embedded in our thinking and structuring of the natural world, that it plays out in the environmental crises today in intended and unintended ways.

One of the most developed texts to apply the notion of wilderness as constructed within American history is Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967), and actually the oldest text in comparison to the other books, it is still powerful. In *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Nash traces how ideas of nature can change in relation to popular culture. For instance, Nash speaks of the influential thinking of romantics such as Emerson and Thoreau who symbolize a shift towards a more transcendent view of natural spaces. He traces environmental thought and he describes how ideas are formed and promoted to benefit certain segments of society. For instance, in the 1800s, in areas where wilderness is cleared and no longer a threat (as perceived through the writings of earlier settlers), Americans began to reconsider the role of nature with more confidence, a perspective that resulted in a growing romanticism, a view of nature still at work within mainstream environmentalism today.

Nash (1967) argues that historical meaning-making never occurs in a vacuum, but is an on-going process. He credits the popularization of wilderness through painters such as Thomas Cole and Albert Bierstadt as part of this experience. I extend this notion, believing that, like landscape works, cinema can be read as expressing specific ideas about nature with regard to values of beauty, spirituality and importance.

Cronon, Merchant and Nash all trace and question the role of environmental thought within our history. How certain ideas and concepts about nature become

embedded within the American mindset, and as a result, play out in the way human beings see and engage with the environment.

Western Historians

Richard Slotkin (1992) explored the basis of the origins of the frontier idea[18]. Like Nash, Slotkin emphasizes the role of narrative within of the process of history. He engages in textual analysis of a variety of genres: posters, diaries and books. In the third book of the trilogy, Gunfighter Nation: *The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (1992) covers the expression of the frontier myth in popular culture; spending time on the meaning of the Hollywood western within culture. Unlike Nash, Slotkin sees Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt's masculinized view of the frontier as most influential on American culture. Slotkin argues that "the racialist theory of Anglo-Saxon ascendance and superiority (embodied in Theodore Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West*), rather than Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis of the closing of the frontier, exerted the most influence in popular culture and government policy making in the twentieth century" (52).

Later in the text, Slotkin suggest that Roosevelt's concept of the frontier myth

[18] *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the frontier in Twentieth-century America* (1992) Richard Slotkin. This book, one of three forming a trilogy, covers the expression of the frontier myth in such popular culture phenomena as dime novels, Buffalo Bill's Wild West, and Hollywood films. Slotkin also discusses the exploration of the significance of the American frontier experience as promoted through the first conservationist president Theodore Roosevelt and historian of the time Frederick Jackson Turner's essay the *Significance of the Frontier in American History.* (Hathaway, 1998)

continues to provide the justification for most of American expansionist policies, including Vietnam. Slotkin's delineation of myth and ties to Vietnam, provide useful insights, for the chapter on the Hollywood western within the 1960s. This text presumes that both views of the frontier (Turner's and Roosevelt's) are embedded within the site of the western. The 'vanishing' aspect of the end of the frontier is part of the nostalgia that sometimes revives the genre.

Slotkin is not without his critics. Janet Walker (2001) challenges Slotkin's focus on the western as a-historical, stating that "He often speaks of the 'western-as-myth' as being set apart from history, that is the film western (as with other cultural forms) is not historical in and of itself; it draws on historical material." Walker instead argues the western *is* history. She cites Brian Henderson's and Peter Lehman's (2004) argument that the film *The Searchers* had as much to do with America in 1956 as it did with Texas in 1868.

Patrick McGee (2006) steers away from myth, but rethinks the western in a new way in *From Shane to Kill Bill: Rethinking the Western*. This book pays particular attention to the often disregarded category of class in much the same way that I wish to engage an analysis in the equally disregarded category of environment. My one fault with the book is that although he cites the embedded nature of class with classifications of gender and race, he neglects to mention the relationship of environment to class. That said, McGee does offers a template in which to reengage with the genre is a dynamic way. He argues that although the western is often framed as a conservative genre, "one that focuses on hyper masculinity … [there is] another side to the western,

another shadow that it casts (xiv)". It is with this same impulse that I venture toward the rethinking of the genre guided by the tools of eco-criticism.

Film reflects who we are, who we thought we were and who we want to be. Just as much as film addresses class ideology, as explored in McGee's (2006) analysis, film in the same way speaks to values of the environmental. The cultural construction of how we use and view land within the genre of the western during this fascinating period of time helps us more fully understand environmental history and the contemporary meaning of place. By locating the environment at the center of film inquiry, I hope to expand the emerging field of eco-criticism. Through film, within its historical context, we can uncover how environmental thought resides within the visual and rhetorical elements of a genre steeped in the story of land.

This dissertation is organized in the following manner:

Chapter one: Introduces the issues and reviews relevant literature.

Chapter two: Provides a review of the methods and theoretical underpinnings

Chapter three, "*The Return to the Garden* western", discusses the early post-World War II era (1945 to 1953). Within this time of the "atomic frontier", I argue that environmental impulses emerge in these films. The impulse is a reworking of a more romanticizing and conservationist view of land, comparable to the romantics of the nineteenth century, landscape artists such as Thomas Cole. I suggest that like Cole, and these films replicate sites of nature through a focus on the aesthetic splendor of

landscape versus the conquest ideology of seeing land as an obstacle or place of only material value. In tandem with a more heightened visual access, these films also create a setting for the eco-dreamer.

In many ways as the visual aspects of these westerns echo the imagery of the romantic landscape paintings, the eco-dreamer embodies the romantic ideas of writers such as Thoreau. The eco-dreamer is a character who throughout the narrative voices less anthropocentric values. He or she becomes the new moral center of the western. Often the eco-dreamer is created through the voice of the Native American. Following the war, some Hollywood films began to offer a more sympathetic portrayal such as in films like *Devil's Doorway* and *Broken Arrow*. Collectively, the films shift toward a more sublime aesthetic, which, paired with the narrative use of the eco-dreamer, functions to break down the purity of the conquest narrative; ultimately playing a role in the degradation of the Hollywood genre.

Chapter Four: The "*Machine in the Garden*" examines the period between 1954 and 1964. Through textual analysis, the Hollywood westerns of this era can be seen as reflecting Cold-War ambivalence about modernity. This ambivalence is seen through shifts in the role of the eco-dreamer and through more nuanced representations of space. While the early post war years can be described as reworking the nature romanticism of Thoreau and even Aldo Leopold, *The Machine in the Garden western* features an interruption by the machine, often symbolized through the car, or other mechanized devices, into nature. These films often engage with the dualities of celebrating expansionism, and an exploration of the underbelly of overuse and the excesses of

power. As such the films of this chapter continue to engage in environmental themes that complicate and undermine the genre's telling of a pure and clean conquest narrative.

Chapter Five, "*Weeds in the Garden",* deals with the relative demise of the Hollywood western as a genre during the political period of the 1960s. As in the other chapters, I examine the role of social and political elements that play out in environmental impulses and can be read in specific film text. Throughout the 1960s up to Earth Day, the Hollywood western is seen as still revising and questioning foundational elements of society, such as the American history of conquest and degradation of lands and people upon it. Part of this self-reflection is in response to the Vietnam War, a conflict viewed by many as another imperialistic action by Americans. So, as these films challenge the 'simplicity' of imperialist actions in the past, the films also serve as a platform for challenging imperialistic interventions abroad in the present. In challenging the acts of intervention, past and present, these films can be read as not only anti-violence but pro- environmental.

Chapter six synthesizes key arguments within the dissertation as a whole, and offers alternative ways to look at and regard the Hollywood western within the space of environmental history.

In this chapter I have offered an introduction to the goals of this dissertation. The aim is to study how the post-World War II Hollywood western constructs ideas of environmentalism or the natural (from 1945-1970) and in doing so suggest shifts in the genre, that ultimately lead to the demise of the Hollywood western. Hollywood films

do not exist in a vacuum, they are artifacts of their time, molded and produced to accommodate genre expectations, and yet to also keep audiences interested. The undercurrent of environmental thought in post war. How, these films include more nuanced environmental strands suggests the era of production and hints at the genre's ability to allow and yet in the end to degrade its ultimate purpose. This text looks at these amazing times in Hollywood from the onset of the atomic age to the launching of the first Earth day.

I will address the environmental ideas and themes are presented, as well as the workings during this time of the Hollywood film industry and the power of the film western as a genre. Topics covered include the connection between human beings and elements of nature, mechanical and scientific effects on nature, fears of modernity (scientific, technological, and pollution related) and its effects on nature. What role does nature play within the film? How are environmental problems presented and by whom? How does the film's era of production shape the interpretation of environmental imagery and discourse? What is the film's overall environmental moral or philosophy, if any? Finally, how did the greening of the white man's land narrative play a role in the big screen western's decline?

This dissertation explores the role of environmental issues within Hollywood film westerns following WWII through the 1960s. The film western frequently reflects on the relationship between human beings and the land, and as such plays a role in the cultural construction and mythmaking of American environmental history. By foregrounding the environment within popular cinema, one can explore and make

visible the complex ways in which non-human space has been conceived, mediated and promoted within filmic discourse. Cheryll Glotfelty (1994) writes:

> "Ecocritical work shares a common motivation: the troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support systems" (xx).

Re-examining this era of film history from a renewed and unique approach is, I believe, absolutely vital, not only for creating new modes of thinking about the natural, but also for critically engaging with sites of media as constructed and influential today.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

As a film historian, working from an eco-critical perspective, I employed multiple, layered, and qualitative approaches, using textual analysis, visual analysis and historical review.

My criteria for choosing films for this study were as follows: First, a film must be among the American Film Institutes (AFI) list of top film westerns. AFI is generally regarded as the foremost authority on the role of American cinema within society. Created in 1967, AFI is an independent non-profit organization that preserves the heritage of the American film industry. AFI's website (http://www.afi.com/) provides information about actors, directors and other key figures within the American film industry and academy. The first twenty-two board members included Gregory Peck, Sidney Poitier and Francis Ford Coppola. The films that make the AFI best-of list emerge from a juried panel of over 1,500 scholars, film critics and historians, and artists. These films are chosen based upon their historical and cultural significance over time and the overall popularity of the film.

Then, I consulted American Box office numbers through Box office Mojo (http://boxofficemojo.com/) and I built a list. Films had to be produced through a major studio and must have grossed at least $150 million, adjusted for inflation. The emphasis on box office success suggests that these films had an impact on the audience's social consciousness. A film that people pay money to see is a film that

exhibits great hold within the public imagination. Although, not a big money maker, *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948) remains on the list because of its longevity as a film of considerable critical acclaim. There are a few films that I deleted from the list. For example, although a successful film at the box office, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969) was not included because the film did not exhibit a strong environmental focus. This final review produced fifteen films with multiple scenes to be analyzed.

Finally, given that Hollywood films are commercial entities, there is an assumption, then, that we can see Hollywood producers as keenly aware of post -war audiences' thoughts and attitudes. As such, these films must address some aspects of their social cultural world, or come across as irrelevant. The post-war mindset of Americans within an atomic age was certainly engaged in moral debates over the longevity of our planet, a significant environmental issue. I believe that these films mediate and reflect these tensions. Therefore, when we explore how the Hollywood western represents attitudes about the treatment of the environment, nature or land, we can ascertain how post-war audiences were engaged in environmental thought.

After compiling my list, using Saldana's *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Saldaña, 2009*)* I systematically watched all of the films three times. The first time I viewed the film was to get a general first impression and make analytic memos. This lead to the creation of a rudimentary segmentation map which is a break-down of the film scene by scene, with attention to how the film works from its parts into a whole. In the second viewing, I applied first cycle in vivo coding

(Saldaña, 2009) from which several categories emerged. I noticed typical characters such as the white macho cowboy who as the moral center represents expansionism as noble. There are two archetypical female characters: 1) The helpless female who is needed to provide children and civilization and 2) The strong tough pioneer woman. There are two competing Native characters, the blood thirsty heathen who is the obstacle to white progress and expansion, and the noble savage. There were antagonists including the greedy rancher and the cruel cattle baron. Finally, there was the eco-dreamer a character who speaks for nature, often inciting others to preserve or repair sites of the natural.

My textural analysis also included considerations of aural aspects of the films. I formed categories based on characteristics such as voice-over, natural sound, and music. I noted whether film segments had broad sweeping orchestrations or simple folk tunes. Dialogue of course was carefully analyzed. This analysis later appears in chapter 4, 5 6.

In order to measure reliability, a second researcher, with documentary film experience coded a 10 percent subsample. Intercoder agreement was 95 percent, which is considered an acceptable level of agreement.

In my visual analysis I examined technical elements such as cinematography, editing, mise-en--*scène* which includes set design, lighting, clothing and make-up. I noted different types of landscapes such as forests, desert spaces, sweeping mountains, and open prairies.

During my second cycle coding, I watched the films through an eco-critical

lens and I refined my categories. I asked questions such as how the characters talk about land? What role does the physical landscape play in the narrative? What environmental values are inherent in the way land, landscape or the natural are represented in the film? In this second cycle coding, I realized that the character that most embodies environmental awareness was the hero and moral center of the story. I decided the eco-dreamer is the character I needed to track and focus on because He or She is the strongest embodiment of environmental awareness.

The third time I watched the films two major organizational strategies emerged. Historical patterns began to emerge. The immediate post war films 1945-1953, the dominant theme was clearly the white man's land story, where land is represented as site of conquest and controls In the middle 1950s to early 1960s, which incidentally coincided with the cold war anxiety, plots and character representations within Hollywood become more complex, and notions about Land as commodity competes with notions of land as sanctuary. The next era, from the early 1960s through the end of the decade, become more nuanced. Now, characters are reversed, the former protagonists of the Western, such as the white governmental officer is now seen as the enemy, and the genre declines.

Although, I use temporal categories to ground this project, not all films fit nicely into specific eras. History is always in process. Nevertheless, these historical periods definitely reveal a shift within the genre over time. Thinking back to eco-critical thinkers and artists who evoke the garden, I titled these three eras *Return to the Garden, Machine in the Garden* and *Weeds in the Garden.*

So, I have taken Saldaña's coding techniques, applied them through an eco-critical lens, and applied these to the fifteen films of this study. Given that films are historical artifacts, I also conducted a historical review of scripts, diaries, production notes and memos. I conducted my historical research at two major film archival sites, the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre research and the Margaret Herrick Library and the Academy Film Archive in Beverly Hills California.

The Wisconsin Center for Film and Theatre research is renowned archival site in Madison Wisconsin. The center has a range of visual, audio and material artifacts of some of Hollywood's most influential producers, directors and actors. The center contains documentation far beyond films and scripts. The Kirk Douglas collection available now in digital was particularly useful. Here I found production notes, manuscripts, photographs, and personal correspondence between the author and actor all relating to the film *Lonely are the Brave*

The Margaret Herrick Library and the Academy Film Archive gathers, restores and preserves film and film related materials to assist film historians and researchers. Formed in the early 1930s, the library has a collection which now includes over 11,000 produced films covering the time period of 1910-to the present. The special collections department contained the papers, memos and script notations for directors such as George Stevens and Martin Ritt. These documents contributed to my analysis of the films *Giant, Shane, Hud and Hombre* and were instrumental in helping historically situate these films I analyzed.

This triangulation of research provided a thicker reading to the impulses I saw on the screen. Here the real life societal dramas played out by actors, directors and producers during a time of returning home, atomic bombs and civil rights inform the fictional drama of the West.

CHAPTER IV

RETURN TO THE GARDEN WESTERNS

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. -Aldo Leopold*, A Sand County Almanac (1948)*

The flame from the angel's sword in the Garden of Eden has been catalyzed into the atom bomb; God's thunderbolt became blunted, so man's thunderbolt has become the steel star of destruction. – Sean O'Casey

"You Devils have got to quit polluting my creek" Character of Nelse in the film Tulsa (1949)

On August 6th and 9th of 1945, the United State dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These actions symbolized the end of a long war; the collapse of many European empires and the beginning of life within an atomic age. It was a period of great change and global activity. Within the shift to peacetime, the concept of the bomb and the fragility of the planet became an undercurrent within the American psyche. The impact of the atomic bomb echoed throughout the post-war culture; the war and the bomb had changed everything. It was a moment when American society could visualize the possibilities of peace, and yet also saw the possibility of Armageddon (Hershey, 1946).[19]

Within this angst of the early post-war years, the American relationship with

[19] See, Hershey, John. *Hiroshima* (1946) Journalist John Hershey wrote this six person account summary of events within a year of the bombs being dropped.

nature began to radically change. First, the American landscape itself underwent a transition in reaction to growing consumption patterns that fueled the industrial economy and then exploited American lands in new ways. Yet, also during this time, numerous environmental clubs and organizations took root or gained increasing membership. In reaction to the bomb and the increasing industrialization of the landscape, these groups galvanized and their grassroots efforts planted the seeds of the mainstream environmental movement to come.

In the early post-war years, concerns over the bomb pervaded literature such as apocalyptic texts like Fairfield Osborn's *Our Plundered Planet* (1948) and William Vogt's *Road to Survival* (1948), both published in 1948. Both books explored the full impact of environmental destruction at the hands of humans. The books also imagined the consequences and devastation of poor environmental stewardship. During this same time, Aldo Leopold revised *A Sand County Almanac*, which would be published after his death in 1949. Although Leopold did not mention the bomb directly, his writings echoed the fears of conservationists at the time and functioned as a warning. Steering away from the apocalyptic tales, Leopold's land ethic questioned the moral right of humans to supersede nature and offered suggestions to reverse this course. He wrote, "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

The same year *A Sand County Almanac* was published, director John Huston's critically acclaimed western, *The Treasure of Sierra Madre* (1947) premiered. The dialogue echoes the writing and thinking of Aldo Leopold. Consider the ideas

expressed in Leopold's poem titled *Think Like a Mountain* (1949): (Hardy)

> "The cowman who cleans his range of wolves does not realize that he is taking over the wolf's job of trimming the herd to fit the range. He has not learned to think like a mountain."

This poem speaks to the ethics of living in a more bio-centric manner; basically it talks about re-use and repair. Compare Leopold's ethical environmental stance, to this scene from *Treasure of Sierra Madre.* After successfully mining for gold, three men decide to finally leave with the gold they have mined. The three characters are Howard, an older miner, (Walter Huston) Dobbs (Humphrey Bogart) and Curtin (Tim Holt). The older character, Howard suggest something to the two other men that confuses them:

Howard: *It will take another day to break down the mine and put the mountain back in shape.*
Dobbs: *Do what to the mountain?*
Howard*: Make her appear like she was before we came.*
Dobbs: *I don't get it.*
Howard: *We wounded this mountain; it is our duty to close her wounds. It's the least we can do to show our gratitude for all the wealth she's given us.*

This moment is unusual for its thematic break from the narrative's focus on human competition and greed. In doing so, it can be seen as resistant to genre norms of capitalist expansionism. The film devotes time and space on a moment of ecological action. This is significant because when further examined, the scene is an expression of sustainability and conservation; it promotes environmental values counter to land use ideas typically expressed within the Hollywood western and genre. I argue that these pops of environmental expression suggest a change within the genre. *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* fits within the group of early post-war films that I call the *Return to the Garden* westerns. In an era of both peace and atomic threat, these films reflect and

mediate societal angst over the role of humanity and the natural.

In this chapter I explore a group of Hollywood westerns, *Treasure of the Sierra Madre, Devil's Doorway, Duel in the Sun, Shane,* and *Broken Arrow*. The films all fall within the early post war period of 1946-1953. Before analyzing the *Return to the Garden* westerns, however, I offer an overview of the Hollywood system and the genre during this period. Then I briefly reflect on the complex symbolism of the Native American within the post-war western.

Prior to World War II, American film westerns persisted primarily in telling the master narrative of manifest destiny,[20] a story of the acquisition of land as ordained and ultimately necessary in the forging of European /American character. For example, westerns such as *Trails of the Wild and the Plainsman (1935), Stagecoach (1939) Virginia City (1940) and the Spoilers (1942)* -- all hugely popular during the 1930s and early 40s--stayed within the confines of the conquest narrative. In these westerns, clear-cutting forests or destructive mining processes are sanctioned by the greater good of expansionism. However, I suggest that as early as 1945-1953 we begin to see alterations within the genre. During this period, some Hollywood westerns begin to question the ideology behind the land story and compromise the relevancy of the genre.

I use the word *garden* in the title as a signifier and framing device. The word "garden" suggests notions of the Garden City movements of Europe and America still

[20] For a fuller discussion see Richard Slotkin's *Gunfighter Nation*, p 30

popular throughout the war with the Victory Gardens.[21] The idea of the 'garden' also evokes ideas of landscape in which to rest away from the complexities of modernity. One of the strongest associations of any concept of 'garden' is the attachment of Judeo-Christian evocations of a *Garden of Eden*. For instance, the idea of a spiritually infused place is how Leo Marx forwards his writing of the pastoral (1964). In his text "the Machine in the Garden,"[22] he sees the garden or the pastoral or as innocence in 'spiritual' harmony.[23]

The use of the word "*return"* is meant to signify the mood of the era; first, it can be taken literally as a reference to the returning soldiers, 'Rosie the Riveter' returning to the domestic sphere, and business returning back to a 'peace-time 'economy. Additionally, there is the sense of a returning prompted by a longing or wanting to go back to some 'idea' of a place; a place of one's own away from the encroachment of modernity and war. This view of nature as a safe place, a site of even transcendence, harkens back to the nineteenth century romantics. These Henry David Thoreau and later John Muir, who, in reaction to industrialist expansionism, re-conceive nature not as a

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[21] See Hardy, D (1999), *1899–1999*, London: Town and Country Planning Association.
[22] Marx uses the garden device to speak to a tension within American culture over the interruption of modernity into the pastoral. Marx addresses a theme of American society as withdrawing from the city and 'society' in a place of an 'idealized landscape that is then transformed by the intrusion of the machine often symbolized in the technological or industrial products such as tractors, cars, trains.
[23] This suggests the quasi-religious experience developed in the romantic pastoralism of Wordsworth, Emerson and Thoreau. Hence, the pastoral ideal is an embodiment of what Lovejoy calls 'semi-primitivism"; it is located in a middle ground somewhere 'between,' yet in a transcendent relation to, the opposing forces of civilization and nature**"** (23, Marx).

place of mere material goods, but; as a site of beauty and "awe."[24] This return to a romanticized approach to the natural is at the heart of the *Return to the Garden western*.

Although this chapter examines five films within this category, two films form the principal basis of my analysis: *Broken Arrow* and *Devil's Doorway* because they contain the strongest ecological threads, and both films' embody a "post-war" shift toward a more sympathetic portrayal of on-screen Native Americans (Simmon 2003).[25] The other films I reference are *The Treasure of Sierra Madre, Tulsa* and *Shane.*

The film western harbored a long and racist history toward Native Americans. In nearly all Hollywood interpretations the Native American is framed as the 'other,' in contrast to the white protagonists (Bordewich, 1996). Traditionally, the Native American is set up as the antagonist in the way of progress, or later in some films as the Cold War progresses, as metaphors for communists and enemies. To further justify the violence and degradation of native people and their land, American Indians are depicted as savage and ignorant.

A more sympathetic representation of Native people, many film historians argue, reflects post-war reworking of race within the culture at large (Kilpatrick, 1999).

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[24] The meanings of 'awe' and the sublime have changed since the earliest romantic writers. William Cronon's "Romantics on the Mountaintop" analysis of Romanticism and the Sublime (use of the word 'awe') William Wordsworth's "Prelude" (here in the 1805-06 edition) in which he and a companion cross the Simplon Pass in the Alps is perhaps the best-known example of a sublime experience that is terrifying and 'awe'-inspiring at the same time. Next comes the introduction and opening chapter of Ralph Waldo Emerson's influential book *Nature* (1836).

[25] Simmon speaks to a lost era in the history of Hollywood, where during the time of silent films there were a handful of westerns that offered a more sympathetic treatment of Native Americans (Loew, 2001) (Sunseri, 1973) (2-30).

I also posit that perhaps there is another reason. Although the wild and violent savage Indian trope was ubiquitous to the western, another stereotype existed within literature and other popular culture forms, the "Noble Savage." A romanticized projection, the noble savage functioned as a figure of moral absolution against the evils of the city. Characterized as living in a pristine paradise, the noble savage is innocent and lives close to nature.[26] Consequently, the reworking of the noble savage can be seen as a desire by white producers to mediate and placate racialized and environmental tensions within society.

No doubt, the presumption of native people as living closer to nature is essentialist. Native communities had complex systems in place, much more nuanced than generally assumed. Nor did they reside in "pristine" environments. Agriculturalists such as the Hopi, for example, created sophisticated waterworks, including reservoirs and irrigation canals.[27] The Oneida burned underbrush and sometime entire portions of forest to create deer browse.[28] The ideal of the "ecological Indian," however, persisted, perhaps out of a need by white Americans to create a 'pure' other. A David Ingram suggests that the other embodies "absent values of authenticity and community, and thereby transcends the alienations of modernity" (46).

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[26] The Noble Savage is often associated as the creation of writers of the enlightenment, such as Jean-Jacque Rouseeau, but has its roots in earlier writings, paintings and songs harking back centuries before.

[27] For more, read Sunseri, Alvin R., "Agricultural Techniques in New Mexico at the Time of the Anglo-American Conquest," *Agricultural History,* Vol. 47, No. 4, Oct., 1973, pp. 329-337

[28] See Patty Loew's *Indian Nations of Wisconsin: Histories of Endurance and Renewal* (WHS Press: Madison, WI 2001) p. 103.

Following the dropping of the atomic bomb, it would seem the longing to reconnect with a place imagined as pure and free from the 'evils' of technology and science would appeal to movie goers. For post-war audiences there was a desire to reconcile these emotions through the symbol of the noble savage. This gestured to an environmental longing of the time. "The deep ecological Indian" Ingram noted, adding, "is a figure of natural man against which the hegemony of the white American male can be renewed" (p.57). In this chapter, the more sympathetic treatment of Native Americans in some westerns hints to this desire within American culture to go back to a pre-atomic world where sites of wild and nature are imagined as transformative. And, while limited in its conflation of Native people's relationship to the planet, the environmental ideas behind it counter genre norms of land and landscape as having use value alone.

In the *Return to the Garden western*, the Native American emerges as a protagonist, I call an "eco-dreamer." Whether, Native or non-native, the eco-dreamer is the moral center of the film. Unlike the cowboy of a more traditional western who is rather rigid in his purity between good and bad, however, the eco-dreamer in these films sees the link between community and land and respects it beyond its use value.

Studio System and genre

As the war influenced Americans' worldview, communication systems also advanced and expanded through an array of new technological tools. The film industry

enjoyed considerable improvements in color imagery and picture projection.[29] Technological advances made during the war allowed post-war filmmakers greater freedom to leave the confines of the studios. Film stocks were improved, enabling cinematographers to capture a wider range of light than previously possible, and at the same time to need less in the way of bulky lighting equipment. Sound recording equipment, particularly with improvements in the wire recorder, became more portable. Lighter cameras with better lenses were developed. Collectively all of these advances encouraged more on-location shooting.

As Hollywood readjusted to peacetime, foundational elements of the industry began to change. In 1948 the Paramount decision ended vertical integration. The policy meant that major studios such as MGM could no longer control all aspects of film making, such as production, distribution and exhibition. This greatly weakened the studios' power. By the end of the 1940s television emerged as a specific threat. By the early 1950s box office receipts showed the shift as fewer people went to movie houses and more chose home entertainment with their television sets. Hollywood exploited technological improvements, such as Vista Vision and Cinemascope, hoping to separate itself from the smallness of the TV screen (Cripps, 1996).[30] Foreign films were also building an unexpected market in America. Some historians suggest that this interest in foreign films correlated with American soldiers renewed connection to Europe during

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[29] See Thomas Cripps' *Hollywood's High Noon* (1997) for a full discussion on shifts in film technology following the war.
[30] See Cripps, (p.219)

the war. In a way the soldiers had seen the world and their tastes were changing. One soldier who came back changed was director George Stevens. During the war Stevens enlisted with the U.S. Army Signal Corps, and, under General Eisenhower, ran the film unit in Europe from 1943 to 1946. His film footage of the war included coverage of D-Day, the liberation of Paris, and the horrors of coming upon the Duben Labor camp and the Dachau concentration camp. Footage from the camps was used as documentary material at the Nuremburg Trials.[31]

In Marilyn Ann Moss's book on George Stevens, she argues that upon Stevens return from the war, Stevens was no longer at ease telling the same old story and in the iconic western, *Shane*, wanted to break free of the studio constraints:

> "In a larger sense *Shane* could very well have been a metaphor for the mechanizations of the postwar studio system as it began to disintegrate and had to cope with producers, directors, writers, and actors who wanted to go independent." (p.178)

Lastly, and perhaps most destructive to the psychological and creative aspects of the studio system, Cold War attitudes and the implementation of Hollywood blacklisting were emerging.[32] The most well-known incidents of blacklisting started with the 1947 investigations by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) into communist influence on the Hollywood movie industry. The Hollywood Ten were the

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[31] In 1988, the film footage that George Steven shot during the WWII was entered into the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress; citing his footage as an "essential visual record" of Second World War.

[32] Many of the film westerns explored in this text were written by black-listed writers. By the time *Broken Arrow* made it to the screen, its screenwriter, Albert Maltz (fronted by Martin Blackborn) was already in prison.

first and most prominent Hollywood employees to be blacklisted for refusing to provide evidence to the extent of Hollywood's stronghold on the public imagination. However, despite these changes in Hollywood, the film western remained an important commodity. Following the war, Americans embraced the film western in record numbers (Corkin, 2004). Never before or again would the genre experience such popularity at the box office.[33] In some ways the genre offered a safe zone where audiences as well as producers could visit an imaginary place where good and bad was clear and obvious. Yet, even these westerns belied the larger social and cultural changes of the period. The westerns of the post-WWII years and the dropping of the bomb could no longer tell stories of violence and conquest in a pure and simple way. The cost of the bomb in human lives and potential for global destruction changed everything, even stories about the past.

Analysis of *the Return to the Garden Western*

In Crowthers' review (1950) of *Devil's Doorway*, he hints at something awry in the genre. "*Devil's Doorway* is a western with a point of view that rattles some skeletons in our family closet, he wrote." In the promotional trailer for the film *Broken Arrow* the voice-over announcer states, "Their story breaks the silence of the years." Both *Devil's Doorway* and *Broken Arrow* were produced in 1949. *Devil's Doorway* was actually completed first, but MGM held the film back from release because of lingering concerns over the subject matter regarding race. As a result, Twentieth

Century-Fox ended up releasing *Broken Arrow* several months prior. *Broken Arrow* was a box-office success and is often cited as the first film to treat native Americans more sympathetically. In the trailers for *Broken Arrow* the announcer states, "That something shameful is being unearthed." Because these films rethink the conquest narrative, (i.e., reworking the treatment of race and violence within our history), a fuller story of the American landscape narrative emerges. This re-thinking, which Crowthers hints at, underpins this chapter.

Eco-dreamer

In *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, the character Howard states, "The valley is where I am at peace; I can be with my community there, far away from the noise." This sentiment, expressed by Howard, the older man of the three in the film, embodies a philosophy espoused by the eco-dreamer, a character found in all of the films within this study. The eco-dreamer lives sustainably and reuses material; he demonstrates an atypical environmental awareness. Because of this, the eco-dreamer is a hero who troubles the conquest land story.

Conservation and Reuse

Delmar Davies's film *Broken Arrow* (1950) was a benchmark in the history of the genre for its more sympathetic treatment of Native Americans. Jimmy Stewart, a major film star, was a key draw for the film. Common with Hollywood westerns of the time, the key Native characters are played by white movie stars except for the portrayal

of Geronimo by Jay Silverheels. Built upon the book *Blood Brothers* (1947),[34] the story is based on actual events about the friendship between Apache leader Cochise and an ex-army man named Tom Jeffords. Both men orchestrated a short-term peace between the U.S. Cavalry and the Apache.

Midway through *Broken Arrow* the leader of the Apache, Cochise, speaks to his new friend, Jeffords, a white man. Cochise states a point:

Cochise*: You should always wipe your hands on your arm after eating, tall one. The grease is good for them.*
Tom Jeffords*: Ah, among the white men, we wash it off.*
Cochise*: What a waste!*

Just as the miner *in The Treasure of Sierra Madre* speaks to ideas of conservation in the mountain scene, here Cochise speaks to the similar value of re-use and management. Cochise has moral authority and can be seen as the eco-dreamer. This small moment is unique for two reasons: first, his eco-agency, and second, his presentation as Native American who is a "teacher." He has authority. Therefore, scenes like this counter the conquest narrative. As a hero character, Cochise provides a rethinking of consumption in contrast to the waste aspects of expansionism.

In the film, *Tulsa* (1949) we see a range of characters who fight to conserve the land against oil barons. Cherokee (Susan Hayward) is a young woman at the center of the story. The film begins with the death of Cherokee's father, Nelse. Her father is a ranch owner and discovers from a worker (Steve) that his cattle are dying near a creek.

[34] The book was based on Arizona state records, starting from the Gadsden Purchase in 1856 up to the Indian wars around 1870.

The scene plays as follows:

Nelse*: What is it Steve? (Ranch-hand)*
Steve: *Trouble, plenty trouble down near the creek.*
(They ride up upon numerous cattle lying on the ground or in the creek)
Steve*: They are dying…and its happening up and down the creek. I counted more than thirty.*
Nelse: *What did it Steve?*
Steve: *I will tell you…(Steve puts a match to the water and it lights on fire.) Oil…It's the new Oil from the Medley place. (Nelse rides off to what we suppose is the Medley place, there is one oil drill in the distance. As Nelse rides past the drill there is garbage littered all around.)*
Nelse: *(he shouts at the men) "You men have got to stop polluting my creek, (he shouts again) you men have got to stop polluting my creek!"*

The word "pollution" reverberates throughout the film *Tulsa.*[35] As the film progresses the oil barons are framed as the antithesis of the eco-dreamer because the barons focus on money with a disregard for the long-term consequences of continuously operating multiple drill sites. However, there is a conservationist, an eco-dreamer named Brad Brady (portrayed by Robert Preston). He teaches the townspeople about the pollution and degradation due to over-exploited oil rigs.

At the end of the film the Native American, Redbird (Pedro Armendariz) another eco-dreamer, accidently drops a match in a stream. The stream, tainted with oil, catches fire and blows up most of the oil wells and destroys the fields. The following scene, which occurs just after the wells have blown-up, features the characters Jim

[35] See: James R. Fleming; Bethany R. Knorr of Colby College. In "History of the Clean Air Act" (2006) he addresses extreme smog events that happened in Los Angeles in the late 1940s. This is the time period and location for the making of *Tulsa*.

Redbird, Thomas Brady and Cherokee Lansing (a love interest and eco-dreamer in training) and Bruce Tanner, the oilman who has been mismanaging the field.

Oilman: *Well, it used to be an oil field.*
Brady*: It is still an oil field, but it wouldn't have been after another year of your handling. You would've pumped it dry. You ought to be glad this happened.*
Oilman: *Oh sure. I ought to give this firebug a medal.*
Cherokee*: Since when is it a crime to throw a match into a stream of running water?*
Man: There was oil in that water.
Brady: Then you admit your oil polluted that stream?
Man: I admit nothing…oh what's the difference.
Cherokee*: That field is going to come to life again but when it does it will be just the way brad planned it with spaced wells…*
Redbird: *…and fences to protect the cattle.*
Brady: *And restricted oil production.*
Cherokee: *If we can prove conservation here, the whole state will follow; the whole nation.*

This scene, like the moment with Cochise, or the miners in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* stands out for its alternative stance. All of these eco-dreamers exalt the virtues of slowing down and conserving— values counter to norms of the genre.

Community

Anthony Mann's *Devil's Doorway* is another film cited as groundbreaking in its representation of Native Americans and offers a complicated narrative. Here the hero is a Shoshone who is played by the white actor, Robert Taylor. His character is called Lance; a name itself gesturing toward the heroic knight Sir Lancelot. Lance is a decorated Civil War veteran who returns home and realizes the country he fought for can now "legally" take-away his land. He hires a female lawyer, which is another unique and transgressive feature of this film. She is unable to break through the maze

of prejudice and cruelty in the American laws because Lance is not a citizen, but rather a ward of the state. At first, Lance is joyful and has friends, but he quickly learns that the home where he grew up and which he shared with his father is at risk.

As an Eco-Dreamer, Lance fears the effects of modernity upon communities and echoes the ideas of Aldo Leopold's land ethic. Leopold wrote:

> "We abuse land because we see it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect…"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals; or collectively: the land. ... In short, a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it."

We see the similarity and harmony echoed in this scene involving Lance in *Devil's Doorway*:

Lance: *We'll let the valley soak in the sunlight, nurse it, pet it til Sweet Meadow is a ranch where we can live, and all the kids after us. It will be ours, warm, plenty to eat, nothing but peace. Any man that comes along who has run out of luck– no man red or white— will be turned away from our door."*

With a focus on community, the eco-dreamer embodies the ethic of sharing and connection to the land; a strong theme within environmental thought. Often, eco-dreamers are given dialogue in which values of sustainability and community are expressed through spiritually infused and often utopian language. Lance's speech (see above) suggests this. These moments argue against the white man's narrative because they consider land as more than a mere commodity. For example, Tim Holt's character Curtain, also in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre,* talks poetically about his memory of picking fruit amid a joyful community:

> *"One summer when I was a kid I worked as a picker in a peach harvest in the San Joaquin Valley. It sure was something. Hundreds of people, old and young, whole families working together. After the day's work we used to build big bonfires and sit around 'em and sing to guitar music, till morning sometimes. You'd go to sleep, wake up and sing and go to sleep again. Everybody had a wonderful time. Ever since, I've had a hankering to be a fruit grower. Must be grand watching your own trees put on leaves, come into blossom and bear ...watching the fruit get big and ripe on the bough, ready for picking...."*

Although these farmers use the land for food production, it is the motif of sharing and community that runs counter to norms and positions this character as an eco-dreamer. The yearning to connect, as expressed by Holt's character, is a romantic thread examined by a number of 20th century environmental historians. Donald Worster (1994a), for example, in *Nature's Economy*, a significant overview of the history of environmental thought, writes:

> "At the very core of [the] Romantic view of nature was what later generations would come to call an ecological perspective: that is, a search for holistic or integrated perception, an emphasis on interdependence and relatedness in nature, and an intense desire to restore man to a place of intimate intercourse with the vast organism that constitutes the earth" (p. 82).

The eco-dreamers within these films embrace interdependence and relatedness and allude to the restorative aspects of nature, which often plays out in a fascination with a place, a valley, or other "utopian" space. In *Tulsa* the character of Jim Redbird, a Cherokee, only desires to raise a family on his blue grass ranch. The eco-dreamer is preoccupied with the idea of a valley or a site of pastoral respite. In *Naked Spur* (1953) the lead character Howard Kemp (Jimmy Stewart) has become a bounty

hunter to earn money to reclaim his paradise – a property in the mountains. He speaks of this place a few times during the film, one time telling the only female character Lina Patch (Janet Leigh) how beautiful it is. The eco-dreamer within these films often speaks of this dream space, alluding to the notion of land as having more than use-value; land as a place of being and transcendence. In an interesting footnote to the film *Naked Spur*, the soundtrack for the film continually plays the melody *Beautiful Dreamer* (Emerson, 1998). The song is a good choice. It underpins the eco-dreamer as he is propelled to keep going; to reach this place, his Eden.

In *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Roderick Nash (1967) writes, "Wilderness represented the Garden-a place to be tamed and cleared for the establishment of a human community" Although this community is in line with expansionist goals of pioneer development, I suggest that there is a subtle shift within the genre; that the land (and we will see this more in the visual excess of these films) illustrates a more complex idea of the human community's relationship to and with the land. In *Shane*, the farmer as the eco-dreamer stays within the realm of the pastoral. The pastoral is a place visually depicted as an idyllic, domesticated space for moral, non-violent people, such as a community of farmers who represent peace and sustainability. *Shane* is also a film about white settlers struggling to keep community from the "big guy." The issues they fight about include water and land, fundamental issues within American environmental history. In a switch from earlier film westerns, the farmers in *Shane* are presented as sort of New Age heroes focused on tending the land and protecting their families. In one scene the film's director, George Stevens, lets

the camera linger as a farmer (Joey's Dad, Joe Starrett) spends a good deal of time discussing the significance of "making roots, sharing with others, watching the land, and making sure it is always ripe and fruitful." This character typifies the eco-dreamer.

Earth Centered Spirituality

When the eco-dreamer is Native American, the utopia discourse is loaded with language indicative of the Noble Savage. The idea of utopian or spaces of respite and community now employs words such as Mother Earth or other assumptions about Native spirituality. Nevertheless, as constructed in the dialogue, the suggestions of the earth-Native connection can be seen as offering an alternative perspective that is less anthropocentric (human focused). Lance, the Native American hero of *Devil's Doorway*, speaks about land:

> Lance: *"It's hard to explain how an Indian feels about the earth. It's the pumping of our blood... the love we got to have. My father said the earth is our mother. I was raised in the valley and now I'm part and the wind deep in my heart I know I belong. If we lose it now, we might as well all be dead".* [36]

Or, later when Lance's father is dying:

> Lances's father*: "Drop my body in the deep shaft, and then you must keep this earth always, for I am part of it. An Indian without land loses his soul, his heart withers…sweet meadow our mother, the earth, her song forever."*

Although this passage romanticizes Native spirituality, it is difficult to ignore this idea of connection or closeness to the earth. There is interconnectivity at work.

Lance, as the eco-dreamer, conveys the concept of humans as spiritually connected to the earth. In some westerns, filmmakers use Native American characters as vehicles to convey this sentiment. Although it is reductionist, it reveals an environmental impulse in the dialogue of a heroic and moral character such as Lance. There is a scene in *Tulsa* that more explicitly links the noble native to the environmental steward. Here the character, Cherokee, a 1/4 Cherokee Indian and her cousin Jim Redbird, also native, speak to an oilman, Tanner. Both Cherokee and Jim refuse Tanner's money for his oil drilling projects.

> Cherokee*: You oilmen come into our country, pollute the streams, ruin the land, kill our cattle yes and our men too.*
>
> Tanner*: "you are being childish; you're acting like your Cherokee grand-parents who shot arrows at the first locomotives. This is oil country the wealth is under the ground not on top of it.*
>
> Redbird: *But is it necessary to destroy the land to produce oil? Excuse me…You mention about our Grandparents shooting arrows at the first locomotives. Perhaps you never heard about the five civilized nations. Never bothered to learn about the Oklahoma Redman. Before the civil war, Mr. Tanner, our grandparents owned plantations in the south, had libraries, printing presses. We vote. We have colleges. We think. And we think that oil has been bad for this country.*

Tulsa, Devil's Doorway and the other Return to the Garden westerns, through the vehicle of the Noble Savage, convey an environmental sentiment and an agenda that reflects the audience's desire for a more nuanced land story.

Non-Violence

In *Broken Arrow*, Jeffords (the key white character played by Jimmy Stewart) states numerous times that he is "sick of all the killing". The eco-dreamers of the *Return to the Garden* western often seek peaceful resolution. Like the cowboys in westerns prior to the war they function as the films' moral compasses, but unlike these cowboys, the eco-dreamers are able to see the ramifications and the long-term consequences of decisions about conquest.

For eco-dreamers in *Return to the Garden* westerns, land represents peace and tranquility. It is man's connection to nature and other living things in it (including other people) that is best typified by "adapting" oneself to its challenges and opportunities, and "accommodating" it through nonviolence. *Shane* in many ways is a traditional western, celebrating the role of the pioneer as necessary and good on the road to civilization. The lead character Shane (played by Alan Ladd) comes from the mountains and is befriended by a family, the Starretts. There is Joey the young boy (portrayed by Brandon de Wilde) and his father, Joe, and mother, Marion (Van Heflin and Jean Arthur) Shane could be considered something of an eco-dreamer because of his desire to forgo violence.

> Shane (to Joey): "Now you run on home to your mother, and tell *her everything's all right and there aren't any more guns in the valley."*

Stevens, the films' director, used special effects to reinforce the violence of the film narrative. For example, he insisted that a pulley be used when filming a scene in

which one of the farmers, Frank (played by Elisha Cook Jr.), is shot and killed in town. Upon impact the pulley abruptly recoils Frank when he is gunned down.
The effect on the screen is that the impact is fierce. When Frank flies backwards it is forceful and fast. A veteran himself, Steven's stated "that he wanted to show 'real' violence, the ugly nature of and the consequences" (p.177-199). Having shot documentaries near the end of the war in Germany, Stevens had returned with particular ideas on violence. One of them was the concern that Hollywood rarely showed the implications of violent acts. Steven's films, which reflect this awareness, are consistent with the strand of environmental thought that questions degradation and violence toward land and humanity.

Talking About the Land

Another sign that the eco-dreamer is at work is his or her desire to teach others about the land. The eco-dreamer spends a great deal of time talking about the land, history, and people's lives on the land. For instance, although *Broken Arrow* opens with the traditional image of the cowboy riding in from the mountains, within minutes we know that something is different. The lead character, Jeffords, (Jimmy Stewart) speaks to the audience in voice-over narration (Sterne, 2012).[37] In his opening lines he sets up an argument for the film; what to look for, what to listen for, and how to come to understand. It also positions Jeffords as the storyteller:

> *This is the story of a land, of the people who lived on it in the year 1870, and of a man whose name was Cochise. He was an Indian - leader of the Chiricahua Apache tribe. I was involved in the story and what I have to tell happened exactly as you'll see it - the only change will be that when the Apaches speak, they will speak in our language. What took place is part of the history of Arizona and it began for me here where you see me riding.*

This also occurs in the opening and ending of *Tulsa*, where the narrator, a friendly character, called Pinky in the film, is seated with his guitar. He strums a few chords and then begins a narration on the city of Tulsa:

> *Oklahoma means Redman's land. Less than 50 years ago all this was Indian territory…here the Osages, the Cherokees, the Creeks the Choctaws, the Seminoles, the Chickasaws, even some Pawnees raced their horses over the prairies, fished the streams, grew their crops and raised their cattle. And all the time the oil was underneath the ground. Well, it had to come out and refineries had to be built to process it and make it what it is today, the life blood of our civilization.*

Although this voice-over clearly celebrates the development of oil, there is room here to speak of Native people as distinct tribes, such as the Pawnee or the Cherokee, who lived on and used the land successfully. Underpinning this moment is the suggestion that Natives did work the land, which is a concept at odds with the conquest narrative that promoted the view of Native people as savage and unable to grow things upon the land. In the closing voice-over the focus is on conservation, a message that is cautionary but still celebratory.

> *"Oklahoma has set a high standard for conservation; California and other states are emulating Oklahoma's model. The new approach, we are told, pleases cattlemen, oilmen and us Tulsans."*

At the end of *Tulsa* the narrator Pinky Jimpson (Chill Wills) returns. He is back seated with the blue sky behind him.

"Modern oil fields are a lot different from the old ones. Like Signal Hill and cattlemen nowadays in East Texas, Louisiana ….and California's Joaquin Valley. You can see conservation working and it is good for everybody cattlemen, oilmen …

As with *Broken Arrow* and *Devil's Doorway*, Tulsa hints to alternative land narratives that counter the white man's narrative and thus degrade the genre's pure expansionist trope as *the* way.

These eco-dreamers articulate an environmental ethic born from a sense of history and tradition. Through lived experiences (trial and error, missteps, and direct observation), eco-dreamers confront the master narrative the same way the cowboy rides into the farmer's barbed-wire fence and understands his landscape will never be the same. He laments the loss of the open range and is compelled to articulate his dismay.

The eco-dreamer's land ethic therefore is informed through an understanding of history. The eco-dreamer narrates as above or gives direct history land lessons. In *Broken Arrow*, Jeffords is the eco-dreamer, the moral, wise and informed character. When he talks there is credibility; he is listened to, so when he corrects faulty logic regarding the conquest narrative there is a disruption as in this scene where he confronts a racist rancher and his friend, John:

> The Rancher*: (speaking of Cochise) He started it!*
> Jeffords: *Now let's get the facts straight. Cochise didn't start this war. A snooty little man from out east did. He started a truce that he didn't honor…besides who asked us out here in the first place?*
>
> *(*Throughout the dining room scene, men at the table challenge Jeffords, one taunts his 'Indian loving' ways. Jeffords continues to

> strengthen his argument, when he suggests that the Apache's live by a code as well. When he tells the story of being released*).*
>
> Jeffords*: I was hogged tied, the Apaches got me earlier*
> The Rancher*: so you fought your way out.*
> Jeffords: *No they let me go*
> The Rancher: *never heard of a thing like that happening to a white man, have you? John?*
> Jeffords: *I ran across a wounded Chiricahua boy and healed him up; I guess they felt they owed me something.*
> John: *Apaches playing fair?*
> Jeffords*: YES!*

Throughout the film Jeffords consistently sees what others do not see, but as the hero he is trusted and believed. The dialogue in this scene makes explicit the limits of the conquest narrative as *the* story. This disruption functions to challenge the core element of the genre that the expansionist conquest of lands and people were noble and true. Jeffords, as with all eco-dreamers throughout this project, has knowledge and wisdom about people and the land, and therefore functions as the moral voice of the film. This makes all the more significant his relationship with his lover, Sonseeahray, and Cochise. He is not like them, but to become morally correct he becomes more like them—'to the ways of others' as we, the audience, should.

Visual

Yosemite Valley, to me, is always a sunrise, a glitter of green and golden wonder in a vast edifice of stone and space. - Ansel Adams

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet un-captured by language." - Aldo Leopold

The eco-dreamer as a rhetorical devise is enhanced through the visual and narrative elements of the *Return to the Garden* western. While the eco-dreamer embodies various tenets of environmentalism, the visual aspects of these westerns also embody an environmental point of view. As Brereton argues in *Hollywood Utopia* (2004) on the power of the picturesque:

> "In particular, the film-time and space given over to this explicit form of unmediated evocations of eco-nature help to dramatize and encourage raw nature to speak directly to audiences, together with their protagonists, who finally find sanctuary…. this expression of therapeutic sanctuary is often valorized over and above the strict narrative requirements of the text …Rather than merely serving as a romantic backdrop or a narrative desu ex-machina, theses evocations of eco-nature become self-consciously fore-grounded and consequently help to promote an ecological meta-narrative, connecting humans with their environmental."

These westerns in color embody the sublime elements of the great landscape paintings, such as the works of Thomas Moran and Albert Bierstadt,[38] while the films in black and white suggest the aesthetic sensibilities of landscape photographers such as Ansel Adams, who displayed his work in support of environmental groups such as the Sierra Club.[39]

Thomas Cole, one of the great landscape artists of the 1800s said of his work "[they] are meant to solicit exploration of these sacred spaces, to visit yet guard them

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[38] See *Mythmakers of the West, Shaping America's Imagination*, John A. Murray (2001) Albert Bierstadt, *The Rocky Mountains* (17) & Thomas Moran, *The Chasm of the Colorado* (19)

[39] Ansel Adams, see John A. Murray, (32-35)

for all their glory and yet all their worth beyond mere human appreciation."[40] Just as he and other landscape artists of the era are credited as visual influences on environmental thought on par with the writing and thinking of Muir and Thoreau, I see the visuals of the *Return to the Garden* western as equally constructing and mediating tropes of the environmental (Selznick, 1972).

In essence, *the Return to the Garden* westerns are similar to the landscape paintings of the 19th century in two ways. First, in the landscape paintings and photographic works like those of Adams there is the human intervention. There are choices made about framing and depth that are meant to solicit meaning. Secondly, the focus on sites of nature become coded as majestic, such as the site of the Teton Mountains, which fill up the frames in *Shane* and inform the viewer of a purposeful appreciation of the natural. It is this last aspect, the purposeful guiding of the viewer, to view and linger with filmic renderings of the landscape and not to propel the narrative, but merely to view the power of scenery that is at the heart of these films. In promoting moments of 'scenic lingering,' the visual aspects of these films, counter the conquest narrative; they reinforce the notion that land is not a mere obstacle on the road to progress, nor is it important for its material value only. In short, the cinematography in

[40] Their works are often cited within environmental history for the visual expression of land as valuable for its beauty. These works are highly constructed between the two of them (he is specifically referencing Moran and Bierstadt, but this could be any of the romantic landscape artists such as Cole), they forever changed how people of the East viewed the American West. Both artists viewed the American West through a translucent romantic lens, as a misty mythic realm where the spirit of nature infused all things-peaks, canyons, waterfalls, forests, rivers and streams-with a sublime majesty.

films such as *Shane*, *Naked Spur*, and *Duel in the Su*n highlights the visual romantic impulse found in mainstream environmentalism and gives nature meaning beyond mere material value at the heart of the white man's land narrative.

In the film *Shane*, the setting for the odyssey reflects his goal and the struggles within vast and panoramic sites of the Teton Mountains. When Stevens, later in his life, discussed the film with students at UCLA, he described the film, scene by scene, and as Ross suggests, "His narrative of *Shane* seemed almost to be an artful dream as he constructed it one more time. He talked about individual shots as they connected with the film's emotional meanings (182)." Here is how Stevens spoke about the landscape,

> [The boy] "heading toward the Teton Peaks, the grand Teton in the Background there, at the right time, when the cloud happened to be with us, with a long focal-length lens to give the mountains some structure and some height, because it's a grand thing, with the horse moving in to the distance."

The *Return to the Garden* western exploits this romantic impulse, through visual tools of framing, depth, and mise-en--*scène*

Broken Arrow (1950) and *Devil's Doorway* both exhibit a strong sense of the visual. Shot in Technicolor, *Broken Arrow* is brilliant. "Mighty pretty scenery," said one reviewer (Crowthers, 1950). Even though *Broken Arrow* was shot in a desert landscape, there are numerous shots of vivid green fauna, trees and aqua blue waters. In the opening scene, we see the traditional cowboy as he rides in, a familiar trope within the genre. However, it is the range of colors and shifts in terrain that make this opening scene unique. Riding in from the mountains, we see Jeffords shot low angle; the camera

positioned below him. His head is framed by a brilliant blue sky. There are multiple sounds of a distant stream and birds competing against his voice-over narration. Within moments Jeffords rides into a valley where he is surrounded by trees and encounters a sparkling, intensely blue pond. The audience sees Jeffords's story through his narration and point of view.

All of the garden westerns in color contain such plant life. They are visual signifiers of utopian, at times Edenic, spaces, which mimic the eco-dreamer's fantasies about pristine landscape. This visual nature is often matched aurally through the sounds of birds, the breezes and water sounds. Conversely, in traditional Hollywood westerns, the town often functions as a chaotic space where humans attempt to impose civilization. In *Broken Arrow,* the town is where Jeffords meets his biggest threats. In town there is no vegetation, the colors are brown and flat in visual contrast to the Native village. The aesthetics of *Broken Arrow, Devil's Doorway, and Treasure of Sierra Madre* parallel the aesthetic of Ansel Adams (Fig. 1). Adams produced photographic works that, although black and white, in tonal variations, echoed the 'awe' ness of nature.[41] In a similar way to the landscape artists of the previous century, Adams searched ways to honor and celebrate the nature of American. In parallel with Leopold and Carson, Adams' visual style also contributed to American discourse on the natural and was part of the post-war tropes gaining renewed traction following the war. *Devil's Doorway,* through tonal variation from white to black, and placement of animals,

[41] "Awe" is the term often used to describe mid 19th century landscape painters whose stylized use of color and scale was meant to provoke the "awe" one felt in nature.

mountains, and water within the frame, can be seen as visually excessive (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

It contributed to the visual ecological agenda of the 1940s. If, as Adams said, “It is

my intention to present - through the medium of photography - intuitive observations of the natural world which may have meaning to the spectators," then the cinematographer for *Devil's Doorway* also takes care to display the natural world of film space and time with meaning.[42]

In *Treasure of Sierra Madre*, lizards, cacti and unfamiliar vegetation surround the characters and create dramatic tension (Fig. 3). [43] Although the heroes are confronted by a sense of the "natural", they do not control it. There is a visual ideological assumption that they coexist with it.

Fig. 3

In *Broken Arrow*, when the lovers Tom (Jeffords) and Sonseeahray (the young

[42] Ansel Adams, see Murray, p 34
[43] *An Open Book*, John Huston's Autobiography, (1994) Huston discusses his array of films which look at religious themes, often portrayed in location settings, such as *African Queen,* and *Roots of Evil.*

woman he falls in love with, played by Debra Paget) meet, they rest in a space that is almost Edenic. There is a natural ecstasy to these scenes that gestures to the sublime renderings of the landscape artists. The lovers are frequently framed in natural settings, surrounded by water, plants and animals. The Technicolor films prioritize deep colors of blue and green, furthering a sense of tranquility. This aspect of the melodramatic and visual excess hints at the arguments of Brereton about the sublime. He suggests that:

> "Sublime majestic visual excesses, heightened through extended time and space give to the visualizing of the drama exceed normative needs and this 'excessive signification' …can sow the seeds of utopian ideals and values which can simultaneously serve the ecological cause." (Brereton, 23)

The scenes between the lovers position not only the characters within nature, but also establishes that nature, beyond the aesthetic appreciation, can be transformative. Because Sonseeahray is Native, she also functions as the ecological Indian (Fig. 4). In Broken Arrow, the lovers-in-Eden moment reaches its peak during the honeymoon scene. Not only are the two lovers framed by green trees and fauna and the stream in the background, but they both ride pure white horses.[44] In the final love scene, Jeffords and Sonseeahray are near the honeymoon wickiup.[45]

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[44] There are numerous script notations that suggest the need to add plants and create water sounds. See files on *Broken Arrow* at Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles.

[45] Wickiup is a traditional lodge; a domed room.

Fig. 4.

We see the two lovers framed by mountains, a stream, and the white horses in the background (Fig. 5). The aesthetic sublime, according to script notations,[46] is intentional and the reference to an Edenic idea is explicitly addressed when Jeffords speaks about the Garden of Eden.

Jeffords: *"I think it was a world made by Adam when he opened his eyes and saw Eve."*

Sonseeahray*: "The evening is full and happy for us, we will listen to the brook be happy for us"*

Fig. 5

The impact of *Broken Arrow* was monumental and transcended the genre. One of the most popular wedding poems is the Apache wedding prayer. It was crafted for the film. The problem is the poem is not Apache. In fact, the writer, Michael Blankfort (a front name for Albert Maltz) is a white Jewish man from Brooklyn. Yet, so powerful is this idea of the ecological Indian that the poem is still popular for weddings. Its lyrics reveal the complex aspects of race, environmentalism and popular culture.

The *Apache Wedding Prayer* Text:

> Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter to the other.
> Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.
> Now there is no more loneliness, for each of you will be companion to
> the other. Now you are two bodies, but there is one life before you. Go
> now to your dwelling place, to enter into the days of your togetherness.
> And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

In this poem the cultural and commercial merge. Written in the late 1940s, the language anticipates the eco-Indian more fully realized by the late 1960s.[47] Ultimately, the love between a white man and Native woman is a metaphor for Jefford's attraction to a natural, pristine landscape. This is what Sonseeahay, his Indian lover, represents. Predictably, she dies in the end and Jeffords returns to his white world, suggesting that the conquest narrative is superior to the romanticized view of nature.

In Broken Arrow Jeffords tries and fails to "go Native." While, in *Duel in the Sun*, the key character, a mixed-race woman named Pearle (Jennifer Jones), tries and fails to fit in or 'pass' as white. Sensual and attracted to two men, Pearle's desire and struggle to fit into the white world drives the story. When both of her parents have died, she is sent to live with her father's second cousin, Laura Belle (Lillian Gish). Laura Belle, a devout Christian, is married to a Senator and rancher, Jackson McCanles (Lionel

[47] Such as the now iconic image of the crying Indian in the Ad councils 1970 in the long running Anti-pollution campaign, where the Native American cries after seeing car commuters littering. This is after he has paddled up a polluted river in a canoe, where the viewer can see smoke stack in the background. The suggestion not only that the Native American is more connected to the earth but also a man out of his depth, playing into the notion of the noble but vanishing Indian concept.

Barrymore). They have two sons Lewt, (Gregory Peck) and Jesse (Joseph Cotton), who live together on an enormous cattle ranch called Spanish Bit.

Martin Scorsese, the American film director, often sites *Duel in the Sun* as one of his favorite films. "Although the film is flawed", he mentions that it held him "in awe by its power and still lingers with me visually". I suggest this lingering effect is similar to what Pat Brereton (2004) in *Hollywood Utopia* argues; that ecological ideas can permeate our emotions through the extended time-space focus on visual excess of the landscape. Brereton makes a case that many post-war Hollywood films provide sublime excess within the closure, which can be read as ecological. "Hollywood draws on the therapeutic power of raw nature and landscape (p.4)." This visual excess and this hinting at the Edenic suggests a shift in the genre; a reflection on the romantic appreciation of nature not only as an object of conquest but also as site of transcendence.

Visually, *Duel in the Sun,* offers several scenes that play upon the idea of 'raw nature' and renewal. For instance in one scene there is the Edenic moment when the lovers meet (Fig. 6). They are wet from swimming and lay barely clothed near the pond where they are surrounded by greenery and framed by mountains. This scene certainly could have been placed in a barn, or a bedroom, but the choice of the era places the lovers within the natural.

In *Naked Spur*[48], except for one scene in a dark cave, the entire film was created on site in Rocky Mountain National Park. Cinematographer William Mellor's choice of Technicolor creates a film that echoes the rush of colors seen in *Duel in the Sun*, *Broken Arrow* and *Tulsa*.[49] Andrew Sarris, commenting on the visual quality of Anthony Mann's westerns, of which *Naked Spur* is one, wrote:

> "His westerns are distinguished by some of the most brilliant photography of exteriors in the history of the American cinema, and yet it is impossible to detect a consistent thematic pattern in his work." (Sarris, 1968)

Fig. 6

[48] Anthony Mann's films are frequently located outdoors, Geoff Andrew's book discusses this in, *The Director's Vision: A Concise Guide to the Art of 250 Great Filmmakers* (1999). "After making a number of tense, claustrophobic *noir* thrillers in the 40s, Mann embarked on a series of westerns notable for their symbolic, expressive use of the rugged American landscape and their psychological complexity..."

Of course, I would suggest that the theme of land as a site of transcendence is always present within Mann's work. Mann, as with other directors in the *Return to the Garden* westerns, were informed by a new awareness of the fragility of the planet and reacted by romantically framing the landscape. This visual impulse plays against a core tenet of the conquest narrative that sees land in terms of resource value only. In these films, landscape is more than mere backdrop.

Perhaps no other post-war filmmaker used visual excess to a greater degree than did George Stevens. His *Shane* is visually brilliant. Just as the landscape artists used the latest paint and color and perspective tools to construct their particular regard for sites of the natural or majestic, film directors played with evolving technologies as well. George Stevens Jr. wrote, "My father was all about a renewed sense of America when he came back from the war he so wanted to celebrate our American landscape." For example, in *Shane,* director George Stevens insisted on using the latest in color technology to give the film a rich spectrum of color. In an early establishing shot we see the greens of the prairie, the reds of the sunset, while a lone rider comes into the shot from a vivid blue river. Incorporating a three-strip Technicolor process, Stevens creates a world drenched in yellow or blue, both colors identifiable with *Shane*[50].

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[50] Two step colored film had actually been around as early as 1917 and for the next two decades the process became more refined. Hollywood began to expand their color use during the late 1930s with films such as *Gone with the Wind* and *Wizard of Oz.* Following the war, in an effort to compete with television Technicolor became a big attraction. This is a process where three rolls of film go through the camera and later are combined.

Stevens said he wanted the colors to "startle" people, "for them to notice the amazing beauty of the land." (Moss, 2004, p. 22). In one of the earliest shots, the audience sees a lone deer drinking from a turquoise colored stream; her coat glistening in shades of gold and red (Fig. 7); Stevens allows the shot to linger. This focus on color is played up throughout the film even down to the costuming of the main characters. They all wear muted colors to better contrast with the vivid beauty of the surroundings. Steven's choice of colors, reds and yellows on the farmers, evoke a passion, while the landscapes blues and greens heighten a sense of tranquility.

Fig. 7.

*In 1954, Technicolor made reduction dye transfer prints of the large format VistaVision negative. Their process was also adapted for use with Todd-AO, and Ultra Panavision 70 formats. All of them were an improvement over the three-strip negatives since the negative print-downs generated sharper and finer grain dye transfer copies.

As for perspective, in parallel to landscape artists such as Bierstadt who craved bigger and bigger canvasses, directors such as Stevens hoped to highlight the 'majesty' of nature by broadening perspective. Stevens and cinematographer Loyal Griggs also manipulated perspective by using 75mm and 100mm telephoto lenses that essentially pulled the background in to make the mountains look taller and more grandiose.

In *Shane*, the aural components heighten the visual excesses. Throughout the scene described above we hear the stream, the echoes of animals in the distance, and the rustling of the wind. As Moss said in *George Stevens, A Life on Film* (2004), with *Shane* "Stevens re-visited his own imaginings of our American mythological past. He painted the American landscape as a moral universe." (p. 201-203) I would also add that he infused the visual with the aural qualities of music and nature sounds to embellish the experience.

Summary

The *Return to the Garden* westerns are defined by the eco-dreamer and reinforced cinematically In many ways the *Return to the Garden* films within this chapter foreshadow elements of the social movements of the 1960s, which more fully interrogate the relationship between power and racism and land. This film also reinforces aspects of dominant social and political ideology. The Hollywood westerns of this chapter speak through the eco-dreamer to alternative views of our environmental relationship and visually touch upon early post-war desires to revisit a more pristine, pastoral space. However, these utopian spaces can be seen as more than merely post-

war nostalgia. The films can be viewed as sites of mediation, where nature has beauty and spiritual transcendence. These films counter the core values of the Hollywood western and can be seen as factors in the gradual decline of the white man's narrative.

The next chapter, the *Machine in the Garden* westerns (1954-1963), show how specific westerns began to explore the imposition of modernity upon the romanticized landscape and complicate the conquest narrative.

CHAPTER V

THE MACHINE IN THE GARDEN WESTERNS

See the USA in your Chevrolet. Dinah Shore (song slogan 1952-1962),

Not many people are likely, any more, to look upon what we call "progress" as an unmixed blessing. Just as surely as it has brought us increased comfort and more material goods, it has brought us spiritual loss, and it threatens now to become the Frankenstein that will destroy us. Wallace Stegner (Wilderness letter 1960)

In a letter to George Stevens, the director of the film *Giant,* Edna Ferber, the book's author, revealed her anxiety over the continuation of nuclear testing in Nevada (Stoll, 2007).[51]

> It is possible that ten years from now—or perhaps even five, though unlikely unless our world is destroyed—which is rather likely—oil and oil millionaires will be anachronisms like the dear old covered wagons and the California gold-rush boys. The atom is obsolete as a weapon, having given way to the hydrogen bomb and that other pretty thing. Cobalt, or something anyway, the atom will push and pull things, instead of oil. (p.1-3)

Like many Americans during the Cold War, Ferber was worried and yet cautiously intrigued by the capabilities of science and technology. It is this tension that

[51] See Steven Stoll, *U.S. Environmentalism since 1945* (2007) pp1-3. He writes "the threat of fallout represented a new and disturbing kind of human unity, one in which the fate of all people became intertwined with the fate of the earth under the new regime of technological warfare. During the half century following these events, environmentalism emerged in the United States as both a philosophy and a political movement."

underpins the films in this chapter, *Giant, The Big Country, Hud, Misfits,* and *Lonely Are the Brave.*

The westerns in the previous chapter, "Return to the Garden," existed within the safe zone of a genre that was just beginning to ponder the realities of the modern atomic age. Like Thoreau and Muir, the eco-dreamer of the Return to the Garden western spoke of nature as a site of community, spiritual transcendence, and beauty. The visual components of these westerns reinforced this message by gesturing back to the landscape artists of the 19th century and their imagery of the pastoral to the sublime. These films established an eco-narrative that is counter to genre norms of conquest; a narrative that began to degrade the white man's land story.

By the mid-1950s to the early 1960s a new kind of western emerged, one that encouraged moviegoers to think about the consequences of modernity upon humanity and the landscape. These concerns echoed the broader cultural concerns of the period: the nation's engagement in the Cold War, the continued atomic testing in Nevada, and the exponential post-war economic growth and expansion of the car culture, industry, and science.

In this chapter I examine the time period that saw the rise of the American car culture and the more public movements of environmental groups such as the Sierra Club. As with the previous chapter, I lay out the events within the genre and the studios during this era. Lastly, building upon the ideas in Leo Marx's (1956) book *The Machine in the Garden*, I describe how these ideas emerge within the Machine in the Garden western.

Car Culture and the Parks

The automobile symbolized American technological growth industrial expansion and a renewed sense of mobility and adventure. The Highway Act of 1954 set in motion a new American car culture. Propelled by military concerns to secure a range of escape routes in case of nuclear attack, interstate highways allowed civilians to take to the roads like never before.[52] The car culture resulted in the major growth of the suburbs, which increased urban sprawl and encouraged explosive growth in the home-building and construction industries.[53] "Borders changed," stated Alan Nadel, "both physically and culturally as American families were swept into the expansive economic and technological growth of America in the 1950s." (Nadel, 1995, pp. 4-5)[54] With

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[52] It was the largest public works project in United States History at the time. Enacted in June of 1956, the Federal-Aid Highway Act, popularly called the National Interstate and Defense Highways act. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the bill into law. 25 billion Dollars was authorized for the construction of some 41,000 miles of Interstate Highway System.

[53] The growth of Levittown (affordable housing) and the automobile suburbs, TV dinners, Washing machines, super markets, bigger, shopping cars, and end of daily shopping and rise of fast food.

[54] From 1949 to 1960 for example, the American economy showed a rise in real gross national product of 51 percent, and one-fourth of all the housing in America as of 1960 had been built during the preceding decade. In the ten years from 1946 to 1955, automobile production increased 400 percent, to eight million a year, and the 1956 National Defense Highway Act authorized constructing over forty thousand miles of new limited access roads." Alan Nadel Containment culture: American narratives post-modernism in the atomic age (1995) pp. 90.
In another text, Stoll's *U.S. Environmentalism Since 1945*," industrialism had transformed the landscape in neighborhoods and rural districts across the country. Rather than take trains from city to city, people purchased automobiles with internal combustion engines that emitted carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and drove them on federal highways. The car culture changed the countryside, as

safer highways, Americans could also drive away from towns and suburbs to remote destinations.

The growth of a car culture rekindled American interest in national parks. This reconnection with parks like Yosemite and Yellowstone—both of which were acquired and saved from development through turn-of-the-century conservation efforts—renewed interest in the further conservation of lands. As people hiked and camped more, the idea of nature as a respite from the "falseness" of modernity was again a part of the conversation. The national parks became part of the American debate on what is and what was "the natural." (Cronon, 1996b)[55] In fact, within a year after the passage of the Highway Act, the Sierra Club put forth a major effort to save a tract of land in Wyoming called Dinosaur Park. The campaign bulletin stated that the rainbow canyons of the Yampa and the green corridors through a primitive paradise unequalled anywhere "are a unique gem of the National park system. They are now needlessly threatened.

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people expected city services to follow them out along the interstates. Cars also made it possible for people to live farther away from where they worked. Suburban sprawl describes the creeping expansion of residential and commercial land uses into regions of low population density. Its identifying feature is the endless replication of the highway strip consisting of fast-food franchises, gas stations, and shopping malls; excellent section on how changes set in motion other events (pp. 4-5).

[55] See Cronon's essay on American legislative efforts to justify the forced removal of Native Americans from their land. The justification is a 'preoccupation with conservation wilderness' in the guise of American colonialism. As a result, The American government could then create national parks such as Yosemite. Cronon further notes that, "Only people whose relationship to the land was already alienated could hold up wilderness as a model for human life in nature, for the romantic ideology of wilderness leaves precisely nowhere for human beings to actually make their living from the land" (p.80).

You can prevent their destruction. Men of vision saved this place for us. Now it's turnabout." [56] In the end, Dinosaur Park was saved, and the successful effort to preserve it is often cited as a forerunner to the environmental legislation of the 1960s, particularly the 1964 Wilderness Act (Stoll, 2007, pp. 36-49).

Studio, Genre, and the Era

From 1946-1953 westerns made up 30 percent of the total output from the major studios. By the mid to late 1950s and early 1960s, output slipped to 15 percent.[57] The genre, as Thomas Cripps (1996) said, was in the "long good-bye".[58] While people were driving to the parks in record numbers, they were also driving to the outdoors to see movies. With the emerging car culture, America built an unprecedented number of outdoor drive-ins.[59] In drive-ins and regular theatres, audiences could see films in a way never before experienced. On September 30, 1952, for example, *Cinerama* was unveiled at a New York City theatre. The cinematic demonstration titled *This Is Cinerama* offered viewers a color travelogue of images cast on a large yet curved screen. The result was that the images appeared three-dimensional. In some ways, *Cinerama* offered the visual appeal of the large landscape canvases that spread across the country in the late 1800s. *Cinerama*'s, vast images allowed viewers to see sites not

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[57] See Cameron and Pye (1996) & Robert Skylar (1976, 249-268) & Biscombe and Pearson, 1998, (pp. 2-4)
[58] See Thomas Cripps' chapter titled *The Long Goodbye in Hollywood's Highnoon* (1997)
[59] *Hollywood's High Noon*, pp. 218-220 Cripps (1997)

typically available; often sites of grandeur and majesty (J. A. Murray, 2001).[60] Although *Cinerama* was expensive, the process was quite successful for a short period of time. On the heels of *Cinerama* came CinemaScope, Vista Vision, and Todd A.O.

The fallout from McCarthyism and the blacklist continued to hold power over the studios, in effect keeping key writers and other creative players from working in the industry (Kovel, 1997).[61] Interest in foreign films continued to build during this period, and, for the western, the impact of foreign films would be particularly felt in the coming decade because of the spaghetti westerns made in Italy.[62]

The Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown vs. Board of Education* outlawed segregation in public schools, and within two years, Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat to a white bus passenger became the public face of civil rights across the nation. Thus, during the time the Machine in the Garden films were produced, the growing civil rights movement was becoming a viable and legitimate movement within American culture (Cripps, 1996, p. 135).

Leo Marx's seminal text, *The Machine in the Garden* (1964), contemplates the frequent references to the pastoral within nineteenth-century American literature and

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[60] John A. Murray in "Mythmakers of the West" writes that "the landscape paintings of Albert Bierstadt "[his] works were monumental affairs, large both in canvas and conception. This view was consistent with the larger-than-life spirit of Manifest Destiny that then pervaded the American West. …From these separate images he then worked to create a composite scene that was infused with a pantheistic sense of the sublime" (p. 18).

[61] See Kovel, J. Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anticommunism and the Making of America (1997) He provides multiple accounts of the history and activities of HUAC

[62] Spaghetti Westerns is the name for a subcategory of film Westerns produced in Italy during the 1960s. These films are often associated with the director Sergio Leone.

suggests that there is a "discursive tension between two ideas; one of the pastoral and the other in the encroaching notion of industry and mechanization." The observation Marx makes is that the pastoral ideal in America was changed by machinery and technology.[63] This site of tension is illustrated in literature through the recurring image of the *Machine in the Garden*. Marx writes:

> "Within the lifetime of a single generation, a rustic and in large part wild landscape was transformed into the site of the world's most productive industrial machine. It would be difficult to imagine more profound contradictions of value or meaning than those made manifest by this circumstance. Its influence upon our literature is suggested by the recurrent image of the machine's sudden entrance onto the landscape" (p.343).

Just as Marx suggests that writers such as Mark Twain were able to highlight and reveal the significance of the tension within American environmental thought, these films expose the tensions more explicit in mid-century American culture. The Machine in the Garden westerns present characters that question or recognize the consequences of technology and mechanization upon the land. In many ways these films move from the garden sites of the last chapter toward a more complex view of the western landscape. In doing so, these films sacrifice the relevance of the "pure" western and move away from the genre's simplistic themes within the conquest of land narrative.

Eco-Dreamer

> "Like all Americans, I like big things: big prairies, big forests and mountains, big wheat fields, railroads, and herds of cattle too, big

[63] Thematic dualities are explored in a range of scholarly texts, such as Richard Slotkin's *Gunfighter Nation* (1992)

> factories, steamboats, and everything else…. Here we are not ruled over by others as is the case in Europe: here we rule ourselves.." (Teddy Roosevelt, 1910)[64]

Teddy Roosevelt's quote speaks to two themes that inform the American frontier myth: the idea of endless land as a site of progress and land as a necessary site for the creation of our American individualism and character. The eco-dreamer of the Machine in the Garden western begins to challenge the purity and sanctity of these ideas. In contrast to the last chapter, the *Machine in the Garden* eco-dreamers actively address the consequences of modernity. These eco-dreamers share three common characteristics. First, the eco-dreamer questions the role of overconsumption and waste in relation to progress. Second, the eco-dreamer challenges norms about land use and treatment of people and animals on natural sites. Third, the eco-dreamer continues to provide history lessons, deconstructing the role of the conquest land story as pure and simple.

Waste and Over-Consumption

The 1956 film *Giant* was one of the top westerns of all time at the box office. The film, a saga based on Edna Ferber's novel of the same name, tells the story of a woman, Leslie (Elizabeth Taylor) who marries and then moves to her husband's Texas

[64] Richard Slotkin offers multiple insights on how President Teddy Roosevelt came to form his ideas on conservation and romantic primitivism, see *Gunfighter Nation*. Roosevelt was a complex figure. Motivated to keep America industrious, he also became influenced by Muir and others, plus his own desire to hunt saw a need to conserve as reflected in his address to the nation in 1909, "in wasting our resources we are wronging our descendants." (Stradling, p.25). Roosevelt became the first conservationist president through his last minute legislation of American national parks. (Strandling & Cronon, 2004).

ranch called Reata. The film starts at around the turn of the century and ends in the mid-1950s. The character Leslie comes from the plush green landscape of Virginia, and the move to her husband's home is an adjustment. When the film's director, George Stevens, wrote to Elizabeth Taylor about the character of Leslie, which she played in film, he reminded her that "Leslie is the moral center of the story." Leslie is the eco-dreamer within this story. Not only is she female, a shift itself within the genre,[65] but Leslie is also a character of great intelligence who continually questions materialism and a racism as tied to land ownership. From the start, Leslie as our eco-dreamer, invokes others to question their position on limits. For example, a core tenet of expansionism is the American identity as forged through consumption and excess as a sign of progress. Leslie, however, questions this value. She is startled by the amount of property a visitor from Texas, Bick (Rock Hudson) owns.

> Leslie: *How big?*
> Bick*: (He gets embarrassed.) 1/2 million acres.*
> Father*: I would call that quite a parcel.*
> Leslie: *That is a lot of land…why so much?*
> Bick: *What?*
> Leslie*: It just seems like a waste for just one family when there are so many others who could use this.*

Eventually Leslie marries Bick and the move to his ranch Reata, in Texas.

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[65] It should be noted the essentialist construction of woman as closer to earth, mimics the trope of the Ecological Indian. See Annette Kolodny's work The Lay of the Land: Metaphor of "land-as-woman," a linguistic construction that reveals much about our fantasies of gratification, and provides psychosexual clues to historic patterns of domination and exploitation of the land". [She]Argues that" if we are to change our treatment of the land, we must change the language that we use to describe it." (p. 395) Eco-critical Reader 1996) (Kolodny, 1975).

In a later scene, Bick's children illustrate that excess has become passé. In the scene he talks to his daughter, Judy and son-in-law, Bob. While the father can be seen as representing modernity with his now industrial ranch, the children symbolize a reaction against the mechanization and controls of ranching and lands. They, like Leslie, counter the excesses of expansionism and as such counter the white man's land story.

> Bick*: You are a ranchman and you're smart. This place isn't just a ranch any more—it's a great big industrial plant—takes know how. More important to you, you love it.*
> *(He offers them the ranch)*
> Bob *(son-in-law): I couldn't take it, sir.*
> Judy*: Papa, Bob and I have planned—we want a place just our own.*
> Bick: *You crazy kids—can you imagine you'll ever have a ranch like this? Like Reata?*
> Bob: *Gosh no—we just want a little place.*
> Judy: *Just a little place—that will allow us time for experimentation and progress.*
> Bob*: You see, sir. Big stuff is old stuff, now.*

This idea of "big stuff is old stuff now" speaks to the tension within mid-1950s culture. How does one stay connected to the land when progress disconnects one? These scenes, that reflect an apprehension about expansionism and superfluous consumption, would be out of place in earlier westerns.

While *Giant* explores the impact of modernity on a family of ranchers as it shifts from simple cattle rearing to an industrial oil ranch, the film *Lonely Are the Brave* explicitly addresses the disruption of modernity upon humanity and the land. Based on the book *The Brave Cowboy*, by Edward Abbey (1992), the film examines the life of a man who struggles to live his life simply, without

the tools of modernity, including cars and planes. Filmmaker Edward Abbey was a lifelong environmental activist,[66] and his attitudes, expressed in "Desert Solitaire" (1988), as "growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell," inform this film. Just as Leslie, and later her children, question the excesses of expansionism as wasteful, the hero of *Lonely Are the Brave* queries how modernity disconnects us from the natural.

The romanticized view of the cowboy unencumbered on the range is not new. What is different is the focus on the value of the human connection to the landscape and land. And what is the cost of losing this link? *Lonely Are the Brave* delves into this question (Stoll, 2007).[67]

When Edward Abbey died, Kirk Douglas, the film's lead actor and the producer of *Lonely are the Brave*, wrote to the editors of the Los Angeles Times (April, 1989) regarding Abbey's obituary.

> I was very sad to read in your paper that author Edward Abbey ("Thoreau of the American West") has died (Part 1, March 16). In your detailed obituary, I was astonished that no mention was made of his book "The Brave Cowboy." I came across a paperback edition of this book around 1960, and was deeply moved. I bought the movie rights and finally persuaded Universal to allow my company, Bryna, to make the film… In the opening scene, I played Jack Burns (Edward Abbey), who

[66] Edward Abbey was a part of the Monkey Wrench Gang. He, like Larry McMurtry who wrote *Hud* and *Hombre,* was actively involved in the growing environmental movement.

[67] "By the 1950s, the combination of ever-increasing air and water pollution with rapid changes in land use began to define new ways of thinking about industrial "progress" for many Americans….Opposition to industrial production explains much of what has given twentieth-century environmentalism its force…. values such as natural beauty." Stoll (p.5).

> rides across a wide plain and comes up to a large wire fence. I get off my horse, taking a pair of pliers, cut the fence and ride on. In your article you quote Abbey: "I am the one who loved un-fenced countries."… In the more than 60 films that I've made, this is my favorite. I am very pleased when I get a letter, or someone comes up to me saying it is also their favorite Hollywood film, and that I was capable of transferring the feelings of this great environmentalist to film. People will always be able to see as well as read the beliefs of this great man in 'Lonely Are the Brave.'[68]

The Machine in the Garden westerns illustrate the conflict between the machine (technology) and traditional connections to land such as the cowboy who rides his horse across the landscape instead of on a train. Although often wrapped up in symbols of masculinity, white authority, and expansion familiar to the genre, these films suggest cracks in a shifting story. Jack Burns (Kirk Douglas), as an eco-dreamer, speaks in the voice of Edward Abbey. Burns is a roaming ranch hand. He refuses to join modern society. He rides his horse Whiskey everywhere instead of driving a car. Burns believes that mechanization keeps people from a connection to the natural. This illustrates a belief within environmentalism that sees nature as valuable beyond use value; that human beings need sites of nature in order to stay connected to their humanity and what is real. Those natural sites must be protected if we are to remain fully human. This view of land as more than just a place in which to prove one's masculinity is a nuanced shift within the genre that counters the white man's land story and further challenges the genre.

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[68] Letter to Editor, Los Angeles Times, Spring 1989.

Land Use and Treatment of People and Animals of the Land

In the film *The Big Country* (1958), the amount of water one man can own is the central question. It emphasizes the theme of "how much and who gets what," which underlies so many environmental issues still at the forefront today. The film is about an eco-dreamer from the East, a ship captain, named McKay (Gregory Peck). Like Leslie in *Giant*, McKay in *The Big Country* is a different representation of the hero. Like Leslie and Jack Burns (*Lonely are the Brave*), McKay is a peacemaker. In an effort to stop two feuding families who are fighting over water rights, Mckay buys up the land so they can share.

In *Gunfight at the Eco-corral*, an eco-critical text on the western genre, Leniham and Murray (2011) suggest that the violent deaths of the two battling patriarchs in *The Big Country* "symbolize a changing west [and] also reinforce the end of the feud, and the return to free water." (p.98). As the eco-dreamer, McKay persists in his desire to share the water because he morally believes that at some point human beings must share. Like Jack Burns and Leslie Benedict, McKay questions the humanity of consumption and greed, and thus joins a cast of eco-dreamers who challenge the purist notions of expansionism at the heart of the genre.

In the *Machine in the Garden* westerns, the eco-dreamers question how resources are used, which underpins key strands of environmental and ecological debates described by Stoll (Stoll, 2007, pp. 3-8). Another pattern that emerges within

this same philosophical thread is how human beings treat non-human animals.[69] There is a relationship between humanity and community as expressed through the hero's connection to domesticated animals. Throughout these films, the perceptions of animals such as cattle and horses are given center stage. In part this suggests a reaction against the use of machines in place of animals, which emphasizes the value of the natural (including animals) as having more than just use value. The conquest land story, in which natural objects (forests, mountains, and wild and domesticated animals) are valuable only in relationship to their use, is a narrative disconnected from the environment and therefore degrading. Lynn White, Jr., in his classic essay, "Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" (J. White, L., 1967) speaks to the role of placating aspects of the natural:

> "By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference toward the feelings of natural objects…. Man's effective monopoly on spirit in these worlds was confirmed, and the old inhibitions to the exploitation of nature crumbled (Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996, p. 10)."

The eco-dreamers in *Machine in the Garden* westerns are driven by a need to

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[69] Formation of the Humane Society of the United States in 1954 & in 1959, George Schaller publishes, *The Year of the Gorilla*, a book focusing on the mountain gorillas in the Congo. In the same year *Born Free* was also published. This book deals with a couples' attempts to raise and then free a lion named Elsa. These books collectively put a face on conservationist work with a focus on animals. In the same year, a congressional passage became enforced regarding humane slaughter.

treat people and animals humanely. They question the human treatment of wild and domesticated animals, just as McKay challenged the idea of water hording because it seemed inhumane. Although most eco-dreamers in Hollywood westerns are male, In *The Misfits (1961)* the female character, Roslyn, (Marilyn Monroe), is the eco-dreamer. The story focuses on Roslyn's relationship with three men, Gay, Guido, and Perce. She is romantically involved with Gay (Clark Gable). At a rodeo, she becomes very upset when she finds out that Guido, one of Gay's friends and other rodeo men get horses to buck by using irritating flank straps. Roslyn shouts that rodeos should be banned. As her relationship with the men grows, she agrees to go with them for a mustang round-up where she learns that they hunt wild horses for dog food. She notices that the dogs are getting nervous. Guido (Eli Wallace), one of the men, hints that the dog knows something is going to happen:

> Guido*: Dogs were wild too, once. He's just remembering when. He's been up here enough times to know what will happen.*
> Roslyn*: You kill them (the horses)?*
> Guido*: No, no. We, uh... sell 'em to the dealer.*
> Roslyn*: He kills them?*
> Guido*: Well, they're chicken-feed horses. You know, turn 'em into dog food. Like, you buy in the store…for the dog and the cat. Well, I thought you knew that….Everybody knows that.*

The scene plays out as she tries to free the horses (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8

Roslyn*: Horse killers! Killers! Murderers! You're liars! All of you, liars! You're only happy when you can see something die! Why don't you kill yourselves and be happy?! You and your God's country! Freedom! I pity you! You're three…..dear, sweet, dead men!*

Guido*: She's crazy. They're all crazy (the men continue to call her crazy, she is unabated)*

Roslyn*: Butchers! Murderers! I pity you! You're three dead men!*

Gay lets the stallions go. The film ends with Gay and Roslyn driving off under a vivid starry night sky. Roslyn tells Gay that she would have a baby with him "as long as there was somebody there to make sure the child grew up into a human being."

This link between human treatment of other animals and humanity may be interpreted as an element of environmental consciousness. The wild animal serves as a symbol. The debate about animals and their humane treatment becomes a space for

humans to more broadly contemplate the natural world and ethics, including environmental ethics. Filmmakers are in a sense dipping their toes into a pool of emerging environmentalism and testing the water. The Hollywood western is a cinematic morality play, where dialogue about our connection to animals becomes a larger soliloquy about our interconnection with the natural landscape and the resources in it. Within this realm is the question of status, power, and hierarchy, not just on the scale of humans to domesticated and wild animals, but also within the sphere of human relationships between men and women, and among ethnicities.

Yet*, the Machine in the Garden* western highlights this blurring or merging of boundaries. Women within the *Machine in the Garden* westerns, including Roslyn, often represent the moral outlet in the film. They tend to see people and things as connected; they are egalitarians. One of the key aspects of the frontier myth is the connection between masculinity and conquest of lands and people. In the classic western, the masculine cowboy proves his worth by conquering nature through violence and degradation. The eco-dreamers in *the Machine in the Garden* westerns counter the white man's narrative of lands, animals, and people as disposable obstacles.

The eco-dreamer is essential to understanding the moral compass of the narrative. He or she exist to expose injustice. In many ways Leslie and Roslyn speak as eco-feminists.[70] Both women see the link between sexism, racism, and degradation

[70] Useful definition built upon the ideas of Francoise d'Eaubonne. She suggests feminists "call upon women to lead an ecological revolution to save the planet (Merchant 1995: 5). " Eco-feminist discourse embraces a range of attitudes toward the environment, but rejects 'both the view of humans as apart from and outside nature and

of nature. All of the eco-dreamers in these films address the fundamental problems of power and greed inherent in the white man's land story. They provoke other characters to question their treatment of human beings, non-human animals, and the land.

A particular scene in the film *Hud* (1963) illustrates this pattern within the *Machine in the Garden* western. *Hud* deals with the relationship of three men, a grandfather Homer (Melvin Douglas) his son, Hud (Paul Newman) and Homer's grandson, Lonnie (Brandon deWilde). The three men work the family cattle ranch. In *Hud* the intrusion of industry represents the end of an idea, a lifestyle, and a connection to the natural as marked through the killing of infested cattle. The invasion of a fatal foot and mouth disease upon Homer's cattle invokes the blight and death of birds referenced in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. What makes the animals' deaths in *Hud* so memorable is how the actors express their respect for the cattle and the emotional toll their loss takes upon the human characters within the plot. This is a departure from the conquest narrative and the prevailing sentiment that animals exist only as symbols of profit. When all of Homer's cattle are rounded up and killed because they are diseased, the audience does not witness the killings. The director Martin Ritt, simply shows us the faces of the men. The grandfather who has raised the cattle and calls them by name talks to his son after the mass slaughter.

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of nature as a limitless provider of man's needs. Consequently, feminist discourse incorporated an inherent critique of masculinity and its 'values' as well as a critique of rationality and the overvaluation of reason. It was also promoted as a critique of human domination of nature, human core chauvinism, specieism, or anthropocentrism together with a critique of the treatment of nature, are core concepts" (Plumwood 1993: 24) Pulled from (Brereton 2004: 31).

Grandson*: It didn't take long.*
Homer*: It don't take long to kill things. Not like it does to grow.*

In the *Machine in the Garden* western, the animals, typically horses and cattle, are seen as soulful and worthy of care. Western historian, Jane Tompkins (1993) referred to *Hud* in her observations about the placement of animals within hegemony:

> When cattle are not seen 'for themselves' but only in relation to their utility for human beings, as factors in an economic scheme, as physical obstacles to be contended with in a heroic undertaking, or as a contested prize in an economic struggle. This invisibility is necessary if our society is to carry on some of its taken-for-granted activities: eating beef, wearing leather, using animal products, and continuing to support the huge and lucrative cattle industry-blood for money. Homer Banner, the grandfather in *Hud* and the owner of a large ranch, must shoot his prized longhorn. Homer loves the land, and his animals represent his life on the land. These animals are his connection to the natural. Homer feels he must personally end his prized friend's life. We don't see the animal fall down. We just see the pain on Homer's face as he shoots his cattle.

The American bison is also characterized differently in *the Machine in the Garden* western. Prior to the war, westerns barely acknowledged the story of the bison (Wooster, 1995, pp. 171-172).[71] In John Ford's film *The Searchers* (1956) bison signify the violence and waste on the frontier (Ingram, 2000).[72] The Searchers is about two men on a quest for a captured relative, Debbie, who was taken by a Comanche tribe. During the search, Ethan Hawkes (John Wayne) and Martin Pawley (Jeffery

[71] Wooster discusses the war department's method of killing the buffalo not just for sport, but primarily as a tactic to kill off Native people. He also describes the methods of mass slaughter from trains; carcasses left behind.

[72] In this film, the Cheyenne are depicted tracking the plains for buffalo in a reserved and respectful manner, which in the film sharply contrasts with the imagery of the white hunters who seem to kill for profit instead of subsistence. (Ingram, 77)

Hunter) come upon a herd of bison. Ethan's hatred toward American Indians is expressed in the bison killing scene. Ethan maniacally fires into a buffalo herd, killing them all. When Martin shakes his head and asks Ethan, "What did you do that for?" Ethan implies that he did it so the Indians would starve. The mass killing denotes Ethan's moral degradation. It also reinforces the idea of pioneer waste dis-connection from the natural, and fear of the "other."[73] This touchstone is familiar in many later westerns such as *Dances with Wolves* in the 1980s and *Little Big Man* (which will be discussed in the next chapter). *The Searchers* is perhaps the most intriguing and complex example of the *Machine in the Garden* western. *The Searchers* blurs and troubles psychological boundaries. As the film challenges the viewer to rethink race, there is also a sense of rethinking perceptions of the human/nature relationship. They are on what appears to be an almost endless journey to find Debbie. "We will find them….if I have to turn the earth upside down" says Ethan at one point. The obstacle is less the mountains or weather. Now the obstacle is racism as expressed in Martin's discussion with Laurie his girlfriend:

> Martin: *"Laurie, I've seen his eyes when he so much as hears the word 'Comanche'*
> *...I've seen him take his knife an' ...never mind... But he's a man can go crazy wild... It might come on him when it was the worst thing could be... What I counted on, I hoped to be there to stop him, if such things come."*

[73] Krech and others write of similar waste by natives, although most plains tribes used multiple parts of bison for clothing , food and tools

The films produced within the complex history of the Cold War and the emerging civil rights movement suggest the psychological complexities within American culture. Film historian, Joseph McBride writes of Ford and his film:

> *The Searchers* is often read in black-and-white terms by critics and scholars with a vested interest in proving or disproving the notion that Ethan's racism is shared by the director. But that either-or kind of argument is beside the point in dealing with such a complex work of art. A film of warring dualities, *The Searchers* gets to the heart of many of the unresolved contradictions that make the western genre such a rich field for exploring American history and myth. (p.558).

It is these unresolved contradictions, this blurring of the lines between what is savage and civilized which underpins the *Machine in the Garden* westerns.

Talking About the Land

Who owns the land? This is a question frequently asked in the *Machine in the Garden* western. For instance, at the beginning of *Giant*, after Leslie meets Jordon (whose nickname is Bick), she asks him in a declarative manner:

> Leslie: *We really stole Texas, didn't we? I mean, away from Mexico.*
> Jordon (Bick*): You're catching me a bit early to start joking.*
> Leslie: *But I'm not joking. It's all right there in the history books. Mr. Austin came down with families, it says. The next thing you know, they're claiming it from Mexico.*
> Jordon: *(Bick) l never heard anything as ignorant as some Eastern people—*
> Leslie: *Oh, please, Jordan. I am only speaking impersonally; about history.*

Leslie continues to question how people think about land, expressing her concerns about the morality of an oil tax exemption for the oilmen. These scenes counter the white man's land story because they continually challenge the morality of expansionism. The film *The Misfits* also hints at this question in the following scene:

> Gay*: I seen a picture of the moon once. Looked just like this.*
> Roslyn*: Who owns this land?*
> Gay: *Government, probably.*
> Rosyln: *Might as well call it God's country. How quiet it is. You can hear your skin against your clothes.*

So, while the suggestion that the government "owns" the land is meant to imply the consequence of the frontier myth gone wrong, there is also within this scene a nod to the romantic aspects of landscape as aesthetic and pure. In *Lonely Are the Brave*, Jack's land story is also a romanticized view of land as an open place of shared mobility. While others drive their cars, Jack continues to ride his horse from ranch to ranch. On one ride, he keeps running into barbed wire. Eventually, He ends up at the ranch of his best friend. There he talks to his friend's wife, Jerry:

> Jack*: A westerner likes open country. That means he's got to hate fences. And the more fences there are, the more he hates them.*
> Jerry*: I've never heard such nonsense in my life.*
> Jack: *It's true, though. Have you ever noticed how many fences there're getting to be? And the signs they got on them: no hunting, no hiking, no admission, no trespassing, private property, closed area, start moving, go away, get lost, drop dead! Do you know what I mean?*

In *The Searchers*, there is a similar reference to land; a reference that is loaded with confounding issues that suggest the narrative's complexity. Ethan Edwards in his statement evokes his hatred and yet respect for his adversaries. What Ethan respects is

how Scar (the key Native male) is imbued with qualities such as living close to the land and being "natural."

> Ethan: *Injuns will chase a thing until he thinks he has chased it enough. Same way when he runs. Seems like he never learn that there is such a thing as a critter that will just keep coming on. So we will find him in the end. I promise you we will find 'em. Just as sure as I am of the turning of the earth.*

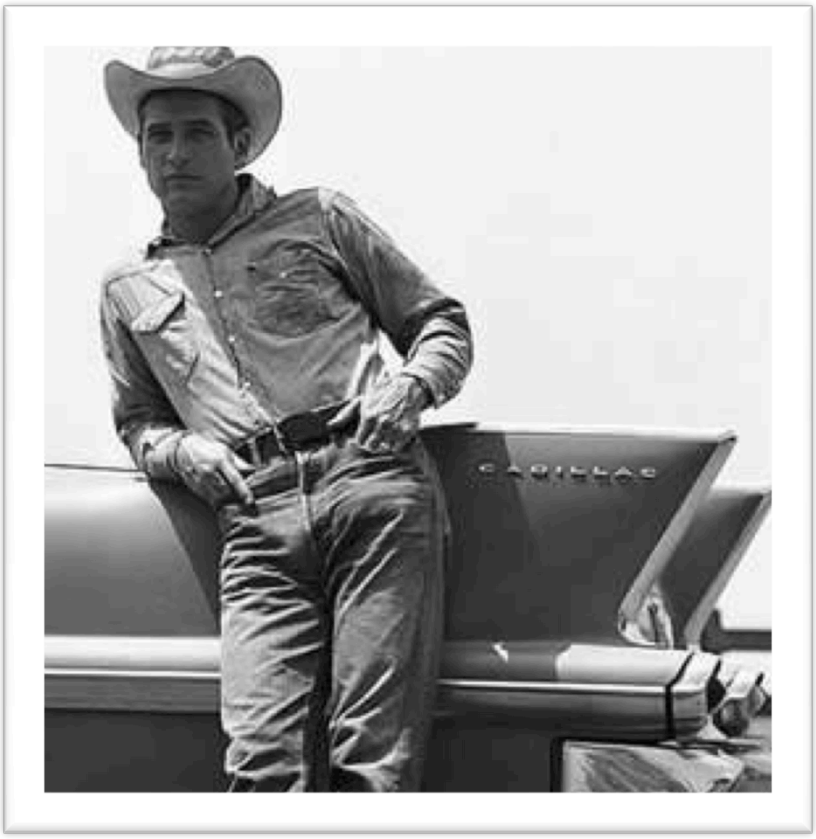
Ethan is not a progressive character. He is racist. Yet, he is smart, knows the country and can live off the land. His is a complex character, but not a hero. Ethan represents a racial view that makes an increasing number of Americans uncomfortable. He has some redeeming qualities. He is tenacious and at first we think he is trying to rescue his niece, but is he? We are not entirely sure he is going to save her. She has already lost her virtue, so he may actually be planning to kill her. There is a tension in the film that leaves us, as viewers, very unsettled. The tension in the film is ambiguous.

Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* (1964) explores the tension between the "pastoral" and progressive ideas that characterize American culture. The eco-dreamers within some westerns speak to these ideas and engage in a fuller land story, more nuanced and therefore counter to the traditional conquest trope

Visual Aspects of the *Machine in the Garden* Western

Like many westerns, the film *Hud* begins its story with an image of open land. However, as the scene proceeds, there are radical alterations to the landscape. A road is visible in the center of the shot. On either side of the road we see phone lines and barbed wire fences dotting the otherwise open landscape. A moving image appears on the horizon. Eventually, the audience sees that the moving object is a pick-up truck. In the bed of the truck is a lone horse. There is no dialogue, but we begin to hear a radio. The person driving gets closer. Then the truck moves over railroad tracks, and arrives at an empty town. The scene is filled with visual markers of modernity, such as trucks, the radio, the railroad, and phone lines. Within moments the driver, Lon, a teenager wearing a cowboy hat, gets out of the truck. He is looking for his brother, Hud, whom he finds because he sees Hud's pink Cadillac (Fig. 9). The color and the car choice convey a sense that something is awry. There are traditional elements of the genre in Lone cowboy attire and relatively open landscape, but there are just as many symbols of "progress." Only a minute into the story and already many signifiers of the genre are disrupted. This disruption symbolizes a countering of the genre, a working through of the tension between ideas of progress and our human relationship to the land.

Fig. 9



Through the motif of the machine, these westerns highlight an American pre-occupation with, and sometimes fear of modernity and its effects on the landscape. *The Machine in Garden* westerns provide visual comparisons between pastoral places and created "modern human spaces." Directors increasingly frame characters in relationship to land. Technique and style choices, such as a film's color, also help audiences understand how filmmakers are rethinking aspects of a film. In the *Machine in the Garden* western, elements of the traditional genre are in place, but they often

collide with motifs of machines such as the automobile. This is true in *Hud* and in *Giant*.

Fig. 10

One of the most iconic images in *Giant* is the sight of Jed (James Dean) sitting in a model T Ford. He is wearing a cowboy hat, and his legs are up on the dash so that we see his worn cowboy boots (Fig. 10). At one point, his horse comes up to him and Jed nuzzles it, petting its mane. The image is quite a contrast between old and new. Jed represents the classic figure wrestling with modernity and a fading way of life. The fact that he is sitting in the car suggests that he has made his choice. This disconnect, the

cowboy not on his horse, like the early scene in *Hud,* heightens the collapse of the man-nature link.

In *Lonely Are the Brave*, Jack is still on his horse. In fact, the man-horse connection is fundamental to the story. However, Jack and his horse, Whiskey, signify the past, as

Fig. 11

they are continually threatened by "encroaching" progress. Motifs of progress in *Lonely Are the Brave* not only include trucks and airplanes but also barbed wire that symbolizes the definitive end to his freedom. In the opening moments of the film, we see Jack stretched out near a campfire. His horse Whiskey is nearby. He seems relaxed and joyful in his environment, the high country of New Mexico. Like the opening of *Hud,* the opening of *Lonely Are the Brave* is not specific about the era of the narrative.

Soon the scene reveals itself to be set in the present as Jack's peaceful meditations are interrupted by the raucous sounds of a Police Helicopter (Fig. 11). Jack is someone in the wrong time.

In *Giant*, the interruption of the plane at the end of the film offers a gentler visualization. Although the Benedicts (the family who owns the ranch) flew into the city, they later decide that this approach is too "high falutin'," and we see them driving and singing along together. There is a shadow of the plane overhead, with the implication that a plane, like the car in *Lonely are the Brave,* is perhaps modernity misplaced in the wide expanses of the west. In *Giant*, it is a train that disrupts Marx's visual suggestion of the pastoral. The film starts with Bick, wearing a cowboy hat, arriving in a town by train. Through the train windows, Bick watches as other English-style horse riders are moving through the countryside. They are reflected on the window itself, so we get two images juxtaposed. The contrast between the old west and modernity is reinforced through repetitive shots of the horses running over the tracks, back and forth. The audience understands that the man in the cowboy hat is an anachronism. He appears somewhat quaint. Stevens, the director, prolongs the scene to create the ultimate visual contrast.

The film continues as we meet Leslie and we see that she lives in and is a part of a lush Virginian landscape; very green, full of trees, hills, and water. So, when she moves to the barren vast Texas landscape, the contrast is quite startling. This cross-crossing invites the audience into a relationship with the landscape in a unique way. It also enhances and foregrounds the characterization of Leslie as the eco-dreamer.

Another way that *Machine in the Garden* westerns compare and contrast the modern with the traditional is through the framing of characters within the landscape. For example, throughout *Giant*, Stevens outlines the landscape within windowpanes. We see Leslie's point of view as she looks out the window. Over time, the film repeats this perspective. So, as the story develops, and Reata (the homestead) evolves from a cattle operation to an industrial oil ranch, the viewer is personally engaged. Watching the film, the audience is familiar with this perspective and therefore fully sees the immense changes in the land. The once open land of Texas is, by the end of the film, a co-opted land of oil rigs. The audience is left to question aesthetic visual consequences as a result of 'progress.'

In *Lonely Are the Brave*, Jack is framed through barbed wire, the rails in the jail, and from a truck driver's point of view through the driver's window. Jack is imprisoned because of his need to live in the open lands. While the juxtaposition of the train and the cowboy in *Giant* is quaint, in *Lonely Are the Brave,* Jack's longing for the past appears tragic. He is imprisoned in the narrative not only through his own ideas but also within the landscape. Where Stevens used windows to frame the changes of modernity on the landscape, the director of *Lonely Are the Brave*, David Miller, frames Jack in a world of claustrophobic modernity. Both films question the notion of "progress," and the limitations of post-war expansionism. They corrupt the traditional view of the white man's land story and question whether it is good and pure.

Of all the films discussed in this chapter, only *The Big Country* and *Giant* are color films. They are also the only two that take place in the past. These films seem

more comfortable at the site of duality, the middle ground as Marx calls it. A painting called *Vetting Cattle on the Frisco* is in the main family room of Reata (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12

The painting illustrates an open plain with clouds and some modest ranges in the background. In the foreground we see cowboys on their horses, some riding, while another cowboy is branding a cow. Stevens insisted on the painting's prominence for he felt the figures in the painting spoke to a theme of the film, the passing of the more traditional cowboy. Stevens thinking was nostalgic. Historian William Cronon posits that these types of landscape frontier paintings evoke, "Nostalgia for a passing frontier way of life inevitably implied ambivalence, if not downright hostility, toward modernity and all that it represented." (p.77)

Hud, *The Misfits*, and *Lonely Are the Brave* are black and white films and all three are contemporary westerns. These films also gesture to the more pessimistic mood of the genre as it moved into the 1960s. James Wong Howe was the principal cinematographer for *Hud* and he made distinct contrasts between cloudy and clear skies and between empty wasteland and lush countryside. The scenery in all three of the black-and-white *Machine in the Garden* westerns becomes a part of the thematic growth of these films.

The critics noticed the film's treatment of landscape. In a review of *Hud*, Bosley Crowthers wrote that the film "has caught the whole raw-boned atmosphere of a land" (New York Times, April) Similarly, Archer Winsten stated that *Hud* "has done well by the flat, panhandle country, the dusty desolation of a lonely ranch house" (New York Post, April). The production notes for *Lonely Are the Brave* speak to the conscious decision to film in black and white because it would give an authenticity and 'realness' to the film. David Miller, the film's director for *Lonely Are the Brave* commented about the difference between Douglas's earlier film *Spartacus* in contrast to *Lonely Are the Brave*.

> The physical production of the two films is in diametric opposition. The last hero being filmed in 35 black and white.… Its extreme emphasis on realism contrasts with the romantic and epic qualities incorporated in *Spartacus*.

The look of *Hud,* as well as that of *The Misfits* and *Lonely Are the Brave,* anticipates the mood of dissolution and alienation Americans were beginning to create for themselves as they pondered the consequences of progress and modernity. The

Machine films visually counter genre aspects that portray the land as a site of potential. In these films, the land is almost gone.

Editing within these films also connects the polarities of the traditional interrupted by the modern, which counters genre norms in a more nuanced way. In *Hud* there is a powerful scene where Homer, Hud and hired hands kill all of the cattle. This is prior to Homer's poignant killing of his favorite longhorns. It echoes the point of view and editing style in *The Misfits* and *Lonely Are the Brave*. However, unlike the *Misfits* where the horses are killed for dog food, in *Lonely Are the Brave* the cattle are killed because of foot and mouth disease.

The slaughter is a powerful symbol of modernity killing the pastoral modes of thought. The scene illustrates the tension between the old and new ways. In *Hud* the *Machine in the Garden* imagery is literal. There is an enormous front end loader that is moving toward the viewer. The viewer's point of view is straight on, so the machine as it plows the dirt and soil, pushes the earth forward and the screen fills up and becomes dark. The cattle are corralled into a hole, collectively killed, and then sprayed with disinfectant. The camera's point of view is on the men as they kill. When the men with the spray come in, they are dressed in white jumpsuits and wear face masks; they look like astronauts. The inability to see the cattle contributes to the scene's intensity. Although we never see the cattle being killed, we hear them and are able to see the pain on many of the men's faces. The robotic way in which the scene plays out is also a factor in its strength. The men kill the cattle, and in quick succession the men with their sprayers and then the plows come in to cover it all.

In many ways the scene in *Hud* mimics the auditory qualities of *The Searchers* in the bison killing scene. We hear the multiple gunshots, the sounds of the animals, and then nothing. Both scenes evoke realism in the death of these animals and the emptiness that follows. There is no music or dialogue to mitigate the action, and so the viewer must accommodate the meaning and confront aspects of the conquest narrative that are deeply disturbing.

In Ford's films, and particularly in *The Searchers*, the land has a voice. In a *Cosmopolitan* interview from March, 1964, Ford said, "Actually, the thing most accurately portrayed in the western is the land. I think you can say that the real star of my westerns has always been the land." There is no question that Ford probably, more than most Hollywood directors, realized the potential of landscape to inhabit a story. In *The Searchers*, arguably, this reaches its zenith as the sound of the natural, the wind, the water, the echoes in the canyons, or lack of sound in the stillness of the night, work to enhance the visual experience of nature as sites of beauty and as a testing ground for the journey of these men.

In the promotional trailer for *The Searchers* the audience sees a message in bold lettering, which is read by the voice-over talent: "From the sun-soaked sand of Arizona to the snow swept plains of Canada," adding, "…in breath-taking panorama-of vista-vision." There is a travelogue quality to this film as we watch the men move through desert dunes to snow-covered valleys. Monument Valley, an area of mesas and majestic grandeur in northeast Arizona, is often what most people imagine when they think of westerns.

Although westerns in general explore the opposition between civilization and the wild, Ford blends them. As with *Giant* and *Hud*, *The Searchers* troubles the boundaries, both mentally and physically.

Lastly, the all-encompassing visual expression of modernity is often a critical element of the *Machine in the Garden* westerns. This is demonstrated by the smallness of the characters in relationship to symbols of mechanization, such as the oil rigs in *Giant and Hud.* The production notes for *Lonely Are the Brave* mention the director's insistence on intercutting Jack and his horse against the truck and the plow. The overall effect creates a manic confrontation of modern with past; both elements fighting for room on the landscape.

In traditional westerns, the power and strength of the cowboy and the pioneers to tame 'Mother Nature' is essential to the racial aspects of the white man's land story. Yet, sometimes this is countered by bad weather in which characters are exposed as weak and defenseless. In *Giant* an enormous storm moves through the landscape and past a hotel. The storm not only diminishes the characters as they try to find shelter, but also destroys motifs of progress, showing the futility of human control. For example, the storm crosses the pool and aggressively tosses all of the pool umbrellas and paraphernalia into the air. The wind breaks windows and moves objects across the room. The scene suggests the catastrophe and anxiety of Ferber's novel *Giant*, upon

which the film is based.[74] As the storm passes through the hotel, other adornments of modernity are blown about or destroyed in its wake.

Lastly, it is the landscape itself that serves as a template in which the characters can prove themselves or surrender. In the desert it becomes either survive or die. Increasingly, the *Machine in the Garden* westerns situate the genre more specifically in the arid spaces of the Southwest. In fact, desertscapes dominate the genre as it moves into the 1960s. Deserts are perceived by many as barren wastelands. Filmmakers of the time who positioned their stories in the desert often worked through their angst in a struggle between tradition and modernity. Their films suggested to the movie goer that modernity is a soul-less wasteland. In her eco-critical work on the desert in Hollywood Westerns, Teresa Podlesney Hathaway suggests the power of the desert to symbolize the pessimism of the genre (Hathaway, 1998).

> The region, arid and inhospitable, has always been the site of pillage. Miners took what they wanted from the ground with no thought to its destruction, for the desert was already considered a waste land. Then the bombing began: the space of the desert as nuclear wasteland, useless, godforsaken land and people sacrificed to the perpetuation of some Christian U.S. god…" (p. 53).

Yet, in the *Machine in the Garden* western there is still something alive, even in the desert. Edward Abbey, the author of the book on which *Lonely Are the Brave* was based, writes in *Desert Solitaire* (E. Abbey, 1988) that the "desert holds the perfect place between lifelessness and living vibrancy." Abbey could have just as easily been

[74] In a letter to Stevens, Ferber writes about the worries in Texas over tornados as similar to the way Californians worry about earthquakes. See George Steven, *Giant* files (1955) at the Margaret Herrick Library, Los Angeles, California.

writing about the purgatory in which the character Ethan from *The Searchers* finds himself. At the end of the film Ethan stands in the doorway, unable to join the more 'civilized' people inside (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13

Summary

Machine in the Garden westerns were ambitious. On the one hand, with their open spaces and richness of landscapes, they echo the romanticism of the *Return to the Garden* westerns. On the other hand, their preoccupation with the threat of the machine or the darkness of their plots and characters points to a more complex characterization of humanity upon the landscape. The middle 1950s to the early 1960s was a time in America of exponential consumption, industrialization and continued paranoia over the testing and possible use of nuclear weapons. These films, in trying to navigate concerns

about the fragility of the planet and human nature, expand the visual, rhetorical elements of the white man's land story, and, in doing, so continue to degrade the conquest conventions of the genre. In the *Weeds in the Garden* western, the next chapter, the films move into a more pessimistic psychological and physical landscape. Here the eco-dreamer emerges most frequently as an ecological-Indian within the waste-lands of the desert.

CHAPTER VI

THE WEEDS IN THE GARDEN WESTERN

'[T]is an unweeded garden, / That grows to seed, things rank and gross in nature / Possess it merely. --William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (act I, scene 2, lines 135–137)

What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.-Ralph Waldo Emerson

The ultimate test of man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.--Gaylord Nelson

We have met the enemy and he is us.--Pogo Cartoon, 1970

During World War II, the pesticide DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichlororthane) was highly successful in the fight against malaria and typhus.[75] Following the war, DDT became available for agriculture, and its use became pervasive throughout the United States.[76] This changed with the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). A book frequently cited as the symbol of a nascent American environmental

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[75] DDT applied to combat the typhus epidemic in occupied Naples to de-louse GIs, then to malaria control in tropics through broad-gauge attacks on insects, low acute toxicity for humans despite accumulation in milk and fatty tissues; approved for public use by FDA in 1945. Prof. William Cronon lecture notes: *The fallout of Silent Spring*

Carson had become concerned about the effect of pesticides, DDT particularly, as early as the 1940s, when anti-pest campaigns had been part of the Pacific war effort. She had already begun collecting research on the matter and calling others' attention to it when a 1957 lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture regarding aerial spraying over Long Island caught her attention and mobilized her to embark on the project that would eventually become *Silent Spring*.

movement, *Silent Spring* explored the ramifications of uncontrolled and unexamined use of chemical products upon humans, animals, and plant life. Rachel Carson exposed DDT as a chemical weapon that, although aimed at one particular pest, caused severe collateral damage.[77]

Building on the cultural and social tensions of the cold war, Carson used imagery in *Silent Spring* that depicted nature as a serene space devastated by white powder of a new kind of fallout, chemical pesticides. Carson linked cancer and the bomb. In many ways Carson's interrogation of corporations' limits and ethics was a precursor to late 1960s counterculture's interrogation of political and social institutions. Carson's perspective cut against the grain of conspicuous consumption and materialism as well as the technologically engineered control of nature.[78] By questioning the indiscriminate spraying of DDT and other chemicals, Carson challenged core belief about unlimited expansion and progress. She connected the dots between greed and destruction, between American corporations, such as Dow Chemical, and the collateral damage to birds and other life forms, including human beings. Carson, in effect, countered the presumptions of human beings' right to control and dominate the land at the heart of the conquest story. She proposed limits. In *Silent Spring* (1962) she wrote:

> "We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we

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[78] Gary Kroll, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring: A Brief History of Ecology* as a Subversive Subject.

> progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road—the one less traveled by—offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of the earth."

Carson offered a vision of modernity out of control. She published *Silent Spring* during a time of exponential global, scientific, and technological growth. In the end, the "two roads" described in the excerpt above required a rethinking of the American human relationship with the natural, a reconceptualization that required limits.

Although garnering human support for change is always difficult, in 1964, on the heels of *Silent Spring*, the United States passed the Wilderness Act. This statute set aside 9.1 million acres of land, establishing a National Wilderness Preservation System. For the rest of the decade, Congress continued to pass innovative air, water, and anti-pollution legislation. All of these environmental initiatives culminated in the proclamation by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Earth Day on April 22, 1970.[79]

In parallel with the rise of the environmental movement was a growing preoccupation with the conflict in Vietnam. While *Silent Spring* questioned the environmental costs of a 'war on pests,' Americans were beginning to question the cost of a war abroad. Through newsreels and photographs, Americans were exposed to horrid imagery of human beings disfigured and lands defaced through the use of chemical warfare, such as Agent Orange and Napalm.[80] The counterculture that had its

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[79] Other authors explore this, such as Garrett Hardin in *The tragedy of the Commons* (1969) and Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* (64). They both question American ideas of progress and growth.

[80] York, Geoffrey; Mick, Hayley; "Last Ghost of the Vietnam War" *The Globe and Mail*, July 12, 2008. He discusses Agent Orange; a mixture of Herbicide Orange (HO)

origins in protests against nuclear testing and industrial degradation, expanded to include political protests on issues of gender, race, sexuality and United States role in Vietnam. Not unexpectedly, the counterculture also brought a keen environmental consciousness that played out in shared activism and a shift in lifestyle and consumption practices. In the 1960s all of these issues became intertwined.[81] It was a period of immense change and the Hollywood westerns produced in that decade responded.

As the decade progressed, the Hollywood western was blown to pieces and the traditional narrative could not sustain itself. The idea of the noble white cowboy, sweeping in and killing only the bad guy, now seemed out of place and incompatible with the times.[82] There was always collateral damage.

The films of this chapter, the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns, are positioned between two landmark moments, the 1962 publication of *Silent Spring* and the first Earth Day in 1970. I contend that Hollywood westerns as a genre, in reaction to intense social and political changes, including the upsurge of environmentalism, could no

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and Agent LNX, which was used during Vietnam from 1961-1971. "Estimates are 400,000 human beings were killed or maimed, and 500,000 children were born with birth defects from contact of Vietnam. The US military used napalm from 1965-1972. Napalm is a combination of plastic polystyrene, hydrocarbon benzene, and gasoline. The mixture forms into a 'jelly-like' substance. When ignited the substance sticks and burns for a quarter of an hour. See, Sven Lindqvist, (2001) *A History of Bombing*, pp105.

[81] Many of these elements, rethinking of sexuality, get tacked onto the symbol of the Indian. The use of drugs such as dope or weed is identified with Native Americans and is seen as more natural; part of the counter-culture identification with American Indian symbols.

[82] See Slotkin's discussion of collateral damage in "Regeneration through Violence" (1996)

longer withstand the increased troubling of the white man's land narrative. Because of this, the genre fails to remain relevant.[83] For the remainder of the chapter, I will briefly address changes within the studio system and the genre during this period, then move on to a close reading of the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns, such as *Hombre, Soldier Blue, Little Big Man*, and *Easy Rider*.

Hollywood and Genre: The 1960s

Between 1962 and 1970, the Hollywood western experienced a dramatic decline in production. At the end of the Second World War, between 1946 and 1950, the major studios collectively produced more than 200 film westerns. By 1965-1970, however, the major studios produced only twenty.[84] Besides the sociopolitical issues that degraded the genre, American film studios still struggled to survive against the exponential popularity of television. There was also the continued success and influence of the foreign film market. Oddly, an export from Italy in the form of the "Spaghetti western" became increasingly popular. Although these films are considered westerns, an analysis of their contribution and meaning-making within the demise of the American western lies beyond the scope of this project.

While foreign films remained popular during this time, because of new tax laws in the United States, an increasing number of American-made films were produced

[83] Hollywood studios produce fewer westerns, with production numbers continuing to decline throughout the following decade. See Sklar.
[84] Slotkin connects the counter-culture movement, and 'all things native' to pop culture, such as the tribal love rock *Hair* and the Life cover "Our Indian heritage' from 1971.

abroad. In an effort to save money, many artists, producers and directors started to make films elsewhere. Cripps, in *Hollywood's High Noon* (1996) devotes a chapter (*The Long Goodbye*) to the multiple reasons the studios failed and how by the 1960s, it was all over. He writes,

> "The studios with the biggest chains suffered the most as their real estate fell ever deeper into disuse. MGM and 20th Century-Fox suffered retrenchment. Universal survived only by merging with the conglomerate Music Corporation of America (MCA) and Technicolor….One by one, the "poverty row" studios such as Republic fell into idleness and oblivion. Foreign Markets dried up as a result of both protectionist tariffs and the magnetism of Europe's postwar cinemas. Exhibitors more than ever, lived off popcorn sales."

In the end, it was this combination of financial and legal constraints that killed the major studios. In much the same way that audiences saw the conquest land story of the traditional Hollywood western as irrelevant in the social context of the 1960s, the old production line approach of the studio system, so powerful at the end of World War II, was also out of date.

The Weeds in the Garden Eco-dreamer

Rachel Carson put a mirror to society in *Silent Spring*. "No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it to themselves." Like Carson, the eco-dreamers within *the Weeds in the Garden western* in this chapter also hold a mirror that reflects their respect for the connection to nature. Often this is expressed by their ability to live and thrive off the land Like Carson, they question human frailty and greed. They have seen the consequences of

expansionism and have spoken to it. This impulse is illustrated through their discourse on the inaccuracies within the white man's land narrative. Their dialogue is often infused with cynical humor, which suggests the genre's self-reflectiveness at the time. Often the eco-dreamer is presented as a survivalist and/or teacher of land ethics who drives the narrative in a way that counters genre norms and therefore highlights the irrelevancy of the genre.

Hombre (1967) is a story about a white man raised by the Apache. The title character (who is also called John Russell and portrayed by Paul Newman) saves a band of white people from white outlaws. The whites are unable to survive in the desert and Hombre gets them to safety. Hombre's knowledge of the land and his ability to navigate harsh climates and obstacles is perceived as innate because of his association with Natives. John Russell, through his close contact with the Apache, is a figure ennobled, seen as morally superior, because of his closeness to sites of nature.[85] Although this bent of rugged primitivism has been played out within previous westerns, the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns focus on the connection to the ecological Indian as informing the hero's agency. In *Hombre*, John Russell guides, teaches, and rescues others in ways that used to be the domain of the white cowboy. The whites in this story and later in other *Weeds* westerns are usually portrayed as weaklings because of their

[85] This conflates white notions of environmentalism with the essentialist presentation of the ecological Indian. It also perpetuates the idea of natives as naive -- tragic figures, ill-equipped to face modernity. Nevertheless, this representation of a hybrid character (a white man raised by the Apache), with all of its faults, also suggests some need in the culture to relate to aspects of environmentalism.

inability to function outdoors. The conventions of the genre are stretched and roles reversed.

Closeness to Nature as Noble

The depiction of a closeness to nature being noble is in line with environmental ideas which favor self-sufficiency, a sense of place, and a knowledge about the earth. Throughout the film *Hombre,* John Russell is credited with these traits. He and several white characters are traveling via stagecoach. They are hijacked and are **l**eft in the middle of the desert. Although the whites are lost, Russell is comfortable and centered. He lies against the rocks, rubs his hands in the soil; he is meditative, while the rest of the passengers struggle to even stand-up. They are all gasping for breath. They are impatient and watch him.[86] Russell's connection to the Apache seems to equip him with keen survivalist skills. In fact, John Russell is so impressive at finding water and

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[86] The roots of the concept of the "Noble Savage" are to be found, according to Hoxie Neale Fairchild (*The Noble Savage*), in 1) the histories and chronicles of the European explorers and 2) Romantic philosophies. The term "Noble Savage" itself was coined in the 18th century by Jean Jacques Rousseau in his famous essay, "Social Contract." To Rousseau, the Noble Savage represented the "natural man," that individual in an initial purer state, uncorrupted by contact with the complexities and compromises of society, living in nature according to nature's own rhythms and patterns (according to "natural law").

Sturgeon writes, "the problem with the familiarity and the repetition of this narrative [white ecological Indian] within popular culture is that indigenous environmental activists and those who care about indigenous cultures have a difficult time making environmental arguments that are not eclipsed by this more popular plot. The environmentalist solutions presented by this plot (involving redeemed white men, the efficacy of violence, individualist environmental action and mystical union with an abstracted nature) are not the environmentalist solutions we need" (54).

safe places to rest and so at ease, that even Jessie, (Diane Cilento) a woman who becomes his friend, questions his abilities as in this dialogue.

> Jessie: *"You don't get tired. You don't get hungry. You don't get thirsty. Are you for real"?*

Russell's keen survivalist skills also advance the perception that, if Natives are better at taking care of the land and understanding the land, then whites must not be connected to the land.[87] The stagecoach passengers are dependent on John Russell. They cry out: "Why didn't you wait for us?"

Throughout the odyssey, Russell continually reminds them to stay out of the sun and sip water. We see some passengers waste water or suffer in the sun because they remain overdressed. The whites are now portrayed as the "other" in this landscape; their inept status makes the journey difficult. Because they are disconnected from nature, they are an obstacle, in the way of themselves.[88] As these moments unfold, the relevancy of the white man's land narrative becomes a evident.

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[87] Russell, seen as Native, symbolizes the myth of the ecological Indian within the boundaries of white Hollywood. Just like the counterculture cherry picking of native symbols to suit lifestyle choice, Hollywood persists in rethinking the racism of imperialism, through the prism of whiteness.

[88] "At least since 1966," suggests Richard Slotkin, "Native Americans and their culture had become important symbols of rebellion in the so-called 'counter-culture' of college-age white Americans."

Another character who approaches the strength of the eco-dreamer is Jessie, a main character in the plot, superseded only by John Russell. She and Russell become very good friends. In a way Jessie can be seen as an "Earth Mother" figure. This portrayal of gender parallels the conflation of Indians as ecological. Nevertheless, Jessie's character, as with Leslie in *Giant*, speaks to a more nuanced representation of gender. The film depicts femininity not as pristine and cleansed through the civilizing forces of the city, but as noble and linked to the natural. Although Jessie's connection to nature is less specific than John Russell's, it mirrors 1960s attitudes that connect environmental issues to caretaking and community building. Not only is Jessie comfortable with her sexuality, but she is also a realist who earns her own living. She is a mother figure to the young couple in the stagecoach party. Earlier in the film she is seen cleaning and repairing items around the inn she operates.[89] Throughout the film, she states that she likes things "natural" or that "it just seems the right and natural thing to do." Relaxed in the outdoors, she is not afraid of bugs and she takes a bath in the pond. She is also willing to hunt for food with a shotgun. She is deemed honorable in the film because she is comfortable with simple things. Jessie's ability to maneuver

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[89] Carolyn Merchant, in the *Death of Nature,* writes, "The female earth was central to organic cosmology that was undermined by the Scientific Revolution and the rise of a market-oriented culture...for sixteenth-century Europeans the root metaphor binding together the self, society and the cosmos was that of an organism...organistic theory emphasied interdependence among the parts of the human body, subordination of individual to communal purposes in family, community, and state, and vital life permeates the cosmos to the lowliest stone" (Merchant, *The Death of Nature*, 1990: 278).

easily in the outdoors also undercuts a core dynamic within the white man's narrative: the idea that wild sites need to be tamed in the name of progress. Jessie, as a naturalist, counters this presumption, as does the female character in the next film, *Soldier Blue*.

In September 1970, Dotson Rader of *The New York Times* wrote that *Soldier Blue* "must be numbered among the most significant, the most brutal and liberating, the most honest American films ever made." Many movie-goers saw *Soldier Blue* (as with *Little Big Horn)* as an allegory for the war in Vietnam. The film maker includes visual signifiers of the My lai massacre, symbolically comparing the treatment of the Vietnamese with the treatment of Native Americans.[90] It certainly can be argued that the eco-dreamers in this chapter are all brutally honest. Their honesty is often exhibited through their cynicism and humor. As with Jessie in *Hombre*, the lead character in *Soldier Blue* is also a woman. She, Christa Belle (played by Candice Bergen), is not only capable of surviving in the wild, but she thrives in nature and enjoys it. Like John Russell in *Hombre*, Christa Belle was also raised by Native Americans, in this case, the Cheyenne. Like Russell, Christa Belle rescues people. This time, the character in need of rescuing is a white man, a soldier. By the end of the movie she finally suggests, "I can go faster by myself." She leaves him so she can find help.

[90] As Slotkin sums up, the use of native jargon in Vietnam, "There are hostiles and friendlies." Slotkin is suggesting that audiences were excused in some way, that there are "consequences when dealing with bad savage enemies you are then allowed to behave like a savage yourself".

As with Russell, Christa Belle exhibits extraordinary capabilities as an outdoorswoman. Her odyssey parallels the journey in *Hombre*. She hunts, fishes, finds water, and knows the right paths to safety.

> Soldier Blue: *This way*
> Christa Bell: *go that way and your eyes will be picked out.*
> *In one scene she is so connected to the natural that she senses a weather change:*
> Christa Bell: *It smells like rain.*
> Soldier Blue*: Well, there isn't a cloud in the sky. (He rolls his eyes.)*

Then the scene cuts to a downpour, with both of them marooned in a river of water. Later she makes fun of her superior abilities, suggesting that she can tell who made a fire just by looking at the abandoned campsite:

> Christa Bell: *It's a white man's fire*
> Soldier Blue: *How do you know?*
> Christa Bell: *It's different than a Cheyenne's fire*

This is said with the same casualness and humor that John Russell frequently infuses in his comments. There is a touch of sarcasm toward the innocent. Both Christa Belle and John Russell are frequently amused by the lack of outdoor skills others reveal.

Christa Bell, Russell, and Jessie are the moral centers of *Soldier Blue and Hombre* because of their closeness or comfort, with sites of nature. They have not become disconnected from the land as the others have. Not only do these three characters eschew the typical white cowboy in favor of more environmentally attuned characters, but they evoke a 1960s morality. They admonish movie goers to support women, oppose the Vietnam War, and get your act together on racial issues.

By incorporating more nuanced land stories within the narrative, the genre is stretched.

In *Easy Rider* (1969), the protagonists—two counterculture motorcycle riders—disrupt the notion of the ideal western hero. Set in contemporary times, *Easy Rider* is about two westerners, Wyatt (Peter Fonda) and Billy (Dennis Hopper), and their quest to "find America." However, instead of going west, these men travel east, en route not to fame and success, but to a Mardi Gras celebration. The inversion of the conquest story ironically gestures toward the demise of the genre. Even the promotional poster for the film seemed prophetic, "They went looking for America and couldn't find it." On their wayward quest the men meet a range of people, people who represent the environmental impulse of the 1960s. The moral or 'good' people that they encounter are deemed superior, once again for their connection to the land. These people, along the road, embody the aspects of the eco-dreamer and because Wyatt engages positively with their wisdom, Wyatt is also an eco-dreamer. For example, when Wyatt talks to a man on a small ranch:

> Wyatt*: No, I mean it; you've got a nice place. It's not every man that can live off the land, you know. You do your own thing in your own time. You should be proud.*

Later in the film, they come upon a man who lives in a commune. He is from the city but won't say the name of the specific city, because as he says, "Doesn't make any difference because every city is alike." He just wants to be away from all cities. This remark suggests that the city is unnatural, a place of police, government, and the establishment. The commune functions as a utopian possibility or alternative. For

example, one of the men on the commune shows Billy and Wyatt how the once-city kids (now members of the commune) work together, planting and working the land, to create a farm cooperative. The land, however, looks dry, and Wyatt asks:

> Wyatt: *Get much rain here?*
> Guy: *Guess we will have to dance for that.*
>
> *(Later Billy laughs and tells Wyatt that the commune members will not survive there, and Wyatt smiles)*
> Wyatt: *"Yes. They will."*

Before a shared meal together, one of the men offers this prayer:[91]

> *We have planted our seeds. We ask that our efforts be worthy to produce simple food for a simple taste. We ask that our efforts be rewarded. We thank you for the food that we eat from other hands. That we may share it with our fellow man. And be even more generous when it is from our own. Thank you for a place, to make a stand.*

The men later bathe in the nude with two women in a stream of clean water and the rewards of this lifestyle seem complete.

The energy that propels Wyatt and Billy along their quest to find America appears at times to be innate. The signature song associated with the film *Born to be Wild* became the anthem for a generation. Another element, barely touched on by film scholars, particularly in the realm of eco-criticism, is how films such as *Easy Rider* use the rhetoric of songs to enhance themes. Some of these themes are tangential to ideas of community and environmental thought, and therefore serve to counter white

[91] Throughout the film the men stop to have dinner with people and prayer is used.

imperialistic attitudes of freedom as the conqueror's sphere. The songs function, as do the eco-dreamers, as inspiration for the good people on the road. The film opens with the song "Born to Be Wild." The lyrics "like a true nature's child, / we were born, born to be wild," play as the credits start. The idea of freedom as the ability to move across the land in your own time—an idea that was very much an element of the western since the beginning—is now co-opted by the counterculture and more environmentally informed as a result.

History Lessons and the Land Ethic

In the *Weeds in the Garden* western the eco-dreamer is the story teller and the teacher; he or she provides lessons in land ethics. These lessons raise consciousness as they function to debunk conquest ideology. One of the myths discredited is the notion of Native people as wild savages who are unable to cultivate their land. When John Russell meets an Indian agent, he explains why the Natives do not farm: "They live on land they do not want to live on." In *Soldier Blue* Christa Belle laughs at the innocence of the soldier and his belief in the system when he claims that Indians will "be given land, and a place to live and eat." This moment addresses a key flaw within the conquest narrative: the idea that whites were the taming element, coming in to teach the natives how to work the land.

In *Hombre*, Russell talks about the Indian agents and their corrupt policies about Native land, money, and food. Russell describes the manner in which American Indian agents were paid on profits from bad beef[92].

John Russell*: He don't need a gun to pull off a robbery, he does it with pen and ink.. The Indians go hungry but you don't.*

History Lesson of Imperialism in *Soldier Blue* and *Little Big Man*

In both *Soldier Blue* and *Hombre,* the eco-dreamers oscillate between two cultures, illustrating a desire to describe whites as appropriating native ethics and land values. This is partially true in *Little Big Man* (1970) as well. In *Little Big Man*, the protagonist is an unlikely antihero. Played by Dustin Hoffman, the character Jack Crabb is 121 years old at the beginning of the film. Crabb is basically a history teacher. By virtue of living through more than a century of tumultuous events, Crabb demands that we, as movie goers, acknowledge his right to interpret the facts. In his reinterpretation of history, the movie goer concomitantly is asked to rethink the master narrative of current events—a narrative of race, power, and war.

The story starts with a man who is interested in oral histories. He asks Crabb to recount his capture by and life with the Cheyenne. Crabb goes on to tell of becoming a gunslinger, marrying a Native woman, and watching General George Armstrong Custer kill his wife. Later, Crabb exacts his revenge by leading Custer to his doom at Little

[92] The US was sometimes obligated by treaty to provide provisions to Indian nations, but these provisions, including beef, often were substituted with inferior products by unscrupulous middlemen.

Big Horn. As a character, Crabb is nervous and unable to use a gun, clearly a shift in the image of the hero. However, Crabb's sensitivity to others represents a new type of masculinity suited to the era of late 1960s and early 1970s consciousness-raising.

Although his character is ill suited to the natural and the outdoors, Crabb is a kind man with integrity and kindness. He questions violence and the role of power in the destruction of people's homes and lives. Jack Crabb is not quite an eco-dreamer, but he provides a space within the narrative for the ideas of eco-dreamer Old Lodge Skins, played by Chief Dan George. When Old Lodge Skins talks with Crabb, he often speaks of a land ethic. Crabb functions as the audience by asking questions. Old Lodge Skins becomes his father figure and through Crabb's conversations with him, the film exudes environmental discourse, in conflict with the genre.

> Crabb *: (after seeing his wife killed) Do you hate them? Do you hate the white man now?*
>
> Old Lodge Skins*: Do you see this fine thing? Do you admire the humanity of it? Because the human beings, my son, they believe everything is alive. Not only man and animals. But also water, earth, stone. And also the things from them... like that hair. The man from whom this hair came, he's bald on the other side, because I now own his scalp! That is the way things are. But the white man, they believe EVERYTHING is dead. Stone, earth, animals. And people! Even their own people! If things keep trying to live, white man will rub them out. That is the difference.*

Old Lodge Skins is an eco-dreamer because he shows the limits of anthropocentric ideology. Reminiscent of Rachel Carson's admonition in *Silent Spring*, Old Lodge Skins' speech describes the interconnections of the natural world with humanity and the process of the connections as ongoing. Crabb, as

the storyteller in *Little Big Man*, is the vehicle through which the filmmaker conveys both the eco-dreamer's strong environmental ethic and a revisionist history.

The opening song from *Soldier Blue* sets in play the history lesson this allegorical film provides.

I tell you a story, it's a true one
And I'll tell it like you'll understand
And ain't gonna talk like some history man

I look out and I see a land
Young and lovely, hard and strong
For fifty thousand years
We've danced her praises
Prayed our thanks and we've just begun

This is, this is my country
Young and growin' free and flowin' sea to sea
Yes this is my country
Ripe and bearing miracles in ev'ry pond and tree
Her spirit walks the high country
Givin' free wild samples
And settin' an example how to give
Yes, this is my country
Reachin' and turnin', she's like a baby learnin' how to live

Yes, this is my country
And I sprang from her and I'm learnin' how to count upon her
Tall trees and the corn is high country
Yes, I love her and I'm learnin' how to take care of her

The Mother Earth imagery in this song taps into the 1960s idea of Native connection to the Earth. It evokes the notion of women as the ultimate caretakers. As with the ecological Indian, the Mother Earth figure itself is romanticized and limiting.

However, in the context of this dissertation this trope of inter-connectivity and sustainability counters the conquest land story and reveals how the *Weeds in the Garden* western contributes to the degrading of the genre. Native Americans, like the cyclists in *Easy Rider*, are now the moral center of the film because of their pacifism and connection to the environment; government agents and the U.S. Cavalry are the villains because of their wasteful treatment of life.

Visual Imagery in the Weeds in the Garden Western

In *Silent Spring* Rachel Carson used the imagery of nuclear fallout to strengthen her argument. Before she describes the degrading consequences of pesticides, she tells a story, which she calls a "fable for tomorrow". She describes a landscape, a pastoral setting that could be anywhere in Middle America. In this mythical landscape, where the birds stop singing and the plants die, Carson links industrial and scientific excesses, through overuse of pesticides, to the killing of birds and other life forms. The filmic landscapes of the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns tell an equally compelling story. Like the fable aspect of *Silent Spring*, the weeds in the garden westerns place their characters in a "what-could-happen" landscape, often a desertscape My use of the term *desertscapes* is meant to elicit a landscape of mostly sand or hybrid rocky terrain.

Hombre, Soldier Blue, and Easy Rider.

While some see the desert as a place no one wants, eco-dreamers often see the desert as almost sacred. The eco-dreamer throughout all of the films within this

dissertation are characters who see more than others do, because they can read nature. In films such as *Hombre* and *Easy Rider*, the desert can seem scary when the characters are lost except for those who understand how to survive in nature. Or, as in *Easy Rider*, the desert is a place of hope for the community of farmers working the land together.

Brereton's *Hollywood Utopia* (2004) notes the landscape of *Easy Rider*: "The desert is a place not of pitched battles but of quiet revelation. Through it all they roared along on their Harleys, looking for a mythical place where people can live, if not in peace, at least with some measure of tolerance.

In the 1960s, from the perspective of the growing counterculture movement, peace and tolerance appeared to be in short supply. They framed the Vietnam War as an imperialist exercise that fueled widespread mistrust of authority and disillusionment. Yet the eco-dreamer, while dismissing the establishment, also believed in the possibility of community and a better world.

The idea of desertscape is complex. By the late 1960s, many Americans associated the desert with nuclear testing sites. From this perspective the desert is worthless-- a place that literally can be blown up with no regard for the long-term consequences. One can also get lost in the desert. So those who value this place, eco-dreamers, are exceptional.

In the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns, eco-dreamers stand out as heroic because they reject the material values of the white man. The desert then is the perfect backdrop for this tension between culture and counterculture, with its "new" ideas about how to live on the land. The desert perfectly suits the development of the characters as they

struggle to find new ways to live sustainably within the excesses of expansionism and the white man's land story.

Through the eyes of people such as Wyatt in *Easy Rider* or Old Lodge Skins in *Little Big Man*, we even begin to see the desert as beautiful. In *Easy Rider*, as the main characters move across a range of "wild" sites, from canyons to fields to small ponds, the impression is picturesque. As in *Hombre* and *Soldier Blue*, there are multiple long shots as characters traverse the landscape, and become eclipsed by the fullness of the land that surrounds them. In *Easy Rider,* Wyatt and Billy's journey is not a painful trek across obstacles, but instead a smooth movement across the horizon. Because, they feel connected to the land and enjoy the ride, they are credited as noble. In *Easy Rider*, the key characters also stop at times to look at the panorama. Although the view is desert-like terrain, the characters sigh; as eco-dreamers they see land differently.

Little Big Man is somewhat different from the other films. Visually, the landscape that surrounds the Native campsites is breath-taking. Shot in Montana and parts of Alberta, Canada, *Little Big Man* projects a romanticized view of the aesthetic qualities of nature. The contrasts between the country and the town are stark, and, as with *Shane* and the other films, they function to position the civilized against the uncivilized. In town the *mise-en-scène* is chaotic. People hurry through the mud. Their clothes are dirty, the buildings are barely lit, and the town is dark and dreary. The city is ugly, while the country and the Native people in it are seen as beautiful. In contrast to the white man's narrative of progress, it is the non-whites (or lesser-whites) who seem "ideal" because they live on the land and appreciate it for more than its mere use value.

From the beginning of *Little Big Man*, movie goers are asked to consider the meaning of white expansionism and encroachment on the land, even in the partially settled spaces. The opening credits show the burning remains of Crabb's childhood home. Except for his sister, all of his family is dead. The smoke, from a fire, lifts up into the sky. The family's Victorian belongings are now damaged (Fig. 14). We see a velvet chaise lounge with a dead man lying across it, blood all about him. Motifs often found in the *Weeds in the Garden* western are broken windows, abandoned mines, used clothing, torched furniture, and generally things that are left behind. In these films, signs of progress are often framed as death.

Fig. 14

Desertscapes also illustrate the nobility of those who respect and can live in such a harsh environment. In *Soldier Blue*, Christa Belle moves more quickly and with less effort than the white soldier. Through long shots we see how much ground they have to cover, and his face grimaces in close-up as he struggles to keep pace with Christa Belle. *In Hombre,* John Russell never struggles. The desertscape is dry, humid, and devoid of many landmarks. However, John Russell always seems to know where he is going, and the exhausted white people from the deserted stagecoach follow behind.

In *Easy Rider*, the two main characters camp out anywhere they can because no one in established society will rent them rooms. (Fig. 15) The areas where they sleep are often exotic, such as the inside of a yellow-lit cave. The desertscapes or other harsh locales also highlight the struggles of Native Americans. These are the places to which whites pushed the Native Americans and yet they still survive. They live but not in the

place they want to be. Building on the ecological noble Indian motif, the ability to survive on the land, is what makes the Native characters in these films heroic.

Fig. 15

Although the ubiquitous long-shots in Hollywood westerns function to emphasize the characters' survivalist and close-to-nature status, these films also use close-up shots in a unique way. The use of zoom lenses across genres became popular in this era of filmmaking. In the western, the zooming technique was often used to illustrate characters' connections to sites of nature. For example, in the opening shot of *Hombre*, instead of a grand landscape, the audience sees John Russell in a tight close-up. He is a white man, but is wearing "Apache" clothing and a red head-band. We see him looking at a horse. He is waiting to catch the animal. Then there is a close-up of the horse looking at him. This goes back and forth, reinforcing the link between the

horse and the man. The implication is that Russell can read and understand this horse, just as the horse understands him. The horse does not want to get into the corral, but Russell is patient and waits to read the actions of the animal. Throughout this scene, the connection between Russell and the animal supersedes classic images of cowboys from earlier westerns who simply ride horses. Right before Russell is able to close the door on the corral, a white man interrupts him. Up to this point, there has been no sound except the echoes of the main horse and the other horses, as they test the area, going forward and then backward, not sure if it is safe. The man, instead of waiting to see what happens, simply shouts out Russell's name. The white man is so loud that the horses run away. The intrusion is abrupt. The scene contrasts Russell's connection to the natural with the abruptness and symbolic intrusion of the whites on the Natives and their connection to the natural. The white man's individual thoughtlessness magnifies the thoughtlessness inherent in the frontier myth. The retelling of 19th century expansionism through a 20th century lens of anti-imperialism is reinforced through the use of visual imagery.

By the time *Soldier Blue* came out, the American public knew of the 1968 My Lai massacre in Vietnam. There were numerous photos that depicted American soldiers acting savagely toward Vietnamese people. The most powerful imagery showed women and children lined up and and collectively shot, their bodies lying at the bottom of a ravine. In *Soldier Blue* these images are reconstructed though the film's restaging of the Sand Creek massacre of 1864. So, when the Cheyenne at the end of the film are forced into a ravine, the connection to My Lai is evident. Scenes are shot documentary

style, which not only provides a disturbingly intimate perspective, but also through cinema verité which intensifies the realism.[93]

The rape scene in *Soldier Blue* is particularly difficult to watch. The complete disregard for humanity is palpable. Richard Slotkin suggests that films such as *Soldier Blue* helped audiences mediate, from a distance, the collateral damage of violence in Vietnam, through the replaying of the similar collateral damage in the massacres of American Indians at sites such as Sand Creek in 1864, or, as in *Little Big Man*, the massacre at Little Big Horn in 1876.[94] "The premise of the western is that when you ride into the town and shoot everything that moves, Slotkin wrote, "you only hit the bad guys, but as we know from the experience of Vietnam, My Lai, that isn't true. There is always collateral damage."[95]

The ecological Indian is sometimes used as a symbol to appease white guilt over historical injustice. "Using cultural symbolism you get the powerful identification of the anti-war movement with the American Indian," Slotkin stated As "My Lai is the hinge that turns things around. And if you are going to identify with the victims you are going

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[93] Cinema Verite, definition from Bordwell, Film Style: "Sometimes the filmmaker does not want smooth camera movements, preferring a bumpy, jiggly image. Commonly, this sort of image is achieved through use of the hand-held camera. This sort of camera movement became common during the 1950s with the growth of documentaries.

[94] In *Little Big Man*, Arthur Penn, the director, uses a similar devise in showing the massacre at Little Big Horn. The camera is cinema verite style, and the village is completely destroyed. In an interview with Turner Classic Movies, Penn said that elements of the film were comments on American genocide depicting events "closest to The Holocaust."

[95] See Slotkin (p. 330)

to identify with the Indians that have been victims of massacre by whites." [96] By the late 1960s, Americans knew of the destructive powers of napalm, and the scenes in *Soldier Blue* echo the burning of Vietnamese hamlets. There are extended moments in the film's portrayal of the massacre of soldiers setting teepees on fire, the flames blow-up and mix with the screams to create a sonic boom of sound. The desecration then is not just the toll of human lives but the environmental damage that occurs as part of collateral damage. [97]

In *Hombre*, the imperialism identified and deconstructed is *cultural* imperialism. At the beginning of the film we see a series of photographs of Native Americans, presented slide show fashion (fifteen slides in all) underneath the credits. The images look familiar; they are from the well-known Edward Curtis collection.[98] Each photographic image is of a Native American, depicted sometimes in groups but often alone. The images include a man praying, a man building a hut, and a man on his horse, looking across the landscape. The photos are all tinted in sepia or rose-colored

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[96] From Slotkin UCLA lecture 2008. He adds, [these films] illustrate the way in which the western movie and the myth behind the western movie were used to rationalize and to explain and justify American policy in Vietnam. The imagery is taken over directly in to political rhetoric (The notion that the strategic hamlet program is compared to pushing the Indians away from the stockade so the pioneers can plant corn the countryside controlled by the Vietcong is spoken of as Indian country.

[97] In Vietnam, the United States military used of Napalm to destroy miles of forest that North Vietnamese soldiers depended on for cover. Napalm along with Agent Orange, herbicides and land mines were all used extensively. See, Jacob Silverman, "How Napalm Works." (2008)

[98] Curtis is a well-known photographer of Native Americans at the turn of the century (1900s). He was one of the few to document the artifact, clothing and peoples of apache and other tribes. The paradoxes of Curtis' work are still ignored through the use of these images as 'truthful' representations in the film.

shading.[99] There are two elements at work here. First, the dominant impression is one of the past. Second, incorporating "real" photos is meant to illustrate accuracy, implying a desire by the filmmakers to frame the story as historical fact.

Familiarity with Curtis' work, however, reveals that his photography was often contrived.[100] He deleted aspects of any image that he found too modern, e.g., a clock in one photo.[101] He also required groups to wear ceremonial attire, even if this type of clothing would not have been worn for the activities depicted in the photograph. Although Curtis created important historical images of many indigenous tribes, in the end, he essentially saw Native people through a distorted lens. Even though Curtis appreciated the importance of preserving images of the tribes he photographed, he imposed his own point of view that in the end framed them as quaint and vanishing.

The link of the vanishing Native American to environmentalism is perhaps most idealized through the famous "Keep America Beautiful"—better known as the "Crying Indian"— public service announcement of 1971. In it, a 19th century Indian in full

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[99]Sepia tones Edward sometimes did this, but the film used this on every image

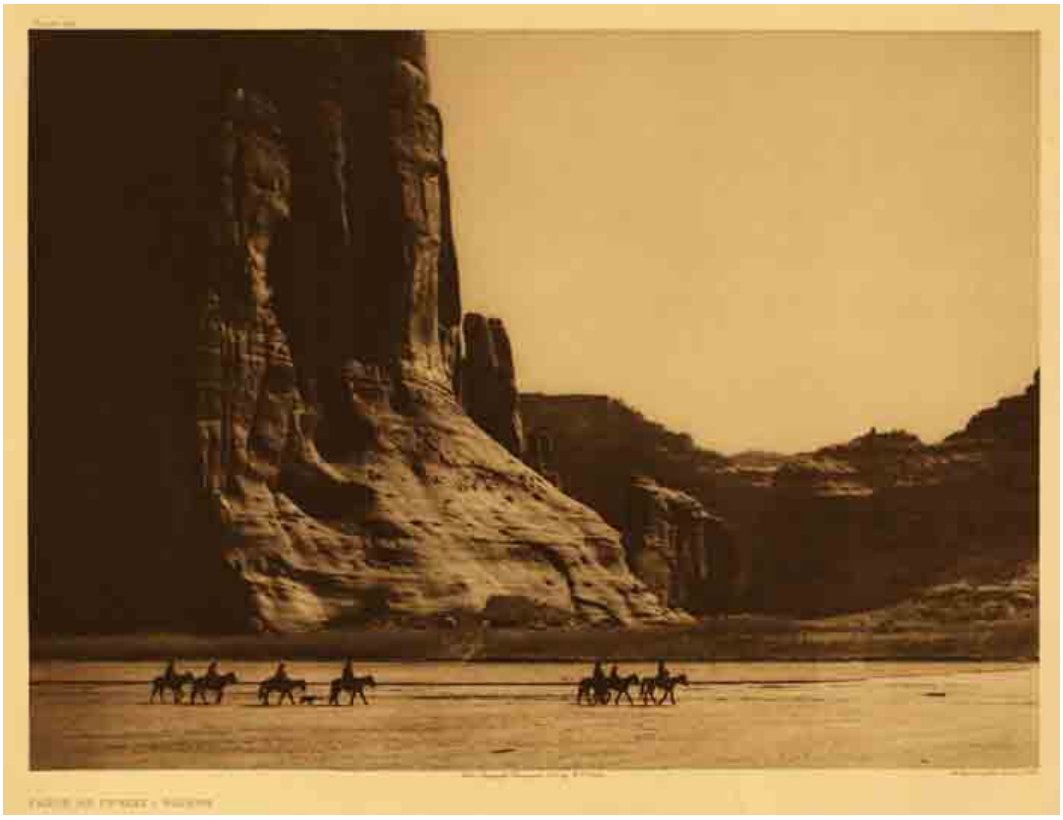
[100] Although Curtis tended to focus on North American tribes, and his work contains some of the only remaining images of the Apache. These photos hint at the complexity of image, and particularly historical framing of human beings. In general, the photographs of Edward Curtis are meant to evoke an ideal imagery of Native American culture at the time - the late 1880s to early 1900s.

[101] The parallel to the construction of the noble, then ecological Indian within cinema follows the same limitations and biases. When Curtis had arrived in various tribal territories, the U.S. government had already forced Indian children into boarding schools, cut their hair and banned the children from speaking in their native tongues. Yet, Curtis chose and went to great efforts to reconstruct Native Americans posing in traditional clothing and showing no signs of modernity such as removing clocks from rooms.

regalia anachronistically walks through a 20th century landscape littered with trash and laments the destruction of his pristine environment. The final close-up shows one tear tragically rolling down his cheek. During the 1960s, the white counterculture movement embraced this social construction of the ecological Indian. The environmental themes that the ecological Indian represented, and that can be seen throughout all of the *Weeds in the Garden* westerns, are the detrimental effects of excessive greed and consumption, and the desire to reconnect with the land. In the symbol of the Native American, there is a hope that white Americans can take on aspects of the ecological Indian and become more eco-centered.

The eco-dreamers are the weeds in the garden. Just as weeds are not really 'seen' as beautiful flowers, the weeds are the survivors. In the *Weeds in the Garden* western, the desert is the metaphorical rough terrain that symbolizes a genre struggling against principles that seem dried up and used. Like the characters in *Easy Rider* (1969), the genre seeks to discover something to fill a void. It is interesting that in *Easy Rider*, the characters go in the reverse direction from traditional westerns. Instead of going west in the hopes of wealth, these men find California a "place of lies,' says Wyatt, and want to go east, seeking "America." The reversal of the trope arguably represents the genre's dislocation. After all, the journey west is meant to celebrate manifest destiny, the "Westward ho!" of an earlier time. "While the western has not entirely disappeared from the 'genre map,' Slotkin notes, "its share of the terrain has been radically reduced and the terms of its cultural presence drastically altered."

Fig. 16



Summary

This chapter has looked at the ways in which landscape and representations of nature played a role in the reduction of the white man's land story. By the end of the 1960s, the Hollywood western was a dying genre. Almost a century after Frederick Jackson Turner wrote about the closing of the American pastoral frontier, the ideals that it invoked were seen as antiquated, and at times, perverse. As the eco-dreamer replaced the cowboy as the new hero and the landscape was seen as more complex, the western was no longer itself. A narrative built upon expansionist ideology bound up in racism,

sexism, and misuse of land, could no longer pass itself off as the story of ordained progress without consequences.

Conclusion

In my content analysis of post-war Hollywood westerns, I examined three historical periods within a 25-year span, the critical post-WWII era from 1945, marked by the use of the first atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the first Earth Day, April 20th, 1970, a symbolic celebration often viewed as the beginning of the modern environmental movement. This era reflected a plethora of political, cultural and social shifts that intersected with the emerging environmental consciousness. At the end of World War II and throughout the 1950s, Americans were uncertain about living in the now-Atomic age and understood that theirs was a more fragile, threatened planet. The Cold War and concerns about communist imperialism abroad eventually led to battles in other landscapes, such as Korea and Vietnam. By the 1960s, a counterculture emerged, one that scrutinized the "establishment"— those in power, including the military and the government. Part of this counterculture movement was the growth of a mainstream environmental consciousness.

The *Return to the Garden* westerns (1945-1953) gestured to an early post-war romanticism toward non-human space. In an era of both peace and atomic threat, these films reflected and mediated societal angst over the role of humanity and the natural through a reworking of the genre. In films such as *Shane, Broken Arrow,*

Naked Spur and *Devil's Doorway* the landscape was a formidable character beyond mere use value; here the natural was reworked through an idealized notion of nature visually expressed through heightened color or tone, as well as light and scale. In many ways these films picked up where the romantics of 19th century landscape painting left off, celebrating landscape as an aesthetic oasis. The "Eco-dreamer" emerged in these early post war westerns, often symbolized by a Native American. The Eco-dreamer, whether native or non-native, wass the moral center of the film because he or she spoke to the human need to respect the land. Unlike the cowboy of a more traditional western, who was rather rigid in his purity between good and bad, in films such as *Treasure of Sierra Madre* and *Devil's Doorway*, the Eco-dreamer saw the link between community and land and articulated the need for sustainability. Script notes, interviews, and diary notations reinforced this value, as film producers reveaedl an interested in framing the story of land in a more majestic and grand manner. As a result audiences experienced the western through a more romanticized, even 'sublime' lens

The *Machine in the Garden* westerns (1954-1963) highlighted societal concerns over industrialization, more explicitly focused on mechanization upon the landscape and the encroachment of modernity. This paralleled the era of growing consumption and emergence of the car culture within America. Visually, audiences saw the grand landscapes of the *Shane*, but now automobiles, planes and other symbols of mechanization in films such as *Giant, Hud, Misfits and Lonely are the Brave*, intruded upon the once-unencumbered landscape. In this way the films echoed the writings of

Leo Marx's *Machine in the Garden,* who wrote of the quandary between modernity and the pastoral. The Eco-dreamers of this era stood up for the marginalized, often the victims of 'progress.' Again director diaries, notes to production teams, and later interviews revealed that some in Hollywood were intrigued by this issue, and, as a result, audiences experienced westerns that began to look at the cost of 'progress.'

The *Weeds in the Garden* westerns, (1964-1970), hinted at tensions of the era, where in reaction to American interventionist policies abroad and the continuing growth of nuclear warfare technology, social movements emerged and coalesced by the 1960s into a counterculture movement. There was a general rethinking of issues of power in the context of gender, sexuality, race, class, animal rights, and— key to this project—

the environmental. Films such as *Hombre, Little Big Man* and *Soldier Blue* drew parallels between the colonialism of manifest destiny in the past and the imperialistic elements of Vietnam. Notes from directors such as Martin Ritt and Arthur Penn, suggest that they were intrigued by the issues of the day and wanted to infuse their Westerns with this sensibility. The landscapes of these films were more desert-like, suggesting an almost apocalyptic visual of ruin and waste. Eco-dreamers of this era appeared more jaded and pessimistic. In these westerns, the enemy was now white authority. To be a hero, the white male had to distance himself from the once-heroic model of American government and military. Directors intended audiences to come away from these films linking American interventionist policies of the past to Vietnam and thinking critically about American foreign policy on other people and the land.

The significance of this dissertation lies in its unique approach to rethinking the Hollywood western as a historical artifact that can be used to tell our American environmental history. This approach can be applied to other genres. Its broader contribution speaks to the value of eco-criticism as a tool of analysis and its application to understanding contemporary environmental debates such as those on climate change, hydraulic fracturing and environmental justice. By placing the environment at the center of film inquiry, this dissertation not only expands the emerging field of eco-criticism as applied to film, but also in relationship to literary work and other discursive text. It contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the cultural development of our human relationship to the environment.

Within the history of American cinema, no other filmic text has dealt so frequently and explicitly with our historical understanding of and relationship to the land as does the film western. Yet, there remains little scholarly analysis of the genre from an eco-critical perspective. This dissertation attempts to fill this gap. Fueling this research was my interest in the near demise of the genre by the late 1960s. Why did the Hollywood Western, a genre that seems so fundamental to American Cinema suddenly fade from prominence? Ultimately, I argue that a key aspect of the genre's decline was its inability to sustain the white man's land story.

Between 1945 and 1970, the Hollywood western went from the height of its popularity, to the dwindling of the genre. In many ways this trajectory is the inverse of the rise of the environmental movement. Through an eco-critical lens, using

textural and visual analysis and historical review, I examined the relationship between the emerging environmental awareness evident in post-war Hollywood Westerns, along with race, class, and gender societal shifts, and the disappearance of the Western. Film westerns of post-World war II were to varying degrees products of their time, cultural artifacts infused with changing post-war sensibilities over the threat of nuclear war and yet also exhibiting a desire to return home to peace-time America

As a researcher, I asked eco-critical questions such as: What role does nature play within the film? How are environmental problems presented and by whom? How does the film's era of production shape the interpretation of environmental imagery and discourse? What is the film's overall environmental moral or philosophy? Finally, how did the greening of the white man's land narrative play a role in the big screen western's decline? I also examined the changes in Hollywood itself -such as advances in cinematic technology, i.e. wide screen formats.

Although the western as a genre did fade, it has not completely disappeared. Films such as McCabe and Mrs. Miller (1971) Jeremiah Johnson (1972) and the Outlaw Josey Wales (1976) offer a unique chance to look at films produced within the "Golden Age" of 1970s environmental legislation. How did these films promote a more nuanced land story? Later films such as *Grey Fox* (1982)*, the Unforgiven,* (1992) and *Dances with Wolves* (1990) could also be part of this analysis. Yet, even in these films there remains the focus on the hero as white and male, but increasingly tied to his relationship to an indigenous person. Films such as *Dances with Wolves*,

for example, in the end, was really a white love story, involving white people whose lives intersect with Indians. The character of it's star, Kevin Costner, was able to appropriate the noble aspects of the ecological Indian and therefore was seen as the ideal hybrid. Future research might explore the persistence of the ecological Indian and examine why this trope is so enduring.

Research might also explore how themes of the western have been coopted by science fiction writers in films such as Star *Wars (1979), Blade Runner* (1982) or more recent films such as *Avatar (2010)* where now the frontier has moved to outer space. Are these films breaking new ground or are they merely reworking old imperialistic ideas about the relationship between race and environmentalism? Although there are elements in *Avatar* that speak to new themes involving sustainability and cooperation, racist tropes remain, such as Hollywood's need to have a white man rescue indigenous people and their planet. Is whiteness really the purveyor of ecological power?

In the early part of the 21st century the western reemerged on television with such programs as *Deadwood* (2004) and *Hell on Wheels* (2011), which offered more complex plotlines, diverse characters and revisionist history. The return of the western to a media landscape transformed by programs on demand and meant to appeal to younger, more diverse audiences is perhaps no coincidence. An eco-critical review of these programs could be revealing It may be that pluralistic audiences are ready for stories that truly reflect the fullness and complexity of the American story of the land. By highlighting the construction of nature, land and the landscape within

media forms, we, as media consumers and producers, can more fully realize the power of media text to inform and mediate our very human link to the natural.

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Filmography

Year	Title	Director/Producer
1946	Duel in the Sun	Vidor/Selznick
1947	Treasure of Sierra Madre	John Huston
1949	Tulsa	Stuart Heisler
1950	Broken Arrow	Delmer Daves
1950	Devil's Doorway	Anthony Mann
1953	Shane	George Stevens
1953	Naked Spur	Anthony Mann
1955	Giant	George Stevens
1956	The Searchers	John Ford
1958	Big Country	William Wyler
1961	The Misfits	John Huston
1962	Lonely are the Brave	David Miller
1963	Hud	Martin Ritt
1967	Hombre	Martin Ritt
1969	Easy Rider	Dennis Hopper
1970	Soldier Blue	Ralph Nelson
1970	Little Big Man	Arthur Penn