

Sandmeyer – 4. Mentoring/Advising – Accomplishments of Former Students

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Overview of Materials:

Due to **my role as philosopher and program faculty in the Environmental Studies program**, the students I have mentored over the years tend to be double majors completing their degree in ENS and another major such as philosophy. Of all the excellent students I have mentored, I have selected two here to indicate the nature and manner of my mentoring work. These are Benjamin Troupe and Tiana Thé.

- Benjamin Troupe is currently the Deputy Public Affairs Officer at the Embassy of Conakry in the Republic of Guinea. Ben was a double-major in political science and philosophy. After he took my Advanced Ethics course on Aldo Leopold's ecological ethics (PHI531_2016F), we worked very closely together until he graduated (and after). I helped him develop the paper he wrote for me in PHI531 into a proposal for the **National Conference on Undergraduate Research**, and he was selected to present this work to the NCUR 2017 conference in Memphis. Ben also worked with me as the student representative on the **Faculty Sustainability Council** during his senior year. Knowing how talented he was, I encouraged him and helped him to craft several applications for fellowships. He was selected in 2018 as the first University of Kentucky graduate to win the prestigious **Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship**, which paid for his Master of Diplomacy at the George Washington University. The Fellowship also guaranteed a slot in the **State Department Diplomatic Corps**, where he is currently finishing his second year as a diplomate in Guinea.
- Tiana Thé is a student whom I met while she was completing her ENS major requirement, PHI366 Environmental Ethics. PHI366 excited her so much she decided to double-major in both **ENS & Philosophy**. She was already a junior at the time, so she and I worked very closely to craft a plan of study that would let her complete her philosophy major requirements without adding more semesters to her degree plan. We developed together an independent study in Advanced Ethics. Given her **professional work** as a speech writer in the Office of the President here at UK, I recommended we focus the class on developing her writing skills. Every week she wrote a short paper, which we would painstakingly critique together in my office. As a final project, she wove together some of her shorter papers into a 7-page paper (included here). Given her high aptitude, I recommended that she apply for the prestigious **Gaines Center's Breathitt Undergraduate Lectureship** here at UK, which she won. After graduating, I helped her decide where to apply to continue her studies at the graduate level; she is currently a pursuing a **Master of Arts** in the Geography Department here at UK.

Sandmeyer, Bob

From: Troupe, Benjamin
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 11:26 PM
To: Sandmeyer, Bob
Subject: Pickering Fellowship Results

Bob,

This evening I was notified that I am one of the thirty recipients of the Pickering Fellowship! I cannot begin to express the words of gratitude and appreciation I have for your mentorship over these past years. Beyond the knowledge and love for philosophy that I gained in your classroom, you have been a true friend and confidant. You have been my closest advisor, and have dedicated much time to seeing me succeed. I honestly look up to you as an exemplar of the type of person I wish to become, and you have taught me many values. This honor is as much yours as it is mine. I contribute my success, not just in this instance, but in my career to you being a part of my life. I sincerely thank you for your support!

Many Thanks,

Ben

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Student Oral Session 2 - Thu 12:20pm-1:20pm

1:00-1:20 p.m.

An Earth Ethic for the New Millennium: Investigating the Moral Status of the Natural World

Benjamin Troupe, University of Kentucky

JONES HALL 249

English

12:20-12:40 p.m.

Literature Is Survival in Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 and Azar Nafisi's Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books

Hannah Rice, Anderson College

12:40-1:00 p.m.

Looking for Meeps: How Dictionaries Reflect Cultural Trends in Language from Johnson to the Urban Dictionary

Ricky Finch, Lipscomb University

1:00-1:20 p.m.

Misapplications of Darwin's Origin of Species: Nazi Germany and the Eugenics Movement

Emily Wollmuth, Hamline University

MANNING HALL 202

Physical/Occupational Therapy/Speech Language Pathology

12:20-12:40 p.m.

Post-Therapy Collaboration

Kary Sheppard, University of Minnesota - Crookston

12:40-1:00 p.m.

The Role of Exercise in Persons with Cerebral Palsy

Lauren Boush, Radford University

Physiology

1:00-1:20 p.m.

Recurrent Hypoglycemia Reduces Severe Hypoglycemia-Induced Fatal Cardiac Arrhythmias in Type 1 Diabetic Rats

Justin Bayles, University of Utah

MANNING HALL 204

History

12:20-12:40 p.m.

1964 Olympics: More Than Just Sports? How Japan Utilized the Olympic Games for Ulterior Motives

Christopher Suen, Dominican University of California

12:40-1:00 p.m.

Adelicia Acklen: An Unconventional Southern Woman

Christian Keen, Trevecca Nazarene University

1:00-1:20 p.m.

American Court System, Asians, Conception of Race

Esther Johnson, Illinois College

MANNING HALL 222

History

12:20-12:40 p.m.

George P. Mitchell Father of Hydraulic Fracturing

Lukas Weiss, San Jacinto College Honors Program

12:40-1:00 p.m.

German Resistance Inside of Nazi Germany

Mary Dickey, Elmhurst College

1:00-1:20 p.m.

God Save the Queen's Things: Race, Class, and Theologies of Property in the 2016 Charlotte Uprising

Casey Aldridge, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

MANNING HALL 318

Communications

12:40-1:00 p.m.

Beautiful Suffering: Structuring Our Vision of Refugees as the Other Through Winning Pulitzer Prize Images in 2016

Diana Langer, Juniata College

MANNING HALL 320

Communications

12:20-12:40 p.m.

Warped Space-Time: Exploiting Schematic Assumptions in "Ritual in Transfigured Time"

Grant Brighter, Ithaca College

The Washington Center Announces the 2018 Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellows

The Washington Center | April 27, 2018



WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars is pleased to announce the selection of the 2018 Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellows. Thirty Graduate Fellowships were awarded to a group of highly competitive candidates. Hundreds of applicants from over 200 colleges and universities competed for this distinguished fellowship.

Managed and funded by the Department of State and administered by The Washington Center, the Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship offers talented students from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to pursue a career in the U.S. Foreign Service. Consideration is given to qualified applicants who, in addition to outstanding leadership skills and academic achievement, demonstrate financial need. Women, members of minority groups historically underrepresented in the Foreign Service, and students with financial need are encouraged to apply.

Recipients of the Pickering Fellowship receive two years of financial support, mentoring and professional development to prepare them for a career in the Foreign Service. Fellows also complete a domestic internship at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. and an overseas internship at a U.S. embassy.

The 2018 Pickering Fellows hail from 26 academic institutions, including HBCUs, state and private universities. Their majors range from Political Science and Philosophy to Art History and African Studies. Through academic and public service activities, these students have traversed the globe, spending time in numerous places from Afghanistan to Cuba, Malawi to Nepal. Collectively, they speak over 20 languages including Hindi, Norwegian, Arabic, and American Sign Language. These accomplished students hail from 19 states and the District of Columbia. Prior to becoming Fellows, they worked in a wide range of fields, including academic research, local and federal government, private companies, international development, and NGOs.

The Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program honors one of the most accomplished U.S. Foreign Service Officers of the 20th century. Ambassador Pickering was appointed Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the U.S. Foreign Service. He served in many leading positions around the world during his Foreign Service career, including Ambassador to Nigeria, El Salvador, Israel, India and Russia. Ambassador Pickering concluded his career as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

"The Washington Center is honored and excited to be administering such a distinguished program for the third year in a row," said Chris Norton, president of The Washington Center.

The 22nd Cohort of Pickering Graduate Fellows:

- Ms. Stephanie Arzate, *Georgetown University*
- Ms. Nicole Bermudez, *Bates College*
- Ms. Anastasia Burnett, *Georgetown University*
- Ms. Jennifer Cardoza, *Northern Arizona University*
- Ms. Valli Chidambaram, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*
- Mr. Eric Chu, *University of Minnesota – Twin Cities*
- Ms. Hannah Clager, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*
- Ms. Caroline Corcoran, *University of Texas at Austin*
- Ms. Taylor Demons, *Baylor University*
- Ms. Kayla Evans, *Spelman College*
- Ms. Renee Garcia-Tolson, *University of California, Berkeley*
- Ms. Ashley Jones-Quaidoo, *Bucknell University*
- Ms. Anna Jozwik, *Northwestern University*
- Ms. Palak Khanna, *Tufts University*
- Ms. Caroline Lanford, *Tulane University*
- Mr. Jakob Lengacher, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*
- Ms. Jeanette Martinez, *California State University – San Bernardino*
- Ms. Sophia Meulenberg, *Westmont College*
- Mr. Erick Murrer, *Western Kentucky University*

- Ms. Jaewon Oh, *Middlebury College*
- Mr. Blake Osborne, *Clark Atlanta University*
- Ms. Gricelda Ramos, *Dartmouth College*
- Ms. Jade Rhoads, *Syracuse University*
- Ms. Maggie Samuels, *Hampshire College*
- Ms. Manna Selassie, *Occidental College*
- Ms. Katherine Shafer, *Elon University*
- Mr. Hainer Sibrian, *Georgia State University*
- Ms. Nancy Talamantes, *University of Southern California*
- Ms. Yassitoungou Tamdji, *Georgetown University*
- Mr. Benjamin Troupe, *University of Kentucky*

Visit the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship (<https://twc.edu/programs/thomas-r-pickering-foreign-affairs-fellowship>) page for more information.



The Washington Center is the largest and most established student internship program in Washington, D.C. Since our founding, we've helped more than 60,000 young people translate their college majors into career paths. We use our scale and expertise to customize each student's experience to be truly transformative.

Sandmeyer, Bob

From: The', Tiana S.
Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 4:49 PM
To: Sandmeyer, Bob
Subject: Popping in

Hi Bob!

Just popping to say hi and that I hope you're doing well. Miss you and I miss class! I think often about how grateful I am to have taken that independent study with you. Learning how to write from you has been fundamental to my progress, and I cringe thinking about how I wrote pre-Sandmeyer.

I am also still reaping the benefits of the Breathitt Lectureship that you encouraged me to apply for. I have presented at a couple conferences and was recently a panelist for a J.D. Rosenberg CoL event. They've asked me to produce a sort of Ted Talk for their website. So, all in all, thanks so much for all the ways you helped me during undergrad. I employ what you taught me nearly every day.

Hope you and yours are doing well.

All the best,
Tiana



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Tiana Thé

Elton, Tansley, and Leopold: Their Contribution to Wildlife Education

We do not realize sufficiently vividly that man is surrounded by vast and intricate animal communities, and that his actions often produce on the animals effects which are usually quite unexpected in their nature – that in fact man is only one animal in a large community of other ones¹.

An understanding of Charles Elton's concept of organismic roles and the food circuit and Arthur Tansley's introduction of anthropogenic ecosystems, contribute to Aldo Leopold's wildlife education that promotes the preservation of the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. Just as human communities are structured, animal communities follow a similar arrangement. Charles Elton identifies four principles to analyze an animal community: (i) food-chains and the food cycle, (ii) the size of food, (iii) the presence of niches, and (iv) the pyramid of numbers.

Animals spend most of their time finding food while maintaining their role in what Elton terms the food circuit. Animals arrange themselves in the food-chain by size; and, as the food chain progresses, the species get larger and larger. There are restrictions on the size of food an animal can eat and size, according to Elton, plays an essential role in the food cycle.

The food chain's structure depends on the fact that each animal can only live on food of a specific size. However, man's relation to food is not as limited. Since our ancestors, humans have had the unique ability to eat any size of food for nourishment. The advent of hunting allowed us to move from smaller animals to much larger animals - a phenomenon that no other species can accomplish. Humans have taken control of their surroundings, liberating them from food size restrictions. If all animals had this

¹ Charles Elton, "The Animal Community", in *Animal Ecology*, (Oxford University 1927) 50.

capability though, the food cycle would lose its diversity and complexity. The arrangements depend on the fact that a "smaller food can be made into a larger one, therefore making it available to a larger animal²".

Niches, as Elton describes, are an animal's relation to enemies, food, and the purpose they play in a biotic community. Similar niches around the world have different animals, but the ground plan is the same. For example, biomes have herbivores and carnivores with more herbivores to support the carnivores. An organism's size and food sources determine its niche.

His last principle of organismic communities is the pyramid of numbers. The pyramid refers to the broad base of small organisms that can reproduce quickly. As the pyramid works its way up incrementally, the size of the animals increases while the numbers of animals decrease. This pyramid of numbers is a characteristic of animal communities all over the world.

Arthur Tansley builds on Elton's conception of roles and succession of animal communities, but he rejects the idea of the environment as a community. Tansley pays attention to how climate, soil complexity, physiography, and every abiotic factor affect the way the systems work. The environment as a system cannot separate vegetation and animals from climate and soil. Without the inorganic relationship between the organic, there would be no system at all. He thus introduces the concept of the environment as a system - an ecosystem. The biome is not a single organism, but the species within it are. Species are too complex and different to be identified as under a single organism. Their

² Elton, Charles "The Animal Community", 61.

interactions with abiotic factors are too significant to be separated from the idea of the ecosystem.

A niche, previously defined by Elton, is the specific place an animal has within an ecosystem. Tansley takes this notion of the niche to supplement his argument that,

as an ecological factor acting on vegetation, the effect of grazing heavy enough to prevent the development of woody plants is essentially the same effect wherever it occurs³.

The process of substituting one type of vegetation for another - like a forest converting to grassland - is inherently destructive. This process requires a systematic succession and the combination of all biotic and abiotic factors to reach a climax. By introducing grazing animals, man subsumes his role within his niche.

One significant biotic factor is man. As a mighty force in the ecosystem, it is hard to divorce man from the environment. Ecologists before Tansley focused primarily on the detrimental impact of the civilized man on nature. For example, ecologists believed that the introduction of grazing animals by man was destructive, invasive, and "unnatural." However, Tansley acknowledges the anthropogenesis of certain ecosystems, thus opening up the study of the human and her place in nature in ways previously denied within ecology. Anthropogenic ecosystems consider the role of man and the niche man assumes. Tansley argues that confining our ecological concepts to "natural" entities is impractical and negates the relevant role of man. It is not the case that man is alien acting upon the environment. Instead, man is part of the ecosystem and can contribute to orderly succession. In order to conduct experiments, ecologists

³ Arthur Tansley "Biotic Factors", in *The Use and Abuse of Vegetational Concepts and Terms*, (Oxford University, 1935) 303.

must infiltrate abiotic factors to understand ecosystems better. The study of ecosystems can contribute to education and an individual's understanding of the land as a system.

Elton's notion of roles and communities and Tansley's introduction of anthropogenic ecosystems contributed to Leopold's understanding of the land and its role in education. This is especially evident in one of Leopold's last writings, "The Role of Wildlife in a Liberal Education," in which Leopold consolidates his understanding of the place of wildlife ecology in the university curriculum.

Liberal education in wildlife is not merely a dilute dosage of technical education. It calls for somewhat different teaching materials and sometimes even different teachers. The objective is to teach the student to see the land, to understand what he sees, and to enjoy what he understands⁵.

Here we can see how Leopold draws on Elton's bio-economic model of the food circuit arguing that understanding of food circuits is conditional to appreciating the land. At the same time, he takes up Tansley's recognition of the anthropogenesis of ecosystems, discarding the idea that the animal community is one thing, and the human community another.

In his last writings, Leopold explicitly reflects on the integration of the sciences and the arts. He argues in these reflections that a siloed understanding of land use and land health will always be inadequate. At the base of his idea of conservation is the concept of land self-renewal. He insists upon the need to understand the human place in the food circuit (he points to Figure 1⁶). Recognizing trophic lines of dependency within the broader biotic community lies at the heart of the ability to develop an ecological understanding of place . Just like Elton, the food circuit is essential to Leopold's wildlife

⁵ Aldo Leopold "The Role of Wildlife in a Liberal Education", in *A Sand County Almanac: Other Writings on Ecology and Conservation* (Oxford University 1949) 466.

⁶ Leopold, Aldo "The Role of Wildlife in a Liberal Education", 469.

education because it articulates the integral role that humans have as members of the biotic community. He believes that understanding our place in the food chain can contribute to a student's land education.

To contribute to wildlife education, Leopold suggests that we must preserve large tracts of wilderness to have a base datum of what land health is. Such large tracts of land, where a man can traverse for two weeks without seeing a single sign of the civilized man, can act as laboratories for the study of land health. These land-laboratories thus function as an important source of base-data by which to understand what land health genuinely means. “In many cases, we literally do not know how good a performance to expect of healthy land unless we have a wild area for comparison with sick ones⁷.”

However, I would suggest, this idea of wilderness as base datum for land health remains at odds with Leopold's *Land Ethic*. In his land ethic, Leopold insists on the functional place of the human in an integral biota. In point of fact, the land ethic operates to change the role of man in relation to the natural world, from that as conqueror to plain member and citizen. Only by this transformation, Leopold suggests, can we truly appreciate the land community and understand how to maintain the health of this community. So, the very idea of wilderness, i.e., a place devoid of human presence, can provide very little understanding of our role as community members seeking to uphold the integrity, stability, and beauty of that community.

Tansley's denial of a fundamental distinction between natural and anthropogenic ecosystems entails that we can study healthy land use within agricultural production. When a farmer assumes the responsibility of her herd in animal agriculture, she not

⁷ Leopold, Aldo “Wilderness” 167.

only protects her herd from carnivorous predator populations in the broader ecosystem but also protects the ecosystem, itself, on which the herd depends. By doing this, the farmer plays a sustaining role in equilibrium between the grassland and her grazing animals. By rotating grazing areas, the agricultural herd fertilize the surrounding areas.

Tansley, thus, insists on the human role as a directing force within ecosystems. This role is neither alien nor unnatural. According to Tansley, there is nothing that distinguishes the anthropogenic community from the so-called natural ecosystem. Consequently, this ecosystemic approach inaugurates the study of healthy land use in agricultural production. All agricultural use is not a misuse. For Tansley, an ecosystem is an interaction between biotic and abiotic factors, and the anthropogenic forces are important to the ecosystem as are other operative elements – if not more important, in fact.

Elton and Tansley influence Leopold's idea of the biotic community. Leopold understands Elton's food circuit and agrees that it can contribute to a student's wildlife education. Every organism within an ecosystem has a niche, and this implies a specific role within the biome. In the *Land Ethic*, Leopold recognizes the anthropogenic role in the biotic community. The land ethic highlights the ethical duty to protect the integrity of the land stemming from our roles as community members. This role implies, implicitly, obligations to the community, particularly to maintain the stability of the land as a whole. Like Tansley, Leopold argues that humans are no more special than any other species or organism.

The 'climax' represents the highest stage of integration and the nearest approach to perfect dynamic equilibrium that can be attained in a system developed under the given conditions and with the available components⁸.

⁸ Tansley, Arthur "The Ecosystem" 300.

So, for both Tansley and Leopold, we can talk about anthropogenic systems alongside natural ecosystems.

Both Charles Elton and Arthur Tansley have influenced the way Leopold viewed the human role in the environment. Fusing Elton concept of land community with Tansley's denial of the special naturalness of ecosystems, Leopold holds that wildlife education is essential to a liberal education. Rather than seeing ourselves as alien forces in wilderness, the land ethic acknowledges the our role within ecosystems as an integral part of the food circuit. Wildlife education can educate the student about this particular role. Understanding that anthropogenic influences can be beneficial and often uphold an ecosystem's equilibrium. it follows that we must act in such a way that preserves the integrity, stability, and beauty of that ecosystem.

Paper Grade: A-

Nice paper. Rather than offer much commentary, I have opted to edit the work. I used the "track changes" function. I recommend you read the edited work and compare it against the original. Pay special attention to (i) the way I've change your paragraph structure and (ii) how the edits and introductions highlight the fundamental influence of Elton and Tansley to Leopold's idea of a communitarian land ethic. The changes of (i) operate on the *flow* of the argument. The changes of (ii) strengthen the basic *thesis* operating throughout the paper.

Course Grade: A

Nice work this semester. Ah, this is a bittersweet moment. My last words to you as your professor. Keep up the good work and keep in touch. It really has been a wonderful working with you this semester.

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LECTURE

Tiana Thé

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