Figure 1. Motorists. A ski boat and personal watercraft cruising Lake Powell today, with Castle Rock in the background (from www.lakepowellmag.com).

Figure 2. Spiritualists. Hikers exploring Glen Canyon before it is flooded, early 1960s (from www.gci.org).
Recreational Paradise
or
Desecrated Shrine?
Diverging Perceptions and Rhetoric of a Contested Wilderness Landscape:
Lake Powell/Glen Canyon

Douglas Warren Johnson
San Francisco State University

Abstract: One of our most loved, and most hated, outdoor recreation areas—Lake Powell (the flooded Glen Canyon)—symbolizes conflicting wilderness ideals. Rhetoric among activists for and against the proposal to restore Glen Canyon by draining Lake Powell (studied through textual analysis of newsletters, books, advertisements, and on-line material) illustrates perceptions of ‘wilderness’. Motorized recreationists (motorists) view the reservoir (billed as America’s #1 Houseboat Destination) and environs as a rugged playground, while those seeking to drain the reservoir (spiritualists) focus on the sanctity of the river and canyon. Personal connection to place forms the emotional foundation for both sides of the debate, but discourse focuses on less subjective arguments based on economic and ecological ideologies. Lake Powell serves as a case study of issues at the intersection of conservation and recreation.

Keywords: wilderness; recreation; environmental perception; Lake Powell; Glen Canyon.

Introduction

‘Wilderness’ is a social construction of space and is, to understate the case, multiply ambiguous. (Bertolás 1997, 99)

Debate over the desirability of Lake Powell, the reservoir that fills Glen Canyon in southern Utah and northern Arizona, brings our society’s perceptions of wilderness—what it is, and what it is good for—into focus. This debate, and others like it, not only illustrate the state of our perceptions, but serve to further develop our perceptions. This makes Lake Powell and other contested sites (Yellowstone National Park, for example) excellent cases for studying the complexities of interaction with those lands often thought of as wilderness (even if not officially designated as such).

Though recreation on and around the reservoir was not a primary motivation for building Glen Canyon Dam (nor would it have been accepted as one), today it is Lake Powell’s boaters and other recreationists who are the largest and most vocal constituency for the value of the reservoir (Figure 1). Another group of recreationists have long felt that Glen Canyon was a treasure that should never have been dammed (Figure 2). In recent years, these latter recreationists have organized a
significant movement to drain Lake Powell. This movement is generating heated rhetoric on both sides of the issue. Congress has held hearings on the matter, newspapers have carried stories, and newsletters from groups like the non-profit Glen Canyon Institute (proponents of draining the reservoir) and the Lake Powell Yacht Club (proponents of maintaining Lake Powell) do their best to justify their views. Taken together these give a valuable snapshot of our wilderness perceptions and the ideas we use to support them.

**Terminology**

For the purposes of this paper I refer to “advocates for Lake Powell” and “advocates for Glen Canyon.” Also, though I do not want to oversimplify the complexity of any individual’s views, I use the terms spiritualist and motorist to define two important poles of the recreation spectrum (which generally parallel the division between those who support draining the reservoir and those who do not). Motorists enjoy and fully endorse the benefits of engines, engineered environments (air conditioning) and other technologies for direct use in outdoor recreation. Spiritualists, on the other hand, enjoy escaping from these very things for re-creation. Where a spiritualist sees wilderness as something that should be saved for its own sake, a motorist wants to determine and area’s usefulness to humans. Though my personal recreational preferences place me close to the spiritualist pole, my intention is to study both sides with curiosity and impartiality. What few judgements I (consciously) make at the end are meant to be balanced, bearing constructive criticism for all parties.

This paper first provides a brief background on the canyon, dam and reservoir including history and statistics. This is a large topic, covered at length in many sources, and will be treated lightly here. Much of this information is not cited since it is repeated in numerous references, both books (Fradkin 1981, Martin 1989, Reisner 1986, Bishop 1995, Potter and Drake 1980) and websites (from the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce, etc.). Recreation at Lake Powell and its attendant issues, are described before presenting the development of the current conflict, including both the movement to drain the reservoir led by the Glen Canyon Institute, and the resistance organizing among Lake Powell advocates. Analysis of opinions expressed in various venues shows the inherent wilderness perceptions held by motorists and spiritualists. Implications for eventual resolution in the case of Glen Canyon/Lake Powell are presented in conclusion.

**Background**

*We have a curious ensemble of wonderful features—carved walls, royal arches, glens,*
above gulches, mounds, and monuments. From which of these features shall we
select a name? We decided to call it Glen Canyon. John Wesley Powell (1961, 232)

**History**

It was only 130 years ago—1869—that John Wesley Powell explored and
named Glen Canyon. The canyon remained relatively unvisited until
the late 1950s, when news of a dam on the drawing boards motivated
wilderness lovers and archaeologists to experience and study ‘the place
that no one knew’.

Bureau of Reclamation engineers surveyed the dam site from 1946 to
1948. Permits were completed in 1959, and trucks began to deliver
materials for the dam and the new town of Page, just south of the site in
Arizona. The first concrete was poured in 1960, the last in 1963, when
the gates were closed and the reservoir began to fill.

The building of Glen Canyon Dam is heralded by some as the ‘birth of
the modern environmental movement.’ Wilderness advocates like the
Sierra used the event as a springboard for increasing opposition to other
dams proposed on the Colorado in the Grand Canyon. The Colorado
River today, with some stretches protected as national park (and being
considered for wilderness designation) and other stretches controlled
by dams, is emblematic of our mixed feelings about the utility and
value of rivers.

Part of the Sierra Club’s successful efforts in protecting the Grand Can-
yon involved encouraging people to raft it so they would realize what
was at stake. The popularity of running the Grand Canyon swelled, and
by 1972 degradation of the riparian habitat necessitated the nation’s
first quota system for outdoor recreation.

**Purpose and operation of the dam**

Glen Canyon Dam was designed for several reasons:

- to store water (27 maf, about 2 years average flow) so that upper basin states
could uphold delivery commitments to lower basin states per the Colorado
River Compact. The volume is overestimated due to dead storage (below the
level of the out-take), and it also shrinks steadily with siltation, so that current
capacity is about 25 maf;

- to generate electricity—about 1,500 MW; the nearby coal-fired Navajo Generating
Station at Page generates 2,310 MW (Phoenix New Times, April 24, 1997).

- to filter sediment that would otherwise accumulate in Lake Mead downstream,
thereby reducing its capacity. Lake Mead supplies water directly to lower basin
states, primarily southern California and metro Phoenix.
Though the project was to be primarily for water regulation, the Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) until recently operated the dam for maximum hydroelectric power profits. This meant wildly fluctuating flows, ranging from 1,000 to 30,000 cfs, at times causing the river to rise and fall as much as thirteen feet in a single day (Bishop 1994, 136) as the operators passed large flows to generate at midday demand peaks, then and shut down at night.

Such fluctuations not only threatened people rafting the river, they had serious repercussions for riparian habitat. Today over half of the beaches are gone, and the vegetation, aquatic insects, birds and other wildlife are faring poorly. The loss of beach campsites affects rafters as well. In January, 1994, BuRec bowed to public pressure and announced that dam releases would be driven by ‘amenity resource values’—such as wildlife and recreation—over electricity production. This holds flows downstream of the dam to within a 3–4 foot variation (Zinser 1995).

In 1996, BuRec released a much-touted experimental flood through the canyon in an attempt to simulate high runoffs that would naturally occur with a free-running Colorado River, in the hopes of restoring beaches and habitat (Long 1997). Though researchers were pleased with the short-term results, optimism faded as continued routine operation of the dam quickly eroded the newly deposited sediment. After the manmade flood, the BuRec closed its Glen Canyon Environmental Studies unit, and the ecologist who had led the work there for 14 years, Dave Wegner, resigned to help start the non-profit Glen Canyon Institute, whose mission is to promote a free-flowing Colorado. (Letting the Colorado ‘run free’ will be used in this paper for ease of understanding, but the phrasing’s potency, much used by the Institute, should not be missed.) He now believes that “the present riverine ecosystem in the Grand Canyon is not sustainable in the long-term with the present operation schemes, even with periodic controlled floods… If you want to restore the Grand Canyon ecosystem, removing the dam is the only long-term solution” (High Country News, November 10, 1997).

It is important to note that the reservoir does not supply water directly for drinking or agriculture. If Lake Powell’s waters were thus engaged, it would be much less conceivable that the reservoir be drained. As it stands, Glen Canyon advocates can reasonably maintain that the benefits of the dam—guaranteeing water to a sprawling Los Angeles and producing some electricity—are not the highest of needs.

**Description of Lake Powell and Glen Canyon**

Lake Powell is the second largest reservoir in the country at 186 miles
long, spanning from northern Arizona, through southeast Utah, almost to Colorado. The truly remarkable aspect of the reservoir is its shoreline, at 1,960 miles more than the west coast of the U.S. This shoreline is a reflection of the reservoir's dendritic, very un-lake-like shape (Figure 3). All this shoreline offers boaters lots of places to explore and anchor, though many places are not flat enough to actually set up camp. The surface area of the reservoir is 252 square miles, only half that of Lake Tahoe (while the shoreline is more than 20 times that of Tahoe).

The water in the reservoir is described as clear and inviting, and by late summer has warmed to 70°F. From the lake one can access beaches (depending on reservoir level), hiking trails, and archaeological sites.
Rainbow Bridge National Monument, with the world's largest natural arch, is a popular destination. Five marinas serve boaters, and buoys mark the safe channel and points of interest.

Though several outfits ran float trips through Glen Canyon starting in the 1940s, the canyon was relatively unvisited. It had a character distinct from other stretches of the Colorado, and was described as being more accessible, both physically and psychologically. Writer Wallace Stegner said, "Awe was never Glen Canyon's province. That is for the Grand Canyon. Glen Canyon was for delight" (1969, 121). It is certain that Powell's imagination was inspired, leaving behind dramatic names like Hidden Passage, Music Temple, Cathedral in the Desert, Dungeon Canyon, and Forbidden Canyon. Reports from those who did visit the canyon make much of the side canyons where one could explore, not knowing what you would find around the next bend—a waterfall, a large stone blocking the way, or most likely, another bend. We no longer have Glen Canyon to speak for itself, so we are left with words and photographic images.

**Recreation at Lake Powell**

Lake Powell is more than just a fantastic recreation area. Awesome in its dimensions and complexity, its desolate beauty makes it an experience never to be forgotten. You can enjoy this Great Basin Desert paradise by boat. Before the completion of Glen Canyon Dam in 1963, these remote rugged canyons were a discouraging barrier to the early pioneers and explorers. Today, Lake Powell winds its way through this desert paradise with excellent views of balancing rocks, pinnacles, buttes, arches and amphitheaters. The combination of clear skies, crystal clear water and red sandstone rock formations makes this national recreation area an ideal place for the outdoor enthusiast. ([www.visitlakepowell.com](http://www.visitlakepowell.com))

Lake Powell is one of the world's premier vacation spots for houseboaters, water skiers, and jet skiers. Each summer, hundreds of thousands of visitors get out on the water. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (consisting of Lake Powell and the surrounding canyon lands) sees almost as many people as the Grand Canyon, and because visitors stay longer on average at Powell, the figures for 'recreational visitor days' ("...a far superior method for assessing the actual magnitude of use on site" (Zinsen 1995, 94)) is almost exactly the same (see Table 1). Glen Canyon NRA, alias Lake Powell, is one of the world's most visited 'wilderness' parks.

Sizewise, Glen Canyon is the 5th largest national park unit in the lower 48 states (Table 2). Its 1.24 million acres, is slightly bigger than Grand Canyon NP, and two-thirds again the size of Yosemite NP.
Table 1

Annual Visitorship at selected National Park Service units in millions recreation visits and millions recreational visitor days (from Zinser 1995, 93; RVD is 'recreational visitor days', the number of visitors multiplied by the length of their stay.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>RVD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellowstone National Park</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>8.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yosemite National Park</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>7.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Canyon National Recreation Area</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Canyon National Park</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Largest National Park Service units outside Alaska in millions gross acres (from Zinser 1995, 88)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellowstone National Park</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Valley National Park</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everglades National Park</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Mead National Recreation Area</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Canyon National Recreation Area</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Canyon National Park</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glacier National Park</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that three contiguous NPS units—Glen Canyon, Grand Canyon, and Lake Mead—amount to a recreation area of almost 4 million acres, making it the largest such area outside of Alaska (Figure 4). The Bureau of Land Management's new Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument adds another 1.7 million acres to the total (this unit is not shown in Figure 4). The U.S. currently has about 100 million acres designated as wilderness, less than 5% of its land area. Being that fully 62% of this wilderness is in Alaska, only about 2.5% of the lower 48 are formally designated as wilderness (Zinser 1995, 637). Many consider Lake Powell, though certainly not wilderness under the legal definition, an accessible 'wilderness' experience, making it an important and rare place.

Lake Powell is extremely popular with foreign tourists, especially Europeans. Ken's OLD WEST Restaurant & Lounge in Page, Arizona, translates their website into French and German, unusual for the rural Southwest. Eileen Martinez, Park Ranger at Glen Canyon NRA, says that 75% of the sixty special use permits she issues each year are to foreign groups, for filming ads, movies, or travelogues. Estimates for the portion of visitors from abroad ranges from 40% to 60%, according to the Page Chamber of Commerce. Learning about these visitors' views would be highly interesting–this is an area that needs more investigation.
Figure 4. National Park Service units in western states (from www.nps.gov)

Note that three contiguous NPS units—Glen Canyon, Grand Canyon, and Lake Mead—amount to a recreation area of almost 4 million acres, making it the largest NPS area outside of Alaska. The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (not shown on this map) covers 1.7 million acres stretching west from Capitol Reef NP and north from Glen Canyon.
Houseboating

While there are many activities to participate in at Lake Powell—a typical ad lists golfing, visiting museums, taking a jeep tour, photography, mountain biking, hiking, air tours—the major activities other than plain sightseeing is boating. Though sightseeing is typically brief, it does instill significant attachments and is therefore of great relevance to the politics of draining Lake Powell. This deserves more study. While the viewpoints of boaters are more easy to come by, those of sightseers are found on comment cards at visitor centers, and could be more thoroughly researched with questionnaires. For this paper, the primary focus will be on motorists at Lake Powell—the boaters.

Local recreation businesses call Lake Powell "America's #1 Houseboating Destination." Boating Life Magazine (April/May 1997, on-line) describes the experience like this:

The sun sets across the water, turning the lake to liquid fire. You light the grill and start the steaks as your spouse and best friends join you on the deck to enjoy the session. Tomorrow you might take the runabout and try for some early-rising bass, go for a swim, teach Junior to slalom ski, and hike the wooded shoreline . . . or you might just relax in the sun and listen to the wind and water.

A daydream? Not if your rich uncle leaves you his lakeside cottage—or if you rent a houseboat. If your mental picture of a houseboat is a floating sweat box inhabited by unshaven fishermen, you need to get with the times. Today's custom-made dream boats are equipped with state-of-the-art entertainment centers, home-like kitchens, central heat and air, and nicer furniture than your first apartment probably featured.

"They're like floating condos," says Mike Harris, publisher of Houseboat Magazine. "And even better than a condo, because if you don't like the scenery, all you have to do is move down the river or to another spot on the lake."

This 'roughing it easy' experience—having the great outdoors and still being able to enjoy a cold beer and a juicy steak—is common to much of U.S. outdoor recreation, from RVers to fishing trips and hunting lodges and car camping. Like the Old Milwaukee beer ad says, "It just doesn't get any better than this." Ex-Secretary of Interior James Watt, perhaps the consummate motorist, took a short raft trip down the Colorado in 1981, and found it much too slow and labor intensive: "I don't like to paddle and I don't like to walk" (Nash 1982, 334). He would have been much happier at Lake Powell.

Other types of boats are popular too. Power boats pull skiers and allow for getting around the reservoir faster, and personal watercraft (PWC, a generic term for Jet Skis, Wave Runners, Sea Doos, etc.) are their own entertainments, allowing one to romp across the water. An advertise-
ment in *Sunset Magazine* (May 1998, 61), shows a houseboat and PWC out on Lake Powell's deep blue water with the requisite canyon backdrop: "When you're at Lake Powell, your houseboat is your castle, but there's only so much you can see at ten mph. So jump in a powerboat and open up the possibilities!" Here is the best of all worlds, having both a castle and a thrill machine. 'Opening up possibilities' echoes the contemporary advertising theme of 'no limits,' which in turn echoes our attachment to a boundless frontier. As historian Jared Farmer says, this "indicates the cultural—and commercial—importance of the imagined primitive West" (1996, 219). Ironically, issues surrounding Lake Powell and the West in general are fundamentally issues of limits.

Park Ranger Martinez says one of the great things about Lake Powell is that with so many miles of shoreline, "there's enough space you can find your own spot, take off your watch and go by the sun, enjoy the clear, clean water, read a book, relax. There are 96 major side canyons to hike up to hanging gardens, and people really get out and explore." She maintains that most boaters are there for "quality family vacations," and that party boats are much less common than on Lake Havasu downstream, for instance. One of the things she really likes about the scene on the lake is that people help each other, that a sense of camaraderie develops and people seem to be a part of a community while they are there.

**Boating in the U.S.**

Consumer expenditures on recreation more than tripled from $18 billion in 1950 to $62 billion in 1982 (National Recreation and Parks Association, 1972 USD). This represents a growth from $119 per capita to $273 per capita, and the trend has no doubt continued in the last 16 years.

Recreation is becoming the predominant force shaping public lands in western states. A year ago Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman said, "Of the $130 billion that National Forests will contribute to economy in the year 2000, $98 billion will come from recreation" (*High Country News*, April 27, 1998). Recreation is not necessarily easier on the environment than traditional extractive uses such as logging, ranching and mining. In that same issue, *High Country News* cites an article from *Bioscience* (Vol. 46) reporting that Smithsonian Institute scientists found outdoor recreation second only to water development projects in pushing species toward threatened or endangered status.

One of the powerful players on the recreation scene is the American Recreation Coalition, comprising major auto, petroleum, and real estate
firms, manufacturers of powerboats, snowmobiles, motorcycles and other recreation vehicles, and hotel and resort chains. One conservationist describes ARC's commercial development interests as being to: "privatize, commercialize, and motorize" (Silver 1998, 56).

Americans spend about twice as much on 'pleasure boats and accessories' as on 'bicycles and supplies'; the only recreational category on which we spend more is 'athletic and sport clothing' (U.S. Dept of Commerce 1994). The $11 billion spent on boating equipment in 1993 was a 9% increase for the previous year's sales, including a 35% growth in PWC sales (Boating Industry). Arizona and Utah, the states containing Lake Powell, are especially keen on boating (see Table 3) remarkable given their aridity.

Table 3

Recreational boats per thousand people in Southwestern states (adapted from Boating Industry annual report) Figures range nationally from a low of 20 in New Jersey to a high of 167 in Minnesota, 'land of 10,000 lakes'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Boats per Thousand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fishing

Fishing is one other form of recreation that should be considered, since it is dependent on the dam. The lake is stocked, and the Colorado River downstream now supports a range of sport fish due to cold water releases. In the words of the Friends of Lake Powell, Lake Powell has created a new realm for fishermen. Before Glen Canyon Dam was built, the Colorado River was so full of silt that only carp, catfish, suckers, and the Colorado River squawfish could survive in its murky waters. Now, abundant game fish thrive in the clear waters of Lake Powell. Introduced species such as bass and crappie as well as walleye, bluegill, and catfish challenge the avid fisherman.

Carp, suckers and squawfish, none of them attractive for fishing, are native fish that spiritualists are apt to appreciate, believing in their right to exist and in the necessity of maintaining a natural order and biodiversity. The Friends do not mention the humpback chub, a native fish listed as endangered.
Water quality

The reservoir has water quality issues, some stemming from recreational use. Kevin Berghoff, a NPS hydrologist at Lake Powell, gave this rundown:

Selenium, naturally occurring in Mancos shale and also produced by agricultural runoff upstream, collects in the reservoir. It bio-accumulates, and at high levels poisons waterfowl. No tissue samples have been taken.

Fecal waste, both human (from camping) and animal (from pets and from grazing allotments that come to shoreline), force the beach closures (twelve in 1995). Lake levels fluctuate 50-60 feet a year, so anything left on shore, even if buried, gets in the water. Also, some houseboats have a sewage discharge port, which boaters are tempted to use out on the reservoir. The NPS is currently pursuing an aggressive educational campaign to improve boaters' awareness of these issues.

Motor fuel, especially at marinas where vent tubes overflow each time a boat is fueled, goes into the lake in significant quantities. Two-cycle engines are the worst offenders, spilling up to 25% of their gas/oil mix into the water under normal operation. Some of this undoubtedly gets into the food chain, but most will volatilize quickly.

To make downstream habitat more suitable for native fish, they are studying a $12 million proposal for a selective withdrawal system that would allow for better temperature regulation of releases.

PWC have been banned on Lake Tahoe and in most NPS units due to water pollution as well as noise. The EPA has ordered manufacturers to cut emissions, and Earth Island Institute has sued 16 manufacturers for building machines that dump carcinogens into California drinking water (High Country News, August 4, 1997). The viewpoints facing off over PWC use parallel those active in the debate at Lake Powell.

Archaeological findings

With the news that Glen Canyon was to be inundated, archaeologists mounted a concerted campaign to document Anasazi sites in the area. The Glen Canyon Project, administered jointly by the Museum of Northern Arizona and the University of Utah, recorded 2,000 sites in the late 1950s and early 1960s. They found that Glen Canyon and local environs were an excellent setting for the study of hunter-gatherers and small scale agriculturalists.

Phil Geib, in the introduction to a recent volume revisiting the archaeological significance of the area, says:

The crush of visitors with easy boat access to the back country and an attitude of indifference or disrespect for cultural remains has resulted in such manage-
ment problems as deliberate vandalism, looting, point collecting, and general site degradation. Most sites within about 2 km of the lake are in poor condition, especially those situated in dry shelters. Restored sites used for interpretation and posted with signs have become public restrooms and graffiti billboards (e.g., Defiance House) (1996, 3).

The National Park Service has the difficult responsibility of informing the public about Glen Canyon prehistory and encouraging interest in it, while simultaneously discouraging activities that result in site damage.

Recreation jobs

In 1994, 6.7% of jobs in Arizona (104,000) were in the tourist industry, paying out $1.7 billion in payroll and bringing in $6 billion in business receipts and 0.9 billion in tax receipts (U.S. Travel Industry Association of America 1996). The economy of the town of Page is almost exclusively reliant on recreation. Probably the largest employer is ARAMARK, the concessionaire managing Lake Powell’s marinas.

ARAMARK is a $6 billion corporation with operations in 11 countries (Pennsylvania State University 1998). In addition to Lake Powell, ARAMARK manages Denali and Shenandoah National Parks, which are listed under ‘Sports and Entertainment Services’ in their portfolio (along with one-third of all major league baseball stadiums). The original company name, stemming from their beginnings in the vending machine trade but perhaps also apropos to the managing and marketing of Lake Powell today, is ‘ARA’, standing for Automated Retailers of America.

Seasonal jobs with ARAMARK pay minimum wage; renting a PWC for a day would take three days’ wages. Class structure is explicit in ARAMARK’s description of their employment opportunities:

For those who want to enjoy Lake Powell in luxury, we offer quality accommodations, fine food, delightful shopping, great entertainment, marvelous scenic boat tours of Lake Powell, and unsurpassed service... that is where you enter the picture!

Working a summer or a career at Lake Powell can be an exciting and rewarding experience if you come with a balanced view. The work is just that—work! Most jobs lack glamour, none are easy, many are routine, but all are important in making sure our guests have an enjoyable and memorable stay. Many of our jobs will not earn you a lot of money, but all are rich in the satisfaction that comes from honest work well done in a magnificent setting full of recreational and social opportunity.

Natural resource economists have estimated the jobs impacts of expenditures for recreation trips to the Lee’s Ferry site on the Colorado River, just one of the recreational opportunities in the Page area. They found that non-resident Colorado River recreation trip expenditures generate
585 jobs (Douglas and Harpman 1995, 233-247). They conclude that their estimates “add further credence and policy weight to the assertion that the outdoor recreation sector of the economy is relatively labor intensive.”

Page is doing well economically, and of course does not want to see that change. The website for Old West Marine Services gave this brief update of the latest goings on around town, providing an interesting snapshot of booming development in a gateway community:

The new [Sheraton] resort is progressing, it... in addition to the hotel, will have factory outlet stores and a museum. A Wendy’s is opening in Page across from Burger King on US 89. That is also where the new city jail is going to be built. One new hotel opened this year and two more (Days Inn and Best Western) are under construction. The Holiday Inn is now a Ramada.

**The Current Conflict**

“Just in case you haven’t heard, the Sierra Club, Glen Canyon Institute and others would really like to have Lake Powell drained. If you think that’s a bad idea... there’s a great new organization, called Friends of Lake Powell, that would love to hear from you. They’re dedicated to the preservation of the lake, the environment and from proponents who seek to drain it” (Lake Powell Magazine, Spring 1998).

The current conflict around Glen Canyon and the dam that turned it into Lake Powell is the extension of a decades-old conflict about the value and role of rivers and remote places. The present uprising is significant in several ways. First, the issue is so very current, and so geographically centered in the most contested wild region in the country, the canyon lands or southern Utah. Competing bills in Congress propose wilderness protection for millions of acres of Bureau of Land Management land, and President Clinton’s put everyone on notice with his 1996 creation of the huge Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

Secondly, the conflict is not trying to stop construction of a dam, but is pushing for tearing one down years after the fact, reversing major infrastructure in the name of wilderness. This situation has rarely happened before, especially at such an enormous scale; Hodel’s 1987 proposal to study the draining of Hetch Hetchy reservoir, though not taken too seriously, is a notable exception (Wilkinson 1991). The situation will serve as a precedent for future discussions of dam decommissioning, and as a step in the inclusion of restoration with the pursuit of preservation. (Interestingly, this situation also places those opposite the environmentalists in a ‘preservationist’ position.)

Lastly, and the main interest of this report, is that the controversy showcases our fundamental viewpoints on our relationship to wilderness. Is
a river first a wild thing with its own rights, a deity even? Or is it a gift of energy and irrigation that we are fools not to exploit? Are wilderness areas playgrounds, or sanctuaries? Are we meant to improve on Nature, or to minimize our impact?

The damming of the Colorado at Glen Canyon has been controversial from the start, but the environmental movement has only recently gained enough power to consider a political campaign to drain the reservoir. The campaign is being taken seriously, as evidenced by the vigor with which Lake Powell advocates have organized a counter campaign.

In September, 1997, the Congressional Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands (which has jurisdiction over Lake Powell as part of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area) and the Subcommittee on Water and Power (which has jurisdiction over the Glen Canyon Dam) held a hearing on the proposal to drain Lake Powell, even though one of the chairs stated, "Personally, I think that this is a bizarre idea! However, there is so much misinformation about the lake and the dam in the media, I felt that a public hearing on the issue was warranted."

In his statement at the hearing, environmentalist David Brower (who has convinced the Sierra Club leadership to support the draining of the reservoir) said, "It is unlikely that Glen Canyon Dam would have been approved had NEPA been in existence in 1956. Therefore, we are launching an unprecedented citizen-led Environmental Assessment this fall to present the truth as we see it..."

The media has been covering the proposal with articles under provocative headlines such as: "Can the River Run Again? Draining Lake Powell Isn't Such a Crazy Idea" (Arizona Daily Star), "Dams Aren't Forever" (New York Times), and "Draining Lake Powell Begins to Make Sense" (Aspen Times).

**The Glen Canyon Institute**

The primary organizer of the movement to drain the reservoir is the Glen Canyon Institute, a non-profit organization founded in 1995. GCI's mission is "to provide leadership in reestablishing the free flow of the Colorado River through a restored Glen Canyon." They intend to "initiate a Citizens Environmental Assessment on the draining of Lake Powell," and are raising funds to conduct some manner of public process with scientific support. The Institute "believes the majority of Americans would support restoring Glen Canyon if all the facts were known, so... [the Environmental Assessment] would be in the public interest."
The Institute has many reasons for campaigning against the dam. Some reasons are rational (these are most talked about), while others are sentimental (these seem to run deeper). That there are both rational and sentimental reasons is an important matter, since they are often intermingled in an unconscious way, and thereby obscured.

John Wesley Powell saw western geography defined by watershed, and to one who has spent much time in the West, rivers are indeed the heart of a region. Likewise, damming a river spells heartbreak for some who love a region (as in the fabled case of John Muir). The damming of the Colorado at Glen Canyon was a painful blow for Sierra Club leader David Brower, writer Edward Abbey, and many others who loved the canyon lands, and it continues to affect new spiritualists who come to love the area, especially those drawn by Abbey’s writings. The essence of Glen Canyon advocates’ sentimental rhetoric on the matter is that “Glen Canyon used to be a pristine and astonishingly beautiful wilderness, and without public reckoning, that birthright was laid to waste” (Farmer 1996). The injustice of being denied a full public reckoning feeds a sense of persecution, but is not central. The core feeling is of a paradise lost, that it was wilderness, and now it is ruined. Their brochure refers to Glen Canyon as ‘the most beautiful place on Earth,’ ‘a wonderland of adventure and beauty.’ These statements will resonate with spiritualists, whose world view expects that beautiful places routinely get trashed by society at-large.

Among the more rational problems with the reservoir that GCI lists are:

- the reservoir wastes approximately 1 maf annually (equal to 8% of the Colorado’s annual flow) through evaporation and bank seepage
- there is danger of a catastrophic flood (in 1983 high flows almost destroyed the dam’s spillways)
- the dam is destroying Grand Canyon habitat for species like the endangered humpback chub;
- consuming all the Colorado’s water is killing the rich estuaries in the Colorado River delta at the Sea of Cortez.

GCI literature maintains that sediment that has been deposited under Lake Powell would be flushed quickly if the river were allowed to run free. The recovery is difficult to predict since we have yet to observe such a process. They also believe the “white bath tub ring” would weather away and be almost completely gone within as little as three decades, and that riparian vegetation would grow back almost immediately (although it might be opportunistic, non-native vegetation). Regarding electricity, GCI maintains that the dam produces only 3% of the power
used in the Four Corners area, of which there is a surplus, and that any lost power could easily be made up with conservation measures.

As far as recreation, they suggest that Glen Canyon could be every bit as valuable a resource as Lake Powell, pointing out the popularity of nearby parks: Canyonlands, Arches, Bryce, and of course, the Grand Canyon. But it is clear that even if such recreation, which can be found in all these other places, is popular at Glen Canyon as well, it is not as job-intensive and certainly not as equipment-intensive as the current style of recreation, and that means a loss of economic support for locals and corporations alike. And, it should not be discounted, the flavor of recreation would be much changed, and this is more than an economic impact—it challenges people's values as well. Lake Powell advocates call GCI and their supporters 'radicals.' Though they mean it as a pejorative, it is probably an accurate term.

**Lake Powell advocates**

Page residents and long-time visitors to Lake Powell are organizing in response to GCI's proposals. Two main groups, the Friends of Lake Powell (FPL) and the Lake Powell Yacht Club (LPYC) provide the focal point for this organization. The president of the FPL gives this optimistic assessment of their movement in an editorial:

> Wow! Who would have ever believed we could have come so far in such a few short months. Mission Statement, Washington, DC hearings, memberships flow in from all around the country, massive governmental support, opposition be-wildernent, donations continue to flow in, congressional visitations to Lake Powell, and despite media 'sensationalism', we are still standing strong and proud. People possess power and we do and will continue to possess the right people. We can all sleep better knowing we are on the right path and with the quarter million members we will build to in 1998, so no "pro-drain" groups will gain ground in this beautiful area of ours.

This is clearly a patriotic mission, in which the "right people... on the right path" must stand "strong and proud." If the group comes close to generating 250,000 memberships they will hold substantial power. Letters from Arizona congressional representatives support the groups, with one from Rep. Bob Stump calling the proposals to drain the reservoir "stupid" and "ridiculous." The recreation equipment industry has every reason to support them as well. Utah Department of Natural Resources Executive Director Ted Stewart gave voice to a common viewpoint when he said,

> I know people whose entire family recreational life is tied up in Lake Powell. I hate to have a knee-jerk reaction, but this looks like another example of a group of elitists trying to take away recreational opportunity from the common folk. Those with the physical ability and desire to hike want to win the battle at

The image of environmentalists as elitists is not new, but is probably more accurately stated in geographic terms: environmentalists are, in good measure, middle class professionals from urban areas who enjoy the outdoors at their leisure, not as the location of their home and livelihood.

Some comments written on visitor cards at John Wesley Powell Memorial Museum in Page (and chosen for reprinting on the FLP website) give an idea of visitor sentiments:

Before the lake, very few people could enjoy seeing Rainbow Bridge. Now hundreds are able to see it because of boat travel. Many people such as myself would never be able to partake of God's wonders because of being in a wheelchair. We have few enough places we can get to—PLEASE don't take Lake Powell from us. The beauty will never be what it was & to me it is gorgeous just the way it is!

To even consider draining one of the most beautiful lakes in the world is by far the most ignorant thing I've ever heard of, if not an economical disaster of the first magnitude.

Awe & amazement is for the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell is for sheer delight and enjoyment. (A creative twist on Stegner's words about Glen Canyon, probably not deliberate.) Please, please, please leave it the way it is today for many people from all over the world to enjoy. Why even consider taking that away. To me it would be a very foolish move.

SAVE THE LAKE! None of us can return to Glen Canyon, any more than we can return to our childhood.

Please prevent any inclination of draining Lake Powell—There is too much to see by way of water, too many jobs will be lost as well as recreational opportunities.

What is done is done. Leave everything as it is. We have gained more than we have lost.

**Perceptions of Wilderness**

"...in the last analysis, wilderness is a matter of perception—part of the geography of the mind." (Nash 1982, 333)

In 1975, old-time river guide Ken Sleight (the model for Edward Abbey's character Seldom Seen in *The Monkey Wrench Gang*) said of the Colorado through the Grand Canyon, "there's no wilderness left, only scenery." That same year, a survey of Colorado river runners—almost none of whom had known the river before Glen Canyon Dam or the huge increase in rafters—found that 91% of those polled thought of it as wilder-
ness (Nash 1982, 332). What we think of as wilderness is most certainly defined by what types of outdoor experiences we have had.

Geographer Randy Bertolas conducted a study of Vermonters, Quebecers, and James Bay Cree to “define, locate, and assess the value of wilderness land” (1997). His study verified that “in the Western tradition, wilderness implies a separated, rather than intertwined, relationship between humans and nature; one that is bridged only for resource development or brief encounters (sight-seeing, camping, fishing, etc.)” His findings show that the native Cree related the idea of wilderness (really, our concept—they have no such word) to ancestors, home, and hunting and sustenance, connections described by virtually none of the Vermonters or Quebecoise. The Cree also said, more than the moderns, that wilderness evoked a in them a feeling.

Recreationists—motorists and spiritualists alike—associate their preferred outdoor activities with pleasurable feelings. Spiritualists like Muir come to mind most readily, but indeed geographer and avid motorcyclist J.B. Jackson waxed eloquently about the joys of connecting to terrain through ‘hot rodding’ (1977). These feelings shape what individuals value most in wilderness, and in turn how they come to conceive of wilderness. These perceptions are clear in rhetoric used to describe a place in its most positive light, since the speaker/author is revealing the things assumed to be important.

**Spiritualists**

Glowing descriptions of Glen Canyon abound. Typical of them, and an excellent, concise example for our analysis, is one provided by Abbey’s biographer. He describes the canyon this way:

...Glen Canyon was a place of exhilarating and mysterious beauty. In its many side canyons, thrushes, warblers, and mockingbirds sang in groves of cottonwood and thickets of redbud, tamarisk, and willow. Along its steep walls, cavelike natural shrines shielded hawks, swallows, and owls intent on raising and protecting their young. Deeper into the gulches and gorges... flowering plants in small clefts hung on inner walls, as if some master gardener had planted and tenderly nurtured them. Below, along the river, waterfalls spilled into plunge pools; badgers, coyotes, wolves, a mule deer, and other mammals browsed near abundant supplies of food and water, certain that safe shelter was nearby... (Bishop 1995, 123).
Such mythic nostalgia, with true-enough sensations amplified by time and a sense of loss, is a major inspiration for spiritualists, yet also a potential source of confusion and mistrust for those with other views. Glen Canyon was hallowed territory, a temple, a ‘natural shrine’ where the ‘master gardener’ himself tended this garden of Eden. In his essay, “Down the River,” Abbey asks us to “imagine the Taj Mahal or Chartres Cathedral buried in mud until only the spires remain visible. With this difference: those man-made celebrations of human aspiration could conceivably be reconstructed while Glen Canyon was a living thing, irreplaceable, which can never be recovered through any human agency” (1968, 152). In opposition to proposals for further dams on the Colorado (which were being touted as providing better views of the canyon), the Sierra Club ran a full-page ad in the New York Times headed by, “Should we also flood the Sistine Chapel so tourists can get nearer the ceiling?” By definition, to spiritualists wilderness is sacred, a sanctuary, a place of worship.

We hear in the above passage that Glen Canyon was a benign, sustaining place, where could be found “abundant supplies of food and water” and “safe shelter;” not only for us by for our fellow beings, the badgers, coyotes, wolves and mule deer, the hawks, swallows and owls. This reflects complex feelings that spiritualists seek through recreation: one, an experience of wilderness as nurturing provider even while one faces the brutal vulnerability to a wilderness so powerful that it can destroy you at any moment; and another, the intrigue of approaching other living beings in their own space.

We also hear that it was an intimate, erotic place, with “plunge pools,” “gulches and gorges,” and “flowering plants in small clefts hung on inner walls.” There is mystery and magic, harmony and life. This is Eden, the paradise we lost, a ‘place no one knew.’ Even setting aside the subjective appreciation of the place, it is truly stunning to consider that 40 years ago there was a place called Glen Canyon, and now it is gone. Few other places are so effectively destroyed. In his ode to Glen Canyon, poet Richard Shelton wrote:

fall gently rain
upon the surface of this lake
shine softly moon and stars
it is no mirror for your light
it is the tomb of beauty
lost forever
and it is despair
the darkness in ourselves we fear

(Trimble and Williams 1996, 34-5)

Areas of wilderness are deemed places with more soul than others. Abbey reasoned, “For a civilization to annihilate the wildness of such a river so
casually... was tantamount to destroying a part of the Southwest’s very soul... any civilization that could act so senselessly, he concluded, was no civilization at all” (Bishop 123–5). Abbey and others see the chief threats to these places as machines and those who use them—motorists. With his writing, Abbey made war on machines, railing against industrial tourism and pronouncing parks for people, not cars (now one would add ATVs and PWCs to that list). To Abbey, and spiritualists, it is clear that motors and motorists are the antithesis of wilderness.

Even those desiring restoration of the canyon often remain somewhat able to appreciate the flooded landscape. On a trip to Lake Powell with a team of researchers, Abbey describes lying on top of the “flat roof of Professor Reynolds’s houseboat and watched glittering Orion blaze overhead and green-gold meteors slash across the sky. Despite the garbage, I thought, and despite the damnation of the dam, this is still a magnificent place to be ” (1988, 90). Wallace Stegner almost agrees. He writes, “...Lake Powell is beautiful. It isn’t Glen Canyon, but it is something in itself” (1969, 126). However, he concludes, “A wilderness that can be approached by powerboat is no wilderness any more, it has lost its magic” (132).

**Motorists**

While certainly less personal than the writings of individuals, advertisements for Lake Powell give a sense for motorists’ feelings about Powell. This ad from ARAMARK’s VisitLakePowell website illustrates the pleasure of motorists’ recreation:

> Come play with abandon. Relax as never before. Immerse yourself in Lake Powell’s watery canyons. Your life will be forever changed. And you’ll return again to this desert wonderland. Because the child inside wants to play outdoors.

Here, too, there is something religious speaking, but in a more Biblical, almost evangelical sense, with immersion into water, honoring the reborn child, a wondrous desert holy land, return pilgrimages and lives forever changed. Sex is here as well, with playful abandon, immersion in wet canyons, and the ultimate relaxation. And finally, there is the celebration of childhood innocence, going outdoors to play. This interesting mix of hedonism and church-going righteousness is another version of paradise. This is a paradise found more than lost, a paradise created by the hand of engineers. As a myth, it has an attractive tangibility to it; it is accessibly close to the mainstream.

**Differences**

To motorists, we are shapers of the world, engineers. To spiritualists, we
are dependent dwellers within a world that transcends humanity. Compare the contrasting views on our relationship with the natural world evident in the following quotes:

The architect, the life-giver, and the moderator of Glen Canyon is the Colorado River... you don't quite catch the river in the act of sculpturing, but the color of the Colorado assured you that creation was still going on (Porter 1988, 11).

Lake Powell is... God's country... where Mother Nature did some of her best work... [She] started the process and man completed its splendor (www.flyachtclub.org)

Such statements make clear the close fit between Lake Powell advocates and the motorist stereotype, and Glen Canyon advocates and the spiritualist stereotype. A correspondence (reprinted on the FLP website) between an active member of the FLP (KR) and a likewise active member of the Glen Canyon Institute (JL), provides a convenient way to examine these differences. Both correspondents are women. The correspondence began in October, 1997 when KR sent a letter to the Sierra Club asking over twenty pointed questions. Her questions challenge the basis of data about water loss and habitat destruction, and perhaps most importantly, she challenges how much thought had gone into evaluating economic impact on locals of draining the reservoir. JL's reply is friendly and factual, but begins to tread on moral ground:

...we must look at long term costs and benefits as seriously as short term ones... I should we happily allow the hundreds of thousands of speedboats, jet skis and houseboats to continue to have at it, keep our blinders on about the future, as millions of tons of sediment, toxins, unburned fuels, and batteries pile up beneath our very short sighted view? I propose we are capable of more vision.

Semantics themselves are contested:

As you may have noticed, I hesitate to call it a lake, because it isn't one. Yes, there is some beauty that survived, but it is an unnatural place—a decadent display of arrogance and waste.

Words like "decadent" and "arrogance" are accusatory, and the correspondence slides toward invective from here on, mostly on the part of FLP's KR. Her subsequent letters are replete with phrases like "Draconian solutions," "forced diaspora," "executive fiat," "aristocracy," "tyranny of the minority," and "arrogantly faulty logic," as well as suspicious insinuations that JL is not being straight with her.

Though there are substantive disagreements about technical details, the main feature of the letters is the disparate world views they reveal. Much of what Rogalin has to say (and her letters are lengthy) seems generally reflective of the views of Lake Powell advocates (they did, after all, post the letters on a website). While environmental academics
continue to explore the philosophy behind the spiritualist world view, the motorist world view is much less intellectualized. It is this counter view on wilderness that Lake Powell culture brings to the surface so nicely, so here I present a sampling of KR's views on selected subjects, with comparison to JL's where necessary for clarity.

On the future of Page, AZ. An issue in which KR and other locals have an undeniable stake, and one of her most cogent arguments. In response to JL's projection that Page would thrive with the reservoir drained, KR replies:

Where in your canyon are [the millions of visitors] going to go? The [Glen Canyon Institute literature states that people would use a drained Lake Powell as much, implying that river-running would be the main use. I should point out that only approximately 60,000 visitors a year raft the river below the dam... How will the inaccessible attractions compensate for the loss of the Lake's easily accessible attractions...

...these are serious matters we're discussing. These are people's lives, their dreams, their joys, the fruits of their labor, their pain, their suffering, their lifetimes of hard work we're talking about disrupting. You give more focus to the Colorado squawfish than you do to the concerns of the people whose lives are involved with the Lake... You show no remorse in the consequences of this action.

JL does in fact care a lot about the squawfish and other aspects of the canyon habitat, which she equates with the "long-term view." This is a genuine source of disagreement, in that JL sees the economic interests of Page residents as short-term.

On fact and sentiment. KR accuses JL of manipulating facts to support her sentiments. Though KR is very suspicious of JL's facts, she herself holds up facts as the basis for decision making, and her arguments are also based fundamentally on sentiment. As she says, "How can anyone debate with the logic and reason of fact against the emotional substance of a faith?" She challenges JL about her characterizations: "Are you demonizing to conceal and overcome a shortage of facts?" This, too, goes equally well both ways.

JL admits, "even if the reservoir didn't have such a finite lifespan, I would work toward restoration of a free flowing river." Facts about the dam's operation are secondary, though they were the ostensible topic for much of the discussion. She continues, "The decision of what's preferable—the reservoir or a free flowing river through a restored Glen Canyon—is a value judgement. But decisions we make as a country are, plain and simple, value judgements." KR responds:

You are right in your conclusion that ultimately our decisions are value judgments. Whether, by keeping the Lake in this case, we want to enjoy the intelli-
gence of human creation in harmony with nature, celebrate the enhancement of human existence through the expansion of the natural environment and honor that existence through responsible stewardship of that in which we all can partake and respect or, if by destroying the Lake, we want to blindly attempt to return to some never-existent cruder and vulgar solipsistic way of life. The choice should be the peoples', not the members of elitist special-interest groups.

Here she is clear that “the people,” if they know the whole situation, will agree with her, just as environmentalist David Brower, in his statement to the Congressional hearing in support of draining the reservoir, felt sure that the people are on his side. “Elitist special-interest groups” are a buzz word from conservative critics, and there are many references that indicate a world view fashioned in large part by right wing doctrine.

On environmentalists. KR says that she has:

come to recognize the telltale parlance of your type of special interest group which has the foregone conclusion that you occupy some mythical moral high ground... you use self-serving code-phrases to justify, aggrandize and moralize your viewpoint. Words such as ‘our organization’s vision extends into the future’ implies that I'm disingenuous and greedy and you are logical and benevolent. What makes the GCI think they are so righteous? ... You think all other divergent points of view are inferior.

I understand that relying on preventive measures to deal with any problems with the dam or reservoir employs technology, which your type of special interest group dislikes. It also dilutes one of your strongest sales tools used to get your way, the panic of impending doom.

She doubts that environmental problems are as bad as people are led to think:

...[such as] the destruction of our forests by acid rain (which $700 million dollars of studies have failed to find any evidence of), or the advance of the world deserts (which studies also have totally debunked), or the warnings about the increase in cancer from chemical pollution (even though cancer not related to smoking has declined by 15% since 1950), or the depletion of our natural resources of oil by the 80's....

Faith in engineering. In discussing the steady siltation of the reservoir, KR says,

It seems to me that if we built the Dam in less than 120 years, we can refurbish it in something less than that too... when we decided to go to the moon, we had no technology to get us there. That's what humans can do! They can create, solve, resolve and benefit too!

When JL mentions the 1983 incident where high flows came close to catastrophically flooding the spillways, saying that, “the BOR engineers are overly confident in man's ability to outwit nature,” KR replies hotly:
You focus on the doomsday scenario of spillway failure... employing the tactic of 'impending crisis'... You fail to explain the probability, if any, of that occurring and why those 'responsible' would ever let that happen? [These are] things operating engineers deal with ALL THE TIME TO MAKE OUR WORLD WORK AS FLAWLESSLY AS IT DOES TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE IMMENSE COMPLEXITY AND HIGH STANDARDS OF LIVING WE NOW ENJOY COMPARED TO OUR ANCESTORS! ...Suffice it to say that the Dam WORKED. It didn't fail and it was improved after the [1983] event. And man learned so as to be better prepared so there won't be a next 'crisis'.

It is interesting to contrast KR's high level of faith in the BOR engineers who manage the dam with her skepticism regarding data that comes from the same organization (when used by JL) and her criticisms of big government. This is a key inconsistency.

On having an open public process. JL asserts that the NEPA-style process they want to undertake will help everyone "come to informed decisions in an open, public debate." KR responds, reasonably, that "Given the Institute's already predetermined position on the Lake, can we, the public, expect an unbiased factual report from the Institute?" And, with more sense of persecution:

I suggest that the your type of special interest group is incapable of providing and abiding by an open, honest public debate. For example, on global warming, has an open, honest debate been allowed to occur, in Kyoto or anywhere else officially in the U.S.? No credentialed opponent to the theory of anthropogenic global warming is even allowed to actively participate.

On humanity's place in nature. KR's views on the role humans should take in shaping the environment are at odds with JL, who asks, "what right do we have to decide that trout are nicer than Humpback Chub, to the point that we cause the latter to become extinct because the former are so much fun to catch?" The idea of Nature having rights is foreign to KR, and is anti-people. Spiritualists' view of wilderness, which involves solitude, does normally include fewer people than that of motorists. As KR puts it:

What you are saying is that nature should be allowed to determine its course. Well, man is part of nature too. And if man is putting trout in the area to satisfy his needs, why he's just acting according to his nature. Therefore, nature is allowing itself to follow its 'natural' course. You imply returning to some imaginary state of nature devoid of any human activity except that which the Institute deems appropriate... [you think] the intelligence of mankind not only is incapable of rightfully participating in and co-existing with nature but is the antithesis to it. The conclusion of that belief is the enslavement and inevitable extinction of the human race.

Yes, Glen Canyon was a beautiful place before Lake Powell, as were a lot of places on this planet. But mankind and the children have a place too! And it has become Lake Powell. And Lake Powell is a beautiful place too! The current ecosystem at Lake Powell now also fulfills many of nature's mandates, which includes the human element. You seem to forget that mankind is also part of the equation.
KR's comments offer a baseline for the views of Lake Powell advocates, and motorists in general. They illustrate the potential for further qualitative interviewing on the subject, and make clear the depth of the schism between recreational motorists and spiritualists.

**Commonalities**

In an article about the persistence of wilderness at Glen Canyon, historian Jared Farmer describes a sense of exploring that is common to both the Glen Canyon experience and the Lake Powell experience. In the canyon, the sensation was one of “discovery—that exciting feeling, as you move into a slot canyon, that you just might be the first to go there; that you have found a wild sanctuary and forsaken the world” (1996, 212). On Lake Powell, the sensation is of a “wilderness where you could pilot a boat, a reservoir where you could feel like Columbus” (216). Especially when the reservoir first filled, it was “terra incognita. This created landscape literally had never been seen before” (217). Early recreationists had to be adventurous, with no marinas for fueling, and no rescue facilities.

Farmer points out that “...these slickrock fjords... do lead to 'natural' areas, oases of solitude,” (219), and that the reservoir does in fact allow people to have some sort of wilderness experience. He feels that “the language, and at times even the experiences of those who mourn Glen Canyon and those who delight in Lake Powell are parallel,” and suggests that Glen Canyon advocates may be taking too limited a view:

> Even well-placed sorrow can turn into self-pity: I came too late... [Precisely because it was unknown, Glen Canyon was wonderful—a rock fantasy land, in other words, where you might have felt the ecstasy of exploration... This viewpoint disguises the fact that exploration has and will go on at Lake Powell. It excludes the possibility that the man-made lake could possess some of the other experiential qualities—mystery, sacred beauty—so freely attributed to wilderness. Perhaps most troubling, it serves to define 'wilderness experience' as essentially escaping the world and finding, however briefly, a more potent one. Discovery—with its legacies of conquest and consumerism—becomes a desired means of encountering the wild. The irony is poignant, and very human (221).

I find that there more divergence in rhetoric than parallelism. However, this overlap on the topic of 'exploration' may in the long term offer a potentially valuable commonality. For now the how's and why's of exploration for motorists and spiritualists differ too greatly. During informal conversations with Glen Canyon advocates, I have heard no confidence that boaters might learn a more 'spiritualist' approach to exploring the reservoir's landscape.

Like Farmer, I am troubled by the consumer approach to 'discovery.' Yet
the desire for discovery as a format for encountering the wild may be a very good thing, if indeed it can be unhooked from consumerist drives.

Natural experiences

John Adams at the University of Missoula has defined a ‘natural experience’ as one that

happens only in settings where the works of humans are of secondary importance;

allows a sense of solemnity, which can be equated with solitude, privacy, and respect;

stimulates us with the “natural order of information” that we evolved to interpret, and which therefore reacquaint us with our animal nature;

presents us with opportunities to engage with the Other—other living beings, the latent presence of rocks, water and sky. “To the extent that the natural world functions simply as a stage on which people act, with plants and animals as props, we are not engaging with nature” (1998).

In reviewing the experience of ORV (off-road vehicle) users, he concludes that they are equipment focused, and see terrain as little more than an obstacle course with a pretty backdrop; this is not a ‘natural experience.’ A less polarized view might argue that such use is a diminished natural experience as defined. This definition provides a good understanding of spiritualists’ reckoning of how outdoor recreation should ideally be conducted.

Conclusion: Interaction and Resolution

"The environmental movement right now is not listening. We are engaged in a rhetoric as strong and as aggressive as the so-called opposition. I would love to see the whole notion of opposition dissolved, so there’s no longer the shadow dance between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ I would love for us to listen to one another and try to say, What do we want as members of the community? What do we love? What do we fear? What are our concerns? How do we dream our future? How do we begin to define home? Then we would have something to build from, rather than constantly turning one another into abstractions and stereotypes engaged in military combativeness.” Terry Tempest Williams (Jensen 1995, 316)

Neither spiritualists nor motorists find it easy to understand each other, but this is precisely the task at hand. In his research around the James Bay Hydro Quebec issue, Bertolas noted that “ideological stereotypes abounded (e.g., ‘rabid environmentalists,’ ‘rapacious developers,’ ‘noble savages’), and there was little productive discussion between the groups most likely to be affected by the expanding project” (1998, 110). This seems to be the case in the Lake Powell/Glen Canyon issue as well: the Lake Powell Yacht Club calls those suggesting the draining of the reservoir “fanatical followers and brain dead” in pointing out the websites
for Glen Canyon Institute and the Sierra Club, the LPYC writer warns readers to “have your air sick bag ready.” Though more restrained and polite, Glen Canyon advocates express similar disdain for their counterparts. Communication will certainly be furthered when spiritualists come to honor the validity of people’s desire to protect their home and livelihood and to choose their own form of recreation, and when motorists acknowledge that others have a real spiritual connection to wilderness and valid reasons for criticizing technology. Lake Powell advocates want to be seen as more than pure motor jocks:

They [Glen Canyon advocates] want the whole world to believe that everybody that comes to Lake Powell sits on a houseboat and does nothing but drink beer... [What] about the millions of children and teenagers who are here with their parents, grandparents, family and friends on an annual vacation—a vacation destination of their choice.

Are the radicals attempting to dictate how John Doe recreates and vacations? If so, this is as ignorant as thinking everyone who owns a boat is wealthy! It’s also ignorant to think that visitors do nothing but put the throttle down and go. When in fact, they enjoy hiking, fishing, mountain biking, seasonal hunting, 4-wheel drive exploration, kayaking, swimming, horseback riding, and backcountry camping...

Spiritualists, likewise, do not want to be identified two-dimensionally as out-of-touch radicals. Their concerns about the environment are at root about the human condition, and they need to be seen as not driven by some simple anti-people mentality.

Mixing sentiment and rationality confused the communication between KR and JL, making them less trustful of each other. The debate over Lake Powell comprises both deep feelings and a plethora of technical information. Communications will also improve when discussants acknowledge the essential roles of both sentiment and rationality, and are able to distinguish between the two.

All sides would benefit by developing consistency in their views. For example, Lake Powell advocates should not on one hand increase access to Rainbow Arch (which is now visited by 325,000 people each year), a spot with great religious significance to Native Americans, and on the same time claim that draining the reservoir would be unfair to those families who have scattered ashes in Lake Powell. If sacred places are to be revered, they should be consistent about it, or declare explicitly that neighboring Indian tribes do not count as much as other Americans.

Advocates for Lake Powell are in the position of arguing for ‘preservation,’ while Glen Canyon advocates are in the position of encouraging the alteration of an existing habitat. These unusual roles offer an op-
portunity to understand the other's position more readily. In a letter to Congress, FLP refers to Lake Powell as "one of the jewels in the crown of the southwest's National Parks including the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Zion and Bryce Canyon. We are lucky our ancestors had the foresight to preserve these beautiful areas. Let's continue the tradition of preservation so our future generations can enjoy them, too." Issues of foresight and preservation have meaning for both sides of the Lake Powell/Glen Canyon issue.

Dave Tate, Editor of Lake Powell Magazine, writes, "Few visitors to the lake would ever dream of draining the spectacular 190-mile wonder" (Spring 1998). He is probably right. Then again, few visitors to the Grand Canyon would ever dream of flooding its splendor. Glen Canyon is not present for visitors' comparison—it can speak only through our imaginations. Regardless of whether we are left with Lake Powell or a recovering Glen Canyon, regardless of the painful aspects of the dialog, this churning confluence of views on wilderness and recreation is inevitable, essential, and right at home on the river of the West.

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