AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Kerry E. Grimm for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy in Environmental Science presented on May 14, 2010.
Title: Conservation Volunteer Tourism at a Reserve in Ecuador: Effects of Perceptions, Discourse, and Motivations on Human-Environment Relations.

Abstract approved:

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The number of people traveling to other countries to volunteer for conservation or

humanitarian projects has increased dramatically in the past three decades. Despite

substantial interest in volunteer tourism, few researchers have examined: (a) the role

of promotional material (e.g., brochures, internet websites) in motivating volunteers;

(b) factors that attract volunteers and pull them to countries, organizations, and

volunteer projects and sites, and how managers and volunteer coordinators perceive

these volunteer motivations; and (c) how key terms (e.g., 'conservation') are used,

interpreted, and affect human-environment relations at the volunteer project and site.

This dissertation contains three separate articles that help to address these knowledge

gaps. To collect my data, I conducted semi-structured interviews, engaged in

participant observation, and examined promotional material at a volunteer project in a

reserve in Ecuador. Findings showed that volunteers almost exclusively used the internet to search for volunteer tourism opportunities. Volunteer decisions to select the organization or project were influenced by both website appearance (e.g., organized, professional) and specific content (e.g., photographs, volunteer comments, project descriptions, buzzwords). Volunteers listed a range of motivations for selecting the country, organization, and volunteer project and site. Managers and volunteer coordinators correctly identified some of these volunteer motivations (e.g., travel, price), but mentioned far fewer reasons than volunteers and overlooked several major factors, especially altruistic and project-specific reasons. Ideological and cluster criticism revealed that participants interpreted 'conservation' differently and this affected characterizations of people and environmental issues, as well as participant behavior and interactions at the project and site. I created typologies for organizations and volunteer tourists based on differences. I suggest that rhetorical criticism can offer a method for conducting replicable and comparable analyses of environmental discourse in political ecology. I conclude with implications for managers, theory, and future research.

Conservation Volunteer Tourism at a Reserve in Ecuador: Effects of Perceptions, Discourse, And Motivations On Human-Environment Relations.

by
Kerry E. Grimm

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APPROVED:

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Director of the Environmental Sciences Program

Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

Kerry E. Grimm, Author

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

With each click of the mouse, I watched images of lush tropical forests and smiling

indigenous children flash in front of my face. It was 2004 and I was looking for an

environmental volunteer project in South America. I wanted to volunteer in my field

of study, help the environment, improve my Spanish, and get settled before traveling

around the continent. The amount of information and number of opportunities were

overwhelming, and each program presented information differently, some

emphasizing conservation work and others focusing on travel to paradise. I eventually

chose to volunteer through a non-governmental organization (NGO) because it was

cheaper than other organizations, was a non-profit, and had an option to volunteer at a

cloud forest reserve. What other chance would I get to live in a cloud forest? This

wealth of information and my careful deliberation was my initiation into the complex

world of volunteer tourism.

Fast forward four months. After braving busses passing five cars at a time on

twisted roads that wound through secondary forests, tree plantations, farms clinging to

steep hillsides, and landslides, I was dropped off at the side of a road in Ecuador. Only

a few houses, a school with volleyball courts, and a wooden shack advertising phone

cards and ice cream were in sight. With help from a young child, I found the reserve's

entrance and began the 30 minute hike uphill to the place where I would volunteer for

the next month.

At the reserve, I realized that the web of promotional material through which I

had sorted was only the tip of the iceberg when it came to understanding conservation

volunteer tourism. Tensions occasionally occurred among volunteers and managers due to different motivations and views of conservation work. Some volunteers struggled with the work at the reserve, not understanding why they did certain tasks that did not fit their image of conservation work (e.g., working in the vegetable garden). I realized that promotional material, interpretations of 'conservation,' and personal motivations for volunteering abroad and selecting the project caused individuals to have certain expectations for their volunteer experience and the work in which they engaged. My experience and realizations remained on my mind long after I left the reserve.

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I was only one of many people who can be considered volunteer tourists, or people who "volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2001, p. 1). Although people can travel domestically to volunteer (Caissie & Halpenny, 2003), Brown & Morrison (2003) stated that the number of people traveling to other countries to volunteer for conservation or humanitarian projects has increased substantially in the past three decades. Volunteer tourists can choose to volunteer though intermediary organizations (e.g., i-to-i), NGOs, or project sites directly, many of which advertise widely on the internet.

Volunteer tourism has been presented as a best practice of tourism (Wearing, 2004). Wearing (2001, 2004) suggested that unlike traditional forms of tourism where

differential power exists, volunteer tourism takes into account cross-cultural issues, can lead to community participation, and promote sustainability. Researchers have examined individuals' motivations and values associated with volunteer tourism (e.g., Broad, 2003; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2006; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Halpenny & Caissie, 2003; Söderman & Snead, 2008; Wearing, 2001, 2004). Researchers have also discussed additional benefits of this activity, such as volunteer self-fulfillment and personal growth (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Lepp, 2008), helping projects and contributing new insights (e.g., Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003), spreading knowledge (e.g., Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003; Ruhanen, 2008; Cooper, & Fayos-Solá, 2008), and decentralization of power in this "decommodified" activity (Wearing, McDonald, & Ponting, 2005).

Many of these studies have focused on the individual volunteers, although multiple participants are involved (e.g., managers, volunteer coordinators, community members). Critiques have highlighted that a full understanding of the volunteer tourism experience might not occur if researchers only study volunteers. Researchers who have spoken with local community members or staff extended this work by identifying varying community views toward volunteer tourism (e.g., Clifton & Benson, 2006; Gray & Campbell, 2007; McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). Some of this research has begun to address situations where participants might have dissimilar views. For example, Gray and Campbell (2007) interviewed multiple actors (e.g., volunteers, organization members, project staff, local cabiñeros/cabin owners) involved in a volunteer conservation project to protect

leatherback sea turtles, and discovered that participants had different ideologies about conservation. Cabiñeros believed that conservation and community benefits (e.g., profit) were linked, whereas volunteers worried that local people would be motivated to protect turtles for economic rather than environmental reasons.

Despite the growing number of individuals both participating in and studying volunteer tourism, several knowledge gaps remain. First, although use of promotional material (e.g., brochures, internet websites) is an initial step in the volunteer tourism process, few researchers have explicitly addressed the influence of this material in motivating people to volunteer and what specific content or images in this material attract volunteers to projects or organizations (e.g., Coghlan, 2007; Simpson, 2004). When researchers have discussed connections between promotional material and motivations, it has usually been ancillary to the main focus of their research or examined in relation to more general motivations for volunteering abroad (e.g., adventure, danger; Ansell, 2008; Simpson, 2005). When researchers considered how promotional material influenced volunteer decisions about specific organizations and projects, they often employed textual analysis of this material, but rarely interviewed volunteers to verify if and how this material played a motivating role (e.g., Coghlan, 2007; Young, 2008).

Second, researchers have primarily explored internal psychological reasons for why individuals decide to volunteer abroad (e.g., to learn, professional development; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). Little work has addressed if and what specific characteristics of a country,

continent, organization, and project motivated volunteers to make their decisions (e.g., Söderman & Snead, 2008). Most researchers examining volunteer tourist motivations have also focused on self-reported motivations of these tourists. Although this approach follows trends in tourism, recreation, and volunteerism research, comparatively less work has examined how others (e.g., managers, organization volunteer coordinators) perceive volunteer motivations or compared these perceptions with volunteer self-reported motivations to uncover any potential misperceptions (e.g., Coghlan, 2008).

Third, there has been little critical analysis of key terms used in conservation volunteer tourism, such as 'conservation,' and how differing interpretations of these terms can affect interactions. Volunteer projects and organizations advertise 'conservation' projects, and volunteers and managers discuss the concept as if it embodies an undisputed meaning, but work in political ecology has shown that this word is anything but neutral and concrete, and it can have ramifications on human-environment relations (e.g., Campbell, 2002). For example, Campbell, Gray, and Meletis (2007) noted that although ecotourists are conservation-seeking, their vision of nature can contradict views of local communities and affect these areas.

Given these knowledge gaps and my personal observations, my broad objective in this dissertation is to explore the roles of discourse, motivations, perceptions, and interpretations in the various stages of conservation volunteer tourism (e.g., information gathering, decision-making, at the site) and how these influence human-environment relationships. In this dissertation, I specifically extend the

literature on volunteer tourism by examining if and how volunteer tourists use promotional material to make decisions related to volunteer opportunities, and what in the material played a motivating role. I also examine reasons why volunteers select countries, organizations, and volunteer projects and sites, as well as how managers perceive volunteer motivations and how these compare to self-reported motivations of volunteers. Finally, I focus on how 'conservation,' a commonly used term in volunteer tourism, is discursively used and interpreted by various actors, and how different interpretations affect behavior and beliefs at the volunteer site. This dissertation also makes contributions to methods used for studying volunteer tourism, motivation, and political ecology by employing ethnographic research approaches such as in-depth interviewing and participant observation, and offering a new approach for conducting discourse analysis in political ecology.

<div align="center">Study Site and Data Collection</div>

To address these knowledge gaps, I conducted fieldwork at a biological reserve in Ecuador that offered conservation, sustainability, and social development volunteer tourism opportunities. I chose Ecuador because it offers numerous conservation volunteer opportunities (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Cousins, 2007). A family owns the reserve, lives onsite, manages the project, and works closely with the local community of 50 families. Although small at 814 hectares, this reserve's elevation of 1100m to 2040m and location in the Ecuadorian Inter-Andean cloud forest affords it high biodiversity. The reserve resides in the Rio Toachi-Chiriboga Important Bird Area (IBA) and two of the world's top twenty-five biological hotspots: the Tropical

Andes and the Choco Darien. At the time of my research, the reserve listed on its

website that its goals were to protect the existing forest, restore degraded areas, work

toward sustainable development, create programs that foster community development,

and educate about conservation. To help achieve these goals, volunteers chose from

three programs with various activities: (a) "Conservation in the Cloud Forest" (e.g.,

reforestation, wildlife monitoring, trail work); (b) "In the Way to Sustainability" (e.g.,

sustainable wood and animal production, organic agriculture, alternative energy); and

(c) "Social Development" (e.g., teaching). Volunteers applied to the reserve, an

Ecuadorian NGO with whom the reserve had an agreement, or through international

intermediary organizations (e.g., Working Abroad).

To obtain information, I used a qualitative, case study approach. I interviewed

36 volunteer tourists, 2 reserve managers, and 3 volunteer coordinators using semi-

structured; engaged in participant observation; attended orientation talks and weekly

education lectures; and examined promotional material.

Chapter Overview

In the next chapter, I address one of the initial stages of volunteer tourism by

exploring what types of promotional material volunteers viewed; how this material

influenced their decision to select the country, organization, and volunteer project and

site; and what specifically in this material played a motivating role. This article is

guided by motivation theories and approaches from tourism, recreation, and

volunteerism (e.g., Crompton, 1979; Driver & Knopf, 1977; King & Lynch, 1998), as

well as research on the role of promotional material in motivating tourists (e.g.,

Coghlan, 2007). I hope that findings will aid managers of volunteer projects with creating appropriate promotional material that draws volunteers to help with environmental work.

In the third chapter, I build on themes uncovered in the first manuscript and further explore volunteer decision-making processes. I move motivation research on volunteer tourism away from the individual's internal motivations to examine: (a) the roles that external pull factors can play in motivations (e.g, on-site services), (b) how other participants perceive volunteer tourist motivations, and (c) how manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions of these motivations compare to actual motivations reported by volunteers. I also illustrate benefits of employing ethnographic methods to study volunteer tourism (Broad & Jenkins, 2008). I hope that findings will help managers have a better understanding of volunteer motivations and reduce any potential misperceptions at the site.

The fourth chapter builds on findings from Chapter 2 where volunteers noted certain key terms (e.g., 'conservation') attracted them to the volunteer project. I have several objectives for this article. First, I aim to analyze the term 'conservation' and determine how volunteers, reserve managers, volunteer coordinators, and promotional material use and interpret this word, and determine if differing ideologies of 'conservation' affect human-environment relations. Second, I answer Campbell, Gray, and Meletis' (2007) call for more research integrating ecotourism and political ecology to improve understanding of ecotourism and ecotourists (i.e., not focus primarily on scalar politics involved with ecotourism). Third, I test whether combining

political ecology and rhetorical criticism can offer a replicable, comparable method for analyzing discourse in political ecology studies. I hope this article will help those involved in volunteer tourism to have a better understanding of each others' conservation ideologies; aid in improving human-environment relations at the project; and extend theory on environmental concepts, ideologies, and discursive political ecology.

In the final chapter, I briefly summarize major findings of my research; address potential limitations; and discuss implications for managers, theory, and future research. Appendices provide additional information and include volunteer tourist demographics (Appendix 1) and interview questions for volunteers, managers, and volunteer coordinators (Appendices 2-4).

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CHAPTER 2: INTERNET PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL AND VOLUNTEER
TOURIST MOTIVATIONS FOR SELECTING ORGANIZATIONS AND
CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Introduction

The number of people traveling to other countries to volunteer for conservation or

humanitarian projects has increased substantially in the past three decades (Brown &

Morrison, 2003). These tourists "volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays

that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society,

the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or

environment" (Wearing, 2001, p. 1). Some volunteers apply to intermediary

organizations (e.g., i-to-i) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), whereas others

contact project sites directly.

　　　　With the growth of volunteer tourism, research on the subject has also

increased. Popular topics of study include motivations (e.g., Broad, 2003; Brown &

Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Söderman & Snead,

2008; Ureily & Reichel, 2000; Ureily et al., 2003; Wearing, 2001, 2004) and values

(e.g., Campbell & Smith, 2006; Halpenny & Caissie, 2003). Researchers have also

focused on benefits of volunteer tourism, including volunteer self-fulfillment and

personal growth (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Lepp, 2008), helping projects and

contributing new insights (e.g., Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003), and spreading

knowledge (e.g., Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003; Ruhanen, Cooper, & Fayos-Solá,

2008).

Researchers have contended that volunteer tourism can create positive host-guest

relationships (e.g., Wearing, 2001) or be social movements (e.g., McGehee, 2002;

McGehee & Santos, 2005). Although some of these researchers interviewed only

volunteers, others also talked with community members and project staff to determine

their impressions of benefits and disadvantages of volunteer tourism (e.g., Clifton &

Benson, 2006; Coghlan, 2008; Gray & Campbell, 2007; Lepp, 2008; McIntosh &

Zahra, 2008).

Few researchers, however, have explicitly addressed the influence of

promotional material (e.g., brochures, internet websites) in motivating volunteers,

especially specific content or images in this material that attract volunteers to projects

or organizations (e.g., Coghlan, 2007; Simpson, 2004). When researchers have

discussed connections between promotional material and motivations, it usually has

been ancillary to the main focus of their research or examined in relation to how this

material appealed to motivations for volunteering abroad (e.g., adventure, danger;

Ansell, 2008; Simpson, 2005). When researchers considered how promotional

material influenced volunteer decisions about organizations and projects, they often

employed textual analysis of the material, but rarely interviewed volunteers directly to

verify if and how this material played a motivating role (e.g., Coghlan, 2007; Young,

2008).

Not understanding the role of promotional material in influencing volunteer

decisions is an important knowledge gap because in the increasingly competitive

volunteer tourism market, projects and organizations must effectively advertise

projects and services to recruit volunteers necessary for monetary and physical

support. Organizations and projects could benefit from and create effective

promotional material by understanding: (a) if this material played a role in motivating

volunteers to choose organizations and projects, (b) types of promotional material

used by volunteers, (c) how volunteers accessed this information, and (d) topics in

promotional material that played a motivating role. To address these issues, we

interviewed volunteer tourists and explored how and what factors in promotional

material motivated individuals to select organizations and project sites. This work

advances motivation research and may aid organizations and project managers in

recruiting volunteers for conservation work.

Conceptual Background

Motivations

Wearing (2004) stated that motivations of volunteer tourists could be examined using

a variety of theories from tourism, recreation, leisure, and volunteerism (e.g.,

Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Driver & Knopf, 1977; Driver, Tinsley, & Manfredo,

1991; Iso-Ahola, 1989; Pearce & Catabaliano, 1983; Pearce & Lee, 2005; Stebbins,

1996). One such theory is the push/pull approach, which suggests that people are

pushed to travel by certain internal motivations (e.g., stress reduction) and/or pulled to

a particular destination by its attributes—both tangible resources (e.g., beaches) and

traveler perceptions and expectations of what the destination provides (e.g., novelty;

Crompton, 1979; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). These push and pull factors are essential

in motivating tourists (Dann, 1981), and Crompton (1979) identified seven push

factors (e.g., escape from perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation

of self, facilitation of social interaction) and two pull factors (cultural motives,

novelty). Many researchers have applied this framework to study motivations of

tourists (e.g., Delamere & Wright, 1997; Fluker & Turner, 2000).

This push/pull approach is only one way to understand motivations. Iso-Ahola

(1979, 1989) contended that all leisure motivations can be classified as seeking or

escaping in that people seek intrinsic rewards and escape everyday problems and

troubles (Iso-Ahola, 1982, 1989). Utilizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Pearce and

colleagues (1983, 2005) formulated the Travel Career Ladder (TCL) and Travel

Career Pattern (TCP), which illustrates that inexperienced tourists are more interested

in fulfilling lower order needs (e.g., relationship, stimulation, relaxation), whereas

experienced tourists are motivated to fulfill higher order needs (e.g., development,

fulfillment). Another approach to motivations contends that they are formed by the

expectation that efforts to participate (e.g., spend money, time) will lead to

performance (e.g., backpack in wilderness), which will result in outcomes and benefits

(e.g., stress release; Driver et al., 1991; Manfredo, Driver, & Brown, 1983; Manfredo,

Driver, & Tarrant, 1996). To measure motivations, Driver and colleagues (1991)

created the Recreation Experience Preference (REP) scales. These include over 300

variables grouped into 19 domains, most of which represent internal push factors (e.g.,

enjoy nature, meet new people, escape personal/social pressures; Driver et al., 1991;

Manfredo et al., 1983).

Studies in volunteerism also have examined motivations, especially those

related to decisions to volunteer. Most researchers recognize that volunteering usually

contains both altruistic and egoist or self-interested motivations (e.g., King & Lynch,

1998). Others, however, have emphasized either altruistic or self-interested

motivations, but not both. Stebbins (1996), for example, suggested that volunteering is

a form of serious leisure and self-interestedness is a greater driving force than altruism

because volunteers expect personal and social rewards for the activity. To measure

motivations for volunteering, Clary and colleagues (1996, 1998) created the Volunteer

Functions Index (VFI), which demarcated six functions: values, understanding,

enhancement, career, protective, and social. Silverberg and colleagues (1999,

2002/2003) applied this index to volunteers in parks and recreation and determined

that it described volunteer functions, but additional co-producer functions existed

(e.g., "department and community need me," "benefits to people I know").

Environmental volunteering has required an expansion of motivations identified in

human volunteering to account for specific motivations related to the environment or

animals, such as to help the environment and work with specific animal species (e.g.,

Bruyere & Rappe, 2007; Grese, Kaplan, Ryan, & Buxton 2000; Kidd, Kidd, &

Zasloff, 1996; Markus & Blackshaw, 1998).

Researchers of volunteer tourism have used these approaches to examine why people volunteer abroad, and to a lesser extent why they chose the country, organization, or project. Similar to findings from broader volunteering, volunteer tourists hold both altruistic (e.g., desire to help, give back, make a difference) and self-interested motivations for volunteering abroad (e.g., gain experience, engage in travel and adventure, learn, pleasure-seeking, personal growth, cultural exchange, professional development, camaraderie; Broad, 2003; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Rehberg, 2005; Wearing, 2001, 2004). Pearce and Coghlan (2008) contended that the TCP could predict similarities and differences in motivations of experienced and inexperienced volunteer tourists. Both groups would be motivated by novelty, escape/relaxation, and relationship, but less experienced volunteer tourists would provide a larger range of motivations and veterans would emphasize involvement with host communities and settings. Despite this body of research on volunteer tourist motivations, most of this work has examined altruistic and self-interested motivations that primarily push individuals to participate.

Comparatively less research has been conducted on pull motivations of volunteer tourists, especially attributes that draw individuals to a specific country or continent, organization, or project (e.g., Söderman & Snead, 2008). Researchers that have discussed these issues, either mentioned findings briefly or as secondary to their research focus (e.g., Simpson, 2005). Reasons for why volunteers select a country or continent included danger, the unknown, scenery, to conduct specific projects that

occur in certain countries (e.g., sea turtle work), to learn a language, timing, family or friend recommendations, and the belief that developing countries need help (Campbell & Smith, 2005; Simpson, 2005; Söderman & Snead, 2008; Wearing, 2004). Research has shown that volunteer tourists select an organization for its reputation, program variety and structure, marketing, safety, specific projects (e.g., sea turtle projects), organization type (e.g., local, NGO), people involved, and recommendations from family or friends (Campbell & Smith, 2005; Coghlan, 2007; Söderman & Snead, 2008; Wearing, 2001). Less research has examined attributes that attract people to specific volunteer projects, but some reasons include recommendations from others and project location, opportunities, and perks (Broad, 2003; Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Campbell & Smith, 2005).

Promotional Material

Although Söderman and Snead (2008) mentioned that marketing played a role in motivating volunteers to choose certain organizations, they did not explain how or if marketing influenced other decisions, such as selecting a specific project. Given that promotional material (e.g., websites, brochures) typically highlights organizational, destination, or project attributes, it can play a role in volunteer decisions. It is also important to understand how this material influences volunteer selections. If it portrays only appealing positions and these attract volunteers, organizations risk negative volunteer impressions if the experience does not match expectations and reasons for participating (Lyons, 2003). This could hinder future recruitment because

volunteers could discourage friends or family from selecting the organization (Lyons, 2003). Although promotional material likely influences volunteer tourism, most researchers have not focused on this topic extensively.

Researchers have examined promotional material in conjunction with push motivations. In non-tourism situations, for example, advertisements appealing to motivations of potential volunteers were more persuasive than those not matching motivations, and individuals were more likely to volunteer when exposed to advertisements related to their internal personal motivations (Clary et. al., 1994). In volunteer tourism, promotional material has advertised the volunteer experience as a means of satisfying potential volunteer desires for authentic and different experiences, exploration and adventure, danger and risk, purposeful travel, meeting people, learning, and skill development (Ansell, 2008; Broad, 2003; Simpson, 2004). Callanan and Thomas (2004) analyzed promotional material on the internet and classified volunteer tourists and volunteer projects as shallow, intermediate, or deep tourism based on self-interested versus altruistic motivations for volunteering abroad and how much a program catered to volunteers. Shallow volunteer tourists, for example, focused on self-development, volunteered for a short time, had no specific skills, and made little direct contribution to the community and environment.

Promotional material also can influence selection of a country, organization, or project. By employing textual analysis, Young (2008) determined that guidebooks catered to volunteer desires for selecting destinations that provide authentic, cultural

experiences. Cousins (2007) found many projects advertised on the internet and selected by volunteers involved mammals, required no special skills, and were located in tropical locations, but it is unclear whether promotional material influenced volunteer selection or if volunteer preferences influenced which projects were advertised. Callanan and Thomas (2005) claimed that promotional material for "shallow volunteer tourism projects" focused on destination attributes and travel experiences, whereas "deep volunteer tourism projects" emphasized the project. Although not specifically studying motivations, Simpson (2004) suggested that promotional material represented and sold development and the "third world" to potential volunteers, even if it did not accurately represent marginalized people with whom volunteers may work (Wearing, 2001). These romanticized versions of other people and places may have influenced some volunteers to select destinations, organizations, or projects. Coghlan (2007) examined how factors such as mission statements, photographs, and testimonials attracted potential volunteers and influenced their expectations; respondents focused on characteristics of the organization (e.g., price, length), brochure attributes (e.g., quality, outlay), and elements in brochures (e.g., project focus, organization role).

Although this body of research illustrates relationships between promotional material and motivations of volunteer tourists, several knowledge gaps remain. First, most studies focused on push motivations and did not examine this topic in much depth or as the primary topic of interest. Second, researchers examining pull motives

(e.g., Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Young, 2008) largely relied on textual analysis of promotional material, and did not ask volunteers if this material motivated them and if so, what images or content specifically played a motivating role. Coghlan (2007), for example, did not interview volunteers, and instead relied on a multiple sorting process performed by students from conservation and tourism studies; these students were not similar in age and did not have the educational background of many volunteer tourists. Our research extends Coghlan's work by interviewing volunteer tourists to identify themes that the sorting process might not have captured.

Our study will also inform research on effects of pull motivations and promotional material in non-volunteer tourism. Results of studies examining relationships between promotional material and tourist motivations have varied. Eagles and Wind (1994) identified pull factors that ecotourism operators believed were important to their clients (e.g., rivers, mountains, birds), but their content analysis of promotional material did not explore if these characteristics motivated tourists. Manfredo (1989) surveyed potential tourists and examined tourism brochures focusing on trip characteristics. He determined that people responding to advertisements depicting highly salient attributes (e.g., catching fish, boat/captain safety) rated that attribute higher than others and had intentions to purchase trips focusing on that attribute. Other researchers, however, have found that destination attributes in promotional material did not play a major motivating role in decisions to travel (e.g., Molina & Estaban, 2006). Baas, Manfredo, Lee, and Allen (1989)

suggested that a brochure did not positively or negatively affect participation, although it increased awareness of opportunities. Most of these studies examined promotional material not found on the internet. Volunteer tourism projects, however, are often advertised on internet websites and many tourists, especially volunteer tourists, now rely on the internet to search for these opportunities (e.g., Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Cousins, 2006). By examining promotional material on the internet, we hope to build on studies examining if and how this information motivates tourists.

Research Questions

Although several pull factors likely motivate volunteer tourists, we focused on promotional material because it is often the first step in selecting an organization or project and illustrates other pull factors (e.g., location, project variety). Promotional material is one factor that organizations and managers can control. Given the limited research examining promotional material related to volunteer tourism as both a motivating force and a means through which to explore other pull factors, we addressed three questions. First, what types of promotional material do volunteers use when choosing an organization or project site, and how do they access this information? Second, does promotional material motivate volunteers to choose a specific organization or project site? Third, if promotional material motivates volunteers, what in this material plays a motivating role (e.g., information, appearance, destination/project attributes)?

Methods

Study Site

We conducted fieldwork for nine weeks (June to August) in 2008 at a biological

reserve in Ecuador that offers conservation, sustainability, and social development

volunteer tourism opportunities.[1] A family owns the reserve, lives onsite, manages the

project, and works closely with the local community of 50 families. Although small at

814 hectares, this reserve's elevation of 1100m to 2040m and location in the

Ecuadorian Inter-Andean cloud forest affords it high biodiversity. The reserve resides

in the Rio Toachi-Chiriboga Important Bird Area (IBA) and two of the world's top

twenty-five biological hotspots: the Tropical Andes and the Choco Darien.

At the time of our research, the reserve listed on its internet website that its

goals were to protect the existing forest, restore degraded areas, work toward

sustainable development, create programs that foster community development, and

educate about conservation. To help achieve these goals, volunteers chose from three

programs with various activities: (a) "Conservation in the Cloud Forest" (e.g.,

reforestation, wildlife monitoring, trail work); (b) "In the Way to Sustainability" (e.g.,

sustainable wood and animal production, organic agriculture, alternative energy); and

(c) "Social Development" (e.g., teaching). Volunteers applied to the reserve, an

Ecuadorian NGO with whom the reserve had an agreement, or through international

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[1] At the reserve managers' request, we do not disclose the reserve's name to protect the reserve and managers' identity. For that reason, we do not include the website.

intermediary organizations (e.g., Working Abroad).[2] The NGO also worked with

many intermediaries, causing some volunteers to be funneled through several

organizations (e.g., intermediary to NGO to reserve). This organizational layering is

common in volunteer tourism, and our exploratory study conducted at the reserve in

2007 revealed that volunteers had read varying information and paid different prices

depending on the organization with which they volunteered.[3]

    We selected this site because: (a) Ecuador offers numerous conservation

volunteer opportunities (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Cousins, 2007); (b) many

volunteers select the reserve, allowing for diverse opinions and reducing the chance of

obtaining a small sample, which can be common with on-site investigations of this

nature (e.g., Lepp, 2008); (c) organizational layering allowed us to examine

promotional material from various organizations; and (d) one of us volunteered at the

reserve in 2005, affording credibility to gain participant trust.[4]

Data Collection

    We used a qualitative, case study approach that employed ethnographic

methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation). Qualitative research addresses

questions concerning interpretations of meanings, concepts, symbols, and metaphors,

and analyzing ways in which humans makes sense of their surroundings (Berg, 2004).

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[2] At the NGO's request, we do not disclose its name to protect the NGO and volunteer coordinators' identities.

[3] During the exploratory study, we informally interviewed 11 volunteers and engaged in participant observation. Though we had some set questions that we asked volunteers, interviews were primarily unstructured. This allowed respondents to discuss their motivations, concerns, and experiences, and to help us discover relevant issues to pursue in subsequent research.

[4] The reserve received 49 volunteers July-September, 2007 and 40 volunteers June-August, 2008.

Qualitative research can involve a case study, which is "an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" and employs multiple sources of evidence for triangulation (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Results from case studies cannot be generalized to all situations, but they can provide a general understanding of similar groups or phenomena because human behavior is rarely unique to a single group (Berg, 2004). Ethnographic methods involve conducting fieldwork for an extended period of time to observe people's lives and using various methods to gather information, such as participant observation, informal and formal interviews, and collecting and analyzing documents (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Although ethnographies traditionally consist of at least one year of fieldwork, recent research has included shorter periods in the field, especially when working with transitory populations (e.g., refugees, volunteer tourists; Malkki, 1997).

We digitally audio-recorded semi-structured interviews in English with 36 volunteer tourists, 2 Ecuadorian reserve managers, and 3 volunteer coordinators (1 from the reserve, and 2 from the NGO). This included all volunteers present during the nine weeks, except six who we did not have time to interview because they arrived at the end of our stay. All participants were fluent or native English speakers. By conducting interviews during the summer months (June to August), which according to demographic research conducted by the NGO are the most popular months for volunteering, we were able to sample from several subgroups that volunteer

throughout the year (e.g., students on summer break, career break adults, gap year students [i.e., youth taking a break between secondary school and university during which they travel or work]). Consistent with past research (e.g., Campbell & Smith, 2006), we interviewed volunteers after they had been at the reserve for at least two weeks to ensure they felt settled.[5] Interviews ranged from 1 to 4 hours, with most between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in duration. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, we assigned a code to each participant (e.g., VF12 = volunteer female 12, RMM = reserve manager male, VC1 = volunteer coordinator 1).

Semi-structured interviews allowed us to have an initial set of questions to provide consistency across interviews and search for patterns in participant responses, but also to expand on individual responses and explore unexpected topics in greater detail (Berg, 2004). When formulating initial interview questions, we relied on previous literature and our exploratory study from which we learned that volunteers sought promotional material on the internet and were motivated to volunteer at the reserve because of project descriptions. In the current study, we did not ask volunteers directly about the role of promotional material until the end of the interview, thereby allowing them to mention it without prompting. Examples of questions we asked included: (a) why did you choose to volunteer though the selected organization, (b) why did you select this site, and (c) was there anything in the promotional material that influenced your decision to volunteer here? After asking volunteers to recollect

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[5] During our last week, due to our upcoming departure, we interviewed five volunteers who had been at the reserve for less than two weeks.

their motivations, we showed them printed copies of websites at which they looked when making their selection (e.g., organization, reserve) in order to remind them of information they read. We used websites given information in our exploratory study, the popularity of this method for finding information (Cousins, 2007), and our previous conversations with the reserve and NGO to determine organizations through which volunteers came. While at the reserve, if we discovered additional organizations used by volunteers, we located and printed the promotional material.

Consistent with ethnographic methods, we also employed participant observation and analyzed promotional material as triangulation techniques. Participant observation: (a) allows collection of greater types of data; (b) minimizes reactivity; (c) helps ask reasonable and culturally-appropriate questions; (d) provides intuitive comprehension of a culture, which allows greater confidence in data meaning; and (e) addresses research questions that cannot be examined with other techniques (Bernard, 2006). We lived, ate, and spent free time with volunteers, as well as completed daily tasks and engaged in informal conversations with volunteers and staff. This allowed us to be immersed in the volunteer tourist culture and engage in participant observation with volunteers and managers about volunteering, the reserve, volunteer motivations, and promotional material. This information supplemented and supported the semi-structured interviews and revealed any changing opinions. Interacting with volunteers and managers for a longer time increased their comfort with disclosure, which was

substantiated by having consistently longer interviews with volunteers whose stays overlapped more with ours.

Data Analysis

We used grounded theory to analyze our data, which is common for ethnographic methods (Bernard, 2006) and has been used in volunteer tourism research (e.g., Gray & Campbell, 2007; Wearing, 2001). Consistent with constructive grounded theory, we began transcribing interviews verbatim in the field. This allowed us to discover emerging themes, or "labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56), and address them in subsequent interviews. Constructive grounded theory recognizes multiple social realities and the roles of both the participant and researcher in creating knowledge (Charmaz, 2000). The researcher does not approach data with presupposed theories, but rather examines data closely to see what themes emerge. For instance, although we anticipated discovering that promotional material played a motivating role, we uncovered other unexpected themes (e.g., legitimacy) in volunteer responses.

To identify recurring themes pertaining to motivations and interactions, we analyzed and coded each transcript line-by-line and categorized codes into themes. We conducted multiple close readings of each transcript to inductively develop a coding scheme in which we condensed and expanded initial themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994); this reiterative process allowed us to gain familiarity with the data and

confidence in final thematic codes discussed here. We then organized coded data by these thematic categories to allow easy retrieval of relevant quotes (Berg, 2004). Verbatim quotes illustrate either representative examples of or exceptions to themes, and we only altered quotes slightly to remove unnecessary words and improve readability.

<div align="center">Results</div>

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Demographics of volunteer tourists were consistent with those found in previous research (e.g., Galley & Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). Ages ranged from 17 to 43, although 70% were under 25 years of age ($n = 25$). There were almost twice as many females ($n = 23$, 64%) as males ($n = 13$, 36%). Volunteers were primarily American, Canadian, and English, but some were from Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Wales, France, and the Netherlands. Most volunteers came to the reserve through the Ecuadorian NGO ($n = 14$, 39%), reserve ($n = 6$, 17%), or the intermediary organization named Global Volunteer Network ($n = 5$, 14%). In total, volunteers used eight intermediary organizations, although Volunteer Latin America provided contact details for the reserve and volunteers applied through the reserve. Volunteers had a mix of educational backgrounds, but almost all had attended, were attending, or were planning to attend college. Twenty-one volunteers studied or planned to study the environment or related science (e.g., biology). Twenty-five respondents had

previously volunteered at home and nine had volunteered abroad. Stays ranged from 2 to 10 weeks with one volunteer staying 7 months (average = 4.5 weeks).

Use of Promotional Material

Our first research question addressed the type of promotional material that volunteers used when choosing a specific organization or project site and how individuals accessed this information. Almost all volunteers relied exclusively on the internet to locate information when selecting an organization or project. For this reason, promotional material in this article refers to internet websites. Illustrating the popularity of this method with potential volunteers, VF8 exclaimed, "The internet is so good. It's brilliant!" RMM acknowledged, "We have a flier, but the flier—I don't know how much it works." Volunteers, such as VF6, often stumbled across the organization or project by chance: "I just…randomly found it on the internet and it looked nice and so I went with it." In some cases, volunteers first discovered the reserve on the internet, and then located organizations that sent volunteers to the site. Several volunteers did not initially search for conservation volunteer projects in Ecuador, instead looking more generally in Central or South America. While searching for volunteer opportunities on the internet, they realized the prevalence of opportunities in Ecuador. VM2 explained, "Ecuador was one of the places that I…came across and realized that there was a lot of conservation volunteering stuff happening here."

The most common method for searching and finding information was Google's internet search engine. We asked volunteers what words they entered when searching for volunteer opportunities. Although people reported a variety of terms, the most popular included: cloud forest, conservation internship, conservation reserves, conservation volunteering, Ecuador, environmental volunteering, volunteer abroad, volunteer South America, volunteer Latin America, and working abroad. Using these keywords allowed certain organizations to benefit. Volunteers who typed "Volunteer South America," "Volunteer Latin America," or "Working Abroad," for example, found organizations with those names listed among the first in Google's search results. Commenting on Volunteer Latin America's marketing strategy, VF12 exclaimed, "Such a good name! I'm sure they paid a fortune for that name." This especially is useful, as some volunteers did not look beyond the first site they found. VF22, for example, typed "Working Abroad" and decided that the organization looked good and did not search further: "I don't actually spend a lot of time on the internet…if I find a website that…is pretty good, I'll just stick to that." When creating promotional material, the reserve kept in mind that volunteers searched with keywords and that certain motivations helped them choose the site. VC3 said:

> We made a focus group asking everyone how did they get to us. And we asked them…the keywords they used. And it was so [great the] possibilities…[some] looked through volunteer work. Some others looked through Ecuador…I think the first thing is to try to analyze the first motivation that the person has of their trip…we decided to put as many possibilities as we thought it could be.

Although most volunteers searched with keywords on Google, VF9 was dissatisfied with the number of poor choices generated: "We just had a look at the internet…it was really hard to find volunteering places in South America, because if you Google it, you get like these [volunteer opportunities that] you pay $600 … or maybe even more."

In some situations, volunteers did not use the internet to locate an opportunity, but rather relied on it to verify an organization or project. This occurred most often if a volunteer heard about the organization or project from a friend or family member. VM8 wanted to volunteer at the reserve because of his cousin's recommendation, but he and a friend looked at the website to learn more before committing: "My cousin went through the website with us and…highlighted some of the things and after that I didn't look at it. I just looked at the jobs, and [how to] apply, and the prices."

Even more common were volunteers who had received a recommendation for an organization, but searched for specific sites and projects listed on its website. VM6's brother and father had volunteered through the intermediary organization, i-to-i, and because they had a good time, VM6 "surfed [its] website" for projects in South America. A friend's recommendation caused VM5 to examine the NGO's promotional material in detail: "I found [the NGO] and then it provided all the different sites, and I looked at each site…painstakingly, so I could pick…the best site that interested me the most." By relying on personal recommendations, volunteers reduced time spent searching the internet and used promotional material for a focused search.

Promotional Material as a Motivating Factor

Our remaining research questions addressed whether promotional material motivated volunteers to choose a specific organization or project site, and if so, what content and images in this material (e.g., information, appearance, destination / project attributes) played a motivating role. Almost all volunteers we interviewed said that promotional material motivated them to choose the organization or project. The major components that influenced their decision were the layout, appearance, and content. Volunteers, however, were not homogenous, and factors that we discuss here illustrate general trends and were not mentioned by all volunteers

Layout and Appearance. Volunteers mentioned the importance of a professional, organized, and well designed website. VF6 admitted, "I think [the NGO] just seemed put together, which I mean, I guess is a kinda shallow way to approach, but being a Westerner—it was just they had a very well-organized website." How Global Volunteer Network (GVN) organized the information about different available projects helped VF2 select the reserve: "The information on the different reserves [was] presented in a way that you could compare and contrast the different reserves and actually figure out what it was you wanted and what reserve offered those things." Volunteers, such as VM1, looked for other options if they found a website that did not seem professional or organized:

> I looked at, I think it was Volunteer Latin America…It was the least user friendly website I've ever come across. They gave you like three days…of the month that you can contact them and that was it and I was working on all three of those days, so it was just like, "Forget this!"

Volunteers also mentioned that they were more likely to choose an organization with a website that was easy to navigate because they appreciated finding information quickly. VF15 believed, "People lose interest if they can't find the information they are looking for. So having the information at your fingertips in an easy to read, easy to manipulate, easy to get around the site way is important." When looking through the promotional material, VM11 stated:

> [GVN] does have a well laid out website. It had the information available that I was looking for…which a lot of other websites obscure…A lot of the websites are interconnected, so I kept getting directed to the same list of volunteer opportunities. There is a lot of unhelpful information out there. GVN seems to be a more straightforward website and organization.

VF12 felt that the ease of navigating Volunteer South America's website spoke to the organization's practices: "It looked professional…it was just laid out in a way that was easy to use, which made me think that they might be like a simple company, easier to deal with." If volunteers could not locate the desired information quickly, they continued searching for organizations. VF14 explained, "I looked through a bunch of sites, and a lot of the other ones were really hard to navigate through. I was like, moving on, next one."

Several volunteers indicated that organizations or projects with organized and seemingly professional websites appeared legitimate, and volunteers trusted these over organizations that had, in VM1's words, "sketchier websites." For VF19, the NGO's website caused her to believe that, "It seemed to exist, which I think is an issue with so many opportunities on the internet these days. You wonder, 'If I arrive, will it actually

be there? Does it really exist?'" VF15 had a favorable impression of the reserve

simply because it had a website:

> Some of the places didn't have websites. So, the fact that this had a website
> made it feel…more legitimate. 'Cause if you are coming to do volunteering
> work and you are paying all this money, you want to make sure you are
> coming with an organization that you believe in and that you feel has some
> legitimacy and some reputation.

Interestingly, although volunteers relied on the internet to find organizations,

many realized that they could be misled by websites. Given that VF11's friend had a

positive experience with the NGO, she was more comfortable volunteering through it:

"It wasn't just pay lots of money to something and then you're not sure where it

goes…you never know from a Google search what reality is versus what they put on a

website." VM4 acknowledged, "You can arrange that so the last shithole [sic] looks

nice…you never know how it is until you were there." Despite recognizing this risk,

volunteers overwhelmingly judged organizations or projects partially by how

professional, organized, and navigable the website appeared.

Content - Photographs. Photographs were one of the first things that

volunteers viewed when visiting a webpage, and some volunteers admitted that these

images attracted them to the reserve. VF15 exclaimed, "When I saw the reserve's

pictures, I was like holy crow, this looks amazing." Acknowledging that the picture of

the volunteer house influenced him, VM13 said that it seemed a comfortable place to

stay for two months. Volunteers indicated that the pictures fit with how they

envisioned the landscape and their experience. VF13 remembered, "When the page

opened up, there was the person on the boat on the water. I guess it might be [another NGO reserve], but that's sort of my idea of…being on a river in the Amazon, like on one of those boats." VF15 pointed to a photograph on Volunteer Abroad's webpage that pictured a group moving a log and explained that she liked "this picture because it's not just one individual doing a job. It's a group of individuals working toward a common goal…it shows the team effort." Although some volunteers were attracted to the photographs, many, such as VM11, asserted that these images were not the deciding factors: "It has some pretty photographs, which does help, [but] I am not going to be sold just by photographs."

Content - Volunteer Comments and Testimonials. Volunteers also appreciated past volunteer comments or blogs in the promotional material. VF21 said that volunteer comments on the reserve's website were one of the reasons she chose the location. When looking through the material, VF1 pointed to a testimonial that she remembered: "'It was definitely the best time of my life' and I was like, 'Wow! Hey, this must be good.'" VF14 stated, "I think the comment page is really good. If you analyze it, you can tell which places have the most comments, and you'd read something…like, 'Oh I was there for a month and I was the only one there'…okay I'm not going to go there." However, several volunteers were skeptical and even annoyed at filling websites with volunteer comments and testimonials. VM11 complained, "I hate websites that put quotes from former volunteers because [organizations] can choose whatever quotes they want, so I don't trust it at all. I ignore them."

Content – Information. Almost all of the volunteers interviewed claimed that information illustrating pull factors (e.g., ecosystem) on the website played a major role in their decision to choose the organization or project. When asked if the information he read factored into his decision, VM2 answered, "Definitely, because that was what I was basing my decision on." Volunteers especially appreciated websites of organizations that provided details about the location, project, and cost. VF11 noted, "[The NGO's website] was extensive. It had the different locations, [was] very clear about what was going on at each location—clear not only about the work you would be doing, but free time activities and things like that." Information in the promotional material also helped volunteers choose the reserve. VM11 illustrated the connection between information in the promotional material and his decision: "I chose the reserve I did because I found information about it…readily accessible information."

Specifically, information about location of the reserve and the ecosystem appealed to most volunteers. Volunteers might have been drawn to a cloud forest beforehand, but many admitted that prior to reading about it, they did not know much about the ecosystem. VF15 admitted that after reading about the setting she thought, "Living in a cloud forest is pretty cool. I would be lying if I said that wasn't a part of the reason I chose it here." Lists of the animals living within the reserve also influenced volunteers' decisions. Volunteers with scientific backgrounds were attracted to the location because the promotional material described, to varying

degrees, concepts with which they were familiar. Several volunteers mentioned that

they selected the reserve because of its location in two of the earth's top twenty-five

biodiversity hotspots.

Detailed descriptions of volunteer tasks also motivated volunteers to choose

the project. Working Abroad, for example, listed specific tasks (e.g., plant trees,

monitor wildlife, work in garden) on their website, causing VM13 to anticipate that

the reserve had "everything [he] wanted." VF9 believed:

> It is a really good thing to write down the specific tasks, not only we do nature
> conservation, we do reforestation, we do sustainable development, but also say
> you have to do this and that…because then you really know what you're going
> to do when you're here.

This volunteer also said that if she and her boyfriend read projects with vague

descriptions, they "kicked them out" of their choices.

In addition to project details, information about the reserve's mission appealed

to volunteers. When looking at the reserve's promotional material, VF21 stated, "[the

mission] sounds very approachable to me. That is actually very important for Ecuador,

becoming a model of integrated farming." For some people, the reserve's mission

determined the country where they volunteered. VF5 explained, "I …looked around

on the internet…I really liked what the reserve was trying to do… it was a good

cause…I think that I would have went wherever the reserve was—if it was in Ecuador

or…Argentina."

Almost all volunteers mentioned that price was a deciding factor in selecting

the organization. Searching for price information was one of the first things that most

volunteers did when viewing promotional material. VF18 explained her process: "I looked at programs, went to Ecuador clicked on that [link]…and I looked at the cost for 10 weeks." If the cost was perceived as unreasonable, most volunteers navigated to another website instead of looking at the material in greater detail. VM13 admitted, "I went probably through six websites…[Working Abroad] was…half [the price of] a lot of the other ones."

Although volunteers highlighted the importance of information in promotional material, some indicated that given the overlay of organizations, the information they read did not clearly distinguish the organization from the project. VF10 acknowledged:

> I looked at [the project descriptions] and read each one and…it was later on when I actually got the program information from GVN that they're like…here go to the reserve's website…I never thought of it as a separate station…I just thought of them all as one.

Some volunteers stated that if they had known the reserve was separate from the organization, they would have chosen to come directly through the reserve. The lack of clarity may have caused some volunteers to choose larger, more expensive organizations that replicated, with permission, information contained in the reserve's promotional material.

Content - Environmental Concepts and Buzzwords. Although environmental concepts and buzzwords overlap with volunteer tasks (e.g., sustainable agriculture), the prevalence of these themes in volunteer responses makes it is important to discuss them separately. We identified key terms from words that volunteers used to search

for projects, concepts that volunteers mentioned in interviews, and project descriptions

in promotional material (e.g., "conservation in the cloud forest"). Some recurring

terms were "sustainability," "conservation," "reforestation," and "community

development." Volunteers mentioned these buzzwords on their own or when asked

what words, concepts, and photographs stood out in the promotional material.

Volunteers indicated that reading these terms motivated them to choose the

organization or project. VM5 said, "The big buzzwords, and why I choose the reserve,

was the fact that it had and they wanted to practice sustainability, that it was an area

that had biodiversity, and that it was working toward conservation." Promotional

material often included several buzzwords in one sentence such as one that VF1

highlighted, which she said made the reserve seem incredible: "The station works in

natural conservation, combating deforestation, protecting existing forest, restoring

degraded areas, and searching for sustainable activities." Even if they recognized these

to be buzzwords, volunteers still acknowledged the power of these words to motivate

them to volunteer through the organization or at the reserve. VF19 explained:

> Because I was looking for it…I felt that there was quite a lot of stuff on community development and sustainability. [The NGO] talked about alternative income generating projects, which is a great catchphrase in the development world and it's really important in terms of community development, but that's what jumped out at me. It's fantastic. It's really beneficial thing they're doing. Obviously they are putting 'sustainable' every second word, and everyone likes to hear that.

Discussion

We explored the extent that volunteer tourists used promotional material, how this material motivated them to select an organization or volunteer project, and what specifically in this promotional material played a motivating role. Volunteers almost exclusively used the internet to search for volunteer tourism opportunities. Volunteers who had an organization or project recommended to them by a friend or family member still examined promotional material on websites to either confirm that choice or select a specific project. In almost all cases, volunteers used Google's search engine as a starting point and entered keywords such as conservation, volunteer abroad, and Ecuador to find information.

Once volunteers located promotional material, their decision to choose the organization or project was influenced by both overall appearance of and specific content on websites, and most attributes advertised in the material were factors that pulled volunteers to the project or organization. Volunteers were attracted to organizations with websites that were organized and professional in appearance. Given that volunteers did not want to spend much time finding information, they tended to remain on easily navigable websites. For many volunteers, a seemingly organized and professional website led them to believe that the project or organization was legitimate; volunteers often feared that projects would be unsatisfactory or nonexistent. Although several volunteers recognized that photographs or information could be deceiving, they still admitted to trusting and being influenced by seemingly

professional websites.

Particular content on a website motivated volunteers, especially photographs, volunteer comments, project descriptions, and buzzwords. Although many volunteers mentioned being attracted by photographs, more believed that the descriptive project information influenced their decision. Volunteers appreciated promotional material that provided a substantial amount of description and detail, as this was usually all they used to inform their decision. Volunteers also searched for buzzwords in promotional material (e.g., conservation, sustainability), which reflected their interests and activities in which they wanted to engage. Our findings have implications for management, theory, and future research.

Managerial Implications and Practical Applications

Our results can help organizations and projects create promotional material that attracts volunteers. We recognize our findings might not apply to all volunteer tourism situations, but given the strong connection between promotional material and motivations, we recommend other managers to ask volunteers about salient qualities in their promotional material. Given that almost all volunteers at this reserve used the internet and Google to locate organizations or projects, managers and organizations should focus resources on internet promotional material, rather than fliers or brochures. In some cases, word of mouth was effective for influencing individuals to choose an organization or project, but promotional material remained extremely important because volunteers still examined websites before making a final decision.

Given that volunteers searched using keywords, managers may wish to find out what terms volunteers used to find their projects and include relevant words in their information; this may enable their website to be listed among the first in Google's search results. Managers should be cautious, however, of creating promotional material that attracts or recruits volunteers under false pretenses. Our study and past research (Lyons, 2003) suggest that promotional material influenced volunteer expectations and if it did not match expectations, dissatisfaction could occur.

If working with multiple organizations, managers should be aware of how other websites represent their information and project. Many volunteer tourists use intermediary organizations and some of these volunteers never see the project's promotional material or only view it after paying the organization. We found that some volunteers were unaware of the multiple organizations involved. Given this disconnect, managers should pay close attention to materials produced by other organizations. If a project works with organizations that have disorganized or unprofessional websites, it might lose potential volunteers who are negatively influenced by this promotional material.

One method for recruitment could be social networking tools, such as Facebook and personal blogs, because some volunteers mentioned that they enjoyed volunteer comments and blogs. The reserve had its own Facebook page and was linked to a Facebook page created by former volunteers. On the latter page, past volunteers discussed their experiences, prospective volunteers asked questions, and

recent volunteers posted pictures and provided updates. Volunteers who joined such a group likely had a positive experience, and therefore, they might encourage potential volunteers. Given that projects might turn to volunteers to help with fundraising, retaining past volunteer interest is also important.

Theoretical Implications and Future Research

Our research also has several implications for theory and future research. First, it suggests that researchers should give greater attention to effects of promotional material found on websites. Many volunteer tourists are pre-college, college, or recently graduated students, thereby growing up in the "internet age" and relying on the internet to search for opportunities (Cousins, 2007; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). These individuals have recently or will soon reach the age when they seek other tourism opportunities. Given this shift, tourism research examining promotional material also should focus on the internet, rather than just brochures, magazines, and other traditional methods of information dissemination and promotion (e.g., Bass et. al, 1989; Molina & Estaban, 2006).

Additionally, our research extends methods for analyzing how promotional material influences volunteer tourists by including interviews with volunteers. Although an organization might present project or organization attributes in its promotional material, talking to volunteers may be necessary to determine if these factors appealed to or motivated volunteers. As we discovered, volunteers mentioned that some promotional material contained unappealing elements and caused them to

avoid selecting certain organizations or projects. Given that our sample only represents volunteers at this reserve and volunteers who did not choose this reserve might not have found the same attributes salient, to see if these trends are widespread, future research should examine tourists who looked at different promotional material and chose different projects and organizations.

Much of the literature on volunteer tourist motivations has examined push factors (e.g., Broad, 2003; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Galley & Clifton, 2004); pull factors have received less attention. Although it may be argued that volunteers already had the desire to volunteer abroad when they looked for opportunities, the attention these individuals gave to their selections indicated that project and organization attributes (e.g., cloud forest, reputable) and the extent that promotional material portrayed these attributes were important. By focusing more on pull factors, researchers will be able to aid managers. Managers or organizations might not be able to push a person to volunteer abroad, but if they desire, they can design projects that include factors that attract volunteers.[6] In examining specific content in promotional material, we found that pull factors (e.g., cloud forest, project tasks) motivated volunteers to select the organization or project. Future research should examine other pull factors, including those not represented in promotional material, in volunteer decisions to select organizations, destinations, or projects.

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[6] Managers also may be able to adjust projects to satisfy some push motivations (e.g., creating projects that allow volunteers to meet other people or experience cultural immersion), but in most cases managers will not be able to directly motivate individuals to volunteer abroad.

Volunteers' concerns with legitimacy, reputation, and trust also warrant greater attention. Volunteers mentioned repeatedly their apprehension about not selecting a legitimate organization or a project that actually exists. This is of interest especially to smaller organizations or reserves wishing to attract volunteers directly, as they may not have funds to create sophisticated websites. This might result in volunteers choosing larger organizations, which would cause some volunteer fees to remain in the organization to cover administrative costs. In turn, projects might not receive funding necessary for conservation work. Although beyond the scope of our paper, researchers should also examine how pervasive the issue of trust is in volunteer tourism (e.g., use of money, project goals, project future).

One limitation of our study is that results may not generalize to all volunteer tourism situations. Researchers can address this limitation by conducting similar work on this topic with other volunteer organizations and projects. Given that initial results on this topic indicate common themes, we encourage researchers to also develop survey instruments to determine if these themes remain consistent across various sites, organizations, projects, and countries.

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CHAPTER 3-- MOVING BEYOND "I" IN MOTIVATION: ATTRIBUTES AND
PERCEPTIONS OF VOLUNTEER TOURISTS

Introduction

The concept of motivations has received substantial attention in the tourism and

recreation literature. Tourism and recreation motivations are internal or external

reasons for visiting an area or participating in an activity at a given time (Dann 1981;

Manfredo, Driver, & Tarrant 1996; Needham & Rollins, 2009). There has been

growing interest in understanding reasons why tourists visit destinations to engage in

some form of volunteering (Brown & Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Galley

& Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). These volunteer tourists "volunteer in an organized

way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty

of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into

aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2001, p. 1).

Researchers have primarily explored internal psychological reasons for why

individuals volunteer abroad (e.g., to learn, professional development; Brown &

Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). This

attention focusing on an individual's internal motivations has left several knowledge

gaps in research on volunteer tourist motivations. Few researchers have addressed if

and what specific characteristics of a country, continent, organization, and project

motivated volunteers to make their decisions (e.g., Söderman & Snead, 2008).

Managers and organizations often cannot encourage volunteers to make the initial

decision to volunteer abroad, but knowing what factors draw or detract potential

volunteers to a destination, organization, or project could be useful for recruiting

volunteers. Most researchers examining volunteer tourist motivations have also

focused on motivations that are self-reported by these tourists. Although this approach

follows trends in tourism, recreation, and volunteerism research, comparatively less

research has examined how others (e.g., managers, organization volunteer

coordinators) perceive volunteer motivations (e.g., Coghlan, 2008). This is important

because volunteers are only one group involved with the volunteer tourism experience,

and differences between actual motivations and perceived motivations can result in

both volunteer and manager dissatisfaction, as well as irrelevant marketing (Coghlan,

2008).

In addition, although researchers have employed qualitative methods to study

volunteer tourism motivations (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Caissie & Halpenny,

2003), few studies have employed onsite ethnographic methods (Broad & Jenkins,

2008). This could answer Wearing, McDonald, and Ponting's (2005) call for methods

that also include participants other than volunteers. These methods can aid in greater

sample sizes with several groups (e.g., managers, volunteers), disclosure of

motivations, and reducing reactivity or the phenomena of people changing their

behavior or answers when they know they are being studied (Bernard, 2006). We

conducted participant observation and interviewed international volunteer tourists,

reserve managers, and volunteer coordinators at a volunteer project in Ecuador to help

address these knowledge gaps. Our study moves research on volunteer tourist

motivations beyond the individual to explore the role of destination, organization, and project attributes in motivating volunteers, as well as manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions of volunteer motivations.

Conceptual Background

Motivations in Tourism, Recreation, and Volunteerism

Wearing (2004) stated that researchers could examine motivations of volunteer tourists with approaches from the fields of tourism, recreation, and volunteerism (e.g., Driver & Knopf, 1977; Iso-Ahola, 1989; Stebbins, 1996). One popular approach in tourism and recreation is the push/pull method, which suggests that people are "pushed" to travel by internal psychological motivations (e.g., reduce stress) and "pulled" to a destination by its attributes—both tangible resources (e.g., beaches) and traveler perceptions and expectations of what the site provides (e.g., novelty; Crompton, 1979; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). Dann (1981) claimed that push and pull factors are essential in motivating tourists, and Crompton (1979) identified seven push factors (e.g., escape a perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, facilitation of social interaction) and two pull factors (cultural motives, novelty). Many researchers have applied this approach to examine tourist motivations, either studying push and pull factors together or separately (e.g., Fodness, 1994; Sirakaya & McLellan, 1997; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994).

Destinations play a central role in tourism, especially as a way to satisfy push motivations (e.g., people seeking solitude might choose a backcountry setting).

Tourists with particular push motivations are drawn to specific locations or

destinations by settings (e.g., natural features, cultural components) that fulfill these

motivations (Needham, Wood, & Rollins, 2004; Uysal & Jurowski, 1994). Klenosky

(2002) suggested that single pull factors (e.g., beaches) could satisfy multiple

motivations (e.g., self-esteem, fun and enjoyment, accomplishment), whereas multiple

pull factors (e.g., skiing, historic/cultural attractions, new/unique location,

scenic/natural resources) could also serve the same motivation (e.g., excitement).

Wearing (2004) argued that in ecotourism, to describe the physical location "as a

'pull' phenomena is to overlook the importance…of the destination communities'

surrounding natural environment as a motivator" (p.217). Therefore, either push

factors (e.g., be physically active, enjoy scenery) or pull factors (e.g., tropical forests,

new experiences) can be the primary motivations of ecotourists (Eagles, 1992; Wight,

1996).

The broader field of volunteerism also helps in understanding volunteer tourist

motivations. Volunteering usually contains both altruistic and self-interested or egoist

motives (e.g., to help, to learn; King & Lynch, 1998; Ryan, Kaplan, & Grese, 2001),

although some studies have emphasized either one or the other. Stebbins (1996), for

example, contended that volunteering is a form of serious leisure, in which the motive

of self-interestedness is more influential than altruistic motivations because volunteers

expect personal and social rewards for their efforts. By designing and applying the

Volunteer Functions Index (VFI), Clary and colleagues (1996) identified six altruistic

and self-interested reasons for why people volunteer (e.g., values, career, social).

Silverberg and colleagues (1999) determined that three additional co-producer

functions existed for parks and recreation volunteers (e.g., department and community

need me). Researchers studying environmental volunteering recognized that extra

motivations were needed to account for reasons related to the environment and

animals, such as to help the environment and to work with specific animal species

(Bruyere & Rappe, 2007; Markus & Blackshaw, 1998). Given that motivations are

dynamic, people may initially volunteer with a project for altruistic motives (e.g., help

the environment), but shift to self-interested motives (e.g., social interactions; Ryan,

Kaplan, & Grese, 2001).

Researchers have also examined why volunteers choose certain organizations

or project locations. Volunteers wanting to work with specific animals, for example,

selected organizations that satisfied this need (Markus & Blackshaw, 1998). Stewart

and Weinstein (1997) reported that volunteer motivations (e.g., community concern,

esteem enhancement) varied between three HIV/AIDS organizations that differed in

setting and focus (e.g., urban, gay community-based social change setting; suburban

individual support setting). Among the most common motivations that volunteers

mentioned for participating in an environmental stewardship group were place-specific

motivations (e.g., "I joined because I knew about problems of the [area] and wanted to

help;" Donald, 1997). This is especially significant because the survey instrument

included only three place-specific reasons for joining the group compared to nine

internal push motivations (e.g., sense of responsibility to environment, personal growth), suggesting that researchers should focus on place-specific reasons for volunteering.

Motivations in Volunteer Tourism

Researchers studying volunteer tourism have also emphasized that individuals volunteer abroad for both altruistic (e.g., desire to help, give back, make a difference) and self-interested or egoist reasons (e.g., gain experience, travel, adventure, learn, seek pleasure, personal growth, cultural exchange, camaraderie; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Wearing, 2001). Some researchers, however, emphasized primarily self-interested motives (e.g., Galley & Clifton, 2004) or altruistic motives (e.g., Singh, 2002).

To a lesser extent, researchers (e.g., Söderman & Snead, 2008) have explored attributes that pulled volunteers to a specific country, continent, project, or organization, although findings were often secondary to the main research focus or mentioned in passing (e.g., Simpson, 2005). This is a significant knowledge gap because, as Wearing (2004) states:

> The internal push motives of discovery, enlightenment, and personal growth are important to volunteer tourists, but features of a destination are more than simply pull motives to this group, for volunteer tourists see physical locations in developing countries as motivations in themselves (p. 217).

Researchers examining why volunteers chose specific countries or continents stated that reasons included the perception that countries were "developing" and in need of help, the desire to learn other languages and about the culture, the unknown, and

personal recommendations (Simpson, 2005; Söderman & Snead, 2008; Wearing, 2004). Specific organizations have attracted volunteer tourists because of their reputation, project opportunities (e.g., sea turtle work), marketing efforts, perceived safety, opportunity to conduct independent research, and organization type (e.g., NGO; Campbell & Smith, 2005; Coghlan, 2007; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Söderman & Snead, 2008). Less work, however, has examined attributes that attracted people to specific volunteer projects and sites, but some reasons included project opportunities, program benefits, location, and personal recommendations (Broad & Jenkins, 2008; Caissie & Halpenny, 2003; Campbell & Smith, 2005).

More research should examine pull motivations related to a destination and project because managers and operators can directly control these factors and recruit potential volunteers by advertising amenable attributes or altering projects. Söderman and Snead (2008) contributed to research on pull motivations, as they explicitly examined why gap year travelers [i.e., youth who take a break between secondary school and university to travel or work] chose organizations providing programs that included additional benefits (e.g., excursions, language courses). Volunteer projects, however, can include both gap year and non-gap year participants (e.g., college student, career-break adults, retirees) and are not always organized programs (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Caissie & Halpenny, 2003); therefore, motives may differ among various types of projects. Söderman and Snead (2008) also did not examine why volunteers chose the specific project or site, although they mentioned specific

elements of the experience (e.g., conservation project) as a factor for selecting an

organization. Some motivations that Söderman and Snead (2008) and Galley and

Clifton (2004) listed for selecting an organization were more general reasons for

volunteering abroad or choosing to travel with any organization (e.g., to do something

new, to do more than travel, no confidence traveling independently), rather than

motives specific to the organization.

Others' Perceptions of Volunteer Tourist Motivations

Measuring motivations has primarily involved asking recreationists, tourists,

and volunteers to self-report their own motives. Comparatively few studies have

examined others' (e.g., managers, volunteer coordinators) perceptions of individuals'

motivations. Wellman, Dawson, and Roggenbuck (1982) asked recreation managers to

predict motivations of visitors at two sites; managers incorrectly identified visitor

motivations at one location, but were generally correct at the other site. The authors

speculated that once a manager forms an image of visitors, manager perceptions can

confirm this image and resist change. In a study on volunteer tourism, Coghlan (2008)

asked expedition leaders to speculate on reasons why individuals volunteered abroad

and then compared responses to volunteer answers on a similar survey. Few

differences existed between volunteer motivations and those perceived by leaders, but

leaders underestimated the importance of each reason and some motivations differed

significantly (e.g., develop personal interests, meet locals, experience different

cultures). Both of these studies suggested that visitors might not be satisfied with their

experience if managers misunderstood visitor motivations. By using qualitative ethnographic methods and examining others' perceptions of both push and pull motivations, we build on these studies that used survey instruments to examine perceptions of individuals' push factors.

Qualitative Research in Volunteer Tourism

Ethnographic methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation) are useful for understanding volunteer tourist motivations and others' perceptions of these motivations. Some studies of volunteer tourist motivations have included qualitative or mixed method approaches, but Broad and Jenkins (2008) asserted that few studies have involved "detailed, long-term examination," which can provide more insights due to the "participatory nature of ethnographic research" (p. 82). Ethnographic methods provide additional information that may be difficult to obtain using other methods. For example, interviews with volunteer tourists have typically been conducted off-site and after the experience (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Caissie & Halpenny, 2003), which can cause volunteers to forget their initial motivations and feel removed from the experience. It also is harder to contact people after they have left a volunteer project, as shown by Caissie and Halpenny (2003) who could interview only 10 out of the 20 volunteers contacted. Many qualitative studies conducted onsite also occurred during short time periods (e.g., less than three weeks at two sites; Lepp, 2008), which can result in small samples or volunteers feeling uncomfortable sharing personal information with a relative "newcomer."

Ethnographic research is useful, particularly for longer projects (e.g., more than two weeks). Spending more time at a site can increase sample sizes, especially for projects without a large number of volunteers at one time (e.g., Lepp, 2008; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). Given that some volunteers might be uneasy discussing self-interested motivations, they might not disclose reasons to someone they do not know. With time, a researcher can build trust and rapport with volunteers, allowing for increased disclosure and less reactivity (Bernard, 2006). This addresses the risk that people may not know their motivations when asked or do not wish to share them (Dann, 1981). Additionally, volunteers discuss their motivations in informal conversations and if researchers are present for extended time, they may be privy to these conversations. Including interviews and participant observation can provide greater understanding of volunteer tourist motivations and others' perceptions of these motivations, as additional motivations can be revealed in informal conversations and by observing participants' actions.

Research Questions

Given the limited research on factors that pull volunteers to select a country, continent, organization, and volunteer project, as well as others' perceptions of volunteer motivations, we pose three questions. First, what attributes pulled volunteers to select the country, continent, organization, and volunteer project and site? Second, for what reasons do other people involved in volunteer tourism (e.g., managers, volunteer coordinators) think individuals volunteered abroad and chose the country,

continent, organization, and project? Third, do differences exist between volunteer

motivations and others' perceptions of these motivations?

Methods

Study Site

We conducted fieldwork for nine weeks (June to August) in 2008 at a biological

reserve in Ecuador that offers conservation, sustainability, and social development

volunteer tourism opportunities.[7] A family owns the reserve, lives onsite, manages the

project, and works closely with the local community of 50 families. Although small at

814 hectares, this reserve's elevation of 1100m to 2040m and location in the

Ecuadorian Inter-Andean cloud forest affords it high biodiversity. The reserve resides

in the Rio Toachi-Chiriboga Important Bird Area (IBA) and two of the world's top

twenty-five biological hotspots: the Tropical Andes and the Choco Darien.

At the time of our research, the reserve listed on its website that its goals were

to protect the existing forest, restore degraded areas, work toward sustainable

development, create programs that foster community development, and educate about

conservation. To help achieve these goals, volunteers chose from three programs with

various activities: (a) "Conservation in the Cloud Forest" (e.g., reforestation, wildlife

monitoring, trail work); (b) "In the Way to Sustainability" (e.g., sustainable wood and

animal production, organic agriculture, alternative energy); and (c) "Social

Development" (e.g., teaching). Volunteers applied to the reserve, an Ecuadorian NGO

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[7] At the reserve managers' request, we do not disclose the reserve's name to protect the identity of the reserve and
managers. For that reason, we do not include the website.

with whom the reserve had an agreement, or through international intermediary

organizations (e.g., Working Abroad).[8] The NGO also worked with intermediaries,

causing some volunteers to be funneled through several organizations (e.g.,

intermediary to non-profit to reserve). We selected this site because: (a) Ecuador

offers numerous conservation volunteer opportunities (Callanan & Thomas, 2005;

Cousins, 2007); (b) many volunteers selected the reserve, allowing for diverse

opinions and reducing the chance of obtaining a small sample, which can be common

with onsite investigations of this nature (e.g., Lepp, 2008); and (c) one of us

volunteered at the reserve in 2005, affording credibility to gain participant trust.[9]

Data Collection

We used a qualitative, case study approach that employed ethnographic

methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation). Qualitative research addresses

questions concerning interpretations of meanings, concepts, symbols, metaphors, and

ways that humans make sense of their surroundings (Berg, 2004). Qualitative research

can involve a case study, which is "an empirical inquiry that investigates

contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries

between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" and employs multiple

sources of evidence for triangulation (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Results from case studies

cannot be generalized to all situations, but they can provide a general understanding of

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[8] At the NGO's request, we do not disclose its name to protect the identities of the NGO and volunteer coordinators.
[9] The reserve received 49 volunteers during July-September, 2007 and 40 volunteers during June-August, 2008.

similar groups or phenomena because human behavior is rarely unique to a single group (Berg, 2004). To collect data, we used ethnographic methods, which involve conducting fieldwork for an extended period of time to observe people's lives and employing various methods to gather information, such as participant observation, informal and formal interviews, and document retrieval (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Although ethnographies traditionally consist of at least one year of fieldwork, researchers have recently spent shorter periods in the field, especially when working with transitory populations (e.g., refugees, volunteer tourists; Malkki, 1997).

We digitally audio-recorded semi-structured interviews in English with 36 volunteer tourists, 2 Ecuadorian reserve managers, and 3 volunteer coordinators (1 from the reserve and 2 from the NGO). This included all volunteers present during our nine weeks in 2008, except six who we did not have time to interview because they arrived at the end of our stay. All participants were fluent or native English speakers. By conducting interviews during the summer months, which according to demographic research conducted by the NGO are their most popular months for volunteering, we were able to sample from several subgroups that volunteer throughout the year (e.g., students on summer break, gap years students, career break adults). Consistent with past research (e.g., Campbell & Smith, 2006), we interviewed volunteers after they had been at the reserve for at least two weeks to ensure they were

settled.[10] Interviews ranged from 1 to 4 hours, with most between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in

duration. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, we assigned a code to each

participant (e.g., VF12 = volunteer female 12, RMM = reserve manager male, VC1 =

volunteer coordinator 1).

Semi-structured interviews allowed us to have an initial set of questions to

provide consistency across interviews and search for patterns in participant responses,

but also to expand on individual responses and explore unexpected topics in greater

detail (Berg, 2004). When formulating initial interview questions, we relied on

previous literature and an exploratory study that we conducted at the site in 2007.[11]

This study suggested that volunteers were pulled to the country, organization, and site

by various attributes and that differences between volunteer motivations and manager

perceptions of these motivations existed. Examples of questions for the current study

included: "why did you choose to volunteer though the selected organization," "why

did you select this reserve," "why did volunteers choose to volunteer abroad," and

"why did they choose this reserve." Given that volunteers might have forgotten their

initial motivations, after asking volunteers to recollect their motivations, we showed

them printed copies of the internet promotional material (i.e., organization, project

websites) at which they looked when while making their initial volunteer decisions.

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[10] During our last week, due to our upcoming departure, we interviewed five volunteers who had been at the reserve for less than two weeks.

[11] During the exploratory study, we interviewed 11 volunteers and engaged in participant observation. Although we had a few predetermined questions that we asked volunteers, interviews were primarily unstructured. This allowed respondents to discuss their motivations, concerns, and experiences, and to help us discover relevant issues to pursue further.

This provided a prompt to remind them of additional reasons for their choices. We used websites given the popularity of this method for finding information (Cousins, 2006; Grimm & Needham, in prep) and to have relevant material, we asked the managers and coordinators through which organizations volunteers came.

Consistent with ethnographic methods, we also employed participant observation and analyzed promotional material as triangulation techniques. Participant observation: (a) allows collection of greater types of data; (b) minimizes reactivity; (c) helps ask reasonable and culturally-appropriate questions; (d) provides intuitive comprehension of a culture, which allows greater confidence in data meaning; and (e) addresses research questions that can seldom be examined with other techniques (Bernard, 2006). We lived, ate, and spent free time with volunteers, as well as completed daily tasks and engaged in informal conversations with volunteers and staff. This allowed us to be immersed in the volunteer tourist culture and engage in participant observation with volunteers and managers about volunteering, the reserve, volunteer motivations, and promotional material. This information supplemented and supported the semi-structured interviews, revealed any changing opinions, and uncovered participant beliefs about others. Interacting with volunteers, managers, and the reserve volunteer coordinator for a longer time also increased their comfort with disclosure, which was substantiated by having consistently longer interviews with volunteers whose stays overlapped more with ours. Data collected from participant observation informed findings in this paper.

Data Analysis

We used constructive grounded theory to analyze our data, which is common for ethnographic methods (Bernard, 2006) and has been used in volunteer tourism research (e.g., Gray & Campbell, 2007; Wearing, 2001). We began transcribing interviews verbatim in the field, which allowed us to discover emerging themes— "labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56)— and address them in subsequent interviews. Constructive grounded theory recognizes multiple social realities and that participants and researchers play roles in creating knowledge (Charmaz, 2000). Researchers do not approach data with presupposed theories, but rather examine data closely to see what topics emerge. For instance, although we expected to find that pull factors played a motivating role, we did not presuppose which factors were predominant.

To identify recurring themes related to motivations, we analyzed and coded each transcript line-by-line and categorized codes into themes. We conducted multiple close readings of each transcript to inductively develop a coding scheme in which we condensed and expanded initial themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This reiterative process allowed us to gain familiarity with the data and confidence in final thematic codes. We then organized coded data by these thematic categories to allow easy retrieval of relevant quotes (Berg, 2004). Verbatim quotes illustrate either representative examples of or exceptions to themes, and we altered quotes slightly

only when removing unnecessary words to improve readability.

Results

Sociodemographic Characteristics

Demographics of volunteer tourists were consistent with those in previous research at long-term volunteer projects (i.e., greater than one or two weeks; Galley & Clifton, 2004; Wearing, 2001). Ages ranged from 17 to 43, although 70% were under 25 years of age ($n = 25$). There were almost twice as many females ($n = 23$, 64%) as males ($n = 13$, 36%). Volunteers were primarily American, Canadian, and English, although some were from Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Wales, France, and the Netherlands. Most volunteers came through the Ecuadorian NGO ($n = 14$, 39%), reserve ($n = 6$, 17%), or the intermediary organization named Global Volunteer Network ($n = 5$, 14%). Volunteers used eight intermediary organizations, although one of these, Volunteer Latin America, provided contact details for the reserve and volunteers applied directly through the reserve. Volunteers had a mix of educational backgrounds, but almost all had attended, were attending, or were planning to attend college. Twenty-one volunteers studied or were planning to study the environment or a related natural resource science (e.g., biology). Previously, 25 respondents had volunteered at home and 9 had volunteered abroad. Stays ranged from 2 to 10 weeks with 1 volunteer staying 7 months, although the average stay was 4.5 weeks.

Managers and the reserve volunteer coordinator (VC3) were in their mid-30's and the NGO volunteer coordinators were in their mid-20's; all were Ecuadorian.

Although the reserve had been in RMM and VC3's family since 1970, it only started

receiving volunteers in 2003. VC3 worked primarily in the reserve's Quito office

coordinating volunteer logistics, but she also spent time at the reserve. VC1 had been

at the reserve once and VC2 had never visited. All managers and coordinators had

attended university and studied topics such as administration and marketing, natural

resource management, environmental science, biology, ecotourism, foreign languages,

and international relations. Although the reserve staff had long been involved with the

project, the NGO volunteer coordinators were relatively new (e.g., eight months to one

year).

Table 3.1. Volunteer motivations for selecting country and continent, organization, and volunteer project and site, and manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions of these motivations (not listed in rank order).

	Volunteers	Managers and Volunteer Coordinators
Country/Continent	Learn/practice Spanish Travel (adventure, travel plan) Haven't been there yet Small, diverse Developing countries need more help Safety Familiarity Andean culture Timing, proximity Chance	Learn/practice Spanish Travel (adventure, travel plan) Different Small, diverse Developing countries need more help Safety
Organization	Price Program variety Legitimate Recommendation Type of organization (e.g. NGO) Business practices, professionalism Chance Promotional material	Price Program variety Legitimate
Volunteer Project and Site	Recommendation Project variety and activities Location Amenities and services Ecosystem (environment, flora, fauna) Mission, goals No special skills needed Gain practical, hands-on knowledge of conservation and sustainability Private, family owned Promotional material Flexibility (dates, length of stay)	Recommendation Project variety and activities Location Amenities and services Natural and ecological setting

Table 3.2. Volunteer motivations to volunteer abroad and manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions of these motivations (not listed in rank order).

	Volunteer	Manager and Volunteer Coordinators
Self-Interested	Learn (environment; culture; language; self)	Learn (environment; culture; language; self)
	Travel (Never traveled abroad before; see world; get to know place/more than tourist; Not independent travel)	Travel (Never traveled abroad before; see world; get to know place/more than tourist; Not independent travel)
	Introspection	
	Challenge	
	Overall experience	
	Meet people	
	Professional Development, CV	
	Escape (reality, city, stress), Relaxation	
	New and different, Adventure	
	Health	
	Have fun	
	Rewarding, Feel good	
	Always wanted to	
	Timing (in life)	
	Not opportunity in my country	
Altruistic	Help (People/developing country; environment	Help (People/developing country; environment
	Make a difference	
	Contribute/do something worthwhile	
	Responsibility to people, environment	
	Family (influence, values)	
	Volunteer, work	

Volunteer Motivations

Answering our first research question, volunteers listed numerous attributes that pulled them to the country, continent, organization, and volunteer project and site (Table 3.1). Volunteers also discussed internal push factors for why they chose to volunteer abroad (Table 3.2). Given that their reasons were consistent with those in other studies (e.g., escape stress, make a difference, travel as more than a tourist; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Campbell & Smith, 2005), we do not discuss them in detail except when comparing them to manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions. Volunteers, however, were not homogenous, and motivations that we discuss here illustrate general trends and were not mentioned by all volunteers.

Country and Continent. Volunteers often chose South America and Ecuador because of the geographical location, including characteristics of the place (e.g., culture, nature). Volunteers selected South America because they had yet to visit the continent. VF12 admitted, "It's one of the continents I've never seen…I've been to four of them. This is the last one." At times, Ecuador was a stopping point on a larger trip, and volunteers either planned to visit or had already traveled around the continent. North Americans mentioned that because Ecuador is relatively close, it was easily accessible and relatively cheap to visit compared to other places (e.g., Asia). For other volunteers, Ecuador was a stopping point in world travel. Ecuador's biodiversity and numerous ecosystems such as the rainforest, cloud forest, coast and páramo [a high elevation neotropical ecosystem] attracted volunteers. This diversity is found in a

small area, which as VF8 stated, afforded volunteers the opportunity to see much during their time abroad: "Ecuador is compact…I see it is the three sections [coast, highlands, rainforest] and it just seems more manageable to get around…than in a bigger country." The Andean location also appealed to volunteers interested in Andean culture and meeting "friendly" Ecuadorians.

Other pull attributes that made South America and Ecuador appealing choices in which to volunteer included the desire to practice or learn Spanish. Volunteers, such as VM6, believed: "There's no better way to learn Spanish than to be thrown into a country that mainly speaks it and have to get around." Volunteers also selected the country because they believed that "developing" countries such as Ecuador needed more help. For example, VF1 explained, "I wanted to help people and…in the developed world there is less help needed… developing countries, they need a lot more help, so that's why I choose why to go to a developing country." The relative safety of Ecuador also attracted volunteers, including the relatively stable economy, non-violent political situation, and non-aggressive males. VF14 said that she chose Ecuador over other countries because some countries are "clearly unsafe, but…also racist and sexist." Volunteers admitted that their parents had similar sentiments and favored Ecuador over other countries, such as Columbia. In some cases, volunteers admitted that their choice of country was circumstantial; they had found a greater number of affordable volunteer opportunities in Ecuador than in other countries. VF11

recalled, "My initial location had been Peru where I really wanted to go, but in looking at the prices [the Ecuadorian NGO] hands down was the most feasible."

Volunteers mentioned familiarity or comfort with the country or continent. In some cases, they had previously visited the continent and wanted to see more. In other situations, such as with VF6, volunteers felt safer returning to an area that they already experienced and knew they liked: "I've been to Peru and so…I kind of know a little bit about South America and that area and so I was like, that's a good idea." VF13 mentioned that she would not choose a country about which she had no understanding of the language, culture, and issues. Other volunteers believed that Ecuador was not unlike their home country, either because Ecuador used the US dollar or did not seem too exotic that they "wouldn't be able to handle it" [VF14]. In this sense, volunteering in Ecuador was seen as a stepping-stone for longer travels (e.g., Africa). VM10 explained, "It's still kinda American. I'm just like stepping my way out of the house, onto the porch or the neighbor's lawn." This is not to say that all volunteers searched for comfort and familiarity, but those who expressed the unknown mentioned it in terms of being in a remote area and away from civilization, as opposed to why they selected the country.

Organization. Overwhelmingly, volunteers mentioned price as a major reason for selecting the organization through which they came (e.g., reserve, NGO, intermediary organization). VM5's frustration returned when he recounted, "[Volunteer programs] are all really expensive, some were US$3000-4000, minus the

plane ticket—that is just the volunteer work! It's like jeez…who's working for who?"

It makes sense that many volunteers went through the reserve or NGO because these

organizations charged US$420 and $450 per month respectively—both cheaper than

larger intermediary organizations. VM9, who had selected the NGO, sympathized, "I

always feel bad for people who come through i-to-i and GVN (Global Volunteer

Network)…you kind of know how much extra they've paid to have the exact same

product. Those organizations I have problems with." Volunteers who went through

intermediaries felt that the organizations they chose were cheaper than other options.

For example, GVN charged an additional US$450 administrative fee, but this fee was

good for two years at any of the reserves with which they work. Compared to

thousands of dollars that some organizations charged for one volunteer opportunity,

volunteers believed that GVN was a reasonable option.

Volunteers emphasized that they trusted and chose organizations that appeared

legitimate, and to some, intermediary organizations seemed more reputable than

applying directly to the reserve. VF5 acknowledged, "I…never traveled abroad or

volunteered abroad and so I thought, if there is a foundation that knows I am here and

they help me do it and I have to pay a little extra just to make sure that it's legitimate,

then I should do that." Volunteers traveling independently wanted more security, but

said that next time they would volunteer directly through a reserve to save money and

ensure that all of their money went to the project. Cautious volunteers, such as VF18,

even admitted that initially they feared whether a project would actually exist: "I

wanted to go through a company that was…verified, a lot of people had been

through." For this reason, people who volunteered through organizations were willing

to pay more money, even if they stressed that price was an important factor.

Volunteers with friends who had volunteered abroad heeded recommendations to

ensure selecting a reputable company. VF15 recalled:

> I chose Volunteer Abroad because I had some friends who had done Volunteer
> Abroad before and they said their experience had been incredible, life-
> changing. And they seemed like a really reputable company, an organization
> that really looked out for you while you were here and gave you a lot of
> support and…information.

In all but one case, volunteers who chose to volunteer directly with the reserve

received a recommendation either from a friend who had previously volunteered at the

reserve or in the volunteer packet complied by Volunteer Latin America, thereby

allowing these volunteers to feel they could trust volunteering directly with the

reserve.

Administrative professionalism also heavily influenced volunteer choice of

organization. This included being helpful, organized, and providing timely responses

to inquiries. Volunteers, such as VM1, sometimes chose the first organization that

responded:

> [The NGO] did respond to my very first email very quickly, which also
> helped, 'cause…this was sort of an impulse thing for me…I didn't
> know I was coming here 'til short notice, and if someone else had
> responded sooner, I may have ended up there.

VF23, who went directly through the reserve, said that the volunteer coordinator in the Quito office "made time to meet with me because I couldn't meet with her on her hours…and, she spoke English, which was nice, and we emailed before I got to Ecuador." Volunteers, such as VF6, were impressed by an organization that appeared organized, whether on the company webpage or in the information that they received: "[The NGO] just seemed put together, which I guess is a kinda shallow way to approach [it], but being a Westerner—it was just they had a very well-organized website and were very quick to reply and helpful." Volunteers mentioned that they avoided organizations not meeting these requirements.

Organization type also attracted volunteers (e.g., local, non-profit). Volunteers were attracted to the NGO because it was non-profit, the reserve because it was family-run, and to both because they were Ecuadorian. VF13 believed, "I think it's a lot better to have the people working on their own land than having foreign groups doing it." Other volunteers, such as VM3, thought that volunteering directly through the reserve was more personal and that they received more accurate details: "I just liked the idea of…talking directly…to the reserve… I felt I was getting the most accurate information…I felt better hearing about it from someone who…had the interest of the reserve at heart as opposed to the interest of their middle man company."

Volunteers appreciated having choices and services with an organization. This included organizations that provided a variety of programs from which volunteers

could choose, whether it was an intermediary company with projects in several countries or the NGO's eight reserve options in Ecuador. VF6 even believed that the different options "made [the NGO] seem a little bit more legitimate than just [having] one reserve." Volunteers also preferred flexibility with travel plans, such as flexible start and end dates. Amenities and services also appealed to volunteers, including airport pick up, in-country support, and health insurance.

As with country selection, volunteers admitted that chance played a role in their decision for selecting the organization. They may have been unaware of other options, such as being able to volunteer directly through the reserve. VF12 said, "If I had known there was three parties involved in my transaction, then I maybe would have cut out one of the parties, because it's more cost-effective." Other volunteers mentioned the organization that they chose was well advertised or listed among the first on Google's search engine. In other cases, volunteers first found the reserve, but then searched to see what organizations went to the site because they were not comfortable going directly through the reserve. Therefore, they chose the organization primarily because of its relationship with the project.

Volunteer Project and Site. Volunteers recounted their extensive deliberation when deciding on a volunteer project, indicating the reserve itself played an important role in pulling volunteers to the site. Volunteers, such as VF20, felt passionate about the reserve's mission and wanted to help the reserve meet its goals: "The whole aim was intriguing to me, because in school they always threw those words out,

'conservation,' 'sustainability,' so I wanted to help out with that." The variety of volunteer tasks and types of activities (e.g., garden, reforestation, community development, renewable energy) also pulled people to the project. VF15 recounted, "This place sounded more comprehensive than some of the other conservation projects and I thought it would be a really great experience to get an overall, encompassing volunteer experience, as opposed to focusing on one aspect and maybe not liking it." Volunteers also appreciated the flexibility of their length of stay and arrival and departure dates. The fact that most of the labor at the reserve did not require special skills appealed to volunteers such as VF5: "I could come here and do physical work and manual labor and…make a difference doing that, whereas if I tried to go somewhere else, I don't think I'd have the skills to help very much." In other cases, as with organization choice, volunteers who knew people who volunteered at the reserve chose the project based on personal recommendations. For instance, VM3 said, "My friend had a great time here and I knew I could try somewhere else, but I'm not a particularly adventurous person [but the reserve] is not like I'm settling."

Environmental and conservation issues also motivated volunteers to choose the reserve, and more generally a conservation project. The ecosystem attracted them, as most volunteers had never been in a cloud forest. VF15 admitted, "Living in a cloud forest is pretty cool. I would be lying if I said that wasn't a part of the reason I chose it here." More generally, volunteers wanted to be in nature and believed that a cloud forest would be beautiful and contain flora and fauna that they wanted to see (e.g.,

orchids, monkeys). Volunteers with an interest in conservation, sustainability, or reforestation believed that the reserve afforded opportunities to expand their practical knowledge. VF13 articulated, "I expect to continue studying conservation and environmental science in college, and I expect that this will probably be good field experience." Volunteers were attracted to the site being private and family-owned, feeling that the managers might both have a better understanding of local conservation and be more passionate about its mission. Interestingly, a few volunteers not knowing originally that it was a private reserve worried about how this would affect conservation work (e.g., would the next generation continue the work, would the reserve take advantage of volunteers). VF4 fretted, "I didn't know [the reserve] was a private reserve until I arrived in Ecuador, which I reckon frightened me a bit…I feel I work for a private cause."

The reserve's location was important to volunteers for a variety of reasons. First, being centrally located and close to the capital of Quito made it easy for volunteers to travel to the reserve and visit various locations on weekends. VM9 recalled, "I knew I would want to go see Ecuador and here we are right in the middle and it's easy to get to everywhere." Some volunteers chose the site because they wanted a remote experience, whereas others did not want to be too far from civilization. When one volunteer joked that the reserve needed an internet café at the site, another volunteer mentioned that civilization was what they were trying to escape. Interestingly, volunteers expressed that the reserve fulfilled both needs,

depending on their motivation; the closeness to Quito made the site seem not too remote, whereas other volunteers commonly stated that it was "in the middle of nowhere" given the ecosystem. In addition, volunteers who expressed that they enjoyed the remote feeling often revealed through their actions that they appreciated being able to use their ipods and enjoy other comforts. This is not surprising because volunteers also selected the reserve because of amenities and services offered such as showers, electricity, a home base while traveling, English-speaking managers, and informative lectures. Other volunteers, however, believed that they received too many luxuries and felt like regular tourists.

Manager and Coordinator Perceptions of Volunteer Motivations

Volunteer Abroad. Our remaining research questions examined: (a) for what reasons do other people involved in volunteer tourism (e.g., managers, volunteer coordinators) think individuals volunteered abroad and chose the country, continent, organization, and project, and (b) if differences existed between volunteer motivations and others' perceptions of these motivations. Managers and coordinators accurately identified both self-interested and altruistic motivations for why volunteers chose to volunteer abroad, but they focused primarily on self-interested motivations. Specifically, they emphasized travel as volunteers' main motivation, believing that individuals viewed volunteering abroad as both a cheap way to travel and chance to know a place more intimately than a typical tourist. RMM explained, "I think the main reason is to travel…to have a different way of traveling…to feel…the roots of the

communities or the cultures that they want to visit." Managers and coordinators recognized that another primary motivation of volunteers was to learn a new language; about the culture; or about the environment, particularly conservation and sustainability efforts. RMF stated that volunteers searched for personal perspective, hoping that the experience would help them learn about themselves. Inconsistent with what many volunteers mentioned, managers and coordinators noted that the desire to help (e.g., environment, developing country and people) did not apply to all volunteers and was often a secondary reason. For example, VC3 believed, "I really think that few people…[are] really concerned about conservation and…really want to make a difference." As can be seen in Table 1, managers identified far fewer reasons why people volunteer abroad and neglected some common motivations (e.g., contribute, escape stress).

Country and Continent. Managers and coordinators correctly believed that volunteers selected Ecuador for travel, adventure, exploration, safety, and its label as a "developing country." Unlike volunteers, however, RMM thought that volunteers believed, "Ecuador is still… an exotic country, something that is not very known and most of the people…want to know what is unknown…to explore." Managers and coordinators accurately assumed that volunteers chose Ecuador because of its diversity and beauty, and given its size, volunteers could see much with little travel. Ecuador is also a good starting place for volunteers who want to travel through the rest of South America; it is one of the northernmost politically stable countries on the continent.

VC3 explained, "Ecuador is not like Peru or Columbia. [It's a] more polished country…the person who finally decides to come to Ecuador … understand[s] that Ecuador is a very safe country." They also recognized that volunteers chose Ecuador because it was a developing country and needed help. RMF lamented that volunteers assumed Ecuador had one of the most corrupt governments and among the highest levels of poverty and deforestation in the Latin America; she mentioned that some intermediaries depicted those figures to make it seem as though the country needed desperate help.

Organization. Among many reasons for selecting specific organizations, managers and volunteer coordinators most commonly listed legitimacy and trust. Those employed with the reserve recognized that many people did not volunteer directly, and instead used an intermediary organization or the NGO because they or their parents trusted larger organizations or companies from their own countries. VC3 stated, "They have more confidence in big organizations, probably they feel safe and if they find [the reserve] in the webpage, they probably say, 'Does it really exist?'" The NGO volunteer coordinators believed that volunteers chose the NGO because of its reputation, having existed for 25 years and being one of the largest Ecuadorian organizations offering volunteer opportunities. VC3 understood that people often chose to volunteer through the reserve because of the lower price. Only VC1 mentioned the number of programs offered as a reason why volunteers selected an organization, although volunteers frequently mentioned this factor.

Volunteer Project and Site. Managers and coordinators emphasized factors from which volunteers benefitted as reasons that pulled volunteers to a conservation reserve in general and this site in particular. Managers and coordinators believed that volunteers wanted to escape the city and spend time in nature, thereby selecting an activity and project involving nature. Similar to volunteers, managers and volunteer coordinators also stressed the importance of project variety, including the activities offered and focus on conservation, sustainability, and social development. RMF stated that volunteers were previously drawn to conservation, but in recent years more have also wanted to learn about sustainability. In addition, all the managers and coordinators highlighted that the reserve provided amenities and services affording comfort, fun opportunities, and chances to learn (e.g., Spanish lessons). Being centrally located and close to Quito also allowed for easy travel to the site and around the country on weekends. Managers suggested that volunteers also selected the reserve for cultural interaction because it was operated by Ecuadorians and volunteers worked with Ecuadorian staff. Only RMF emphasized the importance of the cloud forest, recommendations of previous volunteers, and safety as additional deciding factors. These issues were frequently raised by volunteers. Interestingly, managers and volunteer coordinators did not mention more altruistic motivations for selecting the reserve, such as interest in and a desire to help accomplish the reserve's mission and goals.

Discussion

Using a qualitative approach, we examined attributes that pull volunteer tourists to the

continent, country, organization, and volunteer project and site, as well as managers'

and volunteer coordinators' perceptions of these motivations. Although volunteers

listed a range of motivations, general trends included learning the language, price,

safety, project mission, and project variety. Pull factors often played a substantial role

in volunteer decision-making process, even the desire to go abroad. Managers and

volunteer coordinators correctly identified some volunteer motivations (e.g., travel,

price, amenities, services), but mentioned far fewer reasons than did volunteers.

Managers and volunteer coordinators also did not recognize some major reasons such

as project mission, and especially overlooked altruistic reasons such as the desire to

contribute to the reserve and project. Our findings have implications for managers and

future research.

Managerial Implications and Practical Applications

Knowing why volunteers choose an organization and site will help managers

and organizations recruit potential volunteers by highlighting motivating factors in

promotional material (e.g., location, amenities, project mission). Managers should be

cautious, however, about creating materials that may attract or recruit volunteers under

false pretenses. Past research (Lyons, 2003) has suggested that if promotional

materials did not match expectations, dissatisfaction could occur. In addition, knowing

that certain factors are attractive to volunteers can help managers know what attributes

they should retain at the site (e.g., project variety, reasonable price, safety, hand-on conservation experience). These results also may inform managers at other reserves and other organizations of attributes that attract volunteers. Given that our study only involved one site and we cannot generalize to all volunteer projects, however, other managers and organizations should be cautious applying these findings, as volunteers who did not choose this reserve or these organizations might be attracted to characteristics of other opportunities. More research on attributes that pull volunteers would be helpful for managers and organizations.

Our research can also help smaller projects attract volunteers to help with conservation work. With larger intermediary organizations, some money does not reach the reserve, leaking out to pay for administrative overhead (Weaver, 2001). An extreme example is i-to-i, which stated on its webpage that it did not provide funds to projects other than the cost of room and board. Although this organization stated the reason was because it did not want projects to become dependent on these funds, this can place projects in a delicate position. This reserve used volunteer fees to provide staff salaries and invest in the project, both in the form of sustaining volunteers (e.g., construction of volunteer house) and purchasing supplies for the project. By attracting more direct volunteers, a greater amount of money could be available for conservation initiatives. If smaller reserves know exactly what pulls volunteers to certain organizations, they can try to replicate these qualities to attract volunteers directly. Although a reserve or project cannot change some factors, such as being from the

country from which a volunteer comes, others they can. For instance, knowing that volunteers emphasize professional aspects, including being well organized and providing quick responses, can allow smaller projects to replicate these qualities.

It would also be helpful for managers and coordinators to know volunteer motivations ahead of time, since they are not always aware of them. They could ask volunteers in an opening orientation the reasons for volunteering, as RMF did. An even better approach would be to ask for this information in application materials and ensure that it arrives at the reserve, allowing managers, if they desire, to prepare projects and tasks that match volunteer motivations. For instance, if volunteers stress that they chose the reserve because of sustainability work, managers can try to provide relevant tasks (e.g., working on renewable energy initiatives). We recognize that some tasks might not be possible due to timing (e.g., planting trees in the dry season), managers might not want to lose sight of their program goals, and they may have to decide how to balance volunteer needs with their project goals (e.g., learning versus work). We also realize that volunteers may not know their motivations, feel pressure to offer socially acceptable or desirable answers, and change their motivations throughout the experience. For instance, RMF informed us that one volunteer had provided altruistic reasons for volunteering, but when we spoke with this volunteer later in his stay, he claimed to volunteer for only self-interested reasons. Despite these limitations, having a baseline understanding of volunteer motivations could help managers.

Theoretical Implications and Future Research

With this article, we hope to build on existing motivation research in recreation, tourism, and volunteerism in general and in volunteer tourism in particular. Broadly, our study indicated the importance of pull motivations. We urge researchers investigating motivations to not only focus on internal psychological factors that push people to volunteer, but also examine roles that destination and organization attributes play in pulling people to make their selections. In some cases, people may first be pushed to go abroad, but we caution against relegating pull factors as secondary or not even considering them as motives (Dann, 1981). As we found and Wearing (2004) claimed, the environment and its unique characteristics factor into nature-based travel and volunteer tourists might place greater emphasis on specific destination qualities than do traditional tourists. We discovered that volunteer tourists thought carefully about the country and project they chose, and pull factors played a substantial role in their decisions. For some volunteers, the destination itself was the draw, as they indicated that they always wanted to go to South America for its environment or culture; the decision to volunteer abroad was an afterthought.

Our research also expands work examining factors that pull volunteers to destinations, organizations, and projects. Although we found some of the same motivations as Söderman and Snead (2008) (e.g., program variety, type of organization, linguistic), we discovered interesting differences. These could have resulted from their focus on three structured gap-year programs with different types of

organizations (e.g., company, charity, non-profit), as opposed to our study that examined one project involving multiple organizations, including organizations that market also to non-gap year volunteers. Whereas Söderman and Snead (2008) reported that volunteers stressed the unknown and danger of visiting Latin America, we found that more volunteers mentioned safety and familiarity. Structured programs might have provided comfort and security, allowing volunteers to feel that it was risky. The experience usually was not dangerous, but rather embodied "perceived risk" and "perceived danger" (Simpson, 2005). Larger organizations mediated risk by making the experience seem dangerous and exciting to gap year volunteers while stressing safety to parents (Ansell, 2008). Most volunteers who we interviewed undertook this as independent travel or volunteered through an organization without much in-country support, which might have caused volunteers to seek a feeling of security.

In addition, almost all volunteers who we interviewed mentioned price as a primary factor in their choice of organization, whereas program cost has not been mentioned in many other studies. Differences between our results and Söderman and Snead's (2008) findings might have resulted from differences in program types. The three gap-year programs they examined provided benefits (e.g., excursions, language courses), which usually cost more money and people who select these expensive options might not have the same concerns about the expense.[12]

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[12] They did not provide organization names, so we could not verify prices.

Few researchers have discussed scientific reasons for why volunteers select an organization or project. Exceptions usually involve volunteer opportunities focused on specific animals or gaining field experience (e.g., Campbell & Smith, 2005; Galley & Clifton, 2004). Volunteers who we interviewed emphasized the importance of biodiversity, conservation, and sustainability initiatives at the reserve. It would be beneficial to know if volunteers involved in conservation work are strongly motivated by environmental factors as opposed to other factors (e.g., travel, social) given that some scientists are calling for volunteer tourists to aid with research to reduce funding costs (e.g., Brightsmith, Stronza, & Holle, 2008). Given the disparities between our study and Söderman and Snead's (2008), research should continue examining why volunteers are pulled to countries and organizations, and examine a variety of volunteer opportunities and programs.

Given that multiple groups are involved in volunteer tourism, we believe that broadening volunteer tourism beyond the individual is necessary for understanding the complete volunteer tourism experience. With this article, we followed Coghlan's (2008) lead and moved the focus away from the individual to examine how other people (e.g., managers, coordinators) perceive volunteer motivations and compare how closely these perceptions match volunteers' self-reported motivations. We build on Coghlan's (2008) work by including pull factors and using ethnographic methods, and consistent with her findings, we discovered that volunteers shared a greater range of motivations than staff (e.g., managers) and staff underestimated the importance of

most of these motivations. Unlike the leaders she studied, managers and volunteer coordinators who we interviewed understood that volunteers came for a touristic experience. In fact, managers and coordinators overemphasized self-interested motivations such as travel, and neglected to identify a variety of other motivations commonly mentioned by volunteers themselves, including the project goals and mission. Future studies should continue broadening motivation research beyond the individual, such as identifying manager motivations for running a volunteer tourism project and volunteer perceptions of these motivations. Another area of research could include community member perceptions of volunteer motivations. It would also be useful to know if differences between perceptions and actual motivations influence interactions among participants (e.g., what occurs when volunteers are motivated to help and managers perceive them to be motivated to travel).

We also contend that this work supports Broad and Jenkins's (2008) assertion that there is value in studying motivations using ethnographic methods. These methods can allow participants to gain greater trust in the researcher and increase comfort when disclosing their reasons. Volunteers who spent more time with us at the reserve (i.e., more of our stay overlapped) allowed us to talk and interact with them for more time and consistently had longer and more detailed interviews. In addition, volunteers might not want to reveal egoist motivations, but as they gain trust in the researcher, they might be willing to share an array of motivations.

Informal conversations are one ethnographic method that provide additional information that can supplement more structured interviewing. Volunteers and managers in our study talked about motivations in informal conversations with us and other volunteers, which both supported their responses in the semi-structured interviews and revealed additional motivations. We also found that volunteers sometimes had time to reflect on their motivations and realized their thoughts on initial motivations were not always accurate or the only reasons. In other instances, volunteers stated that they were motivated by one thing (e.g., remoteness), but by observing their actions, we identified additional or contradictory reasons for their choices (e.g., amenities).

The fact that managers mentioned far fewer motivations than did leaders who Coghlan (2008) interviewed might be a result of different research methods; by presenting leaders with a survey, she may have prompted leaders to think of motivations that they had not previously considered. By engaging in interviews and not prompting managers and coordinators, we allowed them to only share motivations prevalent in their minds. We believe that future research, if possible, should include ethnographic methods and compare findings from this approach to results of more traditional survey questions to take advantage of the benefits mentioned above and to see how things play out on the ground. Ethnographic methods would also aid in onsite observations of differences in volunteer motivations (e.g., make a difference) and how

perceived motivations (e.g., travel) affect interactions between participants and work

on the project.

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CHAPTER 4 – WE ALL CAME FOR 'CONSERVATION': DIFFERENT
INTERPRETATIONS AND EFFECTS ON INTERACTIONS AT A VOLUNTEER
TOURISM PROJECT IN ECUADOR

According to Brown & Morrison (2003), the number of people traveling to other

countries to volunteer for conservation or humanitarian projects has increased

substantially in the past three decades. These tourists "volunteer in an organized way

to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of

some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into

aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2001, p. 1). Conservation volunteer

tourism, or volunteer ecotourism, brings together multiple actors (e.g., international

volunteer tourists, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local managers,

community members) in close human-environment contexts for extended periods of

time. Volunteer tourists come to engage in 'conservation' (Grimm & Needham, in

prep), but what exactly does this word mean? Volunteer projects and organizations

advertise this concept (Grimm & Needham, in prep) and it is possible that volunteers

discuss it as if there is an undisputed meaning, but turning to work in political ecology

and rhetorical studies illustrates that this word is anything but neutral and concrete.

In this article, we employ both discursive political ecology and rhetorical

lenses to understand the processes involved with the term 'conservation' in which is

invoked at many levels of the volunteer tourism experience. Promotional material

advertises the concept to attract to volunteers, volunteer projects are titled as

conservation projects, and volunteers and managers on site regular talk about and do

conservation (Grimm & Needham, in prep). Given that discourse is "a constructed system of arguments, ideologies and interpretations that shapes social practices, affecting the way we see things and talk about them" (Hay, 2000, p. 187), we cannot assume that even though participants use 'conservation' in their discourse they interpret the term the same. Political ecologists and rhetorical critics have demonstrated how loaded terms can represent and privilege dominant ideologies, while neglecting other views, and that this can have ramifications for relationships and interactions between different groups (e.g., Campbell, 2002; Cloud, 2004). For example, in their argument for the application of a political ecology framework to ecotourism, Campbell, Gray, and Meletis (2007) noted that although ecotourists are conservation-seeking, their vision of nature can contradict views of local communities and affect these areas.

To analyze how 'conservation' is used and interpreted, and how these different interpretations affect relationships between groups, a method employing both political ecology [i.e., study of political, economic, and social factors involved in environmental change and access to resources] and rhetorical criticism [i.e., investigation and evaluation of acts and artifacts to understand rhetorical processes; Foss, 1996] could be helpful. Although political ecologists often examine discourse, turning to analytical methods from rhetorical studies, specifically ideological criticism [i.e. analysis of dominant ideologies] and cluster criticism [i.e., identification and examination of keywords and terms frequently clustered near the keyword], could

provide a replicable and comparable method for understanding usage, interpretation, and underlying ideologies of key terms in environmental discourse.

This article has three broad objectives. First, a careful analysis of 'conservation' is necessary as the number of people volunteering in the name of conservation increases; these volunteers come together to work on a seemingly similar goal, but differences can affect relationships with other actors and the environment. Specifically, we examine how volunteers, reserve managers, volunteer coordinators, and promotional material use and interpret 'conservation,' whether actors hold differing ideologies of this concept, and how differences influence the project and interactions between actors. Second, by applying political ecology to examine conservation volunteer tourism, we answer Campbell et al.'s (2007) call for (a) ecotourism research to use a political ecology lens to improve theoretical understanding and reduce the proliferation of ecotourism case studies, and (b) for political ecology studies of ecotourism to also analyze ecotourists--in this case, volunteer ecotourists. Third, we test whether combining political ecology and rhetorical criticism can offer a replicable and comparable method for analyzing discourse in political ecology studies. We hope this article will have practical implications by aiding actors involved in volunteer tourism with understanding different ideologies of conservation and how differences affect behavior and interactions at the volunteer project, as well extend theory on environmental concepts, ideologies, and discursive political ecology.

Conceptual Background

Volunteer Tourism and Political Ecology

Conservation volunteer tourism, or volunteer ecotourism, has been proposed as the

best practice of tourism and an 'ideal' form of ecotourism (Wearing, 2001, 2004).

Wearing (2001, 2004) suggested that unlike traditional forms of tourism where

differential power exists, volunteer tourism takes into account cross-cultural issues,

can lead to community participation, and promote sustainability. Other researchers

have discussed additional benefits, such as volunteer self-fulfillment and personal

growth (e.g., Brown & Lehto, 2005; Lepp, 2008), helping projects and contributing

new insights (e.g., Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003), and spreading knowledge (e.g.,

Foster-Smith & Evans, 2003; Ruhanen, Cooper, & Fayos-Solá, 2008). Wearing,

McDonald, and Ponting (2005) contended that volunteer tourism, especially volunteer

projects organized by NGOs, do not prioritize profit and instead decentralize power by

focusing on development approaches that include host communities.

Volunteer tourism has not gone without criticism. Simpson (2004, 2005)

suggested negative impacts on communities and projects due to imperialistic attitudes

of Westerners with preset notions about helping "developing" countries. Volunteers

might also impose the view of an expert (Wearing, 2004) and volunteer tourism can

pave the way for larger-scale ecotourism enterprises (Galley & Clifton, 2004).

Callanan and Thomas (2005) claimed that many volunteers and volunteer projects are

"shallow," providing little contribution to locals, and instead the main appeal is the

destination and volunteer self-benefits (e.g., academic credit). Critiques have

highlighted that problems can result if only volunteers are interviewed, and not other

actors. In contrast, researchers who spoke with local community members or staff

presented a more inclusive view of volunteer tourism effects, identifying varying

community views toward volunteer tourism (e.g., Clifton & Benson, 2006; McGehee

& Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). Gray and Campbell (2007) specifically

questioned Wearing et al.'s (2005) contention that volunteer tourism is a

decommodified activity. By interviewing multiple actors (e.g., volunteers,

organization members, project staff, local cabiñeros / cabin owners) involved in a

volunteer conservation project to protect leatherback sea turtles, Gray and Campbell

(2007) discovered that participants held different ideologies of conservation.

Cabiñeros believed that conservation and community benefits (e.g., profit) were

linked, whereas volunteers worried that locals would be motivated to protect turtles for

economic rather than environmental reasons.

Turning to studies in political ecology, we can understand complexities of

volunteer tourism (see Robbins, 2004 for an overview of political ecology). Campbell

et al. (2007) contended that a political ecology framework could illustrate that

ecotourism is a "phenomena both reflecting and reinforcing human-environment

relations and tied to larger economic, political, and social processes" (p. 201). They

drew on three thematic interests of political ecologists to analyze ecotourism in

protected areas – the social construction of nature, conservation and development

narratives, and alternative consumptions – but they noted that other themes are also

relevant. Research from political ecology also complicates some optimistic claims

from volunteer tourism researchers. West (2006) and Walley (2004), for example,

highlighted problems that can be encountered with community participation, in that

projects do not always include local participants in the entire process and may impose

an imported Western project. Although Wearing et al. (2005) painted NGOs in a

positive light, Sundberg (1998) and Cox (2000) illustrated that NGO interests have not

always aligned with local populations. In addition, many political ecologists warn

against believing that spreading knowledge is always positive; with this spread, there

can be hegemonic power and imposition of certain knowledge onto others (Bryant &

Bailey, 1997; Escobar, 1998). In this article, we continue examining issues that can

arise due to actors from different cultures interacting in environmental settings,

specifically in the context of conservation volunteer tourism.

Discourse and Representation

Discourse and representation play a significant role in volunteer tourism.

Promotional material can portray a particular representation of conservation volunteer

tourism and those involved. It can represent and sell development and the "third

world" to potential volunteers, although it might not accurately represent the place or

marginalized people with whom volunteers may work (Simpson, 2004; Wearing,

2001). The material and its representations can motivate volunteers to select specific

projects, countries, organizations (e.g., Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Young, 2008) and

influence volunteer expectations (Coghlan, 2007). If the experience does not match volunteer expectations and their reasons for participating, volunteers can have negative impressions of organizations and projects (Coghlan, 2007; Lyons, 2003). Previous work (Grimm & Needham, in prep; Simpson, 2004) has shown that promotional material contains popular ideologies (e.g., development, conservation, sustainability) that have attracted volunteers from Western countries. Little research has addressed how promotional material may be interpreted by actors involved in volunteer tourism, and we believe that it would be useful to see if participants suscribe to these ideologies or provide an alternative understanding of these terms.

Discursive political ecology is a useful lens for examining differing interpretations of key terms used to advertise and discuss conservation volunteer tourism projects. Central to discursive political ecology is the notion that there is not one truth, but rather a plurality of views (Peet & Watts, 1996). For instance, the argument that nature is socially constructed illustrates the role that people play in forming and understanding personal interpretations; although the biophysical reality of the environment exists, it is always understood and mediated through people's perceptions (Blaikie, 1995; Eden, 2001; Proctor, 1998). However, those in power can control and disseminate dominant discourse, privileging certain views, ideologies, and concepts at the expense of others (Peet & Watts, 1996). By recognizing plurality, discursive political ecology opens the door for questioning ontological givens, truisms, and dominant ideologies spread in discourse that pertain to concepts such as

community, environmental change, conservation, nature, and sustainability (e.g.,

Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Bassett & Zueli, 2000; Campbell, 2002; Escobar, 1996;

Nygren, 1998). Given that environmental concerns are not only material struggles, but

also discursive struggles over ideas and meanings, discursive political ecologists

analyze varying views that actors hold and how interpretations influence actor

relationships to the environment and others (Bryant, 1998). By applying discursive

political ecology to volunteer tourism, we can explore how varying interpretations of

'conservation' influences actors' relationships to the environment and other actors

involved in the volunteer project (e.g., volunteers, managers, staff, community

members).

Discursive Political Ecology Analysis

One of the main methods that political ecologists have used to analyze

discourse is to examine and deconstruct narratives. A narrative "has a beginning,

middle, and end (or premises and conclusions when case in the form of an argument)

and revolves around a sequence of events or positions in which something happens or

from which something follows" (Roe, 1991, p. 288). Political ecologists deconstruct

the narrative to question who is presenting the narrative, what goals the person has for

the narrative, who is affected by the narrative, and what counter-narratives may exist

(e.g., Fairhead & Leach, 1996). Some narratives that have been examined in political

ecology include desertification, tropical deforestation, shifting cultivation, rangeland

degradation, agricultural intensification, and conservation (e.g., Campbell, 2002;

Fairhead & Leach, 1996; Forsyth, 2005). Dominant narratives can be altered or subjugated if a counter-narrative is presented that tells a better story (Campbell et al., 2007). For example, Fairhead and Leach (1996) countered the narrative of desertification, which held that desertification resulted from Africa's population growth and pressure on resources. They challenged the 'received wisdom,' which "obscures the plurality of other possible views, and often leads to misguided or even fundamentally flawed development plans in Africa" (Leach & Mearns, 1996, p. 3).

However, people can appear to present a counter-narrative and still subscribe to the dominant ideology. Campbell (2002) addressed how sea turtle scientists presented ecotourism as part of a community-based and sustainable use alternative to the traditional conservation narrative, in which wildlife needs to be protected from humans. This counter-narrative allowed conservation experts to appear supportive of the local community's livelihood while still supporting ideas underlying the traditional narrative: ecotourism necessitates a park setting that appears to exclude consumptive uses (Campbell, 2002).

Although analyzing narratives can be a useful way of understanding ideologies, power dynamics, and human-environment relationships, there are limitations. First, although researchers have identified key narratives used in development and conservation schemes, recently there seems to be a growing proliferation of narratives and counter-narratives that can make discourse difficult to compare across scales and geographic regions. Second, because narratives and

counter-narratives must be parsimonious (Roe, 1991), they can simplify a complex situation. Therefore, they then can be difficult to work with when trying to identify practical applications. Narratives and counter-narratives can also dichotomize multiple actors into those ascribing to the narrative and those oppressed by it, overlooking that numerous perceptions might exist and some people may illustrate a mix of viewpoints from narratives and counter-narratives.

Other political ecologists have analyzed discourse by conducting discourse analysis. However, it is not always apparent the steps they have taken or if they have done formal critical discourse analysis (e.g., Mülhausler & Pearce, 2001), making it difficult to replicate the analysis. In some instances, it seems as though discourse analysis entailed careful examination of interview transcripts and historical documents (e.g., Gezon, 2005; Mackenzie, 2005). In other cases, researchers chose certain sections of a text or images containing powerful terms and compared these to on-the-ground interactions, but the rationale for choosing these terms, material from which they came, or criteria for analysis was not always clear (e.g., Bassett & Zueli, 2000; Foale & Macintyre, 2005). Although these analyses are exceedingly useful, discourse can vary from study to study or researchers can title discourses differently. The importance of understanding the analytical method can be seen when comparing other discourse analyses with Neumann's (2004) study of photographs in *National Geographic.* He provided an explanation for how he selected photographs and detailed his method of analysis in examining structure, content (e.g., setting, representations of

people and animals), juxtaposition of photographs, and photo captions, thereby providing steps to allow researchers to replicate this analysis on other photographs.

Recognizing the need for a method to analyze environmental discourse, Dryzek (1997) classified discourses into a matrix where a discourse was either reformist or radical in its departure from industrialism, and prosaic or imaginative. Once classified in the matrix, Dryzek provided a checklist of elements to analyze discourse: (a) basic entities recognized or constructed, (b) assumptions about natural relationships, (c) agents and their motives, and (d) key metaphors and other rhetorical devices. Peeples (2009) claimed that although Dryzek provided an excellent discussion on ideology, his book "lacks a detailed and in any sense systematic analysis of the language used to construct and disseminate these ideas" (p. 50). Without a clear, systematic method there may be difficulty in cross-comparisons that allow for larger patterns and theories to evolve, and instead risk being primarily a collection of case studies (Bryant & Bailey, 1997).

We would like to offer another method for analyzing discourse, show the importance of clearly detailing methods used to analyze discourse, and extend work already underway in discursive political ecology. This addresses Doolittle's (2010) argument that much work in political ecology has focused on theoretical foundations, but little has examined research models. She detailed one possible way for political ecologists to design a project, develop appropriate methods, generate data, and incorporate multiple forms of data into analysis. We continue with this focus on

methods by providing a possible method for data analysis. We are not calling for all

discursive studies to employ the approach that we detail in this article and our eventual

findings may not be that different than in current studies of discourse in political

ecology. Instead, we offer these analytical steps as a possible method to allow

replicable and comparable analyses and to illustrate the importance of clearly detailing

methods for discourse analysis. We hope this will help address Bryant and Bailey's

(1997) caution against political ecology primarily being a collection of case studies.

By turning to rhetorical criticism and focusing on individual terms used in

environmental discourse – similar to words in environmental narratives that often

embody ideology – political ecologists can examine, through use of a systematic

analysis, how multiple actors interpret these terms and how they impact actions toward

others people and the environment.

Rhetorical Theory - Ideographs

Although researchers have warned that political ecology has become a wide

and varied field that can lack coherence (Walker, 2003), we believe that turning to

theories and approaches in rhetorical studies, specifically those focusing on ideology,

could be useful for analyzing discourse. Similar to discursive political ecology,

modern strains of rhetorical theory identify and deconstruct power and hegemony in

discourse and examine how ideology affects relations with other people (e.g., Cloud,

2004; DeLuca, 1999). Foss (1996) explained, "When an ideology becomes hegemonic

in a culture, certain interests or groups are served by it more than others" and it

"supports the interests of those with more power" (p. 294). We do not propose turning

our backs on work done in political ecology on discourse, but rather contend that

methods from rhetorical studies are a natural addition to this work.

An approach to deconstructing ideology is through use of 'ideographs'

(McGee, 1980a), which fits well with discursive political ecology. An ideograph is an

ordinary word or phrase that summarizes and inspires "identification with key social

commitments" (McGee, 1980a, p. 3). Therefore, ideographs appear to unify all groups

under the same ideology (Clarke, 2002). Although McGee (1980b) emphasized that

ideographs should connect to politics and privileged analysis of Eurocentric terms

such as 'liberty,' 'the people,' and 'freedom,' others have included terms specific to

other cultures and the environment (e.g., Chicano, nature; Delgado, 1995; DeLuca,

1999). DeLuca (1999) justified selecting 'nature,' 'progress,' and 'industrialization' as

ideographs because they "define our society for us, justify certain beliefs and actions,

and signify collective commitment" (p.48). Ideographs can be compared in various

settings to allow for comparable analyses. For instance, McGee (1987) compared

'human rights' between the United States and Russia to demonstrate how both cultures

interpret this ideograph differently.

Ideographs are dynamic and their meanings can change over time (Clarke,

2002; DeLuca, 1999; McGee, 1980a), which caused McGee (1980a) to call for both

diachronic and synchronic studies of ideographs. This fits with work in political

ecology that has examined narratives and counter-narratives, illustrating that

ideologies of concepts can change over time. Shifting meanings can result from changing historical conditions, such the ideograph 'progress.' Whereas 'progress' once meant spiritual and moral progress, this term has embodied an economic ideology since the Industrial Revolution (DeLuca, 1999). Shifts in meaning can also result from struggles among groups where subordinate groups challenge the ideograph and imbue it with an alternative meaning. This occurred with black Americans shifting the meaning of 'equality' during the 1960s and more recently, radical environmental and environmental justice groups challenging 'progress' and 'nature' to disarticulate the hegemonic discourse of 'industrialism' (DeLuca, 1999; Lucaites & Condit, 1990). In other cases, however, those in power can retain control of the ideograph through their discursive power (Cloud, 2004).

Similar to work in political ecology on dominant narratives and environmental discourse, rhetorical critics have shown that although ideographs appear to embody a shared meaning, close examinations illustrate that the same ideograph can have multiple meanings for different groups, and might require unmasking the motives of group members or speakers (Clarke, 2002; Moore, 1993). This can affect interactions between groups and allow comparative studies of different groups. For example, Clarke (2002) illustrated how in the debate over the Goshute nuclear waste proposal, the Confederate Tribes of Goshutes and Utah politicians both used 'sovereignty' to describe and justify their position. The groups altered the relationship of 'sovereignty' from situation to situation, until "sovereignty itself [became] a buzzword with multiple

meanings and usages" (p. 57). Using the 'spotted owl' as a representational ideograph [i.e., term that represents the ideograph], Moore (1993) examined how loggers and environmentalists viewed the 'spotted owl' to embody either 'life' or 'liberty,' and he argued that as long as the spotted owl functioned as either an indicator species or scapegoat, it would prevent a resolution between the groups.

McGee (1980a) contended that an ideograph "warrants the use of power, excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or antisocial, and guides behavior and belief into channels easily recognizable by a community as acceptable and laudable" (p. 15). Therefore, examining ideographs fits with political ecologists' desire to understand how underrepresented groups can be affected by the use of discourse. For example, Cloud (2004) illustrated how the ideograph 'clash of cultures' was projected onto another group of people: Americans believed Afghan women needed to be saved from Afghan men, and therefore justified the war. A rhetorical strategy used examined characterizations, which are "labels attached to agents, acts, agencies, or purposes in the public vocabulary, and integrate cultural connotations and denotations while ascribing a typical and pervasive nature to the entity described" (Lucaites & Condit, 1990, p. 7). Characterizing other people and objects allows people to name, classify, and orient themselves toward the other, and in turn justify their behavior and attitudes toward others. Examining characterizations is only one rhetorical strategy that critics employ to understand how ideographs function. Other methods include, but are not limited to, synecdoche, metaphors, narrative, and

framing (e.g., Lucaites & Condit, 1990; Moore, 1993). This further illustrates the connection between rhetorical theory and political ecology as metaphors and narratives have been used by political ecologists when analyzing environmental discourse (e.g., Dryzek, 1997; Neuman, 2004), although these analyses can be slightly different in rhetorical theory.

The Ideograph 'Conservation'

It would not be advantageous for political ecologists to classify every term as an ideograph (McGee, 1980a), but careful examination of current political ecology studies can provide the basis for terms considered ideographs. For this article we selected the ideograph 'conservation' because it was common in environmental and conservation volunteer tourism discourse, addressed in political ecology literature (e.g., Campbell, 2002), and mentioned in interviews and promotional material. In addition, 'conservation' fits the requirements of an ideograph, as it (a) is one word that appears to summarize a group's collective ideology, (b) is dynamic with changing meanings, (c) has multiple meanings among different groups, (d) has a political component in that it has guided environmental and resource policy, and (e) can affect underrepresented groups by both silencing certain groups' views and excusing behavior toward these groups. The following brief diachronic examination of 'conservation' illustrates how it fits these criteria. In detailing the history of this term, we also provide some foundational background of the concept (see Meffe & Carroll, 1997 for more detailed review).

The term 'conservation' entered popular usage in the United States in the late 1800s as more resources in the Western United States were appropriated for human use. At this time, conservation was understood as wise use of resources and effective management for the benefit of people, which would allow the United States to move toward progress and development (Meffe & Carroll, 1997, Oravec, 1984). As the first to head the United States Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot was a central political player in the early conservation movement and declared "the planned and orderly development and conservation of our natural resources is the first duty of the United States;" this foresight would ensure resources available for future generations (Pinchot, 1910, p. 20). Conservationists endorsed the utilitarian principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number.' This led to the multiple use concept for the nation's resources, which continues to guide land use policies of several agencies (Meffe & Carroll, 1997). Oravec (1984) explained that original conservationists were diametric opposites of preservationists. The concept of preservation existed in American minds before conservation, and at its heart was the belief that land should be saved for its intrinsic and aesthetic value, rather than its utilitarian value (Oravec, 1984).

The dominant ideology of 'conservation' changed, merging with interpretations of 'preservation.' This protection paradigm or pro-park mentality claims that wildlife, especially in developing countries, is threatened by human exploitation and population growth (Campbell, 2002). To protect and preserve

biodiversity, advocates of this view (e.g., Redford, Brandon, & Sanderson, 2006) feel justified in their call for policies that establish parks with strict authoritarian governance to keep people out (Neumann, 2005; Wilshusen, Brechin, Fortwrangler, & West, 2002). This contrasts with the former view of conservation, in which resources were to be used to better the lives of people. The protectionist view toward conservation focuses primarily on conserving or protecting natural aspects rather than the links between human communities and local ecologies (Hurley & Halfacre, 2009). People who use resources such as animals or forests are silenced and criminalized as poachers and culprits of deforestation and increased desertification (Campbell, 2002; Fairhead & Leach, 1996; Neumann, 2004). In addition, unlike the utilitarian view of conservation, the protectionist ideology does not link progress and profit with conservation—except in the form of non-extractive practices such as tourism—which can affect local people relying on these resources for their livelihoods (Campbell, 2002; Campbell et al., 2007).

More recently, a counter-narrative of conservation has proliferated, in which community-based conservation and sustainable use are central (Campbell, 2002). Demonstrating conservation's connection to politics, Brechin (2003) argued that to protect nature, it is vital to for everyone involved to "embrace the notion of conservation as social and political process" (p. xi). Conservation should include – not exclude – voices of local community members and involve participatory and decentralized management and policy creation (Campbell, 2002). Therefore, this view

of conservation appears to recognize that actors have different interpretations of conservation and underrepresented groups might not always be heard. Also central to this view is sustainable use. The Convention on Biological Diversity defined sustainable use as "the use of components of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations" (from Campbell, 2002, p. 30). This use can be consumptive (e.g., hunting) or non-consumptive (e.g., wildlife viewing). With sustainable use, we see a shift in meaning to again bring tones of the utilitarian view of conservation in which resources could be used. However, authors have critiqued that this view does not always differ greatly from the protectionist paradigm (Campbell, 2002). People might prefer non-consumptive use and not all community-based conservation includes underrepresented people, in that management plans and policies might embody dominant Western ideologies, but counter local views of conservation, and local people might be invited to participate, but not formulate projects (e.g., Campbell, 2002; Walley, 2004; West, 2006).

Research Questions

Given the limited research critically analyzing the term 'conservation' in conservation volunteer tourism, we addressed three questions. First, how do volunteers, reserve managers, volunteer coordinators, and promotional material use and interpret 'conservation'? Second, do these actors hold different ideologies of this concept, and if so, how does this affect the project and interactions between actors? Third, can

analytical approaches from rhetorical criticism offer political ecology a replicable and comparable method for analyzing environmental discourse?

Methods

Study Site

We conducted fieldwork for nine weeks (June to August) in 2008 at a biological reserve in Ecuador that offers conservation, sustainability, and social development volunteer tourism opportunities.[13] A family owns the reserve, lives onsite, manages the project, and works closely with the local community of 50 families. Although small at 814 hectares, this reserve's elevation of 1100m to 2040m and location in the Ecuadorian Inter-Andean cloud forest affords it high biodiversity. The reserve resides in the Rio Toachi-Chiriboga Important Bird Area (IBA) and two of the world's top twenty-five biological hotspots: the Tropical Andes and the Choco Darien.

At the time of our research, the reserve listed on its website that its goals were to protect the existing forest, restore degraded areas, work toward sustainable development, create programs that foster community development, and educate about conservation. To help achieve these goals, volunteers chose from three programs with various activities: (a) "Conservation in the Cloud Forest" (e.g., reforestation, wildlife monitoring, trail work); (b) "In the Way to Sustainability" (e.g., sustainable wood and animal production, organic agriculture, alternative energy); and (c) "Social Development" (e.g., teaching). Volunteers applied to the reserve, an Ecuadorian NGO

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[13] At the reserve managers' request, we do not disclose the reserve's name to protect the identities of the reserve and
 managers. For that reason, we do not include the website.

with whom the reserve had an agreement, or through international intermediary organizations (e.g., Working Abroad).[14] The NGO also worked with intermediaries, causing some volunteers to be funneled through several organizations (e.g., intermediary to non-profit to reserve). This organizational layering is common in volunteer tourism, and our exploratory study conducted at the reserve in 2007 revealed that volunteers had read varying information and paid different prices depending on with which organization they volunteered.[15] We selected this site because: (a) Ecuador offers numerous conservation volunteer opportunities (Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Cousins, 2007); (b) many volunteers selected the reserve, allowing for diverse opinions and reducing the chance of obtaining a small sample, which can be common with onsite investigations of this nature (e.g., Lepp, 2008); (c) organizational layering allowed us to examine different promotional material from various organizations; and (d) one of us had volunteered at the reserve in 2005, affording us credibility to gain participant trust.[16]

Data Collection

We used a qualitative, case study approach that employed ethnographic methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation). Qualitative research addresses questions concerning interpretations of meanings, concepts, symbols, and metaphors,

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[14] At the NGO's request, we do not disclose its name to protect the identities of the NGO and volunteer coordinators.

[15] During the exploratory study, we interviewed 11 volunteers and engaged in participant observation. Although we had some set questions that we asked volunteers, interviews were primarily unstructured. This allowed respondents to discuss their experiences and interpretations, and to help us discover relevant issues to pursue in this study.

[16] The reserve received 49 volunteers July-September, 2007 and 40 volunteers June-August, 2008.

and analyzing ways in which humans makes sense of their surroundings (Berg, 2004).

Qualitative research can involve a case study, which is "an empirical inquiry that

investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when

the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" and employs

multiple sources of evidence for triangulation (Yin, 2003, p. 13). Results from case

studies cannot be generalized to all situations, but they can provide a general

understanding of similar groups or phenomena because human behavior is rarely

unique to a single group (Berg, 2004). To collect data, we used ethnographic methods,

which involve conducting fieldwork for an extended period of time to observe

people's lives and using various methods to gather information, such as participant

observation, informal and formal interviews, and document retrieval (Hammersley &

Atkinson, 2007). Although ethnographies traditionally consist of at least one year of

fieldwork, recent research has included shorter periods in the field, especially when

working with transitory populations (e.g., refugees, volunteer tourists; Malkki, 1997).

Before arriving at the reserve, we collected and examined printed information

that may have informed volunteers of the reserve and organization through which they

volunteered. We identified most participating organizations during our exploratory

study and through the NGOs marketing research. While at the reserve, if we

discovered additional organizations used by volunteers, we located and printed the

promotional material. We used websites given the popularity of this method for

finding information (Cousins, 2007; Grimm & Needham, in prep.). By having material

in the field, we could revisit its text and images if volunteers mentioned something that we overlooked.

We digitally audio-recorded semi-structured interviews in English with 36 volunteer tourists, 2 Ecuadorian reserve managers, and 3 Ecuadorian volunteer coordinators (1 from the reserve, 2 from the NGO). We interviewed all volunteers present during the nine weeks, except six who we did not have time to interview because they arrived at the end of our stay. All participants were fluent or native English speakers. By conducting interviews during the summer months (June to August), which according to demographic research conducted by the NGO are the most popular months for volunteering, we were able to interview people from several subgroups who volunteer throughout the year (e.g., students on summer break, career break adults). Consistent with past research (e.g., Campbell & Smith, 2006), we interviewed volunteers after they had been at the reserve for at least two weeks to ensure they felt settled.[17] Interviews ranged from 1 to 4 hours, with most between 1.5 and 2.5 hours in duration. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, we assigned a code to each participant (e.g., VF12 = volunteer female 12, RMM = reserve manager male, VC1 = volunteer coordinator 1).

By using semi-structured interviews, we created an initial set of questions for consistency across interviews and to search for patterns in participants' responses, but we could expand on individual responses and explore unexpected topics in greater

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[17] During our last week, due to our upcoming departure, we interviewed five volunteers who had been at the reserve less than two weeks.

detail (Berg, 2004). When formulating initial interview questions, we relied on previous literature and our exploratory study. This study suggested that the term 'conservation' was used to advertise and guide the volunteer project, and that actors held differing interpretations for the term. In the current study, we did not specifically ask volunteers how they defined conservation until the end of the interview, and instead identified how they used this term throughout the interview. After asking volunteers prepared questions, we showed them printed copies of websites they viewed when making their decisions and had them identify words, phrases, or images that were salient. Finally, we asked all participants how they interpreted 'conservation' by having them engage in a free-listing exercise (Paolisso & Maloney, 2000). We gave them a minute to address our request to "List all the words and phrases that come to mind when you hear the word 'conservation.'"

Consistent with ethnographic methods, we also employed participant observation and analyzed promotional material as triangulation techniques. Participant observation: (a) allows collection of greater types of data; (b) minimizes reactivity; (c) helps ask reasonable and culturally-appropriate questions; (d) provides intuitive comprehension of a culture, which allows greater confidence in data meaning; and (e) addresses research questions that may not be examined with other techniques (Bernard, 2006). We lived, ate, and spent free time with volunteers, as well as completed daily tasks and engaged in informal conversations with volunteers and staff. We also attended, digitally audio-recorded, and transcribed the orientation talk

that volunteers received when arriving at the reserve and weekly educational lectures.

These experiences allowed us to engage in participant observation with volunteers and

managers about the volunteer experience, the reserve, and interpretations of

environmental concepts. This information supplemented and supported semi-

structured interviews, revealed any changing opinions, and provided additional

discourse with which to analyze participant beliefs about 'conservation.' Interacting

with volunteers, managers, and the reserve volunteer coordinator for a longer time

increased their comfort with disclosure, which was substantiated by having

consistently longer interviews with volunteers whose stays overlapped more with ours.

Data Analysis

To analyze how the ideograph 'conservation' functioned and was interpreted

by participants, we used a combination of ideological criticism (McGee, 1980a) and

cluster criticism (Burke, 1941) on promotional material; transcripts of interviews,

educational lectures, and the orientation talk; and participant observation notes. We

located and highlighted each time this ideograph appeared. Similar to work in political

ecology analyzing discourse, ideological criticism calls for the analysis of the nature

of ideology (e.g., determine the argument being made, identify values and conceptions

of what is acceptable and what is not); examination of whose interests were

represented and whose were neglected; and identification of rhetorical strategies used

to support the ideology (e.g., characterizations, metaphors, synecdoche; Foss, 1996).

For our analysis, we focused on characterizations for the rhetorical strategy.

To help provide a replicable method for analyzing these componenets, we also employed cluster criticism, which can aid in uncovering the worldview of actors and help determine their meaning of the ideograph. We charted terms that frequently clustered or were used with great intensity in proximity to 'conservation' (e.g., protect, use) to discover patterns that illuminted participants' ideologies (Figure 4.1; Foss, 1996). These terms could be the same words, synonyms, or illustrate similar concepts (e.g., money, economic). We considered words to be in proximity if they were in the same sentence or adjacent sentences in the promotional material, and within interviewees' responses to each question that we asked. We recorded these words and examined how they were used and related to underlying ideologies, characterizations, and actions and beliefs toward the environment and other people. These terms served as our major themes (e.g., preservation, use), which are "labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56). The final themes denote general trends and do not represent all volunteers. In addition, to identify how 'conservation' affected actions toward and beliefs of the volunteer project and other people, we also examined other information [i.e., not only clustered terms] surrounding the word 'conservation.' We then organized data by thematic categories to allow easy retrieval of relevant quotes (Berg, 2004). Verbatim quotes illustrate representative examples of themes, and we altered quotes slightly only when removing unnecessary words to improve readability.

Figure 4.1. Example of cluster analysis [1]

You can see…people are living in poorer conditions and they need to make a living off the land, so how they go about doing that—they are probably more interested in making a living and surviving than conserving. (VF2)

People still maybe don't have enough money to live, don't think of nature conservation, or about stuff like that, if they [are] think[ing] about how my children get enough food. (VF9)

[1] Dark gray = clustered terms, light gray = ideographs.

Results

Promotional Material

Ideology. In total, we viewed internet promotional material from the following eight organizations: the reserve, the NGO, Global Volunteer Network (GVN), Volunteer Latin America, Volunteer South America, Working Abroad, i-to-i, and Volunteer Abroad. The managers and VC3 wrote the reserve's promotional material. The NGO and intermediaries sometimes replicated reserve sentences exactly on their websites, but these organizations also altered sentences, changed the order of information, omitted information, or embedded information in their larger ideological context, thereby highlighting their views toward conservation. For instance, Working Abroad detailed the conservation project at the reserve, but neglected to include sustainable wood production as an activity under "Conservation in the cloud forest." Volunteers reading this information were surprised to find that some of the trees they planted would be harvested.

Identifying terms that clustered around 'conservation' allowed us to examine the ideologies of various organizations (Table 4.1). By examining the varying

prevalence of these terms in the promotional material, we uncovered a mix of ideologies and identified three types of organizations (I, II, III) based on the use and frequency of the clustered terms (Table 4.2). All types mentioned 'preservation' or 'protect' and discussed conservation as pertaining to the interests of non-humans (e.g., animals, plants), but whereas Type I only mentioned these terms, Types II and III organizations also addressed sustainable use and believed that 'conservation' necessitated including interests of humans. We differentiated between Types II and III organizations based on the frequency of individual terms and breadth of terms mentioned. For example, Type III mentioned frequently sustainability, human interests, and profit, whereas Type II only addressed one of these terms or discussed all terms infrequently.

Table 4.1. Clustered terms or concepts around 'conservation'

	Promotional Material	Volunteers	Managers & Volunteer Coordinators
Ideological view	Preservation Protect, Save, Don't destroy Non-humans (Plants, nature, animals, land) Human, social, community Profit, economic Sustainable Use Future Generations Shared responsibility	Preservation Protect, Save, Don't destroy Non-humans (Plants, nature, animals, land) Human, social, community Profit, economic Sustainable Use Future Generations	Preservation Protect, Save Non-humans (Plants, nature, animals, land) Human, social, community Profit, economic Sustainable Use Future Generations Shared responsibility
Characterization	Local people at fault	Local people at fault Poor, living, surviving Challenge, difficult in South America Education (for Ecuadorians) Education (for all people including me)	Infrastructure problems Education (for Ecuadorians) Education (volunteers impose notion of expert)
Actions/Interactions		Government Private Organization Not waste Not consumption Takes time, long term Profit	Government Private Organization Not waste Not consumption Takes time, long term Profit

Table 4.2. Organization typology based on clustered words to describe conservation[1,2]

Type I	Type II	Type III
Preservation	Preservation	Preservation
Protect, Save, Do not destroy	Protect, Save, Do not destroy	Protect, Save, Do not destroy
Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)	Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)	Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)
	Sustainable	Sustainable
	Use	Use
	Involve people, social issue	Involve people, social issue
	Profit, economic	Profit, economic

[1] Type II and Type III based on frequency of individual terms and breadth of terms mentioned
[2] Type I (i-to-i, Volunteer Latin America), Type II (Working Abroad, Volunteer South America, Volunteer Abroad), Type III (reserve, NGO, Global Volunteer Network)

All types had elements of the protectionist paradigm of conservation. Occasionally

they used the term 'preservation' to describe conservation efforts. For instance, the

reserve mentioned that under the "umbrella of in-situ conservation, two systems of

preservation have emerged." The NGO used 'preservation' when detailing on its

website both this reserve and other reserves with which it works: "Family landowners

receive support for their conservation efforts and are…able to preserve more forest

within Ecuador and around the world." Volunteer Latin America[18] and i-to-i,

advertised "conservation volunteering" as a way to 'preserve' the rainforest and

biodiversity of the cloud forest. All types discussed 'protection' and 'saving' natural

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[18] Volunteer Latin America had a general website, and after volunteer paid a small fee, the organization would compile information from various volunteer projects fitting volunteer interests and volunteers then directly applied to the volunteer project; therefore, their website presented one ideology, but the handout was information directly from the reserve.

features (e.g., plants, animals, environment, biodiversity). For example, i-to-i's

material proclaimed: "Conserve the rich biodiversity in Mindo, Ecuador: Lush forest

covering mountains hidden by clouds and an abundant wildlife provides plenty of

inspiration to protect the rich biodiversity in this stunning region."

Differences in types can be more apparent when we examine if and how they

discuss concepts other than preservation. Type I organizations only focused on

'protection' and 'preservation,' included interests of only non-humans, and never

mentioned 'sustainable' and 'use' on their websites. In contrast, Type II and Type III

discussed conservation as involving or connected to 'sustainability.' Almost all these

organizations included on their websites one sentence from the reserve's information

that demonstrated how 'sustainable' fit with conservation efforts:

> The station works in natural conservation, combating deforestation, protecting
> existing forest, restoring degraded areas and searching for sustainable activities
> that enable us to support the reserve and offer a better way of life for the local
> community as well as those who work and live at the reserve.

Only the reserve and GVN explicitly used the term 'use' when discussing

conservation. The fact that Working Abroad, Volunteer Latin America, and Volunteer

South America used the term 'sustainability' more frequently when not discussing

'conservation' suggests that the two concepts were not linked in their minds.

Organizations also differed in whose interests they included and excluded.

Although all organizations contended that non-human interests were a major

component of 'conservation,' Type II and Type III also included interests of humans

under the term 'conservation.' Volunteer South America wrote, "Successful

management and working in harmony with them are key components to ensure that both conservation and local needs are met." Type III organizations often included people when discussing conservation efforts, and hoped that this work would help the local 'community.' Type II organizations tended to replicate the language of the reserve and NGO, and some, as discussed in more detail below, continued to characterize locals as not capable of conservation efforts. Type I organizations rarely mentioned helping or working with local people. In one sentence, i-to-i appeared to work under the banner of community-based conservation, but they asked volunteers to "Work with a community based conservation project in one of the most beautiful natural landscapes and see for yourself why protecting this habitat is so important." Strict protection is not always what a community wants (West, 2006), and this implies that resources should not be used, but instead set aside.

Type III organizations emphasized that conservation should provide 'economic' benefits in their efforts to help locals. For instance, the reserve wrote, "Combining conservation and agriculture will enable us to sustain the reserve and promote economic activities that are environmentally friendly and beneficial for the local inhabitants." The sentence was replicated in information of the NGO and in Volunteer Latin America's handout about the reserve. Type II organizations usually cited the reserve's sentence about supporting the local community and offering a better way of life, but they never specifically mentioned economic benefits.

Rhetorical Strategy - Characterizations. By examining the promotional

material, we could also see how humans, especially local people, were characterized.

Type I and some Type II organizations blamed local people for their role in

destruction of the environment. Volunteer Latin America claimed that population

growth heavily stressed limited resources: "Conservation efforts still face difficult

social, economic, and environmental challenges. Human populations throughout the

region continue to grow, some at alarming rates, ultimately demanding more from the

land." These organizations also used active language and described 'conservation' as a

'fight' to 'protect' fragile ecosystems. Working Abroad altered language of the

reserve's website and stated that part of the goal is to "protect part of this amazing

ecosystem and to fight against deforestation. However, this fight is not easy and they

need as much help as possible, everybody should participate in conservation efforts,

because conservation is a shared responsibility." Volunteer South America, while

appearing to support local people (mostly when replicating reserve sentences), also

wrote that "communities living close to reserve tend to be poor…conservation

projects…provid[e] opportunities for local community and...ensure that they are

willing conservation partners." Although this sentence might appear to fit with

ideologies in community-based conservation, there is a dominant attitude of telling

locals what they should be doing, and the organization also illustrated a protectionist

mentality when claiming that "a community that cares about its environment becomes

sustainable-use mentality, most fell on a spectrum and at times mixed both ideologies in the same sentence. However, we could distinguish three types of volunteers (I, II, III): Type I only mentioned 'preservation,' 'protect,' and non-humans; Type III also discussed non-humans, but did not often mention 'preservation' or related terms and instead focused on 'sustainable,' 'use,' 'people,' and 'profit;' and Type II discussed all terms and concepts equally.

Table 4.3. Volunteer typology based on clustered words to describe conservation

Type I	Type II	Type III
Preservation	Preservation	
Protect, Save, Do not destroy	Protect, Save, Do not destroy	
Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)	Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)	Involves Non-humans (e.g., nature, plants, animals)
Does not involve profit	Does not involve profit	
	Sustainable	Sustainable
	Use	Use
	Future generations	Future generations
	Involve people, social issue	Involve people, social issue
	Profit, economic	Profit, economic

Various sociodemographic characteristics correlated to these volunteer types (Table 4.4). Type III volunteers tended to be older. The average ages for each type were: Type I (without VM13, who was an outlier at 43) = 19.8 years of age, Type II = 21.6, and Type III = 24.3. Although these differences might seem small, they take on more significance given that 70% of the volunteers were under the age of 25. There was also a greater proportion of females to males who were Type III (9:1) compared to Type I (8:6) and Type II (5:6). The majority of volunteers in an environmental,

geography, ecological field were Type II volunteers ($n = 10$), whereas six were Type I (although three had not yet started school) and five were Type III. Those who had worked in social services (e.g., teaching for Teach for America, public health), the service industry (e.g., tourism), or environmental work with local community members (e.g., farmers) tended to be Type III volunteers ($n = 7$). From this data, it appeared that age, educational focus, and work experience related to volunteer 'conservation' ideology. Type III volunteers tended to be older and had experience working with the environment or local community members, whereas Type I volunteers tended to be younger and had yet not studied or worked in an environmental field.

Table 4.4. Volunteer typology demographics

	Volunteer	Study/Work	Age	Organization
Type I				
	VF1	Physical Geography	24	NGO
	VF3	N/A	17	i-to-i
	VF4	Environment, development, policy	23	NGO
	VF7	N/A	17	i-to-i
	VF8	Environmental hazards[1]	19	Working Abroad
	VF12	Economics[1]	18	Volunteer South America
	VF22	Bank	23	Working Abroad
	VF23	Biology (Pre-med)	21	Reserve
	VM2	Cultural Geography[1]	18	Overseas Working Holiday
	VM6	Chemistry, Physics, Engineering (High School)	17	i-to-i
	VM7	Sociology, Criminology	22	Reserve
	VM8	Photography	20	Reserve
	VM11	Physics, Art, Psychology, Music	19	GVN
	VM13	Horticulture	43	Working Abroad

	Volunteer	Study/Work	Age	Organization
Type II				
	VF6	Ecology & Conservation Biology	20	NGO
	VF9	Renewable Energy, Sustainability, Environmental Management	25	Reserve (Volunteer Latin America)
	VF13	Environmental Science[1]	18	NGO
	VF14	Environmental Biology	19	GVN
	VF17	Geography, Biogeography	21	NGO
	VM1	Theater	26	NGO
	VM3	Art History, Environmental Studies	20	Reserve
	VM4	Renewable Energy, Sustainability, Environmental Management	25	Reserve (Volunteer Latin America)
	VM5	Environmental Studies/Teacher	24	NGO
	VM10	Conservation & Wildlife Management	20	NGO
	VM12	Geography	20	NGO
Type III				
	VF2	Environmental Science	29	GVN
	VF5	Biology, Pre-med	20	NGO
	VF10	Soils Science	21	GVN
	VF11	Political Science, Spanish/Teacher	23	NGO
	VF15	Psychology	23	Volunteer Abroad
	VF16	Urban Planning/Teacher	25	NGO
	VF18	Geology, Physics	20	GVN
	VF19	Public Health	26	NGO
	VF20	Earth Atmospheric Science, Biology	22	Working Abroad
	VF21	Tourism	27	Reserve (Volunteer Latin America)
	VM9	Tourism	33	NGO

[1]Volunteer planned to begin university in fall after volunteering

There was a less clear pattern between volunteer types and the organization types through which they went, indicating that promotional material did not match their views in all instances. With volunteers who went through i-to-i, a Type I organization, there was a clear connection between their own and the organization's views. Similar to this organization they agreed much less with sustainable use and tended to hold a more protectionist view. Almost all of those volunteering through Working Abroad were Type I volunteers. Far fewer Type I volunteers went through the NGO. Interestingly, although the reserve was clearly Type III, three out of the four who found the reserve without Volunteer Latin America were Type I, but almost all of these volunteers had relied on a personal recommendation.

By examining clustered words near 'conservation,' we could gain insight into the different interpretations that volunteers held for this concept. Types I and II volunteers used the terms 'preservation,' 'save,' protect,' and discussed the need to not destroy habitat; Type III might have one instance of these words, but their overall discourse and actions were in line with Type III. Eight volunteers interchanged the words 'conservation' and 'preservation' or used 'preservation' to define 'conservation.' As VF14 explained, "preservation is the same word basically." Similarly, seventeen volunteers used terms such as 'protect' and 'save' to describe conservation efforts. For example, VF7 believed, "I thought it was going to be a little bit more like saving the rainforest. I thought we were going to be more like conserving the trees."

Types II and III volunteers, in contrast, tended to also believe that 'conservation' embodied ideologies of sustainable use. These volunteers commonly mentioned 'use,' 'sustainable,' and 'future generations' when discussing 'conservation.' For instance, VF20 said that conservation is "using only what you need and not being wasteful." In this view, nature included not only plants and animals, but also natural 'resources,' which can be described as natural objects for human consumption. VF10 explained that sustainable wood harvesting could be considered a form of 'conservation':

> It's a way to help protect [the family] in the future, and I think that that's a lot of what conservation work is. It's protecting future generations, and if you know you have to take the resource from the land to protect them ultimately, it's okay, because it's still done in a sustainable fashion.

By examining the terms clustered near 'conservation,' we could identify whose interests volunteers included in their ideologies. All volunteers believed that conservation included interests of non-human components (e.g., plants, trees, forest, animals, environment, land). This led some to contest that conservation did not include human interests, and instead their focus was on protecting and restoring the environment. VM1 explained, conservation is, "saving land that's there…not just land, but animals and birds." Type I volunteers never mentioned conservation being linked to people or human needs. In contrast, Types II and III volunteers believed that conservation involved and affected people and 'communities.' VF13 emphasized, "There always has to be a human aspect involved… you can't just say we're going to plant trees if it's not helpful to anyone, like you have to do conservation, but

conservation that is still practical to normal day life." Admiring the work of the reserve, VM5 explained, "they are trying to conserve this place, but not just leave it untouched, but actually make it useful to at the community."

Volunteers had different views on whether conservation should involve profit, thereby benefiting or not benefitting local people. Type III and some Type II volunteers believed that conservation needed to connect social issues with economic profit. VF11 liked that the reserve was trying to get to "the point where it is an effective model of conservation and profit." In discussing what could be done for conservation efforts, VM1 thought that growing coffee would be a good way to make money while supporting conservation. In contrast, Type I and some Type II volunteers did not state conservation involved using resources to generate profit. Most often, this was seen in their omission of mentioning money and profit. Others, however, emphasized that conservation was not about profit. For example, VF9 said, "I think [conservation's] important in the whole world, and you don't get money from it…conservation is not part of the money world." RMF recounted a conversation with VM2, in which he stated that he did not believe that conservation should involve profit; if it did, he would not volunteer but rather expect to be paid. When volunteers mentioned money within this ideology, it often included purchasing land as a conservation measure.

Rhetorical Strategy - Characterizations. Stating that nature needed to be 'protected' and 'saved' implied it is at risk from something. Few volunteers stated

directly who they blamed, but when discussing 'conservation' some volunteers,

primarily Types I and II, characterized people as a danger and that areas needed to be

set aside to be protected from human activities. For example, VF6 stated:

> I think that conserving the forest is really good in terms of not overusing the land and also in terms of not destroying habitat…because Ecuador is so biodiverse, it would be really terrible to see it all get chopped down to produce bananas or something.

Other volunteers (Type II and III) characterized 'poor' people in "developing"

countries as not being able to prioritize conservation because they needed to 'survive'

and make a 'living.' Given this, these volunteers believed that local people could not

really be blamed for lack of a conservation mindset. For example, VF2 stated, "You

can see where the forests have been cleared…people are living in poorer

conditions…they are probably more interested in making a living and surviving than

conserving." VM4 hoped that if Ecuadorians' standard of living increased, the desire

to conserve their environment would also increase. Several volunteers mentioned that

they had been taught these ideas in school, thereby highlighting how representations

are transmitted and perpetuated through hegemonic discourse; the image of

Ecuadorians and their conservation efforts was created before volunteers had ever

visited the country.

Types II and III appeared to be sympathetic to the country's plight by

characterizing a "developing country" as a place where it is more 'challenging' to do

'conservation.' VF17 explained, "It's a completely different place. Everything's

different. You have to accept things aren't going to run the same." VF2 and VF10

discussed with each other how other volunteers did not recognize that it was easier to do conservation in the "first world." VF2 said in the "first world" a reserve manager could go to a nursery and buy trees, whereas in Ecuador managers had to grow the saplings from seeds collected from the forest. VF10 admitted that she was frustrated by VM2, who had said that he had looked forward to seeing how challenging conservation was in a "developing country;" she explained that VM2 did not understand that although this was a vacation for him, people had to deal with conservation 'challenges' on a daily basis.

Characterizations could also be seen by examining the clustered terms 'education,' 'knowledge,' 'learn,' or 'teach.' Fourteen volunteers indicated these terms were critical for effective conservation. Types II and III volunteers sometimes discussed this generally in that all people should have an understanding of conservation. VF17 emphasized, "Education's a big part of conservation. You want to make sure people know and care and have seen what it is that they're protecting." In other cases, however, volunteers characterized Ecuadorians as less knowledgeable about conservation and that volunteers could help them learn. Although two Type III volunteers, VF11 and VF19, discussed education for both everyone and Ecuadorians, the emphasis on Ecuadorians needing to learn was primarily provided by Type I volunteers. For example, VM11 believed that without school, one could not understand conservation:

> Maybe [Ecuadorians] are going to leave school and work on a farm…you
> don't learn about conservation by doing that. You learn about conservation by

having the resources to go to school and having...leisure time…to do the research.

This view represented an imperialistic ideology, in that it privileged Western knowledge and contended that Westerners know more about the environment. VF17 acknowledged, "some people have this preconceived notion that because of the popular discussion of conservation that they're experts."

Managers

Ideology. Managers and NGO volunteer coordinators were Ecuadorian, had attended university, and studied topics such as administration and marketing, natural resource management, environmental science, foreign languages and international relations, ecotourism, and biology. The reserve had been in RMM and VC3's family since 1970, but it only started receiving volunteers in 2003. Although the reserve staff had long been involved with the project, the NGO volunteer coordinators were relatively new (e.g., eight months to one year).

The Ecuadorian managers and volunteer coordinators used many of the same terms as the promotional material and volunteers, and also tended to illustrate a mix of ideologies (Table 4.1). Given that these five participants had similar ideological views of 'conservation,' we did not create a typology; their ideological views were most similar to Type III volunteers. Managers and volunteer coordinators interchanged the words 'conservation' and 'preservation.' RMF explained, "If we talk about the environmental conservation, I think it is to preserve the balance, the relations… the [equilibrium]." They also mentioned terms such as 'protect' to describe conservation

efforts. For example, VC2 said, "In Ecuador, we try to take care of our ecosystems…to protect all specific areas where we live and the environment, especially the forests, all the species that live in there, like plants or birds." RMF did not limit 'protection' to non-human inhabitants, but also mentioned the 'preservation' of cultures.

It appeared that managers clearly distinguished between 'conservation' and 'sustainability,' given that they offered two seemingly distinct programs, one addressing each concept ("In the way to sustainability," "Conservation in the cloud forest"). Volunteers such as VF11, however, noted that there was no clear distinction between programs and that activities could fall under either one: "It seems very clear on the website that you were signing up for a program, for the community outreach, for the sustainability, for the conservation…[but] it's clearly not program based." This could result from the managers' approach being more in line with a pro-people, sustainable use ideology of conservation, in which 'conservation' and 'sustainability' were not distinct concepts. In discussing these concepts, RMF stated that she thought people were starting to see that 'sustainable' agriculture and 'conservation' were more closely linked: "Now [it] is not farm [that] is the enemy of the conservation, now it is sustainable agriculture, friend of the conservation."

In addition, the managers and reserve volunteer coordinator emphasized continuously that 'conservation' is not only an environmental issue, but also a 'social' and 'economic' issue that includes 'human' interests. RMM claimed that "There is a

gap between conservation and practical life….there [are] not a lot of projects that can

prove that it is possible to live a more sustainable life...more respectful with the

environment, and that's what we need to prove." Both managers stated that before

tackling environmental aspects of conservation, 'social' and 'economic' issues must

be resolved. Given this, conservation must be 'profitable.' RMF emphasized, "It has to

be a rule, conservation has to be profitable… people have to have a reason to do

things." RMM further explained, "We don't realize [conservation's] done by people

and people need to live. I don't see any bad in making conservation economic or…a

business." They themselves decided to receive volunteers because they were

struggling to keep the reserve afloat and admitted that if volunteer tourism was not

profitable they would not be able to continue the endeavor. Volunteer tourism

provided them with money to continue conserving the land. To illustrate why it was

necessary to generate income when asking people to conserve, RMM asked volunteers

what they would do if they had a family member who was sick. He answered, "You

would not think twice. You would cut the tree and you would do what you need to do,

and in our countries part of the problem is that conservation is social problem."

One thing that was rarely present in volunteer comments and the promotional

material was the idea that "conservation is a shared responsibility." The managers and

reserve volunteer coordinator used this term to explain that it is not only up to people

in "developing" countries to protect resources, but for everyone worldwide to play a

role. RMF said that one way to think about 'conservation' is that the world should pay

for it, because everyone had a 'responsibility' to maintain places and resources. VC3 asked us, "Why should we conserve for you?" They struggled with the idea that the West, who had already reaped the benefits of developing through use its resources, tells those in "developing" countries with rich and comparatively untouched resources not to use them, but then does not help these countries.

Rhetorical Strategy - Characterizations. As with volunteers and promotional material, by examining clustered words, we could see how participants characterize people when it comes to conservation. Unlike volunteers who felt that Ecuadorians were not ready to conserve, VC3 stated, "Every Ecuadorian is learning how to preserve what we have." RMF surprised volunteers when stating, "[Despite] what you hear about Ecuador—that it has a very high rate of deforestation…we actually have 22% of the territory…protected" A difference is that in Ecuador people live inside national parks. Managers and volunteer coordinators also often did not characterize problems in terms of individual people, but in terms of the country's infrastructure, thereby taking the blame off "ignorant poor people." RMF explained that volunteers sometimes wanted to propose a recycling system in the community and dissuade littering. She illustrated the problem with this idea: "We are not in that step. If you put the signs and you put the bins, then what do you do with the garbage? We don't have a garbage system in Ecuador, so you have to find other ways." RMM explained that currently, "There is not very much incentive for conservation, at least not in the "third-world countries."

Like volunteers, managers also mentioned 'education' in the context of 'conservation,' but they were not consistent in their characterization of Ecuadorians. At one point, RMF seemed frustrated with other Ecuadorians, "Agriculture is not the best thing to do here…It is an education. It's hard to change how people live. In a lot of cases they don't even want to learn." However, at other points, she illustrated that volunteers can have a dominant approach toward education:

> We had volunteers for example trying to do…environmental activities, the ones that you do in your countries, in the school here, but it doesn't work because, for example, in [community members'] houses they don't produce much garbage…they don't do compost, because normally they have their pigs…it's a different thing.

Behavior and Beliefs

Given that McGee (1980a) claimed that ideographs could be used to excuse behavior and beliefs, and political ecology is interested in the material ramifications of discourse, we examined how participants' ideology of 'conservation' affected their behavior and beliefs both generally and specific to the reserve. Three clustered terms that illustrated how 'conservation' warranted certain actions were 'government,' 'organizations,' and 'private reserves.'

Contrary to the pro-park ideology, several volunteers—even some Type I volunteers— stressed that they did not know if 'government' was the answer for conservation. For example, VF5 recognized that people often thought of 'governments' doing 'conservation,' but she believed that it should begin on the individual level: "I think that conservation a lot of times is something people think

that…government should be in control [of] and I don't think that's very effective." Some of these volunteers might have thought that 'private reserves' should 'protect' the area. Doubting the interests of 'governments,' VF22 stated, "I don't think governments are too concerned with reserves and conservation for the most part, not just in South America, but all over the place. So, the people who take the initiative to care for a large piece of land and do the best that they can to conserve – it is really amazing."

Some volunteers worried about the reserve being 'private,' either because they doubted its intentions or worried about its ability to 'protect' the area in the long run. In many cases, Type I volunteers believed that the way to 'conserve' and 'protect' land was not to allow people to own and work the land, but instead set it aside. VM11 said, "It's kind of hard to tell Ecuador, which has a preponderance of land that needs protecting, that they can't farm…International conservation organizations could perhaps buy this land and when they own it, it's safe theoretically." In contrast, other volunteers believed that 'private' reserves provided a more realistic option for 'conservation,' as they allowed people to support their livelihoods while conserving. This view was more in line with managers and volunteers coordinators. RMM explained that even though it countered the popular approach to protecting ecosystems, private reserves were incredibly valuable: "[People] tend to think conservation has to be done by the government, the NGOs, but…think how much land

is in private hands in the world and how many forests there are in private hands in the

world."

Different interpretations of 'conservation' also affected interactions between

actors at the reserve, at times highlighting imperialistic and dominating attitudes. For

instance, differing on whether 'conservation' entailed more of a 'preservation' or

'sustainable use' ideology led actors to have varying opinions on conservation

methods and goals. At times, volunteers believed they knew better methods for

'conservation' than those the managers used. RMF stated:

> If…the activities that they do don't match what they thought they would be
> doing, it's like, "Why are we doing this if that is not conservation?" Or they
> are critical because…they can't conceive another way of doing conservation
> and as the one they have in their mind.

For instance, volunteers who saw 'conservation' as planting a tree did not necessarily

see how the tree maintenance that occurred afterward fit with conservation. RMF

stated that because of differences in views, "Sometimes [volunteers] pressure too

much. We ended sometimes doing projects that are not our projects—for example

drying the samples of plants." VC3 disclosed how hard it was to be judged by

volunteers questioning the project and why the reserve conserved as it did. She asked

why should she not be able to use her land, and emphasized that the family did not

have an obligation to protect its property; they conserved because they felt it was

important to protect the forest and use it wisely. In contrast, not seeing the connection

between the tasks they were doing and conservation, volunteers sometimes felt

inefficient. VM1 admitted, "I almost feel that [my volunteer fee] is benefiting

conservation more than what I am doing here, because at least half the projects I am put on don't—none of the staff seems to act like they are really important, but more like to keep this guy busy."

Problems resulting from differences in 'conservation' ideologies were probably most clearly seen in the reforestation and sustainable wood production project. Reforestation occurred in former pastures that had grown back to secondary forests and consisted of tree species, often 10-15 feet tall, that appeared to volunteers as "trees" not "weeds." To restore threatened hardwood trees and supply the reserve with trees for sustainable harvesting, volunteers created reforestation lines in which a row of secondary species were cut to form an open line where hardwood saplings were planted. Cutting trees contradicted Type I and some Type II volunteers' perception of 'conservation' as involving 'saving' trees, and these volunteers struggled with both cutting "weedy" trees and knowing that some of the trees they would plant would one day be harvested. VF14 argued, "I thought we were here to do conservation and aren't we just planting these trees so they can chop it down and sell them and…we are chopping…50 trees for one tree plant[ed]." Having volunteered at the reserve for six months, VM9 said he often saw this struggle within volunteers: "It's a lot nicer to think a tree you are planting will be around in the forest 100 years from now rather than cut in 50." RMM understood that volunteers were concerned about the reforestation project: "They say why [do] we plant trees for cutting trees. From a conservation mind that is a sin." He then asked, however, what was better—to have

sustainable wood production or to continue having cows and crops that result in clear-cut forests and increased pesticide use.

Part of the reluctance to cut trees could also have resulted from volunteers' belief that 'conservation' should not be 'profitable.' VM6 said he did not agree with sustainable wood production because "it's good to have sustainable things, but…that's part of a lumber industry." Yet, many of these volunteers said they thought the reserve should be more 'sustainable;' it seemed as though agriculture and food products (e.g., coffee, jam) were acceptable sustainable activities for these volunteers, but not cutting trees. RMF realized that given views on profit, the reserve had to be careful with how information was presented to volunteers. For instance, one staff member had told volunteers that they were planting Canelo Negro (*Ocotea heterochroma*) because it was an economic species; although true, RMF listed several other reasons why they planted this species.

These different views toward 'conservation' also led to tensions among volunteers. For instance, after conducting reforestation work one day, Type III volunteers with ecological backgrounds tried to explain to frustrated volunteers that the trees being cut were secondary growth and that clearing reforestation lines gave hardwoods a head start, instead of waiting decades for these species to regenerate on their own. Again, these Type III volunteers thought that 'private reserves' were necessary for 'conservation,' and that for 'private reserves' to succeed they needed to generate a 'profit.' Interestingly, these findings differed from those of Campbell

(2002), in which many scientists she interviewed had an underlying preservationist ideology of conservation. VF10, who studied soils and worked with farmers in Canada, questioned other volunteers' actions: "It's really easy to just be like, 'Oh, they're doing it wrong. They're going to cut down trees,' but what do you do in your day to day life back home that's really so admirable compared to planting trees so your grandkids can eat a meal."

Although most volunteers viewed 'conservation' as something that occurred at the reserve, volunteers of all types were disconnected from it in their own actions. This might make sense for Type I volunteers; if 'conservation' was about trees and nature and not about 'consumption' and 'waste,' they might not connect 'conservation' to their 'use.' However, many Type II and III volunteers also did not acknowledge their wasteful activities at the reserve. Those Type II and III volunteers (n=8) who mentioned that 'conservation' involved 'not wasting' and 'not consuming' were among the few who commented on their actions. A few, such as VF13, mentioned the carbon footprint of flying to plant trees, and wondered if it was worth it: "You put out a lot of pollution in taking a plane here. Kind of have to weigh whether that is as much you are going to give as to conserving or whether you are just polluting more." There was even less connection to actions at the reserve, and only a handful of volunteers questioned their behavior or commented on the actions of other volunteers, such as lights left on. RMF commented on this disconnect: "It doesn't matter how many trees you plant, if you let the light on it's worse for conservation."

Interestingly, when discussing some of the major environmental problems of the region, volunteers often mentioned garbage and littering among Ecuadorians. For instance, VM3 said, "People in states don't just throw their trash out their window, but here that's just what people do…If people are having all these big environmental problems because they can't even be bothered to put their trash in a trashcan, what is the future of Ecuador?" Yet, these volunteers did not see the parallel with their own consumption of packaged goods and overflowing garbage cans outside the volunteer house. VF17 was one of the few volunteers who recognized this tension:

> I feel like the amount [of] trash produced by the volunteers is kind of bad because we're creating this impact while we're supposed to be protecting the environment, and supposed to be sustainable and not be dependent on these processed global foods—and then you've got overflowing trashcans.

Having different ideas of 'conservation' also led Type I and some Type II volunteers to believe that the reserve was not as far along as they had expected and some questioned its effectiveness at conserving. For instance, VM11 exclaimed: "I don't know where all the money and man hours go, honestly! We have a lot of work being done here and I see reforestation lines over there and reforestation lines up the hill and all this could have been done in the last six months…what the hell has been happening here for so long?" However, VF10 pointed out, conservation 'takes time':

> I think people also often forget that conservation is not something you can see the results of in two weeks. It's something that you'll see the results of 50 years down the road or a 100 years down the road…conservation work is an ongoing process, it's not something you can kind of stroll into.

RMM agreed, that "normally a conservation project is long term, very long term. You should have continuity and you should have a long-term plan." VM9 believed that this desire for immediate results came from volunteers imposing a Western view: "Even though in your mind you know it takes a long time…it's almost like you wish it could just go quicker. It's probably part of that Western culturally thing. You want things to happen now or yesterday." Some volunteers who believed that conservation took time were also the volunteers who characterized South America as being a place where conservation was challenging.

Different 'conservation' ideologies caused mistrust toward the reserve among some Type I and II volunteers. For instance, VF1 doubted the reserve's conservation intentions and wondered if the main goal was not just to make money: "If it would really be sustainable logging, like, if they are just cutting some of the trees, and leave the rest of the forest, but how can we be sure that that is happening." After hearing that some of the volunteer fee that she paid would buy additional land for the reserve, she felt better. Other volunteers also questioned where their volunteer fees went because they did not see it going to buying seeds or resources (e.g., tools) that they believed were the components necessarily for 'conservation.' In contrast, VF15 countered:

> Some people just see conservation as one thing and forget that to run a group of volunteers takes more than planting trees and building a garden and whatever else people might think conservation work is…I don't know if at this point, or at any point, people would actually give [up] what they think their definition of conservation work is.

Discussion

Using a qualitative approach that employed ethnographic methods and discursive analysis, we examined volunteer tourist, manager, volunteer coordinator, and promotional material ideologies of 'conservation.' We found differences in how actors interpreted 'conservation.' By employing ideological and cluster criticism, we created typologies for organizations and volunteer tourists that described three types of organizations and volunteer tourists (managers and volunteer coordinators interpreted 'conservation' similarly and did not need a typology), which allowed for comparisons among and between actors. Different interpretations affected characterizations of people and environmental issues (e.g., local people blamed for environmental destruction). At the volunteer project, different views affected behavior and interactions between and among actors (e.g., tension about reforestation project, personal waste consumption at the project site, imposition of beliefs).

Implications for Volunteer Tourism

Our research has several implications for volunteer tourism. We found that actors interpreted 'conservation' differently, which impacted the volunteer project and relationships between actors. For instance, Type I and Type II volunteers who leaned toward an ideology that embodied 'preservation' struggled with the reforestation project, in which trees were cut to plant hardwood saplings that would possibly be harvested in the future for economic gain. This was one of the major projects at the reserve and if volunteers were reluctant to help with this work, it could cause problems

for the reserve's progress. Even when these volunteers helped with this work, managers had to justify their actions on a regular basis to volunteers who doubted how sustainable wood production fit with conservation.

We expected to find more of a connection between volunteer ideologies and promotional material that they read. The only case where all volunteers espoused the same ideology as the organization through which they went was with i-to-i. There are several reasons why we might not have found as strong a connection as we had expected: (a) volunteers who knew the name of the reserve sometimes looked at this material in addition to the NGO or intermediary organization promotional material, thereby being exposed to a variety of views; (b) volunteers did not always read or remember all of the information, instead focusing on parts that were salient to them; and (c) promotional material often presented mixed views on 'conservation.' Given that Simpson (2004) found a strong connection between volunteers' view and promotional material that they read, more research examining relationships between promotional material and volunteer ideologies is necessary.

Volunteers had different interpretations of 'conservation,' and some views countered those of managers and ways in which the term guided the project. Therefore, managers may wish to be unambiguous in their definition of this and other contentious terms (e.g., sustainability). Managers were not clear in their usage of this term and it might be useful for them to first recognize how they interpret terms and then be consistent in their promotional material, discussions with volunteers, and

projects at the reserve. Managers could outline how they interpret conservation and how this then informs the reserve projects and goals when volunteers arrive. Although this may not necessarily change volunteer ideologies, it can at least help mitigate confusion of why certain tasks are accomplished and how they fit with the reserve's 'conservation' goals. This might also entail not advertising seemingly separate programs, as this reinforced the idea that conservation and sustainability were separate concepts even though that was not how they were presented at the reserve. In addition, managers should make sure that other organizations do not separate programs in their information, and if they do, understand how these organizations differentiate between programs. Volunteers from i-to-i and Working Abroad who had been unaware of the sustainable harvesting project before they arrived at the project especially struggled with this aspect. This is not to say the information would have changed their minds, but they might have chosen a project that fit their ideas of conservation.

We interviewed managers, volunteers, and volunteer coordinators, but many volunteer projects also involve local staff and community members who may have different interpretations of 'conservation' and other terms (e.g., community development) than participants who we interviewed. For instance, Wilshusen (2003) explained that in contrast to scientists' definitions of 'biodiversity,' blacks and indigenous people in Colombia's Afro-Columbia community also included in their definition ethnic, cultural, and social diversity of people who are connected to the environment. As more participants and views are added to volunteer tourism projects,

understanding ideologies of different groups becomes important for positive interactions. Not only is it important to interview other participants (e.g., McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007), but also to examine how these participants interpret and discuss words; this can help in understanding if they are working toward the same goals and if differences affect collaborative work. Future work exploring community member interpretations of key terms is a necessary step for including local people's views into the volunteer project and possibly working toward the community participation that Wearing (2004) had hoped volunteer tourism could achieve.

Another implication of our research is how profit factors into volunteer tourism. Wearing, McDonald, and Ponting (2005) claimed that volunteer tourism is a decommodified form of tourism and that the emphasis is not on profit. Our results build on Gray and Campbell (2007) who found that volunteers emphasized environmental reasons for protecting sea turtles. In contrast, at this reserve several volunteers emphasized that conservation should involve profit. This could be due partly because harvesting trees might seem more socially acceptable than harvesting turtles. It would be useful to continue examining how volunteers view conservation and economic gains, especially if that is the way conservation and these projects are moving. Knowing that some volunteers accept economic profit could help projects, not only with recruiting volunteers to work on these projects, but also to include them in discussions on how to generate income.

In addition, Wearing et. al's (2005) claim is problematic in that it may perpetuate the ideology that conservation is not about profit. Managers and volunteer coordinators in our study emphasized that conservation must involve profit to make it realistic, otherwise people will not engage in this activity. This belief guided their plan to provide a model for other areas to conserve while sustaining livelihoods, and they also chose to receive volunteers as a way to receive funds for continuing the reserve's conservation efforts. In emphasizing the non-profit aspect, Wearing et al. (2005) neglected that people running volunteer projects must make a living and support themselves. Perhaps their comments were in reference to intermediary and international organizations, but even the NGO relied on volunteer fees to support its conservation initiatives and cover administrative costs.

By examining ideographs and interactions, we found that although volunteers espoused 'conservation,' many were disconnected from the concept in their personal lives. If they viewed conservation as protecting trees and plants, then consumption might not seem to be a contradiction. Even though consumption does affect the environment to produce and dispose of the objects that people buy, volunteers might be too removed from these beginning and end points on the commodity chain. Interestingly, when volunteers did mention consumptive impact, it was usually in terms of their flight because it released carbon dioxide. Climate change can seem abstract and nebulous to many, so people might feel more comfortable citing this global environmental problem and not connecting it to their daily personal actions

other than an occasional plane trip. To improve environmental issues, people might need to think more about their actions instead of placing blame on others. Future work can use ideographs to examine environmental beliefs, intentions, behaviors, and attitudes (e.g., Fishbein & Azjen, 1975), in that people may appear to have certain attitudes toward conservation, but their discourse and behaviors might illustrate other ideologies.

Implications for Political Ecology

We helped to address Campbell, Gray, and Meletis' (2007) call for more work combining political ecology and ecotourism. Specifically, we use a political ecology lens to examine conservation volunteer tourism to protected areas and also analyzed these tourists. Like Campbell et al. (2007), we examined discourse in ecotourism, but we used a different approach focusing on key terms used in ecotourism instead of conservation and development narratives and the social construction of nature. However, we touch on these ideas in our discussion of ideographs. We also continue to examine consumption in ecotourism. Whereas Campbell et al. (2007) focused on ecotourists' alternative consumption in the form of consuming both alternative products (e.g., sustainable, fair-trade coffee) and the destination through the ecotourist gaze, we also found that traditional consumption patterns were present. Volunteer tourists espoused a conservation ideology, but their actions illustrated that conservation volunteer tourism still generated much waste and consumption. Future

work should continue examining this tension, especially if volunteer tourism and ecotourism continue to claim to be less wasteful and consumptive (e.g. Weaver, 2001).

We also suggest that rhetorical criticism can offer a new method to conduct replicable and comparable analyses on environmental discourse in political ecology by isolating ideographs and associated terms. One might hesitate at the inclusion of another discipline into the already diffuse and at times fragmented field of political ecology. Bryant and Bailey (1997), however, argued that political ecology's diversity is beneficial, because environmental issues are complex and can benefit from knowledge offered by a variety of disciplines (e.g., geography, anthropology, ecology, communication). A defined and replicable method can allow for comparable studies across scales and locations. Researchers studying other volunteer tourism projects can examine if similar ideologies exist concerning 'conservation' and other buzzwords, and if similar issues result. This is not limited to volunteer tourism because by applying this method to analyses of environmental discourse, we can compare how different cultures, geographical regions, and scales use and understand these terms. We recognize that our article only uses one ideograph in one location, although among different actors. To continue examining the extent that this method really is valuable, we believe that more research is needed to apply it to other terms and situations. In addition, characterization is only one rhetorical strategy; other researchers can use different techniques (e.g., metaphor, framing), some of which might be more

appropriate for other types of discourse (e.g., environmental campaigns, political documents).

Employing ideographs as a method for analyzing environmental discourse allowed us to identify diverse underlying ideologies for these concepts and examine which ideas proliferated. Although conservation narratives identify the protectionist and sustainable use/community participation paradigms, using ideological criticism illustrated the complexity of these narratives. People were not clearly in one group or the other, and analyzing participants' language that clustered near 'conservation' highlighted mixed perspectives. For instance, some Type II participants agreed with sustainable use, but then worried about tree harvesting.

By using ideological and cluster criticism, we could allow voices of underrepresented groups into the conversation. For instance, managers and volunteer coordinators stressed that conservation is a "shared responsibility." The reserve volunteer coordinator questioned why the reserve and others should conserve forests and not be able to support their families, while people in Western countries consume as much as they wish. This view is not a Western view of conservation in that it calls for Westerners to also engage in or pay "developing countries" for conservation. This tension is not new, as it could be seen in the 1970 UNESCO conference when "developing" countries similarly said that they should not be asked to forego the benefits that "developed" countries have received. By using the method set forth in this article, we allowed underrepresented groups to share their voice and ideology.

There might be more views that this method uncovers, especially if the discourse of more traditionally silenced groups is included. Using methods that include these views can allow for a disarticulation of the hegemonic discourse and dominant ideologies and aid in collaborative work in other countries.

One potential limitation of this method is that it focuses on information in proximity to the ideograph, and researchers might overlook other valuable information in the discourse. This especially can occur if people discuss the ideograph using other terms. For instance, if volunteers identified conservation as involving restoration, they might use 'restoration' more often than conservation. One way to deal with this is to select the ideograph, determine the clustered words, and then also identify what words cluster near these clustered terms. Another approach might be to use this method, but combine it with traditional ethnographic methods where researchers also use information and themes found not near the ideograph. In this article, we opted to focus only on the 'ideograph' to determine the value and potential of using this method.

Political ecology can also strengthen works in rhetorical criticism. Corcoran (1984) claimed that rhetorical criticism must move away from limited rhetorical examinations of speeches to allow awareness of the global crisis. He asked, "of what use is rhetorical criticism if it does not see its role, partly at least, as watchdog of the discourse that helps create the sociopolitical environment" (Corcoran, 1984, p. 54). We believe that political ecology's interest in power and justice can help further rhetorical studies in meeting the goal of being a watchdog of discourse. In particular,

political ecology can offer a means to address the point made by environmental

rhetorician Schwarze (2007): "Since political and ethical matters cannot be extricated

from the rhetorical modes that constitute them, critics are better served by an

inclusive, integrated approach that richly contextualizes the examination of texts" (p.

89). Ethnographic, on-site fieldwork typical of political ecology studies can help

contextualize these analyses, extending work to not only examine speeches and other

texts, but to also include interviews and examine real life effects of discourse.

<div align="center">References</div>

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CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION

The three preceding chapters extended the literature on volunteer tourism by exploring the role of discourse, motivations, perceptions, and interpretations at various stages of the experience (e.g., information gathering, decision-making, on-site) and how these factors influenced human-environment relationships. First, I identified how volunteer tourists used promotional material to make decisions on volunteer opportunities, and what in the material played a motivating role. Second, I uncovered reasons why volunteers selected the country, organization, and the volunteer project and site; described how managers and volunteer coordinators perceived these volunteer motivations; and highlighted differences between these perceptions and self-reported motivations of volunteers. Third, I determined that the word 'conservation' was used and interpreted in a variety of ways, and this difference affected behavior and beliefs at the volunteer site. In this chapter, I summarize the major findings of my dissertation and the managerial, theoretical, and research implications.

In the second chapter, I explored the extent that volunteer tourists used promotional material, how this material motivated them to select an organization or volunteer project, and what specifically in this promotional material played a motivating role, which few researchers have explicitly addressed (e.g., Coghlan, 2007; Simpson, 2004). Volunteers almost exclusively used the internet to search for volunteer tourism opportunities. In almost all cases, volunteers used Google's search engine as a starting point and entered keywords such as 'conservation,' 'volunteer

abroad,' and 'Ecuador' to find information. Volunteer decisions to choose the organization or project were influenced by both website appearance (e.g., organized, professional) and specific content (e.g., photographs, volunteer comments, project descriptions, buzzwords). A seemingly organized and professional website led many volunteers to believe that the project or organization was legitimate.

In chapter three, I examined attributes that pulled volunteer tourists to the continent, country, organization, and volunteer project and site. Little work has addressed what factors influence these decisions (e.g., Söderman & Snead, 2008). I also identified manager and volunteer coordinator perceptions of these motivations, because not much research has examined how others (e.g., managers, organization volunteer coordinators) perceive volunteer motivations or compared these perceptions with volunteer self-reported motivations to uncover any potential misperceptions (e.g., Coghlan, 2008). Although volunteers listed a range of motivations, general trends included learning the language, price, safety, project mission, and project variety. These factors often played a substantial role in the volunteer decision-making process, even the desire to go abroad. Managers and volunteer coordinators correctly identified some volunteer motivations (e.g., travel, price, amenities, services), but mentioned far fewer reasons than volunteers and did not recognize some major reasons such as project mission. Managers and coordinators especially overlooked altruistic reasons for volunteering such as the desire to contribute to the reserve and project.

In the fourth chapter, I analyzed the discourse of organizations, volunteer tourists, managers, and volunteer coordinators, and detailed different ways that they interpreted the ideograph 'conservation.' Previously, there had been little critical analysis of key terms used in conservation volunteer tourism and how differing interpretations of these terms could affect interactions. Using ideological and cluster criticism, I created typologies for organizations and volunteer tourists that described three types of conservation ideologies for organizations and volunteer tourists (managers and volunteer coordinators interpreted 'conservation' similarly and did not need a typology). Type I volunteers held a preservation view, Type III held a sustainable use view, and Type II presented a combination of these views. Different interpretations affected characterizations of people and environmental issues, as well as participant behavior and interactions at the project site. Type I volunteers, for example, struggled with participating in the reforestation program, which entailed sustainable harvesting of trees they planted. Highlighting certain terms clustered near 'conservation' allowed me to uncover tensions in volunteer and manager beliefs and behavior. Although volunteers believed that 'conservation' was important, many were disconnected from the concept in their personal lives (e.g., personal waste, consumption). In contrast to my expectations, there was a weak connection between volunteer ideologies and those of the organizations through which they came, and I discussed possible reasons for this finding.

I also extended methods and theory for studying discursive political ecology and conservation volunteer tourism. Acknowledging Campbell, Gray, and Meletis's (2007) call for more work to combine political ecology and ecotourism, I used a political ecology lens to examine conservation volunteer tourism to a reserve and analyze these tourists. This article also demonstrated that approaches from rhetorical criticism that isolate ideographs and associated terms can possibly offer a method for conducting replicable and comparable analyses on environmental discourse in political ecology.

<div align="center">Implications for Management</div>

Results from my dissertation can help organizations and managers recruit volunteers and improve human-environment relations at the project site. My findings can aid those involved with volunteer tourism in creating promotional material that attracts volunteers. Given that almost all volunteers used the internet and Google's search engine to locate organizations or projects, managers and organizations could focus resources on internet promotional material, rather than fliers or brochures. One method for recruitment could be social networking tools, such as Facebook and personal blogs, because some volunteers mentioned that they enjoyed reading volunteer comments and blogs. When working with multiple organizations, managers should be aware of how other websites represent their information and project, as many volunteer tourists use intermediary organizations and never see the project's own promotional material.

Knowing why volunteers choose an organization and site can also help managers and organizations recruit potential volunteers by highlighting motivating factors in promotional material (e.g., location, amenities, project mission). Although volunteers did not always remember or had overlooked information in the promotional material, they noted that they searched the promotional material for information in which they were interested (e.g., price). In addition, knowing that certain factors attract volunteers can help managers know what attributes to retain at the site (e.g., project variety, reasonable price, safety, hand-on conservation experience). This research can also help smaller projects attract volunteers directly by informing managers of organization of traits that volunteers find attractive (e.g., professionalism).

It would also be helpful for managers to not only know volunteer motivations, but to also know these motivations in advance of volunteer visits. Managers and organizations could ask for this information in application materials and ensure that it arrives at the reserve to allow managers, if they desire, to prepare projects and tasks that match volunteer motivations. For example, if volunteers disclose that they chose the reserve because of sustainability work, managers can try to provide relevant tasks that match this motivation (e.g., working on renewable energy initiatives). This can also reduce any possible misperceptions of volunteer motivations.

Given that participants expressed a range of 'conservation' ideologies, and some volunteer views countered those of managers and the way in which the project

was designed, managers may wish to be clear in their interpretation of this and other contentious terms (e.g., sustainability). When volunteers arrive, managers could outline their interpretation of 'conservation' and how it informs the reserve project and goals. Although this will not necessarily change volunteer ideologies, it could help mitigate confusion about the reasoning of certain tasks and how they fit with 'conservation' goals.

Implications for Theory and Future Research

There are several theoretical and methodological implications of my research, which also could inform future research. My findings indicate that research examining tourism promotional material should focus on the internet rather than just brochures, magazines, and other traditional methods of information dissemination and promotion (e.g., Bass et. al, 1989; Molina & Estaban, 2006). Additionally, my research extends methods for analyzing how promotional material influences volunteer tourists by including ethnographic methodos such as interviews with volunteers (e.g., Coghlan, 2007, Young, 2008). Although an organization might present project or organization attributes in its promotional material, talking to volunteers may be necessary to determine if these factors actually appealed to or motivated these individuals.

My dissertation also expands research on volunteer tourist motivations by examining factors that pull volunteers to destinations, organizations, and projects. Much of the literature on volunteer tourist motivations has examined internal factors that push individuals to volunteer (e.g., Broad, 2003; Brown & Lehto, 2005; Galley &

Clifton, 2004); pull factors have received less attention. The attention that volunteers gave to their selections indicated that project and organization attributes (e.g., cloud forest, reputation) and how promotional material portrayed these attributes were important to volunteers. Although I found some of the same motivations as Söderman and Snead (2008) (e.g., program variety, type of organization, linguistic), I discovered interesting differences. Most volunteers who I interviewed undertook this as independent travel or volunteered through an organization without much in-country support, which might have caused volunteers to seek a feeling of security. Almost all volunteers mentioned price as a primary factor in their choice of organization, and many discussed scientific reasons for selecting an organization or project. Differences between my results and Söderman and Snead's (2008) findings might have resulted from differences in program types (e.g., gap year structured program versus unstructured program). Given the disparities between our studies and lack of research examining why volunteers are pulled to countries and organizations, future research should continue investigating not only internal psychological factors that push people to volunteer, but also roles that destination and organization attributes play in volunteer choices.

Given that multiple groups are involved in volunteer tourism (e.g., managers, coordinators, volunteers), broadening research beyond the individual volunteer is necessary for understanding the complete volunteer tourism experience. Future work should continue examining how others perceive tourist motivations (e.g., Coghlan,

2008; Wellman, Dawson, & Roggenbuck, 1982). Research could also identify manager motivations for running a volunteer tourism project and volunteer perceptions of these motivations. It would also be useful to know if differences between perceptions and actual motivations affect interactions among participants (e.g., what occurs when volunteers are motivated to help and managers perceive them to be motivated to travel).

My dissertation also contributes to methods used in examining volunteer tourism and supports Broad and Jenkins's (2008) assertion that there is value in studying motivations using ethnographic methods. These methods can allow participants to gain trust in the researcher and increase comfort when disclosing their reasons. Participant observation provided additional information that supplemented semi-structured interviews. Future research, if possible, should include ethnographic methods and can compare findings from this approach to results from survey questions to broaden the data collected and generalizability of findings.

Chapter four demonstrated that rhetorical criticism could possibly offer political ecology a method for conducting replicable and comparable analyses on environmental discourse across scales, locations, and actors through the use of isolating ideographs and associated terms. This approach also allowed voices of underrepresented groups (e.g. non-Westerners) to share their views on 'conservation.' By applying this method for analyses of environmental discourse, political ecologists

can compare how different cultures, geographical regions, and actors at various scales use and understand ideographs (e.g., sustainability).

My research also uncovered interesting themes that would be worthwhile to examine in greater detail in future papers. The concept of trust was present in all of these chapters. In chapters two and three, volunteers discussed concerns with legitimacy and reputation and the role that these played in decisions. Volunteers mentioned repeatedly their apprehension about not selecting a legitimate organization or a project that actually existed. In chapter four, different interpretations of 'conservation' caused volunteer mistrust of managers and the volunteer project. Some volunteers, for example, questioned the reserve's conservation intention, sustainable logging project, and use of volunteer fees. Given that conservation volunteer projects often rely on volunteers and program fees, future research should examine how pervasive the issue of trust is in volunteer tourism and effects of this on volunteer projects.

Chapter four also uncovered issues related to consumption in ecotourism. Whereas Campbell et al. (2007) focused on ecotourists' alternative consumption in the form of consuming both alternative products (e.g., sustainable, fair-trade coffee) and the destination through the ecotourist gaze, I also found more traditional consumption patterns. Volunteer tourists espoused a conservation ideology, but their actions illustrated that conservation volunteer tourism still generated much waste and consumption. Future work should continue examining this tension, especially if

volunteer tourism and ecotourism continue to claim to be less wasteful and consumptive (e.g., Weaver, 2001).

The concept of knowledge was broached in the fourth chapter when volunteers and managers characterized Ecuadorians. Some volunteers framed knowledge in terms of the Western education they received or discussed how litter indicated a lack of environmental awareness among Ecuadorians. Political ecologists have addressed problems that can come from Western interpretations of what knowledge entails and the effects of this on local communities (e.g., Lowe, 2006; Walley, 2002). Future work should explore in greater detail how volunteers and managers view environmental knowledge, and how these views affect human-environment relations.

As with any study, there are benefits and drawbacks to the data collection and analysis. One possible limitation of my study is that results may not generalize to all volunteer tourism situations. Managers and organizations should be cautious applying these findings, as these volunteers and this site might not be representative of all situations. For example, volunteers who did not choose this reserve or these organizations might be attracted to characteristics elsewhere. Researchers can address this limitation by conducting similar work with other volunteer organizations and projects, and examine the extent that findings are similar or different to those reported here. Given that initial results on the topics discussed in this dissertation indicate common themes, researchers should develop survey instruments to determine if these themes remain consistent across various sites, organizations, projects, and countries.

Another possible limitation is that I analyzed only one ideograph and one rhetorical strategy in one location, although among different actors. More research is needed to examine if this method really is replicable and comparable. Researchers should apply the approach to other terms and compare ideographs in other situations, across scales, and different locations. Researchers studying other volunteer tourism projects in other locations can see if similar ideologies exist concerning 'conservation,' or examine other buzzwords (e.g., sustainability). In addition, characterization is only one rhetorical strategy; different techniques (e.g., metaphor, framing) might be more appropriate for other types of discourse (e.g., environmental campaigns, political documents).

My study involved interviewing managers, volunteers, and volunteer coordinators. Many volunteer projects, however, also involve local staff and community members who may have different interpretations of 'conservation' and other terms (e.g., community development) than participants who I interviewed. Wilshusen (2003) explained that in contrast to scientists' definition of 'biodiversity,' blacks and indigenous people in Colombia's Afro-Columbia community also included in their definition ethnic, cultural, and social diversity of people connected to the environment. As more participants and views are added to volunteer tourism projects, understanding different group ideologies becomes important for positive interactions and can reveal if they are working toward the same goals and if differences influence collaborative work. Future research exploring community member interpretations of

key terms is necessary for including views of local people in the volunteer project and

possibly working toward the community participation that Wearing (2004) had hoped

volunteer tourism could achieve.

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I said goodbye to the reserve managers and volunteer coordinator and

promised to return with my family to show them how wonderful the reserve and cloud

forest are. Although most volunteer tourists probably will never return to a project

location, much less conduct research there, I hope the findings in this dissertation will

engender continued connection. By informing managers of volunteers' motivations

and beliefs, my hope is that misperceptions and misunderstandings can be reduced and

satisfaction and connection increased, which might cause the reserve to live in

volunteers' minds years after their experience. This connection might be in the form of

active fundraising or recruitment efforts. Or, it might just be that the lessons learned

and understanding gained at the reserve affects future actions and beliefs. Volunteer

projects continue long after a volunteer leaves, and the reserve volunteer coordinator

expressed her hope for volunteers to have a connection to the reserve decades after the

experience:

> Some of them...say thank you very much. You really gave me a different way
> of thinking. I really changed my point of view, or I am now more open-
> minded, or I really think that the world is different in other places…Many
> people have some changes, but our job is not make changes, but fortunately
> they are changing their point of view about the world and it's beautiful. But,
> not everyone. Not everyone.

It might be an idealistic goal, but it would be wonderful if one day it is "everyone."

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APPENDIX A

VOLUNTEER DEMOGRAPHICS

Volunteer	Age	Nationality	Organization	Duration (Weeks)	Education	Major /(Work)	Volunteer at Home	Volunteered Abroad Previously
VF1	24	Dutch	NGO	4	Master's*	Physical Geography	Yes	Yes
VF2	29	New Zealand	GVN	6	Master's	Environmental Science	Yes	No
VF3	17	US	i-to-i	3	High School*		Yes	Yes
VF4	23	French/ Spanish	NGO	3	Master's+	Environment, Development, Policy	No	No
VF5	20	US	NGO	6	Bachelor's*	Biology, Pre-med	Yes	No
VF6	20	US	NGO	6	Bachelor's*	Ecology & Conservation Biology	Yes	Yes
VF7	17	US	i-to-i	3	High School*		Yes	No
VF8	19	English	Working Abroad	6	Bachelor's+	Environmental Hazards	Yes	No
VF9	25	German	Reserve (Volunteer Latin America)	2	Master's*	Renewable Energy, Sustainability, Environmental Management	No	Yes
VF10	21	Canadian	GVN	6	Bachelor's *	Soils Science	Yes	Yes
VF11	23	US	NGO	3.5	Bachelor's	Political Science, Spanish/ (Teacher)	Yes	No

Volunteer	Age	Nationality	Organization	Duration (Weeks)	Education	Major /(Work)	Volunteer at Home	Volunteered Abroad Previously
VF12	18	English	Volunteer South America	5	High School	Economics	Yes	Yes
VF13	18	US	NGO	3	Bachelor's+	Environmental Science	Yes	No
VF14	19	Canadian	GVN	6	Bachelor's*	Environmental Biology	Yes	No
VF15	23	Canadian	Volunteer Abroad	6	Bachelor's	Psychology	Yes	No
VF16	25	US	NGO	4	Master's+	Urban Planning/(Teacher)	No	No
VF17	21	US	NGO	3	Bachelor's*	Geography, Biogeography	Yes	No
VF18	20	US	GVN	10	Bachelor's*	Geology, Physics	Yes	Yes
VF19	26	Australian	NGO	3	Bachelor's	Public Health	Yes	Yes
VF20	22	Canadian	Working Abroad	6	Bachelor's	Earth Atmospheric Science, Biology	No	No
VF21	27	Polish	Volunteer Latin America	4	Master's	Tourism	Yes	Yes
VF22	23	Canadian	Working Abroad	6	High School	(Bank)	No	No
VF23	21	US	Reserve	2	College*	Biology	Yes	No
VM1	26	US	NGO	2	Bachelor's	(Theater)	No	No
VM2	18	Australian	Overseas Working Holiday	4	Bachelor's+	Cultural Geography	Yes	No
VM3	20	US	Reserve	2	Bachelor's*	Art History, Environmental Studies	Yes	No

Volunteer	Age	Nationality	Organization	Duration (Weeks)	Education	Major /(Work)	Volunteer at Home	Volunteered Abroad Previously
VM4	25	German	Reserve (Volunteer Latin America)	2	Master's*	Renewable Energy, Sustainability, Environmental Management	No	Yes
VM5	24	US	NGO	4	Bachelor's	Environmental Studies/ (Teacher)	Yes	No
VM6	17	US	i-to-i	3	High school*	Chemistry, Physics, Engineering	Yes	No
VM7	22	English	Reserve	4	Bachelor's*	Sociology, Criminology	No	No
VM8	20	English	Reserve	4	Bachelor's*	Photography	No	No
VM9	33	Welsh	NGO	28	Bachelor's	(Tourism)	No	No
VM10	20	US	NGO	3	Bachelor's*	Conservation & Wildlife Management	Yes	No
VM11	19	US	GVN	7	Bachelor's*	Physics, Art, Psychology, Music	No	No
VM12	20	US	NGO	3	Bachelor's*	Geography	Yes	Yes
VM13	43	English	Working Abroad	8	Bachelor's*	Horticulture	Yes	No

* Not Completed

+ Not Started

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-VOLUNTEERS

Background Information
1. How long have you been in South America? Ecuador? At La Hesperia?
2. What organization did you come through? Have you had a positive or negative experience with this organization?

Motivations
1. Why did you choose to volunteer on a conservation project? Was the conservation aspect a major factor in your decision? Were you more interested in volunteering in general (i.e. conservation played a role second to volunteering)?
2. Why did you choose to volunteer abroad? In South America? In Ecuador?
3. Why did you choose to volunteer through _____ (fill in organization through which they came)?
4. Why did you choose to volunteer at the reserve?
5. What other programs, locations, or projects did you look at? What, if anything, attracted you to those programs, sites, or projects? Why did you not choose those?
6. Is there anything else you want to add about your motivations?

Expectations and Perceptions
1. a. What do you think the volunteer's role should be at the reserve? Why do you feel that?
   b. Do you think it's important the volunteers be open-minded? Do you think you are open-minded?
2. What projects have you mostly worked on here? Are these the projects you had hoped to work on?
3. a. Before you came, what did you think was one of the most important things a volunteer did? Why did you think this?
   b. Now that you have volunteered here, what do you think is one of the most important things a volunteer does? Why do you think this?
4. Have your experiences been what you expected? Are they different from what you expected?
   a. If so, how? What things did you expect?
   b. From where do you think your expectations came?
5. Would you have liked to know anything else prior to coming that would have helped you learn about your role as a volunteer? The project? The environment? The community?
6. What do you believe are positive and negative effects of volunteers on the environment? The community? The project?
7. What do you think the manager's role should be at the reserve? Do you feel he/she is playing that role? Why or why not?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add about your expectations and perceptions?

Satisfaction
1. Are you satisfied with your volunteer experience? Why or why not?
2. What are the positives of your experience? What are the negatives of your experience?
3. Do you feel your reasons for wanting to volunteer have been met? If so, to what extent? If not, why not?

Environmental Knowledge
1. a. Before you came, what did you think were some of the greatest threats facing this area (environment and community)? Why did you think this?
   b. Now that you have volunteered here, what do you think are some of the greatest threats facing the area? Why do you think this?
2. Do you think this project can contribute to improving these problems?
   a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?
   b. If not, why do you believe this?
3. Do you think volunteers can contribute to improving these problems?
   a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?
   b. If not, why do you believe this?
4. Do you have any additional ideas for how to improve some of these problems, either than you can do or in general?
   a. If so, what are some of your ideas?
   b. What do you think is the feasibility of these ideas?
   c. Have you shared these with the reserve managers? What did they say?
5. a. What can you personally do for conservation?
   b. Would you say your answer was affected by your time here?
6. Do you think most Ecuadorians are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?
7. Do you think volunteers are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?
8. Do you think the reserve managers are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?
9. Is there anything you would like to add about environmental knowledge?

Promotional Material
1. Did you do any research when choosing where to volunteer? If so, what kind of research?
   a. Did you look at any brochures, web sites, and/or other information from various volunteer organizations?
   b. If so, did that factor in to your decision to come here?
   c. Did you choose not to go to other places because of things you read about the organization or the reserve?

2. a. Was there anything in particular in _____'s (organization mentioned in Q1) information that helped you make your decision? Did any words, concepts, or images stand out to you? Do you recall what these were?
    b. What activities or projects that you read about in the site/project description were you most interested in doing?
    c. Did you learn anything about the area and environmental issues from what you read?
3. Would you say the information you read played a role in what you expected here. If so, how?
4. Now that you have been here for a bit, do you feel the promotional material accurately portrayed the area and/or what you would be doing at the reserve? How or how not?
5. Is there anything else you would have liked to have seen or read in the promotional material? Why or why not?

Prompt Activity: (Provide copies of promotional material to stimulate memory and generate further possible answers for above questions)

6. Is there anything else you would like to add about promotional material?

Volunteer Interpretation of Keywords
I am going to ask you about some words that are often used in discussing volunteer projects. I would like you to list other words or phrases that come to mind when you hear these terms. You will have one minute for each word. I realize your ideas about some of these terms may have changed since being at the reserve; if so, please tell note if it was an original thought that has changed. If you do not note this, I will consider it a current thought:

1. Conservation
2. Sustainable
3. Sustainable development
4. Community
5. Community development
6. Nature
7. Volunteer work
8. Indigenous
9. Ecosystem
10. Cloud forest
11. Biodiversity
12. Cultural Diversity
14. Biological/Nature Reserves
15. Ecotourism
16. Environmental education
17. Developing country

18. Knowledge
19. Volunteer Tourism

 Can you think of any other words you have seen or heard associated with such projects? Where did you see or hear them? (I will then have them free-list with these words and include them in subsequent interviews)

Additional Information/Demographics
1. Is there anything else you would like to add?
2. Is there you would like me to specifically ask the reserve managers?
3. How old are you?
4. What country are you from?
5. Where do you study or work at home?
6. Do you volunteer at home? Have you volunteered abroad previously?
7. Do/Did any of these activities (e.g., school, work, volunteering) involve conservation or community work?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-RESERVE MANAGERS

Motivations
1. What do you view as some of major reasons volunteers choose to volunteer?
2. What do you view as some of the major reasons volunteers choose to volunteer abroad? South America? Ecuador?
3. What do you view as some of the major reasons volunteers choose to volunteer with the NGO? Other organizations?
4. What do you view as some of the major reasons volunteers choose to volunteer at La Hesperia?
5. What are your thoughts on some of the intermediary organizations (e.g., Global Volunteer Network, i-to-i) through which they come?
6. Is there anything you would like to add about volunteer motivations?

Expectations, Perceptions and Interactions
1. What do you think the manager's role should be at the reserve? Why?
2. What do you think the volunteer's role should be at the reserve?
   a. Do you see the majority of them playing this role? How or how not?
3. Which projects here are currently your biggest priorities?
   a. Do volunteers ever want to focus on other projects?
   b. If so, how do you handle this?
4. Do you find volunteers have different expectations than what they encounter?
   a. If so, in what ways? Can you tell me about any instances that stick out?
   b. From where do you think their expectations came?
5. Have volunteers ever come to the reserve with major misconceptions or misunderstandings about the project? Environment? Local community?
   a. If so, can you mention some?
   b. Why do you think they have these misconceptions?
6. Is there anything else you would like volunteers to know prior to coming that would help them learn about their role as a volunteer? The project? The environment? The community?
7. What do you believe are positive and negative effects of volunteers on the environment? The community? The project?
8. Do you think volunteers are satisfied with their experience? Do you think their motivations are met?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add about expectations, perceptions, or interactions?

Environmental Knowledge, Problems, and Solutions
1. What are some of the greatest threats facing this area (environment or community)? Why do you think this?
2. Do you think this project can contribute to improving these problems?

    a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?

    b. If not, why do you believe this?

3. Do you think volunteers can contribute to improving these problems?

    a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?

    b. If not, why do you believe this?

4. Do volunteers have ideas for fixing some of these problems?

    a. If so, what are some? Are these ideas feasible/realistic?

    b. Why or why not?

5. What is your impression of conservation and environmental efforts in Ecuador? Among local Ecuadorians?

6. Do volunteers and Ecuadorians have different ideas of environmental problems and solutions? If so, in what ways?

7. Do you think most Ecuadorians are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?

8. Do you think the local community and the staff are knowledgeable of the environmental issues, given the proximity to the reserve?

9. Do you think volunteers are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?

10. Do you think other organizations/reserves should turn to volunteers to aid with conservation and community development projects? Why or why not?

Promotional Material and Volunteer Knowledge

1. Do you feel promotional material influences volunteers' decisions to come here? If so, what parts of the material do you feel most influences them?

2. Do you find volunteers to be well informed about the NGO and reserve when they arrive? If so, where did they receive their knowledge?

3. Would you attribute any of the expectations, perceptions, or misunderstandings to promotional material? If so, can you provide some specific examples?

4. Have you experienced any problems arising from your promotional material or that of the intermediary organizations? If so, what problems?

5. Do you feel the promotional material accurately portrays the area and the volunteer's role and duties at the reserve?

Manager Interpretation of key words:

I am going to ask you about some words that are often used in discussing volunteer projects. I would like you to list other words or phrases that come to mind when you hear these terms. You will have one minute for each word.

1. Conservation
2. Sustainable
3. Sustainable development
4. Community
5. Community development
6. Nature

7. Volunteer work
8. Indigenous
9.   Ecosystem
10. Cloud forest
11. Biodiversity
12. Cultural Diversity
14. Biological/Nature Reserves
15. Ecotourism
16. Environmental education
17. Developing country
18. Knowledge
19. Volunteer Tourism

Can you think of any other words you have seen or heard associated with such projects? Where did you see or hear them? (I will then have them free-list with these words and include them in subsequent interviews)

Additional Information
1. Is there anything else you would like to add?
2. Is there you would like me to specifically ask the volunteers?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS-VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Background
1. How did you get involved with the NGO/reserve?
2. Why did you decide to take a position as volunteer coordinator?

Volunteer Interactions:
1. Can you tell me about some positive experiences you have had with volunteers?
2. Can you tell me about some negative experiences you have had with volunteers?
3. What are some major reasons volunteers have mentioned for wanting to volunteer? Volunteering with the NGO/reserve? Volunteer at the reserve?
4. Do you find volunteers have different expectations than what they encounter? If so, in what ways? Can you tell me about any instances that stick out?

Promotional Material and Volunteer knowledge
1. Where are some places that volunteer expectations come from? Do you feel some volunteer expectations come from promotional material?
2. How often do you update the NGO/reserve promotional material? Who is in charge of this?
3. Is the material from intermediary, partner organizations accurate? Have you found any incorrect or unclear information?
4. Have you experienced any problems arising from promotional material from these different organizations? If so, what problems?
5. Do you find volunteers well informed about the NGO and the reserve when they arrive for their orientation? If so, where did they receive their knowledge?
6. Have volunteers ever come to the orientation with major misconceptions or misunderstandings about the project? Environment? Local community? If so, can you mention some?

Environmental Knowledge, Problems, and Solutions[19]
1. What are some of the greatest threats facing this area (environment or community)? Why do you think this?
2. Do you think this project can contribute to improving these problems?
    a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?
    b. If not, why do you believe this?
3. Do you think volunteers can contribute to improving these problems?
    a. If so, in what ways? Why do you believe this?
    b. If not, why do you believe this?
4. Do volunteers have ideas for fixing some of these problems?

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[19] We only asked this set of questions to the reserve volunteer coordinator, given her extended time spent with volunteers and greater understanding of the reserve and surrounding area.

a. If so, what are some? Are these ideas feasible/realistic?
b. Why or why not?
5. What is your impression of conservation and environmental efforts in Ecuador? Among local Ecuadorians?
6. Do volunteers and Ecuadorians have different ideas of environmental problems and solutions? If so, in what ways?
7. Do you think most Ecuadorians are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?
8. Do you think the local community and the staff are knowledgeable of the environmental issues, given the proximity to the reserve?
9. Do you think volunteers are knowledgeable about environmental issues? Why or why not?

Volunteer Coordinator Interpretation of key words:
I am going to ask you about some words that are often used in discussing volunteer projects. I would like you to list other words or phrases that come to mind when you hear these terms. You will have one minute for each word.

1. Conservation
2. Sustainable
3. Sustainable development
4. Community
5. Community development
6. Nature
7. Volunteer work
8. Indigenous
9. Ecosystem
10. Cloud forest
11. Biodiversity
12. Cultural Diversity
14. Biological/Nature Reserves
15. Ecotourism
16. Environmental education
17. Developing country
18. Knowledge
19. Volunteer Tourism

Can you think of any other words you have seen or heard associated with such projects? Where did you see or hear them? (I will then have them free-list with these words and include them in subsequent interviews)

Additional Information/Demographic
1. Is there anything else you would like to add?
2. Is there anything you would like me to specifically ask the volunteers and reserve manager(s)?

3. What is your educational background (i.e., major, degree)