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# Emerging Discourses of Gender and Women in the National Park Service: An Ecofeminist Analysis of Ranger Newsletter from 1979 to 1999

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Em Sapp

Emerging Discourses of Gender and Women in the National Park Service: An Ecofeminist  
Analysis of *Ranger* Newsletter from 1979 to 1999

Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

## Abstract

The key focus of this research is based in ecofeminism, the worldview that the oppression of women is connected to the oppression of nature. This research studies the National Park Service, through the Association of National Park Ranger's newsletter/magazine *Ranger*. The study attempts to answer the questions how do issues about gender equality emerge throughout the history of the National Park Service, as looking through the newsletter *Ranger*? How do ideas of femininity and masculinity emerge and are represented in *Ranger* throughout time? The study is significant in that it is representative of the NPS, and by revealing emerging ideas of women and comparing ideas of femininity and masculinity, this could break down stereotypes and norms of women and nature and persuade women to break down these gender norms, visit nature and/or get a profession in nature, such as in the NPS. The study used a content analysis as well as historical discourse when looking at *Ranger*. Informing the study is research done by Polly Kaufman in *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History* and Kathleen Denny in "Gender in Context, Content, and Approach: Comparing Gender Messages in Girl Scout and Boy Scout Handbooks." The research suggests that as gender equality movements progress in the '80s, the *Ranger* newsletter moves along with this. Even though the magazine strives to numerically represent women more as both rangers and writers (especially in the '90s), it is still apparent that there are issues in the NPS under the surface.

## Introduction

National, state, and local parks are an important part of my college life. As a kid, I was never interested in playing outside in my backyard and attaining all the Vitamin D I probably needed. Nature was a foreign, scary, and out-of-the-way concept that I never fully embraced until I graduated high school. Once I started the path of my own autonomous personhood, separate from my family and my hometown, I decided that I wanted to challenge myself. That summer after graduation, I signed up for a weeklong backpacking trip in the Appalachian Mountains. I found that nature and being outdoors was the one place that I could be myself, destress, and enjoy life. I came to love the woods, mountains, and desert, and in my college experience, continued to take trips in nature and get out of my comfort zone. The positive experience that nature and nature paths, trails, and parks have given me is something I believe all people, no matter their gender, or any other identifying characteristic, should be able to enjoy as well. This is especially true for those that visit National Parks as well as the park rangers who work there, since the NPS is one of the most well-known ventures into nature that a citizen in the U.S. can take.

Unfortunately, in the present, the National Park Service has been known to make female employees feel unwelcome. According to Lyndsey Gilpin in “How the Park Service is Failing Women,” an employee survey from 2000 “found that over half of female rangers and three-quarters of female park police had experienced sexual harassment on the job. Almost three-quarters said they experienced discrimination, and over half described the Park Service as “poor” at enforcing no-retaliation policies.” This is alarming for today’s standards, especially after all the policies and bills that have been in place to protect against sexual harassment and gender discrimination. This has pointed me toward studying the National Park Service and how themes

of gender emerge with them over time. I am curious how gender issues and perceptions were affected over time in the NPS. I question how do issues about gender equality emerge throughout the history of the National Park Service? How do ideas of femininity and masculinity emerge and are represented in the NPS throughout time?

In my research, I question how the language and representation of women and gender emerges and how that is reflective of the time period. Throughout the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, the counter revolutions of the '70s, and the female empowerment movement of the '80s, the National Park Service has been affected. Especially as a government institution, the policies that came about from these movements had to be enacted in the NPS. With the National Parks starting in 1916 as mostly consisting of the U.S. military protecting the land, the beginnings of the NPS are stemmed in white masculinity. While a handful of women were park rangers before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawing sex discrimination, at first they were not given the same titles, uniforms, or jobs. Title IX from the 1970s also brought about a greater population of women into the National Park workforce, since they were forced to include women in their workforce. But, I am curious how the written text of the park rangers changed to accommodate that, as well as how the pictures and photographs of the park rangers represent women.

Within the National Parks is the Association of National Park Rangers, which created the magazine/newsletter *Ranger*. According to Bill Halainen in his introduction to the eHistory of *Ranger*, the ANPR's mission "has been to foster improved communications within the ranks of both rangers and the employees of the National Park Service in general." Thus, *Ranger* was born as a way to discuss "operational, professional, personnel and other issues of interest to rangers" (Halainen). In my study, I use *Ranger* as a vehicle with which to study gender in the National

Park Service. Since the newsletter comes straight from the National Park Rangers of the time, as well as features writing and photographs from writers not on the editorial board of the magazine, *Ranger* is the perfect time capsule with which to analyze my questions. To look into this, I utilized a content analysis methodology by coding text, cartoons, and photographs within the magazine.

When analyzing conversations of gender diversity and women, it is also important to look at the different roles that gender plays in the context of enjoying or working with nature. Will women have to put on a mask of masculinity to work within the environment of the NPS? There are stereotypes based on these categories in connection with nature, which include that people of color do not want to engage in the environment and are disinterested, and women are not physically strong enough to engage in nature. These identities of race and gender also intersect, creating a unique experience for individuals with nature.

For my proposed research, I am using the lenses of ecofeminism to inform and analyze my methods and data. Ecofeminism looks at the connection between the oppression of women and the oppression of nature. As Greta Gard from *Ecofeminism* states, “Ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women or any other oppressed group will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature. Its theoretical base is a sense of self most commonly expressed by women and other nondominant groups—a self that is interconnected with all life” (1). Ecofeminism calls for an interconnectedness between environmental justice and social justice while also exploring the importance of how concepts of nature affect societal perceptions of gender. The National Park Service serves as an ideal space in which to analyze with an ecofeminist viewpoint because of the intersection between nature and gender that the NPS inherently involves. Men and women both work in the NPS (as well as

individuals outside the binary genders, I'm sure). Work in the NPS can involve interpreting nature and history or working more in the law enforcement aspect of the NPS. From the beginning, these job roles are already gendered where the interpreting ranger is more feminine of a job and the law enforcement ranger is more masculine in their role.

It is significant to look into the emergence of gender diversity in the National Park Service because if there are gaps in what they've done before and the NPS wants to be more inclusive, this could help understand how they can still continue to emerge into an intersectional and inclusive dialogue among their employees and the visitors of the parks as well. If the NPS's rocky beginnings of inclusion (actually excluding women from employment) are still apparent in their organization, this could dissuade visitors of minority status from visiting, as well as from minorities applying for jobs there or even thinking they could have a job as a ranger. Any knowledge obtained from this research could contribute to National Parks creating better atmospheres for both their marginalized employees and for bringing in more visits from marginalized citizens.

The intersectional nature of the study is important to further the importance of ecofeminism. The field of ecofeminism, I think, is not fully realized. By connecting ecofeminism to a physical entity such as the National Park Service, I think this will instill interest into the concept and inspire further studies based off of ecofeminism.

## Literature Review

The framework that this research will utilize is ecofeminism. Greta Gaard, in “Living Interconnections with Animals and Nature,” writes that “ecofeminism’s basic premise is that the ideology which authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species is the same ideology which sanctions the oppression of nature” (1). In other words, while people continue to be oppressed because of their identifying characteristics such as gender and race, nature continues to be oppressed as well. Not until nature is freed can people be freed from their oppression, too. In feminism, the connection between women and the environment is an important, and often overlooked, part of feminisms. While some feminisms strive for inclusion, they do not always include the environment or animals. Ecofeminists make observations about “how people act with other beings and with the planet” (Ross 23), and, just by looking at language, it is possible to see this overlooked connection. An example that Naomi Ross uses in “Exploring Ecofeminism” is that “the parallels between the rape of women and the rape of the planet are evident when one is thoughtful about experience” (23). Often society refers to the destruction of land and its resources as “rape.” Rape is an action of non-consensual sex typically perpetrated by a man against a woman. The woman’s resources have been taken from her, she has been taken advantage of, and she will never be the same again. These phrases could be metaphorically said of nature as well especially in the context of fracking, oil spills, mining, and illegal poaching of animals. Ecofeminism is thus a call to the end of *all* oppressions, because this school of feminist thought notes the importance of the construction of nature along with the construction of society and gender.

Ecofeminism is a small worldview within the section of environmentalism. It is the hope of ecofeminists that environmentalists, male and female, take on a more ecofeminist approach



when working or being alongside both nature and women. With the alarming amount of women park rangers being sexually harassed in the NPS in 2000 (Gilpin), it is necessary to understand how the National Park Service incorporates ecofeminism into their culture.

On the less theoretical and more applied part of ecofeminism, gender plays a large role in how people are supposed to view and be a part of nature. In most societies, nature is referred to as “Mother Earth.” For the U.S., this has created a significant dualism between men and women. The first dualism is that of men/women where one cannot be like the other and there is no middle-ground. The dualisms of emotion/reason, passive/active, and nature/culture paint men as one thing (active, rational, cultured) and women as the exact opposite or negative of that (passive, emotional, natural). Nature is unchanging, stagnant, something to be exploited for the betterment of society, similar to how women are perceived in society. Men are equated to cultured civilization and are seen as transcending nature by creating their own narratives through their culture (Kheel 38). According to this hegemonic stand point, men are the creators of culture while women are made to stand in the background of that created culture. Women are insignificant in the eyes of culture, and thus they are diminished, just as the importance of nature is diminished compared to the importance of society/culture. These dualisms are the cite of problems with society, which ecofeminism aims to subvert.

It is important to understand just how far back these dualisms have taken place. Long before the National Park Service, in seventeenth-century England when science and rationality were being emphasized and explored in Western culture, the female and the natural was being rejected. Ruth Watts, in her book *Women in Science*, chronicles the history of women in the scientific community and points out how women have always been involved in science even as male scientists excluded women and femininity from the profession. She details how The Royal

Society of England, the oldest scientific community in the world, based in London, used a “gentlemanly” model when researching and exploring knowledge (Watts 43). They excluded all that was feminine “(including passion and unnecessary words!)” (Watts 43), while simultaneously advocating unbiased knowledge. The society rode on the backbone of Francis Bacon’s science which “re-utilised associations between nature and femaleness, it gave even more powerful expression to the ‘antitheses between femalesness and the activity of knowledge’” (Watts 44). Science began in the West with a dualism between women and science/knowledge. Thus, although the National Park Service deals with nature, jobs having to do with botany, zoology, or environmental science were socialized to be unfit for women because of the science involved in the knowledge of nature.

Inside of ecofeminism, a large amount of research on national parks and gender has not been done. What is available are comprehensive histories of women in the National Park Service, which is important in looking at how the NPS has emerged in ideas of gender and the inclusion of women into the service. One such comprehensive history was written by Polly Welts Kaufman: *National Parks and the Woman’s Voice*. Since the beginning of the National Park Service, women had been a part of the organization. Ranger’s wives would join their husbands out in remote locations. Since the parks were always understaffed, the wives were integral to the parks’ formation as well as work done on the parks. Kaufman states that the National Park Service was masculine from the beginning because the first major influence on the NPS was the U.S. Cavalry. The cavalry, or an early internal military in the U.S. protected Yellowstone and Yosemite from natural disasters such as wildfires. In their environmentalism, they used a more conservatism approach instead of any type of ecofeminism. Other than military personnel, the public communications branch of the rangers was tasked with being the image for the park.

These “Mather men” (so named after one of the originators of the NPS) were supposed to act with “cordiality, grace, and chivalry” (Kaufman xxxiv). The ranger-naturalists were seen as effeminate by the military rangers and when women began to be hired as ranger-naturalists after World War I, the male ranger-naturalists felt that their jobs were being threatened. While the rest of the nation continued to increase the number of women holding science positions, “the Park Service hired only a few highly qualified women as seasonal naturalists during the next three decades” (Kaufman xxxiv). During the 1960s, male historians started disliking their jobs, because the naturalist position was seen as “unprofessional.” The park “drew on contemporary perceptions of appropriate gender roles” and decided to hire more women as historical interpreters (Kaufman xxxiv). By the mid-1960s, the federal Equal Opportunity Act promoted women to apply for and be hired by the NPS. Unfortunately, masculinity still dominated the NPS. Women believed that they had to emasculate themselves to fit into the National Park Service. They would postpone marriage and had to fight to wear the same traditional uniform that their male coworkers had worn since the beginning.

Really, because women were allowed and continually more accepted into the NPS, diversity within their job descriptions was more apparent for park visitors. In fact, “women were responsible for three of only a handful of parks that interpret the arts, and, beginning in the 1970s, for parks presenting the lives of individual women, and one telling the story of women’s struggle for equal rights” (Kaufman xxxvii). In the present, “one-third of the more than fifteen thousand Park Service employees are women and twenty percent of the women represent minorities” (Kaufman xxxvii). The wives of park rangers during the formation of the NPS began to change the culture of the parks to one that spoke more to the continually diverse population of the U.S.

As for the methodology of my research, in the article “Comparing Gender Messages in Girl Scout and Boy Scout Handbooks,” Kathleen Denny explores the gendered messages in both the Boy Scout and Girl Scout handbooks. She does this through a textual analysis of the content and context of activities along with how they are instructed to complete activities. Denny uses three analytical components of context, content, and approach of the handbook activities. The first phase of research was a “quantitative content analysis of the badge titles and badge activities” (Denny 33). Denny coded and counted for particular badge attributes and activities. The second phase was the “textual analysis of the official statements” (Denny 34). The last phase was a “close reading of comparable badges and their associated activities from each handbook to illustrate some of the important distinctions in gendered approach” (Denny 34). Denny applies coding to each activity and coded each into only one category. She also coded what types of activities were offered in the two separate handbooks. Lastly, Denny examined the qualitative and textual analyses of her data. To finish her research she stated that, “rather than code the texts for the presence or absence of any particular trait, I assessed them holistically, attuned to themes and patterns that emerged having to do with the attitude or approach endorsed by the texts” (Denny 35).

These texts will influence my research in their theory and methodology. The idea of ecofeminism is used throughout my research in that I am looking for a space in which to exemplify women and their representation within the NPS, whether it is in the foreground or background. Women have continually been involved in the NPS, just as women were always involved in science, and my research will bring up their achievements or at the very least, their involvement. I will also be using a similar methodology to Denny’s research with a content analysis. While not as in-depth, I will be coding as well as assessing the texts holistically. It is

worth noting that there is not much research similar to my own project. No research has been done on *Ranger* or the ANPR, nor has there been connections between ecofeminism and the NPS.

## Research Design and Methodology

To study how ecofeminism and representations of gender and gender stereotypes have emerged in the National Park Service, I examined the Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers, *Ranger*. The magazine spanned from 1979 to 2016 in full text in pdf format online. The newsletter started out in 1979 with about just five pages per issue and only two issues per year. Because the ANPR had just started out in 1977, they were just getting their foot off the ground and attempting to fill a hole in park ranger communication through a newsletter. Starting in July 1981, the magazine's look changed and the quality of the format and text also improved. In 1985, the magazine changed again to be named *Ranger* instead of just *Newsletter* as Bill Halainen became the new editor and expanded the publication in length as well as making it quarterly. Again, in April 1993, Teresa Ford, a woman, became the editor of *Ranger*, and introduced color along with other improvements to the magazine.

*Ranger* served as a wealth of information about the National Park Service. It was drawn by Keith L. Hoofenagle. Since much of the content stemmed from the authors who are park rangers, as well as the readers of these magazines, *Ranger* gave great insight into the thoughts of the NPS community. *Ranger* reflected the culture of the NPS while simultaneously reinforcing culture that had already been in place. *Ranger* as a whole was filled with the values, norms, and beliefs of the park rangers, along with their perception of gender. In the publication, any lines blurred between femininity and masculinity were apparent especially through the photographs and cartoons. These images were helpful besides the text in how gender was represented. If the NPS showed bias or boundaries when it came to discussing gender and women, *Ranger* was the place where that would show up. This included how they were representing women and what words/discourses they used to discuss gender.

The time period of the newsletter was also important when it comes to answering my questions. The newsletter began in 1979, the tail end of the counter-revolution movement, as well as a decade after the Civil Rights movement. With the Civil Rights Act in 1964, sex discrimination was made illegal, and women had to be allowed to work equally among male park rangers. Because of these real-life events, the newsletter reflected the result of those events in its writing. Studying *Ranger* seemed the best way to understand the historical context of the park, at least in the span of 1979 to 1999. This twenty-year period captured the beginnings of the magazine as well as the beginnings of the ANPR in the twentieth century. This gave a more condensed understanding of how the NPS and park rangers understood and addressed gender and gendered issues.

With *Ranger* spanning from 1979 to 2016, to get a vision of the emerging context of gender, I decided to study only certain magazines. In the first three years of its publication—1979, 1980, and 1981—I examined all articles in each year (two per year). 1982 had three publications, and I looked at each of them. Starting at the 1983 publications, I looked at every other issue. I looked at the March and September publications of 1983, skipping the June and Winter publication of that year. I looked at the Summer 1984 publication, skipping the Spring and Fall issues, and I looked at the Spring and Fall 1985 issues, skipping the Summer and Winter issues. While it was important to look at each of the issues during the beginning years of the publication, once the magazine got their footing in format, style, and content, I believed it would be best to start skipping certain publication. After the 1985 publications, I started only looking at the Fall issues of each year from 1986 to 1999. Once *Ranger* got into a consistent format, it was more practical to look at just the fall issues as those were the issues in which the title articles most dealt with any type of diversity, specifically in the Fall 1985 Issue, “Women in the National

Park Service.” The Winter 1993-1994 issue was the only one during that 1985-1999 period in which I stepped outside of the boundaries I made for myself to only do the fall issues. I decided to look at the Winter 1993-1994 issue because the previous Fall 1993 issue discussed that there was going to be a women’s issue workshop at the Ranger Rendezvous. The winter issues always discussed what happened at the Ranger Rendezvous, and I believed that the Winter 1993-94 issue would be beneficial to my study since it would discuss gender. This issue did turn out to be incredibly beneficial to my research.

I used a qualitative content analysis method to conduct my research. This content analysis provided me with physical representations of an emergence in the understanding of gender in the National Parks Service. I used photographs to look at numerical representations of gender, and by looking first at gender in a quantitative way, this then gave me the backbone from which to start the qualitative analysis.

The qualitative content analysis was most useful for answering how gender and gender representations emerged. A content analysis takes a look at what has already happened and been written. This historical look into National Park intersectionality can only be done by addressing physical copies of the past. Interviews would not have been able to capture the historical perspective of 40 years of the National Park Service. In fact, an interview-based research project would have brought up bias and possibly an inaccurate representation of the past because it would have been in-depth analysis from only a few people.

To analyze the newsletters, I made sure to have an Excel sheet open as I skimmed through the ones I had chosen. In the Excel sheet, I had a column for the number of magazine, publication date, issue number and volume, issue title, cover, pictures, two columns for interesting quotes, one for big headers, and then an infinite amount for coded words. I later



realized that I also had to make columns for authors of those quotes, headers, and coded words and looked specifically for whether or not a woman was the author. I also had a list of words to code for. The list included the following words: diversity, female, women, change, transformation, (in)equal, gender, race, African-American, Asian, Latino/a, Native American, white, black, people of color, inclusion/inclusive, bias, culture, ethics, identity, glass ceiling, intersectionality, (under)representation, sexual harassment, tolerance, issues, feminine, masculine, minority, affirmative action, feminism. To code for these words, I used Control F to quickly search if the words were in the newsletter that I analyzed. Typically, only a few words would be in one issue. Also, the word that I found most was “women.” In my Excel sheet, I took note of the context surrounding the word I found. I placed the entire quote into the Excel sheet, as well as the page number and author. If it was something very important, I bolded the entire quote to make sure I went back to it.

Other than coding, I also looked at the headers of articles. This was a significant way to see what each article was discussing without having to read it in depth. If the header had a coded word or had anything to slightly do with gender or women, I would then delve deeper into it and read through the article. I also took note of letters to the editor and the photographs and cartoons in *Ranger*. If there was a significant number of photos in a newsletter, I would count the ratio of women to men in the issue. This was important to see the representation of women in the National Park Service, as well as how they were depicted. When looking at photographs and cartoons specifically, I asked myself whether women or men were in positions of power, such as speaking alone at a podium or working hard on the trail, or if they were only in group settings with other rangers working or relaxing at the Ranger Rendezvous. Were the women rangers active at work in a candid shot or were they standing still smiling and posing? The pictures were

also significant because many of them were submitted by readers of *Ranger*, instead of the authors themselves. While the Association of Park Rangers might understand nuances of privilege, it was the readers that also made up the vast population of the National Park Service, and their perspectives on gender were just as important in the analysis.

In terms of methodological issues, the biggest one was my own bias. While I, as a Women Studies major and a Creative Writing minor, saw a large importance in the words used for conveying perspectives on gender, the people using these words might not have meant them in the context that I was thinking of—that is, as following the mainstream narrative or the counter-narrative to the mainstream. I acknowledge my own positionality because the words that are used in 2018 are different from those in the 1980s.

Another issue I encountered was that I had to keep adding words to code for. I did not go back to the other issues I had not coded those specific words for, so there may have been gaps in the words that I was supposed to be finding. Also, they may have been quotes or depictions that I missed because I was so heavily coding. During the beginning articles, because there only about five pages per issue, it was much easier to find everything having to do with gender that was there. But, in the later ones that averaged 30 pages, I had to strategically code to get through as many issues as possible. This could have made my sample data heavy in the 1980s issues with a decreased amount of data in the 1990s.

## Findings

From the beginning, I questioned how issues about gender equality and femininity/masculinity emerged throughout the history of the National Park Service. To do this, I analyzed the content of the Association of National Park Rangers' newsletter *Ranger*. I hypothesized that gender equality would increase as the time period got closer to the present, and as world events of feminism occurred. I found that the publication is mostly all talk and little to no action.

Other than the beginnings of the National Park Service being stemmed in masculinity, the Association of National Park Rangers also held its roots in masculinity. Tim Setnicka in an article in the Fall 1986 issue wrote, "the roots of the Association are directly linked to high levels of testosterone and the well-known National Park Service herding instinct" (12). This statement seemed to ring true for the rest of the publication, even as each new *Ranger* issue became more aware of women and successfully represented women more in numbers (specifically white women).

### *Women's Issues Conference and Workshops*

Women's Issues Conferences and Workshops (mentioned in the July 1980, January 1981, Fall 1993 and Winter 1993-94 issues) conveyed a sense of female inequality not as visibly present in the rest of the publication. The July 1980 issue dedicated an entire page to the article "First NPS Women's Conference," written by Claire Harrison. Harrison, as an ANPR member, reported on the concerns brought up at the conference. The major concerns were general concepts, communications, barriers and geographic mobility, upward mobility, recruitment, training, and minority women's concerns. While all of these concerns were aimed at women park

rangers, the recruitment and minority women's concerns specifically stated the word "women" in the report. For recruitment, it was recommended to "endorse the new Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment program...recommend utilization of women in non-traditional roles including maintenance, law enforcement, and recommend study of alternate methods of recruitment such as internal testing authorities, cooperative ed, conversions, etc." (3). From 1980, women addressed these problems involving Federal Equal Opportunity and placing women into non-traditional roles within the NPS. For the minority concerns, it was not apparent what types of minorities were being addressed other than black women, as the conference recommended "endorsing contacts between black college and minority training programs" (3). Other than that, it was recommended to have better adjustment programs, better upward mobility, and minority consulting firms.

While much hard work was put into coming up with action plans and recommendations, the goals from the Women's Conference were not taken seriously or put into action. The Women's Conference brought up an update in the January 1981 issue that they not only had to recommend action, but also suggest how to implement it. Once again, this article was written by a woman, Susie Bartlett. They had proposed mini, regional conferences to be more specific in their recommendations. Another update on the Women's Conference surfaced in the March 1982 issue in which Ginny Rousseau, the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator, reported on an update from Bureau Federal Women's Program Manager Carolyn Murchison. Murchison stated that the recommendations had been forwarded to Washington, but, a week after they were supposed to be delivered, they were not. Even with this, "Ms. Murchison has recommended that an additional task force NOT be set up to further scrutinize the recommendations, delaying implementation up to a year" (7).

There were no other updates on the women's conference. This must have been a frustrating development for all the hard work put into place by the women at the national and regional conferences. While it was unknown why the recommendations were not sent when they were supposed to be to Washington, or who they were specifically being sent to, the problem seemed to have extended further than the National Park Service. As a governmental institution, the NPS was based in government policies, laws, and culture. If the government did not have interest or first-priority in women's issues, then the recommendations would not have been taken seriously or looked into immediately. Once the women's recommendations were taken out of the hands of women, the passion about these issues was lost.

While perhaps Washington did not take the women's issues recommendations seriously, one would think that the ANPR would. If this had been the case, then there wouldn't have been a need for further women's workshops at the annual Ranger Rendezvous. But, in the Winter 1993-94 issue on the Ranger Rendezvous, Karen Wade summarized the Women's Issues workshop led by Kathy Smith at the '93-94 Rendezvous. In the workshop, they identified women's issues, specific solutions to the NPS director, and how the ANPR could assist with that. The issues they identified were that of dual careers, a parent or "mommy track," caregiving for dependents, gender sensitivity, being valued as an equal, and unrealistic expectations (26). Although the workshop did not discuss representation, there were still plenty of other issues which came to the forefront of their discussion. Gender sensitivity, being valued as an equal, and unrealistic expectations were the most aligned with the socialization of gender outside of problems solely within the NPS. "Gender sensitivity" was meant in terms of women having inappropriate or offensive things said to them by other male rangers. The women also discussed not being valued,

being patronized, not listened to, and only being selected for a position because of their female gender.

While women had to have these serious discussions on their gender and how that affected their work in the NPS, the rest of the magazine outside of these small articles conveyed a different attitude toward gender. Without the small sections on women's workshop or a women's conference, any reader would not have thought that there was any problem for women solely based on their gender. In fact, because of increasing numerical representation within the NPS, other rangers may have thought that gender discrimination was over. For instance, in the Fall 1993 issue (the issue made directly before the Winter 1993-94 issue), the president of the ANPR, Rick Gale, wrote a statement about gender representation in the ANPR that he was looking for "a few good women and men who are prepared to make serious commitments of time and energy to the organization" (3) to replace the influx of retiring rangers. He referred to both men and women, but also made sure to point out that women were being represented in the ANPR. Gale wrote:

The last point is critical. The tired cliché about ANPR's board being just an old boy network is no more than that; not only are there few 'old boys' on it, but the majority of the voting members (9-6) are now women. There are only two founding members still active anywhere within the leadership of the organization, including the board, committee chairs, staff, work project leaders, and sundry other positions occupied by untitled hard chargers. (3)

Gale stopped short of saying anything in-depth about gender, other than the numbers present in the board. With Gale discussing the representation of the board, he pointed out that it was

important that women were 9-6 as voting members. While women were the majority in this case, he did not go into detail of why it was important that women were represented.

Considering the amount of power that the President of the ANPR had over the organization, the above message was the only message written about gender in *Ranger* by the President. Gale did not, and never does, address any of the problems brought up by the Women's Conference or the Women's Workshop at the Ranger Rendezvous, even though they were serious problems. He addressed the numbers of the ANPR board (9 women to 6 men) as a win in gender equality, while in reality, the women's issues workshops at Ranger Rendezvous showed that there was much more work to do, even 13 years after the first NPS Women's Conference.

### *Inclusive Language*

In *Ranger*, the language used became more inclusive toward women rangers over time. In the March 1983 issue, Jim Tuck discussed the importance of including women in the park ranger workplace through language. He wrote, "it is still important that we try to stay away from phrases and words that are potentially damaging. Witness the use of the word "girls" when referring to "women" who work in an office.... We all need to be sensitive to the detrimental effects of ill-advised terminology" (2). Tuck pointed to the significance of using the word "women" instead of "girls." Words did damage to the women rangers because "girls" in general refers to children instead of strong, professional workers. Tuck gave one of the more insightful examples of this realization, while the other uses of language in the publication appeared there without reference to the importance of being respectful to women.

When referring to rangers, the pronouns "he" and "she" were the primary words used to include women. It is worth noting that there were no references to trans people or nonbinary

people with “they” pronouns or any other language that could have been used to include them. The January 1979 issue primarily referred to rangers as “he” only pronouns. For instance, an anonymous ranger stated, “in most situations, the Ranger seems to be his own worst problem” (3). It was also apparent that there weren’t many “she” pronouns used in the beginning even about specific women because the magazine was mostly written by men about men. Soon enough, in the September 1983 issue, the magazine made sure to refer to rangers as “he/she.” This was important because women would automatically feel excluded from their workplace if they were never referred to. Simply adding “she/her/hers” pronouns did something more to welcome women into the park ranger workplace.

Instead of just pronouns, it was also important to refer to rangers as both “men and women.” In the March 1983 issue, Dick Martin the President of the ANPR, wrote “the idea that we as rangers are much like the fabled mountain men and women of the last century is not a cliché” (3). In this case, Martin referred to women not just as park rangers but as “mountain women.” The term “mountain women” is masculine in nature in that “mountain men” was and still is a term used for men highly involved in or living in nature. “Mountain women” included women into this stereotype and could make the women park rangers feel more inclusive about their workplace.

The order that was used to refer to both men and women as park rangers was also significant. Typically, the order was always “he/him/his” pronouns or “men” first when discussing rangers. There were a few occurrences where the language was female first. In the Fall 1988 issue, an anonymous person wrote, “she/he must narrow down a list of 20-100 people to a few, according to her/his needs, desires and prejudices” (4). The author could have been female in this case, but it is still important that the editors accepted this letter to the editor even



with its female first language. This author went against the norm subtly, not even about an issue that was specifically about gender.

Another example of this female first language is in the Fall 1993 issue. The President, Rick Gale wrote “we're looking for others to replace us. But not just anyone: We're seeking a few good women and men who are prepared to make serious commitments of time and energy to the organization” (3). Gale made an extreme effort to put women first in his statement and to include them in general. By referring to women first, this conveyed a sense of respect to women in the ANPR and NPS, especially since Rick Gale was a male president. Coming from the person with the most power in the ANPR and the *Ranger* magazine, the inclusivity that he adopted was very significant and showed that even at the top of the ANPR, gender equality for women was closer.

The word “diversity” also appeared in several issues with the context of its meaning changing over time. Often, when park rangers wrote about diversity, they were writing about vegetation and animal biodiversity. But, the ANPR wrote seldom about cultural diversity, or if they did, it was something that popped up in a single sentence in an article. When diversity was written about, it was often in the context of park ranger interpretation. In the July 1980 issue, there was a photograph of nature with the caption “THE OZARKS: A REFLECTION OF NPS DIVERSITY, these areas reflect a natural, historic, and cultural diversity that transcends time and our country's development” (3). The “cultural diversity” pertained to the Ozarks as a historical place, not particularly as a place of work. This came up several times, as the NPS strived to show cultural diversity in the history of the U.S., as well as discussing plant life.

In terms of diversity within the workplace, park rangers would sometimes call for more cultural diversity. From the Fall 1988 issue Joe Zarki of Yellowstone wrote “ANPR should be "a

group that seeks the widest possible diversity of members from within the park ranger profession” (14). From the Fall 1992 issue: “the need for cultural and ethnic diversity in our work force” (10) by Jim Brady in the article “What is a Ranger?” From the Winter 1993-94 issue about Speaker’s Assistant Secretary of Interior, George Frampton: “Frampton said increased workforce diversity is a "major issue," not just racial, ethnic and gender diversity, but cultural diversity as well” (14). It was evident that even men called for some type of cultural diversity. I was not aware what the race or other identifying characteristics of the authors were, other than their gender. Since these authors all had male names, I assumed that at least some of the male park rangers were aware and on-board with some type of diversity. It was worth noticing that none of these authors were specific about what cultural diversity meant to them though.

While no women of color were specifically mentioned, it was worth noting the article done on Dr. Thom Alcoze in the Winter 1993-94 Issue. Dr. Alcoze, a Native American man and director of the Center for Native Education and Cultural Diversity at Northern Arizona University, came to the Ranger Rendezvous to talk about his relationship with nature. Getting Dr. Alcoze to talk about his perspective might have been one way for the NPS to integrate diversity into its ideals in the workplace. Dr. Alcoze had a notably “unconventional, yet refreshing approach to his theme of ‘Appreciating Parks’” (18). He spoke to the rangers about how love of the land as a kid who used to play in the dirt turned into “preservation of natural resources” (18) as an adult. Dr. Alcoze urged the rangers to bring ethics and beliefs into their job, connecting science with passion. This view of science and nature was much in line with ecofeminist thought and was dissimilar from most of the articles present in *Ranger*. *Ranger* exemplified talking about nature as a profession, a science, sometimes without the passion Dr. Alcoze mentioned. The article, written by Teresa Ford, then female editor for *Ranger*,

exemplified the want/need for diverse thoughts and perspectives within the NPS, especially going towards an ecofeminist perspective.

The overall language of *Ranger* was continuously trying to include women and some form of “cultural diversity.” In some ways, this helped the magazine promote gender equality at a very base level.

### *Representation Over Time*

The ANPR did do a progressively better job of involving women in representation. From the beginning, women were not writers except on issues pertaining to women such as the women’s conference and workshops at the Ranger Rendezvous. In 1993, once *Ranger* introduced Teresa Ford as their first female editor, more writers were female and did not have to write about women’s issues. In the beginnings of the magazine, it was difficult to see any real representation of women in the magazine. Mary Bradley, in the February 1980 issue, was voted the first ANRP Honorary Member. Bradley was not a “real” park ranger; instead, she was considered “one of the Ranger’s greatest friends” (2). Although a woman was represented with a great honor for her work alongside the rangers, this example was far and few between.

The next significant example of female representation in *Ranger* was in the “Women in the National Park Service” issue published in Fall 1985. The main article was a condensed history of women in the NPS up until 1985, written by Polly Kaufman, author of *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History*. In it, Kaufman went into detail about how women had fought for the same rights within the NPS as the male rangers. Women such as Freida Nelson, Marguerite Lindsley Arnold, and Enid Michael (working from the 1920s to the 1940s) paved the way for future women NPS workers. Kaufman concluded the history stating “although the

figures for women park rangers are not spectacular, they do show that women are here to stay” (8). The three women were also photographed, in which Nelson’s photo showed her displaying her new uniform, a masculine suit with a tie and suspenders. Marguerite Lindley Arnold held her horse in a candid shot with a large flowing uniform and pants, and Enid Michael’s photograph depicted her holding three large pinecones wearing a jacket, gloves, boots, and pants. The articles before this did not depict this many women in one issue.

As for women of color, there were only a few depictions of them, and that only began in 1982. While I stated what races these women were, these were only guesses based off of how the women looked in their black and white photographs. The magazine never gave specifics of race or discussed the term “women of color.” In the March 1982 issue, a black woman ranger was shown walking along a path. The August 1982 issue depicted an Asian woman ranger interpreting nature to children. In the Fall 1985 issue, Ranger Veralyn, a black woman, interpreted the historic French Market of New Orleans. In the Fall 1999 issue, Ranger Colleen Smith, a black woman “stands ready to greet visitors and answer questions” (7). Depictions of women of color were far less than white women and showed the need for further representation of women of color. In general, white women gained further representation after the “Women in the National Park Service” article in both being authors and being the subjects of those photographs.

### *Masculine and Feminine Stereotypes*

While representation was important, *how* those women were represented was equally, if more important. In general, I found that the women park rangers were depicted as masculine. When they were depicted as feminine, it was meant to be demeaning or not the main focus of the image. As concluded above, women were represented more numerically as time went on, but

women were typically only depicted in interpretive ranger roles instead of law enforcement ranger roles. For instance, in any photographs of law enforcement, it was typically a man depicted or if it is a woman it was difficult to tell. These photographs included depictions of rangers helping visitors in action roles such as lifting, climbing, and other strength activities. The photographs of interpretive rangers were of rangers giving tours or talking with visitors about monuments or nature. These depictions required considerably less physical strength and exercise and fit in with the stereotypical view of women in less active jobs.

Photographs of women from the 1979 to 1993 showed women in these interpretive roles, as well as in the background. The first couple covers from 1979 to 1981 depicted women in old black and white photographs. These included women in dresses, smiling, beside men, or women in the background of the Ranger Rendezvous. These depictions were typically feminine and showing women as background characters, demure, or feminine. It was unclear whether some of these women were even rangers. In these years, until about the Winter 1993-94 issue, women were not prominent speakers, or if there were photographs of women speaking in a conference manner, the number of men speaking or looking professional would outnumber them in that specific article. In group pictures, men always outnumbered the women, such as in the July 1981 issue, in which a photograph of the Stephen Mather session of 1957 showed a group of men in suits with only one woman.

When women rangers were depicted, they were typically in a masculine style. The most prominent example of this was the cover photograph and photographs inside the Fall 1985 issue "Women in the National Park Service." The cover photo was of a white woman park ranger in uniform standing in front of a massive pile of antlers. She was not frowning but not smiling either. The woman did not look feminine in the least. Her hair was short, she wore pants and

boots, she held her ranger hat by her side, and she stood in front of animal remains. She was the only person in the photo, and she was in the dead center. This, as well as the inside picture of Freida Nelson from 1926 showing off her uniform and suspenders with a smile, conveyed women as masculine when they were in the role of park ranger. These depictions of women were a huge difference from all the other photographs of women park rangers in the background. Being the cover, it was the first thing that readers would see.

In later years, women were depicted more consistently as masculine or in power. In the Winter 1993-1994 issue, there was a photograph of three women in powerful business attire taking a break from a business meeting. While they wore jewelry and had their hair done up in typical '80s style, they also wore suits with shoulder pads. The three women were the only people in the photograph and conveyed power. They laughed comfortably with each other without any men in sight. This was significant in that there weren't many pictures of women in groups. Other photographs of women in the Winter 1993-94 issue included women standing up at a conference to speak in front of a group of men. The women wore suit jackets and seemed confident while public speaking.

It was interesting then that the women that were upheld in NPS history, such as Frieda Nelson, were masculine in their role. It was difficult to find feminine women photographs in any of the *Ranger's* history. Other than the photographs in the magazine, cartoons also depicted women, and I found that the cartoons would often depict women as feminine as a way to make fun of them. They were not powerful like the women depicted in their shoulder-pad suits. While masculine women were put on a pedestal, feminine women park rangers were demeaned, at least by the comic written by Keith L. Hoofnagle. Hoofnagle's comics encapsulated humorous park ranger inside jokes as well as over-the-top humor targeted as employers of the National Park

Service. Hoofnagle used humor as a way to make fun of feminine women and uphold the concept that men are the norm and the powerful.

While being in the same issue that brought to light the struggles and accomplishments of women in the NPS, Hoofnagle made fun of feminine park rangers. Hoofnagle depicted women rangers as “yuppies” who fell outside of any ranger role in the Fall 1985 issue. In the comic, Hoofnagle warned readers to look out for a Yuppie Ranger, especially if she was a woman. The white woman depicted had long eyelashes, a fur coat, white gloves, a shining earring, and long blonde hair down instead of up in a bun or ponytail. She looked unamused and stated to another male ranger “You’re persnickety about your rangers wearing the uniform properly. But I say the uniform is boring, boring, boring!” (9). This was unrealistic in that women had been fighting for the right to wear the same uniform as male rangers. Also, none of the female park rangers in the photographs in *Ranger* looked anything like Hoofnagle’s drawing.

Makeup and other feminine things were used as a source of demeaning humor, especially when men were involved as well. Hoofnagle drew in the Fall 1989 issue a woman trying to make more money for the NPS by selling Mary Kaye makeup. She wore it herself, but the humor was in the fact that she had practiced putting the makeup on two of her male coworkers. The men appeared uncomfortable in the makeup, although the woman seemed to enjoy putting it on them. The comic showed a rigidity between gender expectations. Women, even park rangers, were expected to wear makeup and enjoy it, while men were supposed to look ugly and uncomfortable in makeup. Although the comic put the woman, Superintendent Sylvia Snit, in a position of higher power than the two men, the cartoon still created a culture of gender roles and expectations. Instead of the humor lying in thinking it was weird to gender things like makeup, it fell into the all-too typical humor of making fun of trying to break out of those stereotypes.

In the Fall 1988 issue, Hoofnagle further used the breaking of gender roles as a joke. In the panel “Urinalysis,” which depicted park rangers stating their worries about the “fears of what might be revealed” during an intimate drug test, an amused male stated, “and what’s going to happen when they find out that our heavy equipment operator is a transsexual?” (22). There is no one to answer him, but the humor lies in the idea of a man “turning into” a woman. This furthers the societal perception that women and men were inherently different and that their roles could not be intermingled. It wasn’t clear whether the heavy equipment operator was a man or a woman, but because of the implication of working with heavy machinery, one assumed that it was a man. In all 28 issues which I studied, this was the only depiction of transgender people. While the terminology was different in the ‘80s, the cartoon showed that transgender people were still very much prejudiced by cisgender people.

There were also photographs depicting men not in a masculine role, and in these cases, this was not depicted as humorous or against the norm. In the December 1982 issue, among pictures of men presenting and speaking at the Ranger Rendezvous was a photo of a man sitting down playing with a baby. It was unknown whether or not this was his baby or if he was watching the baby for someone else. The stereotypical photo would have been of a female watching her baby, but instead this photo went against the norm. Another example of this was in the Fall 1997 issue in which a male ranger put on a puppet show for visiting children. Entertaining children and not being on the field would have been a stereotypical depiction of a woman. These two photographs stood out as the only photographs not showing men in a stereotypical masculine role.

Overall, men were typically depicted as in power and masculine. Only two times was any breaking of the masculine norm for men not seen as humorous or unconventional, but it seemed



more typical that male park rangers were expected to be masculine in their work with masculine roles and in stereotypes having to do with makeup. When female park rangers were depicted as masculine, which was the norm, they were in their typical role. When female park rangers were depicted as feminine, this was not typical, and they were made fun of or demeaned.

## Conclusion

This attempted to answer the questions how do issues about gender equality emerge throughout the history of the National Park Service, as looking through the newsletter *Ranger*? How do ideas of femininity and masculinity emerge and are represented in *Ranger* throughout time? To look into this, I utilized a content analysis methodology by coding text, cartoons, and photographs within the magazine. The research that informed this study was primarily done by Polly Kaufman in *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History* and Kathleen Denny in "Gender in Context, Content, and Approach: Comparing Gender Messages in Girl Scout and Boy Scout Handbooks." Kaufman's overview of women in the NPS gave me background for my own study, while Denny's research was an example of the methodology I would use.

What I found in my research was that while the magazine attempts to, and succeeds in, including women in numerical representation, the Women's Issues Conference and Workshop at the Ranger Rendezvous of 1980 and 1993-94 painted a different picture. These conferences and workshops, while significant to women of the NPS and against-the-grain of the typical articles in *Ranger*, were not spotlighted or emphasized. While it was positive that women were represented more as writers and park rangers within the magazine as time progressed, these internal issues were not being specifically addressed except by the women in the ANPR and NPS. Even then, women were still being placed into stereotypical roles such as the interpretive ranger instead of the law enforcement ranger. Simultaneously, women were also placed into masculine roles and could not stray from that. On the other hand, men had to be in masculine roles and were barely outside of that binary. When either gender was depicted as leaving their expected roles, it was to make fun of them.

It may be difficult to gauge women's equality from the content of *Ranger*, but from the Women's Issues Workshops, it was easier to tell that women were not treated as equals compared to their male employees. Women brought up several issues pertaining to their employment and gender of which none were addressed in the magazine, nor did solutions arise. In terms of number and language, equality did get better for women, specifically in the 1980s, but this did not include women of color or other minorities. Also, attempts at further gender equality for women seemed to taper off in the 1990s except for the 1993-94 Women's Issues Workshop. This parallels the world outside the NPS in that female empowerment was a large movement in the '80s and in the '90s not as apparent.

For those scholars who want to look further into ecofeminist thought, gender, or the NPS and ANPR, I suggest looking at all of the *Ranger* magazines instead of just ones from a certain time period. This way, it would be easier to get a full picture of the *Ranger* magazine and how they portray women, especially in the present. Another possibility is to do a historical content analysis and compare more in-depth the circumstances of American society and gender equality alongside the magazine's content. I think it would also be interesting to compare NPS policies such as the Civil Rights Act or Affirmative Action and the enactment of those policies as they came about to *Ranger*'s content. To be even more in-depth, in-person interviewing or ethnography would get a better glimpse into women's perspectives on the NPS. As the magazine doesn't go into too much detail about women's narratives concerning their gender, I think it would be beneficial to continue research in their perspectives of their work and how they navigate their workplace. This would also be beneficial to compare and contrast what life was like from 1979 to 1999, to the present-day workplace of the NPS.

Further research can be done specifically about the disconnect between inclusivity of women in language and numbers and the fact that, in the 2000s, an alarming number of female park rangers reported being sexually harassed by their coworkers. While studying the past is important, I did not find anything about sexual discrimination or harassment in *Ranger* from 1979 to 1999. It would be important to understand how those things came to be, and for how long they were happening. This further research could help create more equality for female park rangers and or least make the National Park Service aware of the problems that are happening in the present which haven't been fixed from the past.

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