These cars were “made to run things over.”

Charging across rugged terrain, battling against boulder and bogs, irresponsible OHV recreationists continue to “go wherever they damn well please” (KIA). Due to such behavior, OHV area closures and restrictions are on the rise. Who are these individuals that carelessly ruin recreational opportunities for others, while causing irreparable damage to the environment? Are they simply ignorant? Apathetic? Selfish? Free spirited? What drives them to commit such idiotic actions?

One answer to this perplexity is so prevalent that it is “almost invisible.” Shaping our attitudes, beliefs, values, and lifestyles, advertising’s effects largely go unseen. Turn on the TV or flip through any magazine, and notice “the go anywhere, do anything” attitude that is typical of SUV, truck, and other OHV advertising. There’s no question that such words and images have an effect on shaping public perceptions. SUV and other OHV advertising is replete with the subtle, and often blatant, militant message to “carpe mountainum.” ...to destroy and conquer...to show no mercy. And why show mercy when you have a car that can “plow through just about anything,” “conquer most terrain,” “withstand any beating,” and “see you over most any patch of land – no matter how rough and tumble?” Heck, these cars were made to “run things over.” At least, that is what the media would have you believe. OHV advertisements feed man’s desire for domination with mud splashing, boulder-climbing, plant-crushing, in-your-face images. Brutal? Yes. Responsible? No. Appealing? Absolutely.

Advertiser’s arrogant assertions of OHV power and ability suggest an exaggerated sense of man’s superior role in the environment. They make you believe that “with the TRX you are given power to manage the force of nature.” That you command the land with your “4X4 that eats rocks and gravel, hills and water crossings for breakfast, silly sand washes and washboard whoops for lunch.” Several advertisements proudly state that with their OHV you can treat “mountains like speed bumps,”“roads like potholes,” “rocky landscapes like cobblestone roads.” That you can go “wherever you want and do whatever you want.” “There are no boundaries,” “no limits.” So, go ahead and travel to the “end of the road, and beyond...far beyond.” “Climb over boulders, splash through muddy gulches, power up mountains, and curl down twisted gorges,” “for this isn’t about off-roading, it’s about off-off-road riding” with your “go-anywhere, do anything, fun machine.”

Society is bombarded with such brazen messages of brutality. Yet, they appeal to man’s innate tendency towards anthropocentricity. The egotistical energy emanating from OHV advertising encourages irresponsible recreational behavior, resulting in increased environmental degradation.

Why do we continue to wage such a needless war against the environment? There are several perfectly responsible SUV, truck, and other OHV advertisements that succeed in creating appeal without encouraging irresponsible behavior.

Society and media industry should heed the words of Aldo Leopold, who cried out for the establishment of a land ethic. “A land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value.” Love, respect, admiration, and high regard do not coincide with the words, “destroy,” “tackle,” “crush,” “attack,” etc. that run rampant in OHV advertising. Such advertising hinders man’s understanding of his role in the ecologic community. Man is not conqueror, ruler, or master of the land; he is a biotic citizen of planet Earth.

But how are people supposed to know that, when much of what they see and hear are images and phrases suggesting the supremacy of man...when all they hear are phrases such as, “go anywhere, do anything,” “blast through mulch and over mountain,” “tackle the most inhospitable terrain.”

Bottom line: Reckless OHV use can have a disastrous impact on the land. In many areas, it already has. Media may be partially to blame. ( Heck, we could blame many societal problems on the media.) A dramatic change in OHV advertising needs to take place.

By: Angie Cannon
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Abinash Battacharya

Q: Tell me about your hometown?
A: I was born in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and have lived there most of my life.

Q: How was it growing up in Nepal?
A: It wasn’t as stressful as it is here...I had more free time to spend with my friends and family...I am now too busy with myself...which I don’t like so much.

Q: How do you like Utah?
A: I came to Utah spring of 2004. The college is great, and Logan, for a small city, is quite diverse. People are very kind and hospitable...they’re nice. Mt. Logan is a hill. Growing up by the huge, tall Himalayas...these mountains are nothing. You haven’t even seen mountains, until you’ve seen the Himalayas.

Q: What is your major? And what are your plans after graduation?
A: Watershed Science. I have one year left and then I plan on going to graduate school somewhere in the United States.

Q: What would be your ideal job?

Q: What are some of your hobbies?
A: I like listening to music. I’m a big fan of sports...any sports...and...I like to travel.

Q: What inspired you to go into Natural Resources?
A: I really wanted to do something for the environment. I’m not in it for the money... I’m in it to do what I think is most important as a human being...It’s our responsibility to protect the environment and make it better...to leave behind something wonderful for the generations to come.

Q: What kind of music do you like?

Q: What is your favorite book?
A: I’m not much of a reader, but the most recent book I read was “Into Thin Air.”

Q: What is your favorite food?
A: I miss the food my mother made...obviously, it’s Nepali food.

Q: What are some of your dreams in life?
A: I’m not pursuing any materialistic dreams...I always try to make a difference in someone else’s life.

Q: What is your advice to the world?
A: Love and respect one another...animals...plants...everything.

Q: What is your motto in life?
A: Everyone comes into this world for a reason...it’s just a matter of time until you realize what that reason is.

What Abinash can do for you:
I can share my international perspective with others. I can also make you delicious and spicy food...Nepali food.
Meet a Professor

Name: Jennifer Gervais

Where did you grow up? North Yarmouth, Maine, United States of America

Where did you get your degrees? B.S. from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, M.S. from Humboldt, California, PhD from Oregon State University.

What are your degrees in? B.S. in Biology with an English Minor, M.S. and PhD in Wildlife.

What inspired you to go into your degrees? A friend talked me into taking a class with her in ornithology my freshman year of college. Another thing was when I worked on the Prince William Sound oil spill in Alaska, in 1989.

What classes do you normally teach? Plant and Animal Populations (FRWS 3810).

What research are you currently involved in? Burrowing Owls population dynamics and the effects from contaminates.

Have you had any interesting jobs before becoming a professor? Prince William Sound oil spill in Alaska, spent 4 months pulling weeds on a deserted sandy Hawaiian island, and was on a seabird project in Soviet water out in the berringstrait right before Soviet Union collapsed.

Why did you decide to teach? I think that it is important to share knowledge. It’s critical and it’s also fun.

How long have you been teaching? I taught my first class in 2001 and also did some environmental education 20 years ago.

Hobbies and interests: Outdoor activities, running a small farm, bird watching, and looking at plants.

Philosophy on life: Life is short, so try to have fun.

Favorite music: Irish folk

Favorite food: Chocolate.

Favorite color: Purple and Green

What book would you recommend for someone to read? Just read! It doesn’t matter what.

What do you hope people will remember you for (besides you talking really fast)? That I cared about students, that students enjoyed my class and actually learned something from me.

Most embarrassing moment: Not going to share....

peeves: People that borrow books and don’t return them. Late buses, and I really hate it when my cat vomits on the rug. My floors are hardwood floors and every time, she hits the rug, I don’t know how.

Thoughts on Logan: It’s a beautiful area, but we need 10 feet of snow.

Future plans/dreams/wishes: I’m afraid that I’m doomed to running an organic goat farm in Oregon after Dan and I move.
Rangeland Trails to Texas

On Friday, February 4, 2005 the range club traveled to Fort Worth Texas to participate in the annual Society for Range Management meetings and compete with 26 other schools in US, Canada, and Mexico in two international tests. Each contest is sponsored by the SRM and the top scorers receive honors, such as scholarships and or cash awards.

On Monday the 7th, our club competed in the Undergraduate Range Management Exam. The test covers the subject areas of range ecology, range improvements, range regions, range inventory, range management, and plant physiology. It consists of multiple choice and problem solving questions. It is a two hour timed test that has 120 questions.

On Tuesday the 8th we competed in the plant identification contest. For the test, there are 100 out of a possible 200 common range plants. There can be more than one of the same plant on the test too. This year, it seemed like 70 percent of those were young grasses. To score on the test a contestant must correctly spell and identify the plant by family, genus, specific epithet (species), origin, and growth form.

This year, two of the club members competed in the undergraduate public speaking contest. We had an enjoyable time watching Clint Sampson represent USU when his name was announced as the fifth place winner and he quickly fumbled to the front of the room during the awards ceremony to accept his handshake and picture. Good job Clint!

Between those test times, members of the club were able to attend a variety of presentations given by professors, range managers, and private organizations on current rangeland research and studies. Presentations included "grazing pressure forces cattle to graze broom snakeweed", "needs for future rangeland biodiversity research", "livestock, rangelands, and relevancy", "cattle preference to forage kochia and its relation to forage quality and morphological characteristics" etc.

Included in the meetings is a chance for students to leave resumes and talk to agencies about available jobs. There was also a trade show that advertised current topics in range science and information available to improve range management.

Next year, these meeting will be held in British Columbia. The USU Range Club will again be traveling there to compete and learn. To learn more about the SRM and its meeting and events you can go to their website at www.rangelands.org. Or e-mail jastuart@cc.usu.edu for USU Range Club information.

By Isaac Pittman