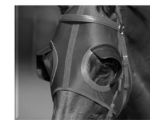


Instrumental Reasoning, Ecological Costs



Instrumental Reasoning (IR)

- **DEFINITION:** Reason as an instrument or tool for achieving a narrow, specific, pre-defined end.
 - Max. efficiency, max. output
 - Good: Focused, disciplined, results oriented
 - Bad: Not systemic/ecological
 - Miss unintended consequence
 - Miss “side-effects”
 - Not reflective or critical
 - E.g., importing Kudzu

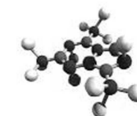


IR is Multi-leveled: Individual & Societal

- Mode of individual thought
 - Work to pay bills, seek food, navigate traffic, adjust thermostat
 - Goals motivate (I/O goal setting theory)
- Embodied intuitionally
 - **Technologies:** cars, f. fuels, retirement plans
 - **Capitalism:** invest for profit, own property, beat competition; more=better
 - **Corporations:** socio-legal constructions for max. profit.
 - **Legal system:** means of control and authority, created powerful to maintain power.

IR Driven by Modern Transformations

- Scientific & Industrial Revolutions
- Modern assumptions:
 - nature inert, control for profit and progress; nature mechanical vs. enchanted
- New form of reason:
 - control vs. contemplate world;
- Individualism – revere agency, utilitarian individualism



IR antagonistic toward Eco. View

- Seeking gain/progress, not harmony or attunement
- Mechanistic vs. Holistic
- Linear vs. Systemic
- Eg:
 - fossil fuels
 - cars
 - sprawl



Learning Check

Stop! Write answers to following:

1. Define IR – given an example; ± “blinders”
2. How embodied institutionally?
3. How reflecting transf. of modernity?
4. How dangerous for ecologies?



Case Study of IR: Scotts Corporation

Reading:

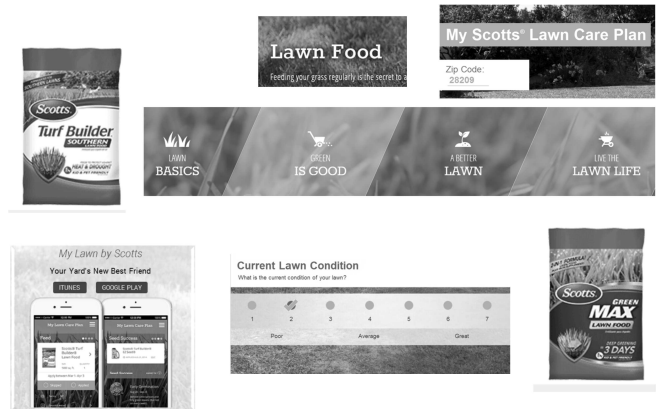
The United States of Fertilizer, Steinberg (2009)

The Puzzle Pieces

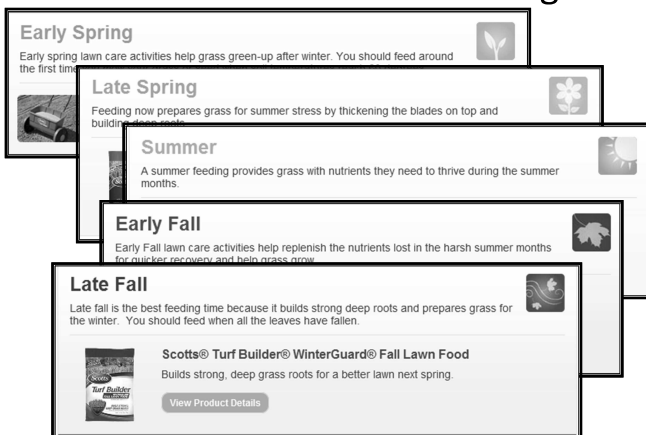
1. Website to max. use
2. Artificial fertilizer facts
3. Eutrophication
4. Gulf of Mexico Dead-zone
5. The Corporate Form
6. Legal Structure
7. Cramped moral landscape
8. Conclusions



Scotts: 1. Website “framing”



Scotts: 1. Website “framing”

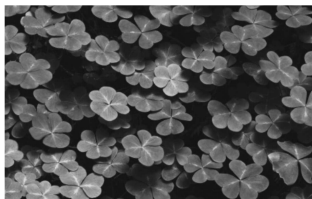


Scotts: 1. Website “framing”

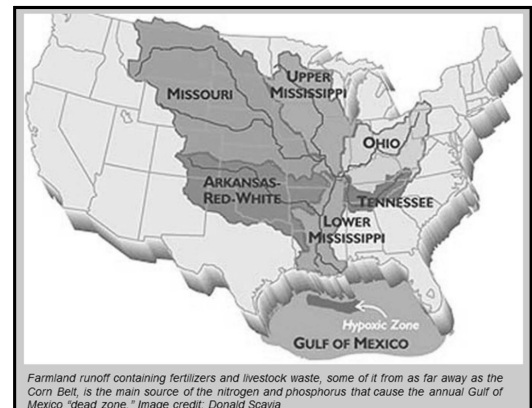
- Technologies of control
- Metaphors/framing: “feeding levels”
- “Teaching” “Green” “Progress”
- Zip-code based science
- Moral sources
 - Utilitarian/modern: uniformly green
 - Expressive Individualism
 - Positional status
- Recommended levels from state ag agencies?

Scotts: 2. Fertilizer Facts

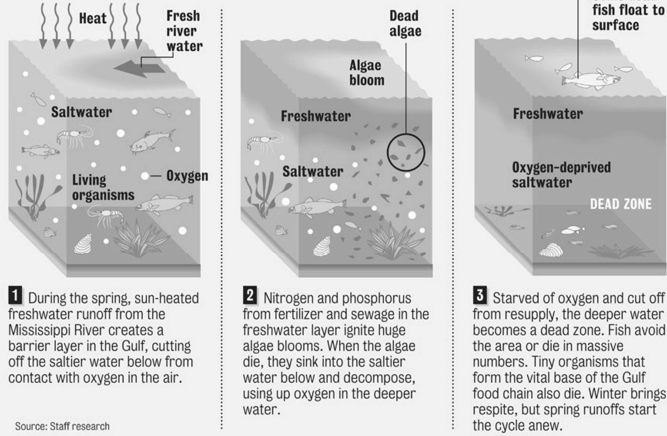
- History
 - 1909 Haber process, synth. fertilizer, high temp, high energy
 - WWII bombs
 - Corn uses heavily
- Demise of Clover
- How turf builder different
- Grass engineered to fertilizer



Scotts: 3. Eutrophication



HOW THE DEAD ZONE FORMS



Scotts: 4. Gulf of Mexico Dead-zone



Scotts: 4. The Corporate Form

- Instrumental Vehicle?
 - tool to make profit for shareholders
 - Motivate fert. use > sales > profit
 - (side effects?)
- Board of Directors' mission
- Criterion for Exec. evaluation
- Limited liability
- Linear control
- Annual report
- Instrumental Reasoning dominates



Scotts: 5. Legal Structure

- Profit as ultimate goal
- Executives required to maximize shareholder value
- No room for ecological criteria

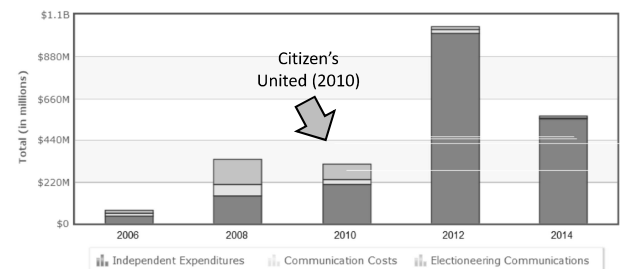


Scotts: 7. Cramped moral landscape

- Barriers to being "good corporate citizens"
- Are corporations people?
- **Legal Update!**
- Sup. Court & Citizen's United (2010)
 - 5 to 4 vote!
 - Corporations people
 - Need free speech
 - Campaign donations as free speech
 - So..... Can't restrict corporate campaign giving



Total Outside Spending by Election Cycle, Excluding Party Committees



http://www.opensecrets.org/news/reports/citizens_united.php

Scotts: 8. Conclusions

- Instrumental reasoning
 - attitude / values / corp. form / legal structure
- What questions get asked?
 - What's the "**bottom line**" for fertilizer use?
- What questions don't?
- Who benefits? loses?
- Alternatives?



Be sure you can explain how the corporate form embodies instrumental reasoning and why it's ecologically dangerous.

Other examples of Instrumental Reasoning →

Other examples: "Writing" papers efficiently

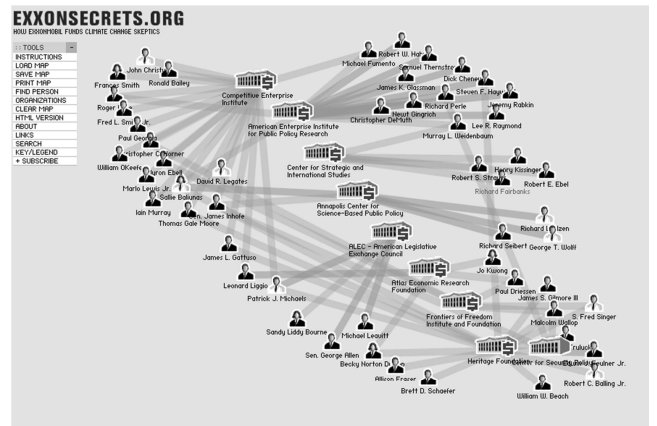
Saving money by ... "streamlining" universities



- Gov. Scott Walker in 2015 proposed changing Univ. of Wisc. mission:
- FROM
 - "search for truth"
 - "improve the human condition"
- TO....
 - "meet the state's workforce needs."

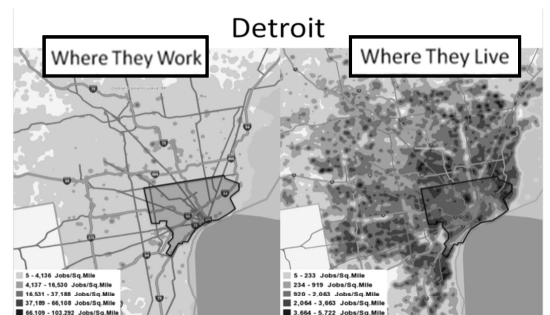


Addressing CC by ... funding deniers

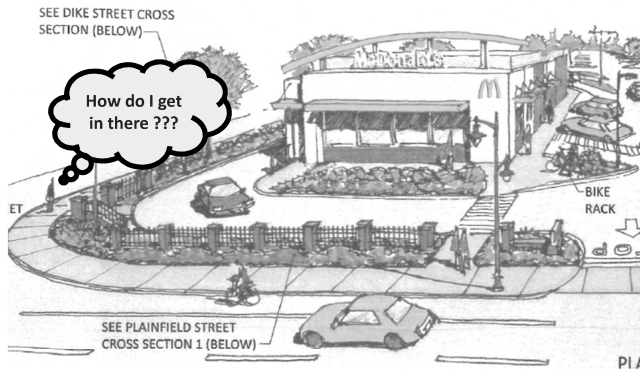


Addressing CC by ... shifting the blame

Getting more space by ... consuming land/gas



Optimizing for cars... not pedestrians



Factory farming – Efficient or costly?

