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Response to Mel Kotyk (1999). "No Vision = Wandering in the Wilderness"

Suspect Visions

[Wayne Tyson](#)

retired ecosystem restoration consultant

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The closer we get to crucial distinctions, the more we risk semantic confusion. Mel Kotyk need not, I hope, be sad. My interpretation of Kotyk's (1999) views also may be flawed, but I hope to begin to build some connective tissue here. I believe that Holling is quite right to be suspicious of people with visions.

The semantic confusion lies in the crucial distinction between "a vision" as a fixed focus or agenda, sometimes known in the United States as "tunnel" vision, and the ability to see comprehensively--vision. Holling may have figured out long ago that nine-tenths of the hell being raised in the world is (and long has been) well intentioned. That's why Kotyk's definition of dogmatism rocked me to the core: he describes tunnel vision, arrogant presumption to perfection--well, near perfection.

It is a privilege to have vision. But a having "a" vision requires blinders to screen out the outliers--outliers wherein whole universes of alternatives may lie undiscovered.

For me, the most exciting feature of *Conservation Ecology* is this feature (vision without a vision) of driving a stake into the heart of presumption. Somewhere in the phenomena (or phenomenon?) we study may lie a universal Rosetta Stone. More than one paper in this journal's short existence has touched upon it. It is compelling to be present at its unearthing.

RESPONSES TO THIS ARTICLE

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LITERATURE CITED

Kotyk, M. 1999. No vision = wandering in the wilderness. *Conservation Ecology* 3(2): Response 3. [online] URL: <http://www.consecol.org/Journal/vol3/iss2/resp3>

Address of Correspondent:

Wayne Tyson
Drawer 34069
Hillcrest Station
San Diego, California 92163 USA
Phone: 619-280-2553

Fax: 619-280-4025
landrest@utm.net



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