Power of Inspiration. Analysing the use of a spokesperson to communicate the conservation of wildlife and the natural world.

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science Communication

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December, 2013
Abstract

People have had a close relationship with the natural world for thousands of years, but this connection has not always had a positive effect on the flora, fauna and ecosystems of the world. Indeed over time species and habitats have been lost forever; attributed directly to mankind’s actions.

However despite these environmental tragedies there have been triumphs, due in part to a type of spokesperson; a conservation spokesperson. This is essentially a person who speaks on behalf of conservation of the natural world and wildlife and attempts to influence and persuade change to favor a conservation campaign.

Today in the 21st century it is generally agreed that there are two distinct types of conservation spokespeople: the celebrity and the celebrity conservationist.

The creative component of this thesis is a film entitled Mystery Bird. Fellow science communication student, Sean Giffin, and I made this film from December 2010 to October 2011. Mystery Bird tells the story of Geoff Harrow and his life’s campaign to save an endangered New Zealand bird, the Hutton’s shearwater, from extinction.

Whilst making this film I realized that Harrow was a conservation spokesperson, and this motivated me to analyse the use of a spokesperson during a conservation campaign. My aim was to determine which attributes in a spokesperson led to success, with the hope of encouraging the use of spokespeople in conservation campaigns.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank the staff at the Centre for Science Communication at the University of Otago. In particular Sue Harvey; Dr Jenny Rock who has been a great support; my supervisor Associate Professor Phil Bishop who has provided prompt and invaluable feedback and encouraged me in completing this thesis and Ross Johnston the wisest man I know, who inspires me everyday to be a story teller.

Thank you also goes to the other students from the Centre for Science Communication and in particular to my film partner, Sean Giffin. A huge thank you to my friends and family here in Dunedin, Australia, Singapore and the UK where this thesis has been written. Particular thanks goes out to Matt Hogan, Quinn Berentson, Robbie Bridgeman, Amy Anderson, James Blake, Ram Alluri, John Boreham, Jill Karyn and my mum Olive Clements.

A special hug and a pat goes to my beautiful dog Skye who moved with me to New Zealand so I could pursue my dream of natural history filmmaking and who was always by my side until a few months ago. Thanks for the journey Skye and rest in peace.

Thank you to Lucy Lawless who very kindly offered to be a part of this thesis despite a hectic theatre schedule and I am very grateful to her for her enthusiasm and support.

And finally I would like to dedicate this thesis and film to Geoff Harrow. Without him the film Mystery Bird would never have been made and the Hutton’s shearwater might never have been found and saved from extinction.
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Introduction

Humans have utilised the natural world for thousands of years and until recently the environment and all it contained was considered primarily as a commodity. As mankind entered the 20th century, this began to change drastically and a new way of thinking began to emerge. The environment and wildlife was no longer considered merely as a commodity but as something to preserve; the environmental movement had begun (McNeill, 2000; Adams, 2004).

Today in the 21st century conservation of the natural world is a topic that sits firmly on every agenda across the world. From religion to politics to every day decisions, it is a topic that individuals are constantly required to consider.

From the moment conservation campaigns were developed, and continued developing, an important element of these campaigns began to emerge; the use of a spokesperson to communicate their conservation messages (Brockington 2009).

These spokespeople were given a variety of names including conservationist, environmentalists and eco-warriors (Cubitt 2005; Adams 2006; Brown 2010).

There is no defined age, race, nationality or gender for these spokespeople and the variables are large (Brockington 2009), but they can be placed into two distinct groups; the famous celebrity and the celebrity conservationist (Lester, 2006; Brockington 2008; Brown 2010).

Spokespeople are considered to have had a huge impact on the conservation movement and this thesis will examine the types of different spokespeople with the aim of reaching some conclusions about what attributes they possess that help them to inspire, educate, persuade and communicate the conservation of the natural world.

Firstly in Chapter 1, I will explore the historical background of the environmental movement citing some examples of early day spokespeople dating back to 300 BC.
Chapter 2 will then explore the psychology behind perception, persuasion and change within society and how these aspects of the human mind and society relate to the effectiveness of a spokesperson.

This will then lead into Chapter 3 in which I will examine what tools and traits a successful spokesperson possesses and in Chapter 4, I will investigate the two categories of conservation spokespeople with the aim of determining which attributes these types possess. I will use a case study for each of these, allowing me to examine in greater detail the individual spokespersons’ background. I will also propose that there is a third category in which Geoff Harrow the star of the film Mystery Bird fits into, and will examine, in similar detail, his emergence as a conservation spokesperson.

Finally in Chapter 5, I will analyse the potential impacts and consequences of each of the spokespeople used in Chapter 4.
Chapter 1 – History of Conservation Spokespeople

1.1 Wildlife and people

Like a never-ending Hollywood blockbuster film, the relationship between the human race and wildlife is one that has played out over hundreds of thousands of years. Today in the 21st century that relationship is as complex, multilayered, challenging, and rewarding as ever.

We are a species with a population of over 7 billion people (Livi-Bacci, 2012) and our relationship with the natural world and wildlife is immensely complex. We are the planets’ most dominant species and we have evolved intricate technologies and cultures that enable us to survive. We are unique in that we can live, survive and reproduce in practically every ecosystem in the world. (Richerson et al., 1996)

These technologies and cultural advances have allowed us to manipulate the planets’ environment in a way that has changed the ecosystems we live in and caused the extinction of thousands of species (Pimm & Raven, 2000).

Furthermore Homo sapiens have always had a relationship with the species we share ecosystems with and very few, if any species, in our range have gone unaffected by our presence (Gottleib, 1996).

It is this very presence that has often shaped the future of a species; be it a negative or positive outcome. More specifically it is the individuals within societies who have influenced and shaped the outcomes for the wildlife in our ecosystems (Palmer et al., 2002).

This chapter will briefly examine some of the individuals who have had significant impacts and instigated change in the conservation of wildlife in history.

It must be noted that it is not my intention to elevate these people above others who have not been mentioned. It is meant as a background to today’s wildlife spokespeople.
Furthermore methods used by these early day spokespeople to achieve success will be examined in further detail in later chapters.

### 1.2 Early wildlife conservationists and spokespeople

*The old pond;*

_A frog jumps in—*

*The sound of the water.* — _Basho_

(Basho cited by Palmer et al., 2000 p.52)

Buddha, Aristotle, Saint Francis of Assisi, Matsuo Basho are all names of early day advocates of nature, wildlife and animals.

Motivations differed and may have included religion, art, sustainable living, scientific advancement and self-preservation, but central to all of these spokespeople was the education of people about the natural world and often the need to change our behaviours and preserve the environment. (Palmer, et al., 2002, & Adams, 2004)

Examples of these early day nature and wildlife spokespeople are fascinating and although their primary aim may not have been wildlife preservation their message concerning the natural world is one of respect and hence is of importance. Of particular note is their individual contribution to society and the changes they instigated that impacted the natural world (Palmer et al., 2002).

One such person was a Royal Hindu, Siddharta Gotama, born in the foothills of the Himalayas in approximately 400 BCE (Before Common Era).

Siddharta Gotama went on to become one of the world’s best known animal and natural world campaigners. He is remembered and revered now as Buddha (Dhammika, 2005). Much of Buddha’s teachings called for care, compassion and kindness towards the creatures we share the planet with (Purushottama, 2002).
He questioned the current attitude of the time toward animals and nature. The attitude was one of exploitation, fear and subservience. He instead encouraged a harmony and belief in the benign deposition of nature and the sharing of the planet between humans and wildlife (Purushottama, 2002).

The following edict accounts his teachings:

“Here no animal is to be killed for sacrifice…the Beloved of the Gods has provided medicines for man and beast…medicinal plants…[R]oots and fruits have also been sent where they did not grow and have been planted along the roads for use of man and beast.’ – Buddha

(Buddha cited by Embree et al., 1988 p. 144)

The above implores for a world where resources are shared between humans and animals. Where humans’ do not have a right or more entitlement to the planet’s resources. It is interesting to note that in modern conservation messages this is often a primary plea – allowing wildlife its habitat (Gray, 1995; McNeill, 2000).

Buddha’s teachings and words continue to be followed today and he can indeed be credited with being one of the world’s first wildlife and conservation spokespeople and indeed one of the worlds most successful (Dhammika, 2005).

Remaining in India a fascinating example of one of the world’s first wildlife sanctuaries can be found. Around 300 BC a man called Kautilya, a professor of economics and political science and chief advisor to the King authored the ancient Indian political treatise called ‘Arthasastra’ (Tisdell, 2005).

In this he would advise extensively on the care and preservation of the Asian elephant. At the time, and indeed for the next few thousand years, elephants were considered essential for war, transport and economic production. His advice to the leaders was to preserve the elephants’ habitats and set up sanctuaries. There were also capital punishment for anyone killing an elephant in the sanctuaries; this was to ensure the elephant would continue to breed and flourish in the forests in the wild and hence be available for capture and taming (Sukumar, 2003). The conservation and protection of
elephants in India and the numerous spokespeople for them is an example of early day wildlife conservation (Tisdell, 2005).

Two centuries later Aristotle, a Greek philosopher who remains the centre of many academic studies today, lectured and studied an immense range of fields from zoology to poetry to politics (Cooper, 2002).

Aristotle was vastly different from Buddha and actually he claimed there were profound differences between humans and animals and did not consider animals to be on equal terms with humans (Callicott, 2008). Aristotle is not considered to have promoted a moral awareness about the environment or other living creatures but he is credited with having promoted deep respect for the natural world. He educated and shared this through his studies and writings. One of his greatest achievements was his advancement of the world’s understanding about the weird and wonderful world of zoology. (Cooper, 2002).

Aristotle is not regarded as a conservationist but a spokesperson of immense value to the advancement of the understanding the natural world. Perhaps inadvertently through his writings and theorising in animal knowledge he paved the way to advancement in moral obligation and conservation. (Cooper, 2002; Callicott, 2008).

His wonderment at the natural world is perhaps best summoned up by the following quote: “In all natural things there is something wonderful” (Cooper, 2002 p.12).

Progressing through the centuries there continues to be examples of individuals advocating the need for respect to animals and nature.

St Francis of Assisi – a Catholic priest who in the 11th century implored kinship with all creatures and whom after his death was proclaimed the Patron Saint of Animals (Robson 1997).

Matsuo Basho, a Japanese poet in the 17th century and Buddhist, whose work is considered to be
“an important development and summation of medieval Japanese cultural attitudes to the natural world, and emphasizes a heightened sense of unity with nature” (Palmer et al., 2000 p.51)

He is credited with being influential in Japanese culture and literature and inspiring people to forge a connection to nature and its creatures (Palmer et al., 2000).

Jeremy Bentham, a British social reformer in the 18th century, believed strongly in animal rights (Bentham, 1891. Much of his opinions on animals refers to domestic animals but is still relevant to wildlife. He asks his readers in one of his books: “The question is not, Can they reason? nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?” in reference to the suffering of animals at man’s hands (Bentham, 1789 p.25).

However despite these early day spokespeople, as the world headed toward the 18th century, the dominant thought of the age was that the world was made for mankind and that all species were subordinate to his needs. (Gray, 1995)

Certainly it must be noted that this was not the case in all parts of the world. For instance Native American Indians believed that animals were equal and in India and other Asian countries Buddhism culture and other religions decreed a respect for nature and animals (Gray, 1995).

But it wasn’t until the late 18th century that things began to change significantly on a global scale. There was an advancement in zoological studies and nature and wildlife began to be seen as something to be protected instead of as a commodity to be conquered and exploited. And there were more and more spokespeople advocating animal wildlife rights and environmental concerns. (Gottlieb, 1996; Gray, 1995).

An awareness, empathy and a moral obligation to wildlife and nature was beginning to take seed in the minds of the masses.
1.3 Spokespeople and the Conservation Movement – 19th century

"In wildness is the preservation of the world." – Henry David Thoreau

By the late 18th and early 19th century there were many changes around the world. Of note was the emergence of America as an independent nation and the changes in the British Empire. Although still large Britain had lost one of their most resource rich colonies: America. It was imperative for the Empire to manage the resources they still controlled (Ribbentrop, 1989).

Timber was one such resource that the British Empire placed greater importance on than ever before and this is how the forests of British India became the first forests to be protected under British rule outside of Britain. It also led to what many consider to be the first large scale examples of innovative management of the natural world (Barton, 2002).

By the mid 19th century British India had forestry managers who had linked forest cover, or lack thereof, to climate (Barton, 2002). These managers recognised the need to conserve forests as they observed that in the previous centuries clearing and grazing had decimated areas. This further led to the belief by many forestry managers that they needed to re-vegetate land where “man’s abuse had destroyed a once pristine house hold of nature” (Barton, 2002 p 38).

These managers were often inspiring and persuasive in their arguments. Many would remain working in the forestry industry for over 20 years. Of significant note is the appointment of Dr Gibson by the British Indian forestry division in the mid 19th century. Unlike the majority of the forestry managers, Gibson was a trained botanist and not a timber merchant. His appointment set a precedent for “scientifically trained men” (Barton, 2002 p. 47) to be placed in positions of power in relation to managing forestry. Gibson went on to become an influential spokesperson in regards to preserving the forests of India. (Barton, 2002).
The use of credible endorsed spokespeople as communicators in the environmental movement will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters. As such it is important to note this early use and recognition of such a person.

The type of large-scale forestry management first conducted in British India soon spread to the other British colonies. Timber was now seen as resource that could run out and there was a growing interest in the link between climate and deforestation.

By the end of the 19th century many British colonies including New Zealand, Australia, Africa and Canada had forests and land managed in a similar fashion as was pioneered in India. And it didn’t take long for America to also join what is now considered to be the beginnings of sustainable resource management (Barton, 2002).

Hand in hand with this type of resource management was the world’s growing interest in zoology – the race to accumulate knowledge about the weird and wonderful world of animals began to reach fever pitch. Charles Darwin, Alfred Wallace, Richard Owen (Berentson, 2012), to name just a few, were madly collecting and categorising animals from around the world.

But most importantly there were a growing number of spokespeople imploring mankind to accept their moral obligations to animal conservation and preservation of habitat (Gray, 1995; Palmer et al., 2000).

Henry David Thoreau was one such spokesperson. He was an American author whose inspirational writings on natural history were considered to be the building blocks for the conservation movement that followed. His most significant contribution to conservation was his book *Walden* in which he documents his personal journey while living for two years in Massachusetts beside Walden pond surrounded by forest in a hut he built himself (Walls, 2002).

It was simple-living, surrounded by nature, that inspired his life, writings and beliefs for the remainder of his days. Thoreau only lived until 44 years of age but during his relatively short life he wrote about his growing concern on the long-term impacts of
development and capitalism. He feared the loss of wild spaces and the loss of wildlife. But most importantly he presented solutions in his writings (Walls, 2002).

He proposed that communities establish reserves and that this land would be a “a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation” and if forested would “stand and decay for higher uses” (Kehr, 1983 p.30).

Thus he combined sustainable use with conservation.

He also wrote about mankind’s moral obligations to wildlife. He famously wrote: “Who hears the fishes when they cry?” (Thoreau, 1849 p.32).

And finally Thoreau believed in action. He believed that power flowed from the individual to the community. With his writing he didn’t just ask people to read and support his beliefs – he asked them to go discover their own ‘Walden” experience (Walls, 2002).

When he died in 1862 it was only another ten years before the world’s first national park, Yosemite, was formed in America and a man called John Muir began talking about conservation.

Muir was a mountaineer and a preservationist in the late 19th century and is considered to be of one of the worlds most influential conservationists of all time (Corcoran 2002). He is often credited with starting the modern day conservation movement, of creating ecological consciousness, of campaigning for the world’s first national park and changing the way Americans and the world viewed their relationship with wilderness and wildlife (McNeill, 2000; Corcoran, 2002).

He was a man of action. A man who experienced first hand wilderness and who achieved his own enlightenment from these experiences and took this message to the public (Devall, 1982). He believed strongly that experiencing nature and wilderness first hand would change a person. Indeed, he famously took President Roosevelt to the Sierra wilderness area to give him a direct experience of why this wilderness needed to be preserved. It took one day for the President to be convinced (Corcoran, 2002).
Furthermore he formed the Sierra Club in 1898 whose core aim is to “explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth“ (Sierra Club 2013). Today this Club is one of America’s largest and most influential conservation organisations in the world (Devall, 1982).

His idea behind national parks was that one of their main purposes was for the “protection of non-human species and associated ecosystems from the violent exploitation by humans using the agriculture and technology of an industrialized society” (Devall, 1982 p.64).

He famously lamented the loss of plant species by goats that he called “hooved locusts” (Muir, 1911) and spoke of the fulfillment of finding an orchid:

“I never before saw a plant so full of life; so perfectly spiritual. It seemed pure enough for the throne of its Creator. I felt as if I were in the presence of superior beings who loved me and beckoned me to come. I sat down beside them and wept for joy” (Corcoran, 2002).

As the world entered the 20th century John Muir had published his first book, had written numerous articles and journals and his influence, alongside the conservation movement in America and the world, was growing rapidly. His political influence was strong and he was getting increasingly involved in government legislation and advocating the formation of more protected wild places (Devall, 1982).

He had continued on a much larger scale what Buddha, Saint Francis, numerous indigenous people and Thoreau had started – the world like never before had developed an ecological consciousness and that in turn would generate an ecological conscience.

1.4 New Zealand’s path to an ecological conscience

This thesis and my film, Mystery Bird, has been inspired by a passionate New Zealand wildlife spokesperson, an endemic New Zealand bird and the wilderness of this country.
Consequently, it is only right to now turn to examine briefly New Zealand’s conservation movement and early day wildlife spokespeople.

New Zealand is a country that was isolated from the world for thousands and thousands of years; two small islands left uninhabited by humans with great tracts of wilderness and wildlife. In an isolated landscape unique species evolved and flourished; the huge flightless moa, small flightless birds such as the kiwi and ocean birds that bred in burrows around the coast (Towns & Ballantine, 1993; Berentson, 2012).

However in the 14th century life in New Zealand changed forever. Mankind had arrived and over the next few hundred years introduced species such as goats, pigs, sheep, possums and rats and waves of human settlement wrecked havoc among wildlife. By the 19th century New Zealand had lost forever many species including all the moa species and many of the remaining species were in great jeopardy (Towns & Ballantine, 1993).

Not all was lost though. Similar to the rest of the world there were people who were campaigning for the wilderness and its wildlife.

In the late 19th century New Zealand’s first National Park (Tongariro National Park) was formed, a level of protection for fur seals was instigated and reserves began to be established (Roxburgh, 2013).

Politicians such as Thomas Potts in Canterbury during the 1860s were imploring the government to conduct forest surveys so that the forests could be better managed and conserved (Beattie, 2003).

Around the late 19th century, New Zealand’s first wildlife and wilderness reserves were established and with them New Zealand’s first rangers were appointed (Hill & Hill, 1987).

Richard Henry was an Irish settler who lived in Te Anau in the South Island. He was a man of many trades but his passion became birds and the New Zealand wilderness. In
the 1891 Resolution Island in Fiordland was made into a reserve and Richard Henry was appointed the curator. He was New Zealand’s first ranger (Hill & Hill, 1987).

He lived there for 14 years and during that time wrote articles about New Zealand’s native birds and became increasingly concerned about the impact that stouts, weasels and ferrets were having on the flightless birds in Fiordland. He famously rowed hundreds of flightless birds such as the kakapo and kiwi to Resolution Island, which he believed to be predator free. Unfortunately in 1900 a stoat was spotted on the island and the kakapo and other birds fast disappeared. He was later transferred to another island and died in the early 20th century (Hill & Hill, 1987).

Richard Henry may not be well remembered by mainstream New Zealand but his actions and campaigning for protection of native wildlife were the start of New Zealand conservation, as we know it today. He introduced the idea of predator free islands as a refuge for wildlife and his writings for scientific journals, natural history magazines and his book reached many of New Zealand’s people (Hill & Hill, 1987).

As New Zealand entered the 20th century it did so with the beginnings of an ecological conscience that would grow over the next hundred years to earn New Zealand its reputation as a leading country on wildlife conservation (Clout, 2001; Roxburgh, 2013).

1.5 Conservation and wildlife spokespeople - 20th century to present

“The fact is that no species has ever had such wholesale control over everything on earth, living or dead, as we now have. That lays upon us, whether we like it or not, an awesome responsibility. In our hands now lies not only our own future, but that of all other living creatures with whom we share the earth.” - David Attenborough, Life on Earth TV series 1979.

From the flightless birds of New Zealand to the bison beasts of America, the 20th century was a time of growing concern for the planet’s diminishing wilderness and wildlife. It was also a century of loss; the Passenger pigeon, the Pig footed bandicoot,
the Indefatigable Galapagos mouse all became but names and memories on a long list of extinct species (Flannery, 2001; Berentson, 2012).

Massive technological advancements, an increasing global population, increasing extreme weather events and societies’ disconnected from the very land on which they lived were also hallmarks of this century (Gray, 1995; McNeill, 2000).

However the 20th century was also a time during which the conservation movement, zoological knowledge, animal rights and local and global legislation reached an unprecedented level (McNeill, 2000; Palmer et al., 2002).

Thousands of men and woman participated in varying degrees of wildlife campaigns. From celebrities to scientists to politicians to conservation workers; there were voices from all over the world.

It is impossible to list and discuss all the people in the 20th century who have had become wildlife spokespeople and whose campaigns and actions have contributed to wildlife conservation.

For me personally I was brought up reading the likes of Gerald Durrell and watching David Attenborough both of whom have shaped my career choice and all aspects of my life. I would add to my personal list others such as Dian Fossey, Jane Goodall, Theodore Roosevelt, New Zealand’s own Perrine Moncreif, Gerald Durrell, Joy Adamson, Steve Irwin, Birute Galdikas, Jacques Cousteau, Margaret Murie, Peter Scott and Paul Watson. And since making the documentary film Mystery Bird, I would also add to that list Geoff Harrow.

All of the above people have shaped my views on the world, my career and my lifestyle. They have undoubtedly influenced many thousands of others in the world too. I believe they themselves were in turn influenced and shaped by many of those earlier conservationists and wildlife campaigners some of whom I have discussed above. Hence, history is important, it places in context the development of wildlife conservation spokespeople until today.
In later chapters I will examine more closely some of the world’s wildlife campaigners but for now we will move on and examine the way societies perceive a situation and how individuals can make people change.
Chapter 2 – Society, the human mind and spokespeople

2.1 Behaviour, spokespeople & change

In the 21st century there exist hundreds, if not thousands, of different societies where views on language, religion, politics and environment can be vastly different (Gladwell, 2005).

These differences have occurred due, in part, to the way individuals within a society perceive the world around them and how these individuals have influenced others. A society or group will often have a majority perception toward an issue and this will then be reflected in the general behaviour of that society (Elias, 2001).

The dynamics of humans social systems are complex and broad but certain parts of this system can be examined to help explain any shifts in human attitude and consequent change (Scheffer, 2009).

A change in an individual’s belief or perception of a situation, can lead to a variation in that individual’s behaviour. That in turn can lead to that individual influencing and persuading others around them to also change their behaviour (Kelman, 1961).

This ability to change others’ behaviour either by example, by communication or a combination of both is of great importance to the effectiveness and success of a spokesperson (Monroe, 2003). In relation to wildlife spokespeople it can be the difference between the continuing viability of a species or its extinction (Brockington, 2009).

Hence, this chapter will examine human perception; the way the human brain processes information from spokespeople; the art of persuasion and how change happens in a group or society.
2.2 The Human Mind

If we examine firstly the human brain we can begin to understand a little bit more about individual and group behaviour.

The brain is an extremely complex organ and thousands of studies have been conducted in seeking to understand it (Ridley, 2001). Of most interest to this thesis is research on how the brain processes and classifies new information and decides what to do with that information.

Many researchers have hypothesised that there is a tendency for the human mind to lock onto one interpretation of the surrounding situation or environment. Ridley (2001) noted a tendency for the human mind to favour one hypothesis while Gladwell (2005) studied the tendency for the human mind to lock onto and quickly classify new and complex observations into easily understood existing hypotheses.

Classifying and understanding new information quickly allows us to make what we perceive as the ‘correct’ actions in our day-to-day lives (Ridley, 2001).

From the moment we are born our brain is presented with a never-ending array of new information. Science, art, literacy and religion present us with ever evolving explanations for the world around us (Ridley, 2001).

Our senses are literally bombarded with this new information every day. A recent study by Bohn & Short (2009) found that the average American ‘consumed’ about 12 hours of information a day. The researchers then translated that figure into a computer based measurement estimating the average person in America received 35 GB of data a day or over a 100,000 words (Bohn & Short, 2009).

Bohn & Short (2009) further concluded that within American society; radio and TV are still the dominant sources of our daily doses of information with Internet browsing becoming increasingly larger.
Given those huge figures it is clear that without being able to classify and process this new information quickly and move on, we would be in a constant state of confusion. We would be frozen with indecision and even a simple decision such as what toilet paper to use would be impossible.

Lets briefly use information about toilet paper in New Zealand as an example of something we need to make a decision on. The World Wildlife Fund New Zealand (2013) estimates there are around twenty brands of toilet paper available in New Zealand. There are campaigners promoting which ones are environmentally ethical and which ones are not, using images, for example, of forests being decimated and orang-utans dying on the ground (World Wildlife Fund New Zealand 2013). There is information in the advertisements that don’t even relate to your choice about toilet paper but are instead targeting emotions – a cute dog, a cute baby, an attractive man or woman.

In this single example our brains have been asked to classify information relating to science, credibility, wildlife ethics, moral obligations, price, likability and emotions and there are no doubt more in that single example.

Essentially we are asking the brain to make sense of the world for us, to process all new information so that we can carry out actions. The consequence for the perceived ‘wrong’ decision over the received ‘right’ one is often regret (Zeelenberg, 1999). Furthermore when classifying this information that leads to our decisions and actions, we are often unconsciously taking into account expected feedback and anticipated regret from that decision (Zeelenberg, 1999).

This is where spokesperson becomes affective as a persuader. The spokesperson essentially processes the new information for us and tells us what our beliefs and action should be (Ohanian, 1990). Of course, the toilet paper example above shows us that there can be multiple different ‘correct’ answers but still it can be argued that some of the individuals’ processing and hypothesising has been lessened through the packaging of the information into persuasive campaigns and delivered by a spokesperson in some form of communication.
2.3 Persuasion

To understand persuasion in relation to behaviour change we must first define behaviour. Monroe (2003) defines behaviour as a specific action and further postulates that most activities we undertake are made up of at least one discernable behaviour.

There is some controversy on the classification of behaviours but broadly speaking most behaviour can be either innate or learned; an example of innate behaviour is blinking our eyes and learned behaviour is putting contact lenses in our eyes (Laland & Brown, 2011). All living organisms display both innate and learned behaviour and many living organisms can be persuaded to perform a specific behaviour. When training animals food is often used as persuasive tool to evoke a behaviour (Lindsay, 2008). Humans too can be persuaded. However humans are unique in that our brains have developed emotion, critical thinking and logic beyond all other organisms. This makes persuasion infinitely more complicated (Perloff, 2010).

Broadly speaking persuasion is then defined by Anderson (1978) as the process of inducing a voluntary change in someone’s behaviour, beliefs or attitudes through the communication of a message.

Dillard & Pfau (2002 p.4) further clarify that while coercion can take the form of force, “persuasion relies on the power of verbal and non-verbal symbols”.

Aristotle first defined persuasion, through verbal and written communication, into three categories; ethos, pathos and logos. Ethos involves convincing an individual of ones credibility and hence giving credence to one’s argument; pathos appeals to the individual’s emotion and logos is the use of logic to convince (Dillard & Pfau, 2002).

Since then further definitions of types of persuasion have emerged including;

- “the bandwagon effect”; the everybody-is-doing-it type of persuasion also known as siding with the 'winning' group (Dillard and Pfau, 2002 p. 718)
- the “glittering generalities” type of persuasion which essentially uses words with good connotations, virtuous words and positive descriptive words (Cross, 1997 p.2)
- testimonial persuasion; the celebrity endorsement of credible source type of persuasion (Cross, 1997 p.8)
- statistical persuasion; the use of statistics and numbers to ‘prove’ your argument. (Dillard and Pfau, 2002 p. 184)

It can be summarised that historically throughout almost all campaigns from political elections to religious arguments a form of persuasion from Aristotle’s concepts to latter day definitions have been used by a spokesperson.

Spokespeople have also been armed with ‘persuasion tools’ which Robert Cialdini, a renowned Professor in Psychology, defined in his book *Influence* (Cialdini, 2009). He breaks these down into 6 basic tools:

1. Reciprocity
2. Commitment and Consistency
3. Social Proof
4. Authority
5. Liking
6. Scarcity

The success of spokespeople, the methods used, and the application of the tools listed above will be examined more closely in chapter 3 and in later chapters alongside the case studies of wildlife spokespeople.

**2.4 Changes in Perception and Behaviour**

The aim of persuasion is usually change in some form.

Studies have shown that our beliefs and actions are essential to our identity and that change in behaviours can imply that past decisions or behaviours were wrong (Scheffer, 2009). As mentioned earlier with every shift in attitude and behaviour there can also be
a level of anticipated regret and expected feedback. This can increase with the perceived importance of the decision to be made (Zeelenberg, 1999).

Therefore it can be generally agreed that individuals do not simply change their beliefs and behaviour based on nothing. There must exist some sort of catalyst to this change (Gladwell, 2000).

It is generally agreed there are two types of change – conceptual change and technical change. Conceptual change is broadly defined as the process where concepts and the relationships to them change. Technical change is used in relation to innovation, development and invention (Ridley, 2001). The type of change discussed throughout this thesis is primarily conceptual change.

Broadly speaking change occurs once an individual has been persuaded; the direct reaction to a successful persuasive argument is response-changing behaviour (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Dillard & Pfau, 2002).

Most studies agree that crucial to a successful change in behaviour is the spokesperson who communicates the message. The most successful are the ones who can initiate this changing behaviour response in the largest amount of people.

Both Gladwell (2000) and Scheffer (2009) theorise that change can occur very quickly and that people can respond quickly to decisive and persuasive arguments and often follow the lead of individuals around them. Gladwell (2000) further postulates that once an idea gains momentum it can spread quickly through societies and implement huge changes in social behaviour.

Cialdini (2009) discusses the need for fast decision making in today’s societies due in part to the fast paced lives we now lead. He further discusses the importance of spokespeople who present the correct information in the correct context. A brilliant example he uses is of Frank Zappa a long-haired rock musician in the 1960s and a controversial leg amputee talk show host. Their first exchange on the talk show went as follows:
“Talk Show Host: I guess your long hair makes you a girl.
Zappa: I guess your wooden leg makes you a table.”

This example demonstrates how “an isolated piece of information, even though it normally counsels us correctly, can lead us to clearly stupid mistakes—mistakes that, when exploited by clever others, leave us looking silly or worse.” (Cialdini, 2009).

It is of great importance to understand that during decision-making and especially when making fast decisions individuals often don’t use all the information available to them. Instead individuals often rely on information presented to us through various media by spokespeople. These spokespeople are often effectively deciding what information is relevant to the issue and presenting it in that context (Cialdini, 2009). Marketing & advertising companies, politicians, campaigners and many more groups have gone to great lengths to understand and take the best advantage of this tendency of the individual (Gladwell, 2000).

This leads us to Chapter 3 where I will examine what makes a successful spokesperson and what methods are used to communicate their messages.
Chapter 3 – Spokesperson success

3.1 Success of a Spokesperson - Introduction

“The subtle circumstances surrounding how we say things may matter more than what we are saying” (Gladwell, 2000 p.79)

As discussed in Chapter Two, the human mind is a complex organ. Place that mind within a society and the complexities become even greater. In Chapter Two I examined some of the literature in relation to the human brain, in an attempt to understand why and how the mind makes decisions and how persuasion from others can induce response-changing behaviour.

I was interested in this response-changing behaviour because studies have shown that persuasion that changes behaviour and beliefs is of significant importance in the conservation of wildlife species (Brockington, 2009).

Many of the historical figures I discussed earlier in Chapter One have been credited with significantly raising the awareness of an animal species and some have even been credited with its ongoing survival. And these spokespeople all used some form of persuasion (Palmer et al., 2002).

Personally I believe that Geoff Harrow, the main character of the film Mystery Bird that I produced alongside this thesis, can be credited with both raising awareness of the endangered Hutton’s shearwater (IUCN Red List 2010) and helping to save it from extinction. I am not alone in that belief based on interviews I conducted with people from The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust – a group of people dedicated to saving the Hutton’s shearwater from extinction.

I believe Geoff Harrow has achieved this through ongoing campaigning with the primary goal to raise the awareness of the Hutton’s shearwater and raise money for projects to aid the species’ survival (The Hutton’s Shearwater Charitable Trust 2013). Throughout my personal conversations with Geoff Harrow, and interviews he gave me while making the documentary, he stated that he was participating in the film Mystery
Bird with the primary goal of raising awareness for the Hutton’s shearwater species and personally I think he has achieved this.

So this leads me to examine what makes a successful spokesperson and more specifically what tools, traits and methods does a successful spokesperson need? Then in Chapter Four I will look at how these variables apply to wildlife and conservation spokespeople and how two distinct conservation spokespeople types have emerged.

3.2 Tools for Success

Robert Cialdini, the renowned professor in psychology whom I mentioned briefly in Chapter Two, defined ‘persuasion tools’ in his book Influence (Cialdini, 2009). He listed these as;

1. Reciprocity
2. Commitment and Consistency
3. Social Proof
4. Authority
5. Liking

For the sake of simplicity I will now examine other literature within and alongside Cialdini’s (2009) defined tools of persuasion in an attempt to better understand the methods spokespeople use.

3.2.1 Reciprocity

Falk & Fischbacher (2006 p. 1) define reciprocity as “rewarding kind actions and punishing unkind ones” while Gouldner (1960) examines some of the early 20th century social studies in an attempt to define reciprocity. He quotes sociologists whom placed reciprocity within society as an individual’s greatest duty and “is the basis on which the entire social and ethical life of primitive civilizations presumably rests” (Richard Thurnwald cited in Gouldner, 1960 p. 161). Gouldner (1960) further postulates that there is no society in the world that does not follow the rule of reciprocity.
Cialdini (2009 p.13) meanwhile calls reciprocity “one of the most potent weapons of influence around us” and further states “that the rule says that we should try to repay in kind what another person has provided us”.

There have been hundreds more studies on reciprocity within society and it is generally agreed it is of utmost importance to the way our society functions and is a key tool in influence (Cialdini 2009).

Furthermore, reciprocity can have great longevity. Cialdini (2009) cites a case of aid relief between Mexico and Ethiopia; in 1935 Mexico sent monetary aid to Ethiopia when Ethiopia was invaded by Italy. 50 years later in 1985 at a time when Ethiopia was considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world, Ethiopia sent monetary aid to Mexico after Mexico suffered an earthquake. The explanation given was reciprocation – the Ethiopian government felt an obligation to reciprocate the aid they were sent 50 years earlier.

Reciprocity, however, can be used in an unethical way. Katz et al. (2003) examined the pharmaceutical industry and the practice of gift giving in exchange for lucrative sales and promotion of products to clients. They further concluded that behaviour could be influenced through the giving of gifts that have very low monetary value in comparison to the favour requested.

Reciprocation is a tool that can be used extensively in influencing people’s behaviour and choices. Many shops and sales people use this tactic – how many of us have returned from a shopping trip having bought something because we were first given a free sample and then felt compelled to reciprocate this perceived action of kindness. This is also how many fund-raising campaigns work – for instance, people walking past a fund raising person are often given something – a sticker, a book, a pen, and then when asked to support the campaign feel more compelled to donate.

In conservation the rule of reciprocity has also been used extensively. Examples include campaigners such as NGO’s assisting local communities in development and then asking for assistance in conserving wildlife and habitat. This method has been used
widely in developing countries where situations have often decreed that reciprocity became almost a form of currency (Stirrat & Henkel, 1997).

Spokespeople have been shown to use the rule of reciprocation to influence and persuade. They can do this by asking for support for their campaign from people who they have previously ‘given’ to. Studies have shown that individuals are more likely to respond favourably to a request if they have previously been ‘given’ something (whether it be a favour or a gift) prior to the request (Cialdini, 2009).

Spokespeople seeking support for their campaign can also use ‘friendship’ as a means of reciprocation – this is something that politicians and governments have been doing for hundreds of years. The basic premise being that governments promise support and friendship to each other with the understanding that this will be returned at some time in the future (Goldstein & Freeman, 1990).

Therefore it can be concluded that reciprocation can be a very powerful tool and one that a successful spokesperson can use to gain support, funding and use to instigate a behaviour change.

### 3.2.2 Actions, Commitment and Consistency

“Actions speak louder than words” is a common saying and is applied to many situations from personal relationships to politics (Ohanian, 1990).

Brockington (2009) theorises that one’s actions need to be consistent with one’s message if they are to be believed. He cites an example of a famous celebrity who was the spokesperson for a cause to reduce carbon emissions. However it was revealed that this person travelled extensively on a private jet. Furthermore when questioned about the travel most of it was deemed to be for recreational purposes and hence that person’s credibility diminished in the eyes of the public.

Henrich (2009) conducted a fascinating analysis on the evolution of ‘credibility enhancing displays’ and the implication for cultural evolution. He concluded that before
the evolution of more intricate forms of communication such as language, humans had to learn from observing others ‘displaying’ an action.

He further concluded that with the development of language came more opportunity to deceive; instead of one displaying a behaviour to demonstrate, one could tell it and hence the potential for deliberate misinformation was greater. This he theorises was combated by cultures developing a “cultural immune system… designed to asses a belief or a commitment” so as not to be deceived. A part of this was observing the actions of the persuader alongside their verbal communication (Henrich, 2009).

In summary, Henrich (2009 p. 247) concludes that this is why we place importance on an individual’s actions as “evidence of commitment to the expressed beliefs”.

Commitment and consistency are rated as the second tools of persuasion by Cialdini (2009). He analysed studies on consistency and how it affects the success of persuasion and concluded that once someone has made a decision about something they are compelled to remain consistent even if this conflicts with their own best interests. This he explains is because inconsistency is considered to be an undesirable trait and that a “person whose beliefs, words and deeds don’t match, may be seen as indecisive, confused, two faced or even mentally ill”, whereas someone who is consistent is highly valued (Cialdini, 2009 p. 45).

This desire to be consistent can however mean that individuals can be slow to change. As discussed in Chapter Two, studies have shown that our beliefs and actions are essential to our identity and that a behaviour change can also imply that past decisions or behaviours were wrong (Scheffer, 2009).

However although individuals value consistency, studies have found that individuals also value logic. Hence a new theory or ideal presented with logic can still be considered to have consistency (Cialdini, 2009). Aristotle rated logic as one of the three crucial elements to persuasion; logic referring to the use of evidence and reason to support an idea or theory (Dillard & Pfau, 2002).
According to Cialdini (2009, p. 62) commitment is closely related to consistency. He states that “written testaments are effective in bringing about personal change because they can be so easily made public”. Essentially once a stance has been taken whether it be written, verbal or by demonstration – a commitment has been formed and in order to remain consistent that commitment must be honoured.

Door to door sales people use the rule of commitment to persuade people to buy what they are selling. Studies have shown that by asking people to fill in their own sales paperwork they are less likely to cancel within the cooling off period because people feel like they have made a commitment.

Hence, it can be concluded that consistency and commitment are both powerful tools of influence and persuasion that can be used by a spokesperson. A spokesperson who is consistent in their speech and actions, who uses logic to substantiate any changes in their argument and shows commitment to their cause will be most likely to achieve success over a spokesperson who does not use these tools of influence.

### 3.2.3 Authority and Credibility

According to the Oxford Dictionary the definition of authority is someone who has the “power or right to give orders, make decisions and enforce obedience” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013).

When it comes to persuasion, authority can be a very powerful tool and of course can be used in a forceful violent manner. Persuasion is this form is not relevant to my thesis so I will only be examining authority in the context of democratic situations where free-will exists.

Many studies have been conducted on how authority shapes our societies and behaviour. One study in particular in the 1960s by psychologist Milgram has been referenced extensively in social studies literature. Milgram performed a series of experiments on the willingness of individuals to obey authority. He concluded that...
individuals possess an extreme willingness to obey authority figures even to the detriment of themselves and went against what they felt was right (Milgram, 1974).

Authority can be very positive in instigating change in behaviours and garnering support. Theodore Roosevelt used his authority as the President of the United States to implement policy change regarding the conservation of forests in the United States and educate the public on the importance of the preservation of the environment (Devall, 1982).

In Chapter One I examined an example of early day conservation of a species in India where the elephants and their habitat were protected by the leaders and the King who used their authority to ensure this occurred (Sukumar, 2003).

However, not all authority has positive outcomes. Cialdini (2009) discusses how this level of willingness to obey authority can work against us; citing examples of nurses obeying doctors’ orders even when they knew them to be incorrect.

Authority can also be more subtle, and symbols of authority can be identified in clothing such as uniforms and business suits, qualifications and job titles (Cialdini, 2009).

Studies have shown that an endorser’s perceived trustworthiness is directly related to a person’s qualifications and expertise (Ohanian, 1990). Furthermore, a study on zoo-affiliated spokespeople by Fraser et al. (2010) found that those who had certain job titles were considered to be more credible when delivering conservation and animal information.

In this study the ‘animal research scientist’ and the ‘field biologist’ were considered to be most credible and hold the greatest authority in comparison to the ‘zoo volunteer’ and ‘zoo administrator’ who were considered to be less credible. The types of questions asked related primarily to natural history, wildlife and science so these results were not surprising, however it is an excellent example of title and credentials increasing authority and credibility (Fraser et al., 2010).
This link between authority and credentials has existed in earlier history as shown in Chapter One when I discussed an example of early day credibility and the link to qualifications with the appointment of Dr Gibson, a trained botanist, as an forestry manager in India in the mid 19th century (Barton 2002).

Further studies such as one by Goldsmith et al. (2000), in relation to advertising campaigns, concluded that the endorsers’ credibility had the strongest impact in an advertisement when rated against corporate credibility, attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions. This can help explain why a spokesperson is so important and really can be the ‘face’ and authority of a corporation or organisation.

Aristotle also rated ethos or credibility as one of the three crucial elements to persuasion. He theorised that we believe people we respect, and that this respect could be gained by ensuring one was an authority on the subject one was discussing (Dillard & Pfau, 2002).

Thus authority can be considered to be very powerful, as can a person’s credibility through their job title, qualifications or expertise. All of these can be tools for a spokesperson to utilise for a successful change in behaviour or opinion.

### 3.2.4 Social Proof

Cialdini (2009) identifies social proof as another very important part of how and why individuals change their behaviour. Essentially he defines social proof as the way in which we use the actions of others around us to decide what is the correct behaviour. This can range from how fast we drive on the road, to the way we eat our food or indeed to the way we respond in any new situation. He states that we “have a tendency to see an action as more appropriate when others are doing it” (Cialdini, 2009 p. 88).

Dillard and Pfau (2002, p.718) label this the “bandwagon effect” where people tend to follow what other people are doing and also tend to join the perceived “winning side”. From an evolutionary point of view this makes sense. For instance, if everyone is running away from something then it makes sense to run too as there is most likely a
danger. Similarly if everyone is eating something then it makes sense to eat that food too as it is most likely to be safe.

Advertising companies use social proof as a tool; often they tell us that their product is a top seller or is very popular and therefore are essentially telling us to look at all the people that have bought this product and that it must be the correct thing to do. In a very different example, preachers have been known to place ‘ringers’ in their audience – people that will stand up and declare support and therefore show that this is the correct thing to do (Cialdini, 2009).

Interestingly non-actions can also be followed; if everyone chooses not to act in a situation then it is probably safer not to act as well, as there is a perceived danger or detrimental consequence in the action (Alexander, 1974). This non-action behaviour is often what spokespeople are trying to change.

Cialdini (2009, p.107) also concluded that people tend to follow the actions of individuals whom are similar to themselves. In other words “we are more likely to follow the lead of a similar individual than a dissimilar one”.

Hence social proof can be used by a spokesperson to influence and persuade others – if enough people believe in something or display a behaviour then it is more likely that others will follow (Dillard and Pfau, 2002).
3.2.5 Liking

“My dear young lady there was a great deal of truth I dare say, in what you said, and you looked pretty while you said it, which is more important.”

- Oscar Wilde, 1893

The character, attractiveness, charm and general likability of a spokesperson can be one of their greatest tools in persuasion.

Considerable research has shown that the attractiveness of a communicator “is a important cue in an individual’s initial judgement of another person” (Ohanian, 1990). Meanwhile, in an extensive literature review, Joseph (1982) concluded that attractive spokespersons are consistently liked more, and are more likely to have a positive impact on campaigns in which they are linked to. Furthermore they are more likely to be able to persuade.

Cialdini (2009) also concluded that attractiveness is a key component of how we are viewed by others and furthermore we very often associate good-looking people with kindness, intelligence and honesty.

Perhaps more importantly Cialdini (2009) concluded that individuals are more likely to change their opinion and be persuaded by people they like. The reasons someone ‘likes’ a spokesperson is not limited by that person’s physical attractiveness but also their ability to flatter, give compliments and be associated with positive things (Cialdini, 2009).

The studies and literature regarding the link between likability and persuasion have been utilised extensively by politicians, advertising firms and conservation spokespersons to name just a few. Celebrities in particular are often chosen to be a spokesperson because they often possess a high value of likability (Brockington, 2009).
Cross (1997) cites celebrity endorsement as a form of testimonial persuasion while Brockington (2009) has conducted extensive studies on the link between celebrities and conservation spokespeople. I will be examining this in greater detail in Chapter Four.

### 3.3 Different Tools for Different Spokespeople

So it appears from all the literature, research and studies that a successful spokesperson needs to be armed with a number of strategies and tools in order to be an affective persuader and achieve change.

The tools listed in Section 3.2 are by no means an exhaustive list but I consider it to be fairly comprehensive given the scope of reading and subjects areas examined.

Cialdini (2009) considered these persuasion tools to be adaptive to every situation and to very specific situations.

Within the many variables that a specific situation presents is the medium that is being used to communicate a message. These can include:

- written
- television
- film and documentary
- events
- personal interaction
- radio
- social media
- internet

Take for example likeability and physical attractiveness – this tool could be important in a visual context such as television or personal interaction but would be far less important in a radio interview or written paper.

Hence, it is important for the appropriate persuasion tool to be utilized by a
spokesperson for the specific situation. Furthermore Cialdini (2009) concludes that not all of these tools are necessary to be present to have a successful outcome. A single one of these tools or a combination can be just as effective dependent on circumstance.

This thesis is concerned primarily with the use of a spokesperson in communication of a conservation message. Although the media listed above are also of importance to the success of this message it is not the intention of this thesis to examine those variables in any great detail. Instead the assumption is that these media are simply a part of the success of the spokesperson and that different media for communication can be used depending on the situation.

In the next chapter I will examine the two distinct conservation spokesperson types that studies have found exist and analyze them alongside the tools of persuasion that have been discussed in this chapter.
Chapter 4 - Spokesperson Types

4.1 Spokesperson Type – Introduction

In Chapter 2, I examined the human mind and our need to be able to process information quickly and hence the development of spokespeople. The type of spokespeople this thesis is primarily concerned with is conservation spokespeople.

It is generally acknowledged that within the environmental movement there exist two distinct types of conservation spokespeople: the ‘celebrity’ and the ‘conservation celebrity’ (Brockington, 2008).

Brockington (2008) further defines these as:

1. Celebrity; the already famous celebrity who lends their existing fame and influence to a conservation cause. The celebrity is often an ‘entertainment celebrity’ namely an actress, actor, musician or TV personality.

2. Celebrity conservationist; a person who wins their fame through their work for a conservation cause and often in relation to a specific animal. They usually have a qualification or have a good working knowledge of the conservation cause they are campaigning for.

In this chapter I will examine in greater detail these two categories of conservation spokespeople with the aim of examining their background and what attributes they possess that have led them to becoming conservation spokespeople. I will further examine these attributes alongside those listed in Chapter 3.

I will also propose that within the ‘celebrity conservationist’ category there is a group I will name the ‘hero conservationist’. I propose this is a person who does not seek any fame or acknowledgment for their conservation work and does not necessarily enjoy the attention that being a conservation spokesperson has
brought to them. Instead they see this attention as a means of promoting their cause and as a way of communicating their message for the greater good of their campaign. This is the category I believe Geoff Harrow falls into and I will further examine his role as a ‘hero conservationist’ later in the chapter.

It should be noted that although there is considerable literature about celebrities and their influence in society there is significantly less on the direct link between celebrity and conservation. Thus if it appears that there is an over reliance on one author throughout this chapter (namely Dan Brockington) it is because very little other reputable literature currently exists.

4.2 The Celebrity

In order to understand the role a celebrity plays in a conservation campaign we first need to define what or more specifically who a celebrity is.

Turner et al. (2000 p.9) observes that celebrities are “people the public are interested in; if the public is interested in this person, they are a celebrity; therefore anyone the public is interested in is a celebrity”. Meanwhile Rojek (2001, p.10) defines the word celebrity as “the attribution of glamorous or notorious status to a person within the public sphere” and Boorstin (2012, p.217) defines a celebrity as “a person who is known for his well-knownness”.

There is a documented relationship between celebrities and conservation; Lester (2006) believes that celebrity spokespeople in environmental politics and conservation is a well-established relationship spanning much of the 20th century. Meanwhile Brockington (2008) theorizes that the interaction between celebrities and conservation is decades old and it appears to be growing.

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, examples of early day wildlife and conservation spokespeople date back to 300 BC and although these spokespeople were not termed celebrities as such, they were often well known by the public and hence still fit in the broad definition outlined above.
In this chapter however, I will only be examining modern celebrities who have become conservation spokespeople in the 20th century. It is important to state here that this section will deal only with celebrities from the entertainment arena whose primary job is not conservation or conservation related activities. This is to distinguish from the later section on celebrity conservationists.

Celebrities occur in a number of different areas including television, film and the music scene. What they all have in common is that the general public is interested in them, and what they do and say. This can mean they have more chance of reaching a larger audience when they wish to influence the decision-making on a particular issue (Rojek, 2001; Thrall et al., 2008).

There are so many causes and so much publicity in today's world that one of the greatest challenges campaigners face is capturing the public's attention in the first place and then holding it for long enough to instigate change. This is when celebrities can be beneficial (Thrall et al., 2008; Lawless, 2013 see Appendix A)

Furthermore Turner et al. (2000, p. 166) makes the following statement that relates to the individual's need to process information and the role of a spokesperson:

“A defining characteristic of contemporary times is what is popularly called “information overload”, and celebrities can be seen as one way in which to short-circuit this. As advertisers all know, the individual celebrity persona provides a powerful condensation of meaning which can be attached to commodities and issues; similarly, celebrities can act as prisms through which social complexity is brought back to the human level.” (Turner et al., 2000, p. 166).

Turner’s statement above also touches on the theory that celebrities can often experience what the average person cannot. The general public often thinks of celebrities as living in a 'different world'; a world that allows them to do things that the average person cannot. Thus the celebrity allows people to connect with a conservation cause through their experience or knowledge of an issue. The celebrity can provide imagery and a first hand experience that the average person may not be able to
experience first hand (Brockington, 2009). As Turner et al (2000, p.166) stated above, this can bring the cause or issue “back to a human level”.

Piece Brosnan, for instance, significantly raised the profile of the Eastern Pacific gray whale when he publicly joined members of an environmental action group (Natural Resources Defence Council 2013) in visiting the whales’ threatened breeding grounds in Mexico (Brockington, 2009). Brosnan spent 5 days with the members of this council and in close proximity to the whales thus experiencing the problem first hand. He then shared his experience, imagery and conservation message with the public. He was essentially presenting the problem to the public through his personal experience (Natural Resources Defence Council 2013).

West and Orman (2003) further theorize that celebrities can influence politics because they attract media attention and can thus influence government to instigate policy change.

Thus it can be induced that celebrities have more exposure than the average person and therefore are ideally placed to be spokespersons to the public and thus influence behavior (Marshall 1997).

Indeed Thrall et al. (2008) concluded that at least 50 % of celebrities at any level of prominence are involved in some form of advocacy. Brockington (2012) further theorized that the most prominent celebrities are more likely to be involved in a greater amount of causes.

So it can be concluded that a considerable number of celebrities all over the world are talking on behalf of causes including conservation causes.

It is at this point that we must question motivation; why does a celebrity want to speak on behalf of conservation and/or wildlife?

Brockington (2009) summarizes that there are three main motivations:

1. They believe in the cause and want to make a difference
2. It is good for their image
3. They find it enjoyable

In addressing the first motivation, celebrities often cite their own good fortune and the desire to give back to the world. Often this is backed up with personal financial contributions (Brownstein, 1990; Marshall, 1997).

Furthermore celebrities often feel like the fact they are a celebrity and that people are so interested in their lives, it makes sense to try and use this interest to make a difference (Meyer & Gamson, 1995).

Susan Sarandon in relation to her political activism once stated;

“If my privacy is going to be invaded and I’m going to be treated as a commodity, I might as well take advantage of it” (cited in Brownstein, 1990 p. 11).

The second motivation for a celebrity becoming involved in a conservation campaign is image and this can be quite complex. Lester (2006) found that celebrities who protested were often criticized, but celebrities who supported or endorsed wildlife conservation were rarely criticized (Brockington, 2008). Vivanco (2004) further concludes that the endorsement form of conservation is considered safe. Lester (2006) conducted an analysis on celebrity involvement during a protest against logging in Tasmania, Australia. Protesting against what many saw as a necessary development in Tasmania versus endorsing the conservation of a charismatic animal such as a gorilla are clearly two very different forms of conservation for a celebrity to be a spokesperson.

In relation to image, Brockington (2009) further theorizes that it is good for a celebrity’s image to be involved in conservation because it helps them to stay in the public’s eye and indicates that they are compassionate people who care for issues the affect the world.

The third motivation ‘enjoyment’ is simply that. Celebrities, just like the average person, enjoy certain places, experiences and activities. Furthermore wildlife
conservation in a beautiful region provides not just basic enjoyment and stimulation of the senses, but provides a backdrop to a publicity campaign running alongside the conservation angle (Brockington, 2009). Pierce Brosnan sitting on a boat on an ocean meters away from a whale is an image that can be used for his own publicity alongside his wildlife conservation message.

So it can be concluded that motivations can be complex and are often interconnected. It should also be noted that some of the literature on celebrities and conservation, suggests that supporting a conservation cause is not always a pleasant or easy experience for a celebrity and furthermore a celebrity’s motivations can be constantly questioned (Meyer & Gamson 1995; Lester 2006).

One of the common themes running throughout the literature is the importance of the authenticity of the celebrity and the impact this has on their success. Authenticity is essentially the ability of the celebrity to be genuine and legitimate (Brockington 2009). Meyers (2009 p. 895) theorizes that “once the celebrity is positioned as ‘authentic’, the values and ideologies he/she symbolizes also become ‘real’ and culturally resonant”.

This ties in with the literature and studies I discussed in Chapter 3 regarding credibility and its importance to successful persuasion. The conclusion from those studies is that spokespeople need to demonstrate consistency and commitment.

However, for a celebrity, achieving this level of authenticity can be difficult (Brockington, 2009). The general public tends to have a belief that fame can make people less authentic and thus the public is often more skeptical to a message from a celebrity (Gamson, 1994). In other words the mere fact a celebrity is a celebrity can mean that their authenticity is questioned.

Furthermore Lester (2006) found that celebrities were vulnerable to criticism and questioning of motivation and authenticity.

So what makes a celebrity more authentic and thus more likely to be a trusted and successful spokesperson? As stated above, the authenticity of a celebrity can be
questioned, so how can celebrities mitigate this?

Based on the literature of the relationship between celebrities and conservation there are number of attributes that can make a celebrity more authentic and hence more successful in their campaign.

These can be summarized briefly as:

1. Commitment and longevity; a celebrity’s interest in a cause over a long period of time (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). Commitment can also be shown by a celebrity not just being a ‘safe’ endorser but also an activist (Lester 2006).

2. Personal Experience; the celebrity personally experiencing a region/threatened environment for themselves. (Krasner, 1997; Jackson, 2008; Brockington, 2009).

3. Charisma, Attractiveness and likability; as discussed in Chapter 3 these attributes can help with persuasion and they apply to celebrities. They can also aid with perceived authenticity (Jackson, 2008; Brockington, 2009; Cubitt, 2009).

4. Social Proof; the more celebrities that support a conservation cause can confirm that this is the correct stance on the issue. This shows that the celebrity is making the correct decision and can create the ‘bandwagon effect’ as discussed in Chapter 3 (Jackson, 2008; Caildini, 2009).

5. Authority; utilizing factually based studies and arguments to back their campaigns (Lester, 2006; Brockington, 2009)

It should be noted, and perhaps unsurprisingly, that all the attributes utilized by celebrities in their campaigns are basically the same as the ones discussed in Chapter 3 in the context of persuasion. This implies that the attributes needed to be a successful celebrity conservation spokesperson are the same as what are needed in many of the fields mentioned in Chapter 3, including marketing,
advertising, sales, politics and religion.

Rather than further examine examples of celebrities who have demonstrated the above attributes during a conservation campaign, I will instead focus on just one. The aim of this method is not to dismiss the literature that theorizes on the characteristics of conservation spokespeople but to add to it through primary research.

I have chosen Lucy Lawless for a number of reasons. Firstly she is someone that I respect immensely. I remember reading with a feeling of incredulity and admiration about her personal stance on climate change and her arrest while protesting with Greenpeace New Zealand to stop oil drilling in the Arctic. Secondly, I wanted to examine a female New Zealand celebrity as the other two case studies are both conducted on males. Thirdly, I wanted to dig a little deeper into why a celebrity gets involved in a conservation cause and become a spokesperson for it. I wanted more than a celebrity who supported ‘safe’ wildlife and conservation causes. I wanted someone who had protested their cause and put themselves in the position of being publically criticized and analyzed and potentially risked many of the attributes that had made them celebrities in the first place.

4.3 Case Study Lucy Lawless – Celebrity

Lucy Lawless is a New Zealand actress and singer best known for her starring role as Xena in Xena – Warrior Princess, an American historical fantasy television series filmed in New Zealand. This series ran from 1995 – 2001 and was immensely popular in America and also aired in over a 100 countries (Morreale, 1998; NZ On Screen, 2013). In 2007 the show was rated as number 10 on the TV Guide’s Top Cult Shows Ever (TV Guide 2013) and the success of the series made Lawless an instance celebrity recognized around the world for her portrayal of the strong female warrior (Morreale, 1998).
Lawless’s path to fame began when she was aged ten years old and appeared in her first musical. She then studied music and languages at university, spent time overseas, returned to New Zealand and began acting in smaller roles in New Zealand film, advertisements and television. Her big break occurred when she was cast in the role of Xena in 1995. When the series ended in 2001 she began to develop her singing and theatre career alongside her film and television work.

So how did a New Zealand actress become a campaigner and spokesperson for the environment and conservation causes?

Lawless’s global fame as a conservationist occurred only recently in 2012 with her stance against Shell’s drilling in the Arctic for oil. Along with six other activists from Greenpeace, Lawless climbed Shell’s drilling tower whilst it was moored in Port Taranaki, New Zealand. They occupied this tower for 77 hours, blogging and giving interviews to highlight climate change and the plight of the Arctic. The seven protesters along with Lawless were eventually arrested and charged for unlawfully trespassing on the ship (Greenpeace, 2013). Overnight Lawless became an environmental celebrity, she was no longer just known as the warrior princess; media and fans worldwide were calling her the eco warrior princess (Miller, 2012; Rustin, 2012).

However 2012 was not the beginning of Lawless’s involvement in conservation and climate change issues. In fact, she had joined Greenpeace New Zealand in 2009 and became active in a petition urging New Zealanders to ask the New Zealand government to cut green house gas emissions. In 2010 she co-launched a successful Greenpeace campaign against mining in New Zealand National Parks.

I asked Lawless when she first became compelled to speak on behalf of the environment. I was very interested to understand her motivations and felt privileged to be able to ask her first hand. She answered that she had become aware of certain aspects that made her want to create a better planet. Firstly, she cited the hole in the ozone layer and the increase in skin cancer in New Zealand leading her to the realization that “what a person consumes in one part of the world can horribly affect whole populations thousands of miles away. I realized we
were really and truly connected” (Lawless 2013, see Appendix A).

Throughout her answers to my questions Lawless cites one of her primary motivations for getting involved with conservation campaigns as saving people’s lives, particularly her own children. She believes the human race cannot survive in a world that is heading towards “environmental bankruptcy”. She also feels “that the loss of a single species due to our greed, ignorance and sheer stupidity is a crime” (Lawless 2013, see Appendix A).

The outcomes she wants for her campaigns are increased awareness and making sure people vote and campaign with knowledge. She further states she is “desperate” to spread the word about climate change and seeking clean energy and halt the destruction of rainforests and the acidification of oceans.

From understanding her motivations and desires I wanted to examine her commitment and consistency to her conservation ideals. I asked her what actions she personally had undertaken in relation to climate change and energy. She states that she publicly supported Greenpeace in the now famous oil drilling protest and continues to support Greenpeace in various campaigns including climate change awareness. She was also instrumental in making the New Zealand government back down on its plans to mine coal in protected forests; she led a protest march as part of Greenpeace for this campaign (Greenpeace, 2013). She further states that she displays No Deep Sea Drill signs on her personal property; has solar panels on her house; financially contributes to causes; drives a small car and tries not to fly too much and “never for pleasure”.

Many of the media articles written about her after the Arctic drilling protest believe she demonstrated her commitment to climate change awareness through her direct and very public participation in that protest (Miller, 2012; Rustin, 2012). She had participated in other Greenpeace activities before, but this was a physical protest that required her to put her own safety and potentially her freedom and career on the line. It was something that she was arrested and sentenced for. Campaigning on behalf of climate change and clean energy is clearly something she is willing to suffer personally for (Greenpeace 2013; Rustin, 2013).
However, she was not alone in this particular protest – there were seven other people with her but very few news articles were written about them and they are referred to as the “other activists” (Rustin, 2013). Lawless however, received considerable personal media converge across the world about the protest. I was interested in how she felt about that.

She responded that she believes the general public is interested in what celebrities have to say and that this gives her an advantage as a spokesperson. In an interview with a journalist from The Guardian in relation to climate change she made it clear that she did not have time for people who mock celebrity activists and accuse them of attention-seeking. She further stated “the scientists have been screaming about this for 15 years… but nobody listened. So at least with a few celebrities – I call them schlebrities – even though you and I know that’s a very silly kind of currency, I think it's all hands to the pump” (Rustin, 2012).

She is clearly aware that the fame she won through the international success of the Xena series makes her more likely to be successful in persuading people to support her conservation campaigns. Her likability is also linked to her Xena persona and attractiveness (Morreale, 1998).

However, Lawless also feels she gets criticized for speaking out on issues that are important and that media would prefer the more trivial celebrity news piece.

Furthermore, she wishes that the public would place more importance on what scientists are saying and thinks its regrettable that the public often won't listen to them but will listen to a celebrity. To an extent she does understand why this occurs in our society, stating that the nature of academic study and communication can come across a bit “turgid in the real world” and that not many “scientists speak effectively in soundbites” (Lawless 2013, see Appendix A).

I asked Lawless about qualifications and credentials. In Chapter 3 I discussed a link between credentials and authority. Lucy herself does not have any qualifications relating to science, biology, zoology or any of the disciplines relating to the
environment. So I asked her if it is important for someone to have a relevant credential when discussing a conservation campaign.

Lawless declared that she does not believe that credentials and qualifications are all you need to be a credible spokesperson for a topic. She further stated that the actual credibility of the *campaign* is what matters to her. She believes that being a “thinking human being” and “checking your facts” is just as important. She also believes in being honest about her authority on a subject. She states that she has “never tried to pass (herself) off as anything other than a concerned mother who wants to protect her children from colossal wrong” (Lawless 2013, see Appendix A).

I felt extremely fortunate to have been able to ask Lucy Lawless direct questions about being a celebrity and conservation spokesperson.

I believe she has proven to be a successful conservation spokesperson and although the actual impact that celebrities can have on a conservation campaign is greatly debated and difficult to measure. I will discuss this in Chapter 5 (Brockington, 2008; Lester, 2006).

Finally, I believe Lawless possesses many of the characteristics and attributes I discussed earlier in this section. These include commitment, consistency, personal experience, attractiveness, a desire to make a difference, authority and a belief in the campaign.

Again, it is interesting to note that all of these characteristics are the same ones discussed in Chapter 3 in regards to affective persuasion. It is also important to note that these are the attributes that other studies and literature have proposed are important for a successful celebrity spokesperson.

In the next section I will examine the ‘celebrity conservationist.’
4.4 The Celebrity Conservationist

The “celebrity conservationist” is a term that Brockington (2009) has coined to describe a person who achieves fame through their work for a conservation cause.

This term may be applied, but is not limited to, researchers, scientists and nature documentary presenters. These people's stories, their lives and work is considered to be good entertainment (Marshall, 1997; Brockington, 2008) and their appeal lies in their apparent authenticity and their likability (Vivanco, 2004).

A significant number of celebrity conservationists achieve fame through television and presenting nature documentaries (Huggan, 2013). This includes the people like Sir David Attenborough and Steve Irwin (Brockington, 2009; Brown, 2010). Others have achieved fame through their close relationships with large charismatic animals, such as Dian Fossey who worked with gorillas and Dame Jane Goodall who worked with chimpanzees (Krasner, 1997; Cubitt, 2005).

Sometimes these conservation celebrities may not be the most knowledgeable in their field but their characteristics combined with their knowledge can make them very successful as communicators and spokespeople for their chosen campaign (Vivanco, 2004; Brockington, 2009; Brown, 2010).

Krasner (1997) theorized that the use of Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall as campaigners for the gorillas and chimpanzees was a clever strategy by their mentor Louis Leakey to popularise primatology. Leaky believed that the average person would not be interested in animal behaviour but would surely be captivated by the image of a young white woman in the 1970s in the jungles of Africa embracing a primate (Krasner, 1997).

Similarly, Steve Irwin became a successful TV personality and celebrity conservationist in part due to the image he presented; a modern day Tarzan full of adventure and passion (Vivanco, 2004; Brown, 2010).
The motivations of a celebrity conservationist can be complex and are often an authentic desire for conservation alongside fame seeking and personal gain (Brockington, 2008; Huggan, 2013). The simple fact that we all need to make a living is another motivation and unlike the entertainment celebrity the conservation celebrity often does not enter their campaign with wealth behind them. However, money aside, their motivations can be the same as the celebrity, namely; a desire to make a difference, desire for a favorable image and enjoyment (Brockington, 2008; Brown, 2010; Huggan, 2013).

In fact there are many similarities between a celebrity and a ‘conservation celebrity’ including a similar set of persuasive characteristics as listed earlier in this chapter and the need to fulfill the public’s desire for proven authenticity (Vivanco, 2004; Brockington, 2008).

Much of the literature concerning celebrity conservationists discusses the importance of their authenticity and is perhaps one of the most important attributes that a celebrity conservationist can gain to be successful.

For instance, in a poll in 2006 David Attenborough was considered to be the most trusted man in the United Kingdom (Brockes, 2006). Furthermore he is considered to be universally popular and to have integrity and authority on the natural world. Additionally, Attenborough has obtained a level of authenticity on the natural world that is considered by many to be unmatched (Jeffries, 2003; Cubitt, 2005; Huggan, 2013).

I mentioned in an earlier section how celebrities can help the average person to connect with the natural world. Studies have shown that whereas the entertainment celebrities’ connection is often short lived, conservation celebrities on the other hand often have an ongoing connection to share (Brockington, 2009; Krasner, 1997). For instance, David Attenborough has been travelling and reporting from various environments for over 50 years and is credited with having seen and experienced more wonders of nature than any other person in the world (Jeffries, 2003).
Many studies attribute Steve Irwin’s success to the drama of him actually being ‘there’; being in the presence of dolphins or wrestling a crocodile. He also portrayed the image of a brave adventurer (Brown 2010). Indeed, Attenborough is also credited with this adventurous persona – albeit a more traditional adventurer with echoes of the old empire practice of travel and exploration (Jeffries 2003; Cubitt 2005).

Jane Goodall also shared her first-hand experience with the public after spending years living with a group of chimpanzees in Africa and publicizing books and articles (Goodall, 2010; Krasner, 1997).

Thus the conservation celebrity allows people to connect with a conservation cause through their experience or knowledge of an issue. The conservation celebrity can provide imagery and a first hand experience that the average person cannot experience (Brown, 2010; Brockington, 2008). Although is similar to what a celebrity can also provide the difference is the celebrity conservationist is usually providing this for a much longer time.

Other attributes that many conservation celebrities possess that celebrities often don’t is an official qualification in the field they are campaigning for (Brockington, 2009; Vivanco, 2004).

David Attenborough possess a degree in natural sciences (Attenborough, 2009) and Jane Goodall has a PhD degree in Ethology (Greene, 2005). However, Steve Irwin did not hold any official qualification but he is still considered by many to have been an expert in his field through is lifelong association with wildlife.

I will now examine Steve Irwin in greater detail with the aim of deconstructing why he was so successful as a conservation celebrity. I have chosen Irwin for a number of reasons. Firstly, he is someone that I personally watched develop from a little known wildlife expert to a worldwide celebrity. Secondly, I am particularly interested in his methods and hands-on approach and thirdly, there is a considerable amount of literature available on his role in conservation.
4.5 Case Study Steve Irwin – Celebrity Conservationist

Steve Irwin was born in 1962 in Victoria Australia and died in 2006 after a fatal encounter with a stingray aged 44 years old (Australia Zoo December 2013). In his relatively short life he is credited as significantly educating the general public about wildlife and conservation and becoming a worldwide celebrity (Brown 2010; Australia Zoo December 2013).

So how Irwin did rise to such celebrity status and become one of the most famous reptile experts in the world?

Firstly, Irwin had an unusual upbringing. His parents ran a reptile and fauna park in Queensland and by the time Irwin was 9 years old he was helping his father catch and relocate wild crocodiles (Australia Zoo December 2013).

By his early 20s he was living in remote far North Queensland catching and relocating problem crocodiles to protect them from poachers. It was during this time that he developed his methods for catching crocodiles that he would later share with the world in his famous television series (Huggan, 2009).

Steve also continued working at his parent’s reptile and fauna park and by the early 90s took over the management from his parents. He believed passionately in the conservation of crocodiles in the wild and even worked free of charge for the Queensland Government to help trap and relocate ‘trouble’ crocodiles. Around the same as he took over his parents park, he met a visiting American tourist called Terri Raines and less than a year later they were married (Brown, 2010).

To celebrate their nuptials the two Irwins embarked on a crocodile trapping adventure and made a wildlife documentary about it. This documentary became the start of Crocodile Hunter, the series that would make Steve Irwin a household name in over a 100 countries (Rayner, 2007).

At the time of his death Irwin was operating the successful Australia Zoo Wildlife
Park, had appeared in 5 seasons of *Crocodile Hunter*; had starred in a string of successful spin off TV series including *Croc Files*; had appeared in a film with Eddie Murphy and starred in his own film. His wife Terri and 2 young children had also become household names through their involvement with his TV series and the Australia Zoo. At its peak *Crocodile Hunter* had a weekly global audience of 200 million people (Rayner, 2007; Huggan, 2009).

Hence, it is safe to conclude that Irwin had risen from a little known crocodile wrangler to global celebrity. So what attributes did he posses to achieve this?

Firstly, his commitment to wildlife began at a very young age and continued throughout his entire life. He was particularly committed to working with crocodiles and demonstrated this commitment over most of his life.

Secondly, he had personal and close experiences with the wildlife he was campaigning for. He would jump on crocodiles and grab and pick up snakes and added drama and excitement by choosing dangerous wildlife (Brockington, 2008). His methods were controversial and many critics challenged his closeness to wildlife as showing a lack of respect akin to molestation (Brown 2010; Brockington, 2008).

Others believed that Irwin’s conservation message was lost through his antics (Vivanco, 2004). Often the opposition came from more traditional zoologists, biologists and wildlife conservationists (Bradshaw et al., 2007). Indeed Sebastian Paquette, a Canadian biologist, expressed his frustration at being ridiculed by colleagues for publicly stating his support for Irwin (Paquette, 2006).

Paquette believed the academic community never fully understood that the way Irwin communicated and his personal experiences on television were a huge benefit to wildlife conservation. Paquette’s (2006 p. 6) final comments regarding Irwin’s critics were most profound:

“I am not suggesting that conservationists should start performing life threatening stunts with deadly creatures in front of television cameras. But if every conservation
biologist was even a tenth as successful at communicating his passion and enthusiasm for conservation as Steve Irwin was, reconciling people and nature surely would not be such a difficult challenge”.

This brings us to Irwin’s third attribute; charisma, attractiveness and likability.

It was no accident that Irwin was marketed outside Australia the way he was. In the UK and Australia his boyish charm, enthusiasm and safari style clothing were an immediate hit. Furthermore, he was seen as the typical Australian, the Australian many nations wanted to believe existed. The realities of course being that very few people live like Irwin in Australia.

Although Irwin’s activities on television were often questioned, most literature agrees that he was universally liked. Brown (2010) conducted a survey on nearly 2000 people after the death of Irwin with the aim of assessing Irwin’s influence on wildlife conservation.

Of note in relation to likability, the majority of respondents believed him to be “passionate, respectful, loving and honest” and very few respondents believed him to a be “showboat” or lacking in authenticity (Brown 2010, p.86).

Finally, there is the authority he held. Although never having achieved an academic qualification he had years of field experience and indeed published journal articles and received a prestigious research grant (Huggan, 2009).

However, authority and credentials was one area Irwin was perhaps most criticized. Many critics claimed Irwin’s information was unscientific and misleading and that he ‘dumbed’ down the information. He was criticized for his opposition to sustainable crocodile harvesting and accused of being unscientific and emotional (Bradshaw et al., 2007).

Vinanco (2004) analyzed a film involving Steve Irwin and crocodiles in East Timor and found that the conservation message was not explained well and that much of the complexities surrounding the issue were not covered. His study also noted that sometimes in nature and wildlife documentaries the conservation message is lost
at the expense of providing entertainment.

However, despite these criticisms and lack of academic credentials many of the articles and studies on Irwin tend to agree that he held a certain level of authority on the wildlife he was campaigning for and perhaps more significantly that the general public believed him to have this authority (Vivanco, 2004; Brockington, 2008; Brown, 2010).

In Brown's (2010) survey an overwhelming majority of respondents believed Irwin to be an educator.

And so it can be summarized that to varying degrees, Steve Irwin possessed all the attributes discussed previously in this thesis, namely; commitment consistency, personal experience, likability, social proof and authority.

Finally, I would like to briefly examine Steve's motivations for his wildlife conservation and work. It is generally agreed that he genuinely loved animals. As discussed above despite scientific research he refused to endorse any killings of his beloved crocodiles. It can also be theorized that his conservation work became his livelihood. As Brockington (2008) stated “Irwin captures brilliantly the fact that being a celebrity of any sort is business”. He further goes on to state that Irwin was hugely successful as a celebrity, promoting Australia and also his own business the Australia Zoo which is now a multi million dollar business.

It is impossible to conclude if Steve Irwin was motivated in his conservation work by the lure of fame and money. He no doubt chased fame through his starring role in various television series but most studies believe he had a very genuine desire to promote conservation and give the average person a connection with nature. Furthermore before his death he was instrumental in setting up a wildlife conservation charity, which I will discuss further in Chapter 5.

At the end of the day we can only believe what people tell us is their motivation for doing what they do and this is what Irwin had to say about his motivation:
The one thing that I would wanna be remembered for is passion and enthusiasm. Conservation is my job, my life, my whole persona (Crocodile Hunter TV series Season Four episode 39, 2002).
4.6 Case Study - Geoff Harrow

At the beginning of this Chapter, I proposed that Geoff Harrow, the man featured in my film *Mystery Bird*, is a conservation spokesperson. I also proposed that he did not fall into the category of celebrity spokesperson but into a sub category of celebrity conservationist spokesperson. I named this category the ‘hero conservationist’.

According to the Oxford Dictionary the definition of a hero is someone who is admired for their noble qualities, notable achievements or their courage. In ancient times the hero was defined as someone who had super human qualities or was semi divine (Oxford Dictionaries 2013).

Other studies on heroism define a hero as a person who has a commitment to a noble cause, which is often aimed at furthering the welfare of others. Furthermore that person is usually willing to accept the consequences of achieving that purpose whether they are negative or positive (Jayawickreme & Di Stefano, 2012).

It is difficult to find literature on conservationists and wildlife workers who are not well known to the general public. I can think of many myself but these are through a personal encounter or word of mouth.

Most studies and literature that I examined believed that people that are famous or well known do in fact *want* this attention on some level (Boorstin, 1983; Rojek, 2001; West & Orman, 2003).

Therefore, I think it is safe to conclude that once a person becomes well known to the general public through their work and communication about conservation then they have essentially become a celebrity conservationist.

As I stated earlier I propose there is a sub category of celebrity conservationist – the hero conservationist who is a person who is willing to be a spokesperson for
the good of their cause but does not seek any of the fame that comes with this.

I believe Geoff Harrow fits into this category and hence I would like to examine his path to ‘hero conservationist’ with the aim of gaining a better understanding of his motivations and understanding what attributes and characteristics he possesses that make him a successful spokesperson and a hero conservationist.

It should be noted that I spent much of 2010 and 2011 interviewing Geoff Harrow for the film both on and off camera (see Appendices B, C, D & E).

Geoff Harrow was “84 and three quarters” when I first met him in the early summer of 2010 during a meeting with the Hutton’s Shearwater Charitable Trust to discuss the making of my documentary about the birds. My first impression of Geoff Harrow was a man with incredible energy and I was immediately intrigued as to his role with the Trust.

The description on the Trust’s website states that Harrow is on the board of Trustees and has had a passion for the birds for 45 years and that he rediscovered their breeding grounds in 1964 (The Hutton’s Shearwater Charitable Trust 2013).

I was immediately interested in Harrow from the moment I met him – what was his connection with this bird and how did he ‘rediscover’ a bird that lives high up in the mountains?

When he spoke about the birds he did so in a way that was careful and controlled but you could feel the urgency in his voice and his absolute resolution that the species should be saved and that the Trust and himself would ensure the birds ongoing survival.

Based on this meeting my filming partner and myself decided to make the film Mystery Bird about the Hutton’s shearwater. Initially we proposed the film would include many characters – there was a scientist who was pioneering new research on the bird’s migration route; there was a passionate Department of Conservation worker and there was, of course, Geoff Harrow. However, as the year progressed and we spent more time with Harrow, he began to reveal his past and the extent of
his involvement with the species. It became clear to use that his story interwoven with the birds was the story to tell.

It should be noted that Geoff Harrow always resisted his personal story being a part of the Hutton’s shearwater story. He believed the film should be about the birds and the birds alone. We believed otherwise. We thought that by adding his personal story it would connect the audience to the birds; that through his passion we had more chance of making the audiences care about the birds. We told Geoff our theory and he agreed to become the star of our film.

Harrow is a very humble man and at times he was modest almost to the point of frustration. It was only over the course of many interviews and time spent in the Kaikoura Ranges with him that he gradually revealed his incredible background and life’s journey with the birds. He was always happy to be a spokesperson for the birds but was often reluctant to be given any accolades for his work; he would always include another person that he believed should be credited.

To understand how a man from Christchurch who worked in the pharmaceutical marketing business rediscovered a presumed extinct bird in the 1960s I will now delve a little deeper into his background.

Geoff Harrow was born in Christchurch, New Zealand in the mid 1920s. Whilst on a school trip through the South Island, Geoff saw his first mountains and was captivated. He was also very interested in birds from a young age and joined Forest and Bird when he was just 10 years old (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

At university he joined the university climbing club and by the early 1950s had climbed all the peaks in New Zealand over 10,000 feet and was being mentored in his climbing by the same man who was mentoring Sir Edmund Hillary (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

In late 1953, Ed Hillary had just returned to New Zealand after famously summiting Mt Everest and was putting together a New Zealand team to go back
and conquer some of the other peaks. Geoff’s mentor encouraged him to apply to be on the team despite Geoff not believing he was skilled enough (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

Geoff applied, was chosen and became one of eight New Zealanders who accompanied Hillary back to the Himalayas in the spring of 1954. For Ed Hillary one of the primary goals of this expedition was to be first person to summit Mt Baruntse – a technically difficult mountain with a height of just under 24,000 feet. Unfortunately, Ed Hillary was quite badly injured whilst attempting another climb in the Himalayas and Geoff describes Hillary clasping his hand and imploring Geoff to climb Mt Baruntse and “get one” for New Zealand (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

Geoff and a fellow climber succeeded but it was a very difficult climb and they nearly lost their lives. Geoff’s account of the return from the summit, in a snow storm at night and the two men’s eventual acceptance of their fate “sitting in the snow just quietly waiting to die of hyperthermia” and then their miraculous rescue, is a riveting story in itself (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

On his return to New Zealand, Harrow continued with his day job in the pharmaceutical marketing business and spent his weekends climbing. He also got an opportunity to visit Antarctica and assist with some research on birds. Harrow never talked any further about his work with me other than to say that in those days it could be hard to get a job and you stayed with the same company for your whole life. He says he only had two jobs in is life before retiring (Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

It was on summer holidays to Kaikoura in the early 60s that Harrow first began hearing about muttonbirds nesting up in the mountains. Local property owners and hunters shared their stories with him and he became fascinated by the idea of a mysterious bird nesting up so high. Harrow by then considered himself to be an amateur ornithologist. He had friends at the Canterbury Museum who he discussed what he had heard and they said it could possibly be the Hutton’s Shearwater – a bird thought to be extinct as their nesting sites had never been located. This friend
told Harrow he should go and have a look (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B).

For Geoff a new climb in unknown territory and the allure of the mysterious bird was like a red flag to a bull. In the summer of 1965 he left work on a Friday night and by Saturday morning was climbing up the Kaikoura Ranges alone and with limited equipment. He had to negotiate huge waterfalls, rough terrain, rock climbing and a sleepless night listening for the sounds of the birds (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B; Harrow 2011 see Appendix C)

On the Sunday morning he pushed on higher into the mountains and found a bird carcass. He describes his joy and elation at the find and quickly located two more carcasses before taking 8 hours to descend the mountain and return to Christchurch. He was at work on Monday morning, as usual, albeit feeling “a little tired”. The bird carcasses were sent for testing and he shortly received a telegraph stating that they were indeed the Hutton’s shearwater - the mysterious bird thought to be extinct. Geoff’s journey with the now iconic bird from the Kaikoura Mountains had begun.

Geoff Harrow became the number one advocate for the bird’s protection. The threats were numerous – invasive species being the main problem and soon only two colonies remained high in the mountains protected from the pests by the sharp mountainous drops and the waterfalls. However, any pig or goat that managed to find its way to the colonies would very likely cause the species’ extinction (Harrow 2011 see Appendix C).

So Geoff Harrow worked tirelessly campaigning for their protection and at every opportunity participated in the fieldwork. He estimates he has climbed to the various colonies over a hundred times mostly on weekends and conducting primary research on the bird’s life cycle and behavior. He spoke at mountaineering events, wildlife forums and he was instrumental in forming the Hutton’s Shearwater Trust and the translocation program; he would jump at any opportunity to promote the birds and gain more awareness and funding (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B; Harrow 2011 see Appendix C; Harrow 2011 see Appendix D).
I was very interested to know Geoff’s motivations and why he felt so passionately about this bird.

After numerous conversations with Geoff it emerged that he had a number of motivations. Firstly he stated, that he’d “always been a mountaineer and always loved birds…it was the combination of the two” (Harrow 2011 see Appendix D). The Hutton’s shearwater is New Zealand’s highest nesting sea bird and nests in an area accessible only by helicopter or experienced climbers. For someone like Harrow the bird fitted perfectly with his love of the mountains and adventure. He further stated that the “fieldwork was tough” but that he was “perfectly at home in all that rough tough mountain landscape and it was something that came very easily to me” (Harrow 2011 see Appendix D).

Secondly, he found the lure of a threatened bird that virtually nothing was known about very exciting and rewarding (Harrow 2011 see Appendix C).

And finally, Harrow felt an overwhelming sense of obligation to the bird he had rediscovered. He felt that their survival was critical and that “it’s up to New Zealanders to protect their own species.” He felt his work with the birds was a unique opportunity to do something good for his country and the world (Harrow 2011 see Appendix D; Harrow 2011 see Appendix E).

Harrow’s commitment to this conservation campaign is unquestionable. In the years since 1965 he has been involved in every aspect of the bird’s conservation; from campaigning to fieldwork. He has even paid for helicopters to ensure that along with scientists he could access the mountainous area to continue their fieldwork (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B).

The outcomes that Harrow wanted from all his work was increased awareness of the bird in order to ensure its survival. He understood that support from the public was essential and that “you’ve got to have people interested and feed them information. If you’re going to fund raise you’ve got to give them knowledge and interest and make it worthwhile for them” (Harrow 2011 see Appendix C).
I believe he has achieved this. The Hutton’s shearwater now has a large Trust which raises money for on-going projects and research. The Department of Conservation is involved in this research alongside the Trust. In my time spent in Kaikoura whilst filming the documentary between December 2010 and September 2011 there was not one person I spoke to in the town who hadn’t heard of the bird. Indeed, the town people are turning out in increasing numbers to hold a annual ‘farewell’ and ‘welcome home’ for the bird on its migration departure and return (The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust).

It is impossible to measure how much of this awareness is related directly to Harrow but I believe it is significant given his involvement with the bird for so long. Certainly other members of the Trust I spoke to credit much of the awareness of the bird to Geoff Harrow.

In terms of qualifications that directly relate to the subject Geoff Harrow does not possess any official credentials. He has an immense respect for scientists and also workers from the Department of Conservation as I observed first-hand over the course of 10 days whilst on a field study with Geoff and these personal. He was very respectful of their expertise and it was humbling to hear him ask them to tell him what to do during fieldwork.

In terms of his authority I believe his commitment for over 45 years and time spent with the birds in the field gives him a level of expertise about the birds that is possibly unmatched. However again this is almost impossible to measure.

Another attribute I believe Geoff Harrow possesses is likability. Of all the people we met and asked about Geoff Harrow during the course of making this film I never met anyone who would say a bad word about him. I also believe he came across in the film as a genuine and likable man – and this was conveyed to me verbally by many acquaintances. Furthermore, the fact that he is often used by the Trust as a spokesperson and the way he persuaded people to assist him with the birds in the earlier years, implies that he was successful as a persuader and hence has a level of likability.

His personal experience in the field is also important to note as this adds to his
credibility and image as a spokesperson.

Therefore, I believe Harrow possesses many of the characteristics and attributes I have discussed throughout this section in relation to a successful spokesperson.

These include commitment, consistency, personal experience, attractiveness, a desire to make a difference and authority. Again it is interesting to note that all of these characteristics are the same ones discussed in Chapter 3 in regards to affective persuasion. It is also important to note that these are the attributes that other studies and literature have proposed are important for a successful spokesperson.

So my final question is; can he be defined as a ‘conservation hero’ as I first proposed?

Boorstin (1983) theorized that the hero is distinguished by his achievement and Jayawickreme & Di Stefano (2012) postulated that a hero has a commitment to a noble cause.

Through interviews with Geoff Harrow and personal encounters with members of the Hutton’s Shearwater Trust and the Kaikoura public, I believe Geoff Harrow has proven his commitment to the bird and succeeded in raising their profile and potentially saving the species.

Therefore, I believe I am justified in calling Geoff Harrow a hero conservationist.

Furthermore, Popora (1996 p.227) found that “local heros, personal acquaintances from ordinary life, were by far the most frequent category” of heros, so it is highly possible that many of the people that know Geoff or have seen the film Mystery Bird would consider him a hero too.

In Chapter 5 I will examine the success and impact each of the following spokespeople have had on their respective campaigns; Lucy Lawless, Steve Irwin and Geoff Harrow.
Chapter 5 – Conservation spokespeople impacts

5.1 Impact of Conservation Spokesperson – Introduction

In order for a spokesperson to achieve success they need to have some sort of impact on the target audience (Cubitt, 2005; Brockington, 2008; Brown, 2010).

The influence of a conservation spokesperson can sometimes be difficult to measure but studies have shown that their impacts can include: a change in belief, pro-conservation behaviors, financial support, policy change, increased participation, action and awareness (Monroe, 2003; Cubitt, 2005; Brockington, 2008; Cialdini, 2009; Brown, 2010; Spears et al., 2013).

I would now like to re-examine each of the conservation spokespersons, Lucy Lawless, Steve Irwin and Geoff Harrow, with the aim of investigating the potential impacts they have had on their conservation campaign.

5.2 Lucy Lawless

Before discussing Lawless’s impact as a spokesperson, it should again be noted that influence can be difficult to measure, especially if there have been no previous academic studies undertaken which is the case for Lawless. However, I have found newspaper articles, blogs and websites that discuss her influence as a conservation spokesperson.

5.2.1 Increasing Public Awareness

As discussed in earlier chapters one of the biggest impacts a celebrity can have is increasing public awareness. When I asked Lawless if she believed celebrities had an advantage when speaking about a cause she stated “people are interested in what celebrities have to say and wider fame has wider reach” (Lawless 2013 see Appendix A).

Whilst participating in the Shell protest she was tweeting on Twitter, a social media website, throughout the 72 hours that the protest lasted. As of early
December 2013, Lucy has 83,879 followers on twitter (Twitter 2013). Her last post regarding the drilling of Deep Sea Oil was on the 21st of November 2013 – so it is likely that around 80,000 people were made aware of this campaign if they were not aware already. These are people that have chosen to connect with her on this social media site.

Her now famous protest in early 2012 gained Greenpeace and herself worldwide attention from the press. In June 2012, The Guardian UK edition published an interview with her in the Saturday edition (Rustin, 2012). In a recent survey conducted by analyst Comscore, The Guardian newspaper was found to be the third most read newspaper in the world with over 30 million readers a month with a increasing online readership rate (The Guardian 2012).

Of those 30 million people a month who read the Guardian it can be assumed that a significant portion must have read all, if not part of, Lawless’s interview. Lawless was also interviewed locally in New Zealand, appearing in all the major newspapers, including the NZ Herald, which has a daily readership of 835,000 (NZ Herald 2013).

Following the protest in early 2012, Lawless then joined other celebrities in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to launch Greenpeace’s Save the Arctic Campaign. Alongside Sir Richard Branson, her name was one of the first signatures on a petition to create a global sanctuary in the Arctic (Greenpeace 2013). As of early December 2013 the campaign had received just under 4.5 million signatures (Save the Arctic 2013). Much of the literature and Lawless herself believe that celebrities can help spread awareness because they can reach such a large audience.

TV One in New Zealand ran a 13-minute story on the Sunday night following Lawless’s protest and arrest. In this interview she was asked whether celebrities rather then policy makers should influence the public? Lawless responded that “if somebody makes you aware of an issue then you are in a position to make up your own mind” (TV One 2012). Hence, I believe Lucy Lawless can be credited with raising awareness about the Arctic, climate change and other conservation campaigns such as coal mining in New Zealand. Given some of the figures above I believe it would be accurate to say that Lucy Lawless
has brought awareness of significant environmental issues to millions of people around the world.

5.2.2 Action

As mentioned previously Lucy Lawless does not just endorse conservation projects she also participates in action-led protests. Much of her actions have led directly to awareness but some of her conservation actions have also had a more direct impact on the campaign itself.

In 2010 Lucy Lawless and Robyn Malcolm (a New Zealand actress) led a protest in Auckland against coal mining in New Zealand’s National Parks. On the day, allegedly 50,000 people turned out to march, making it New Zealand’s largest protest in history. The result contributed to the New Zealand government agreeing to back down on issuing permits to coal companies seeking to mine in National Parks (Greenpeace 2013). The issue was of course close to many New Zealander’s hearts and Greenpeace and the general media publicized the issue, but Lawless has also been credited with significantly creating awareness and affecting the outcome of the campaign through her actions (Greenpeace 2013).

Other conservation actions that Lawless has been involved with include promoting the Kiwi Ranger program by being physically present at the launch (Kiwi Ranger 2013), speaking at climate change summits and Greenpeace events (Greenpeace 2013).

5.2.3 Fundraising

Lawless has been involved in raising money for organizations that she is involved with. The main conservation campaign she has raised money for is Greenpeace. It is difficult to state the exact amount of money she has raised through awareness but some examples can be quantified.

In 2011 for example she raised $12,500 for Greenpeace’s ship the Rainbow Warrior III by auctioning a dinner with herself. She also auctioned some of her
personal art collection raising a further $22,000 (Greenpeace 2013). Lawless also donated money to conservation campaigns and that her own “wedding presents were donations to rainforest and ocean charities” (Lawless 2013 see Appendix A).

Thus from these above examples it can be concluded that Lucy Lawless is indeed an effective spokesperson for a conservation campaign. Through speaking about the campaigns and taking direct actions, she raises money and raises awareness that could potentially led to change and pro-conservation behavior.

5.3 Steve Irwin

There has been much discussion on Steve Irwin’s impact as a celebrity conservationist. Some have credited him with significantly raising awareness about wildlife while others have accused him of abusing wildlife for the purpose of entertainment (Paquette, 2007; Brockington, 2008; Brown, 2010).

There is more literature and figures available about Irwin that Lucy Lawless in relation to his impact as a celebrity conservationist but the academic studies are still few. So once again I would like to make the point that impact itself can be difficult to measure and I examined websites, newspaper articles, and viewership statistics alongside academic studies and literature to try and understand the impact Steve Irwin had as a conservation spokesperson.

5.3.1 Increasing Public Awareness

According to Steve Irwin his purpose in life was to save wildlife (Brown, 2010, Australia Zoo 2013). One of the primary ways he set out to do this was by becoming a celebrity conservationist and hence reaching a wider audience with his conservation messages (Huggan, 2009; Brown, 2010; Australia Zoo 2013).

At its peak Crocodile Hunter, the show in which Steve Irwin starred, had a weekly global audience of 200 million people (Rayner 2007; Huggan 2009). This series covered a number of conservation issues around the world. For instance in Season One, episodes 6 & 7 called Outlaws of the Outback covered Australia’s problem with
invasive species and the devastating consequences they can have on native wildlife (Crocodile Hunter TV Series Season Two, 1998). Invasive species are a huge problem in countries like Australia and New Zealand and through Irwin’s coverage of this topic I have no doubt that an individual in America and the UK, for instance, would gain a considerable insight into this problem even if they were unaware of it previously.

Other conservation issues he covered in his series, were capturing troublesome crocodiles and relocating them in Australia, following the conservation efforts of teams working in Sumatra with wild orang-utans, and searching for the presumed extinct Tasmanian tiger (Crocodile Hunter TV Series 1997-2004).

There is some literature on the impact that wildlife films can have on changing attitudes and behavior but there is little primary research so most of the literature is largely based on anecdotal evidence (Bouse, 2000; Brockington, 2008; Wright, 2010).

There is no literature that positively states that wildlife films can “save” a species because there is a lack of evidence to support this claim (Clark 2006; Wright 2010). Despite this, many wildlife filmmakers have expressed that their primary aim in making wildlife films is to raise awareness through film and achieve conservation aims (Mitman, 1999; Bouse, 2000; Wright, 2010). Indeed this is what Irwin expressed in relation to his series Crocodile Hunter (Crocodile Hunter TV Series 1997-2004).

Clark (2006) concluded that knowledge about the wildlife species were linked to willingness to take action, meanwhile Holbert et al. (2003) theorized that the viewing of conservation films and documentaries often had a positive effect in terms of a desire to develop pro-conservation behaviors.

Irwin was a spokesperson not just on television and films. He also appeared in newspapers, magazines, websites, radio, social media, authored scientific papers and attended events and conferences. Furthermore he was a spokesperson for the Australian Quarantine & Inspection Services, Australian Tourism Campaigns and
numerous wildlife focused NGO’s including Wildlife Warriors Worldwide and appeared in person at his own Zoo (Brockington, 2008; Brown, 2010; Australia Zoo 2013).

Thus although it is difficult to quantify Irwin’s impact in raising awareness about conservation and wildlife, I still believe it is accurate to state that through all his different methods of communication, he reached millions of people. Furthermore it is likely that the awareness he raised stimulated pro-conservation behavior and actions.

5.3.2 Action

Steve Irwin was a man of action and this didn’t just apply to his often controversial approach of getting up close and personal with wildlife.

As mentioned in Chapter 4 he worked for free for the Queensland Government relocating troubled crocodiles. He also bought large tracts of land in Australia and overseas with the aim of preserving this habitat for the wildlife (Australia Zoo 2013). Alongside Terri Irwin, he developed his parents’ reptile and fauna park into Australia Zoo which runs many conservation projects including threatened species breeding projects (Australia Zoo 2013).

A big part of his conservation message was pointing out that people could achieve change through their actions and that everyone could make a difference (Brown, 2010; Australia Zoo 2013). Aside from raising awareness, and his first hand conservation work, Irwin also raised considerable money for conservation projects and indeed his legacy continues in some of the Trusts and projects he left behind.

5.3.3 Fundraising

Unfortunately, it is impossible to accurately define the amount of dollars that Steve Irwin has raised for wildlife conservation. He was active throughout his time as a
celebrity conservationist in fundraising events. He also claimed to use his TV appearance fees for conservation, including the $175,000 from the Australian Government for making a quarantine advertisement (Willis, 2003).

Furthermore he established the conservation fund Wildlife Warriors Worldwide that raises money for conservation projects around the world (Wildlife Warriors Worldwide 2013).

When Steve Irwin died in September 2006 his death was global news. Brown (2010) found that after his death there was a dramatic increase in donations to Wildlife Warriors Worldwide and this reached 2 million dollars in the month immediately after his demise. Brown (2010) further theorizes that Irwin’s fundraising abilities will continue even after his death.

Steve Irwin had similar outcomes to Lucy Lawless in that he raised awareness, raised money and took direct action in conservation issues. It is difficult to measure the two against each other and come up with definite figures but it does appear that he has been more successful in reaching a wider audience and raising more money. Steve Irwin was by no means the perfect conservationist. There was considerable controversy around his methods and he was often accused of molesting animals and encouraging conservation behaviors that were not based on scientific studies (Bradshaw et al., 2007).

However, I believe despite some of his methods and his questionable science he was an effective spokesperson who encouraged conservation behavior and had the potential to achieve this through sharing knowledge.

5.4 Geoff Harrow

Harrow’s impact as a conservation spokesperson is perhaps the most difficult to determine as there is no previous consideration as to his impact or influence on the Hutton’s shearwater by any studies or even mainstream media.
All of the publicity I have located about him has been through a few main sources, namely The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust, the local Kaikoura newspaper, mountaineering publications, the Department of Conservation website, Forest & Bird New Zealand and my film *Mystery Bird*. I will examine these sources to try and gain an understanding of Geoff’s potential influence as a conservation spokesperson.

5.4.1 Raising Public Awareness

In 1965 the township of Kaikoura had an approximated population of 3,140 (Statistics New Zealand 1965) with very few tourists. Only a few of the local people (Iwi and farmers) knew of the existence of a muttonbird nesting high up in the mountains, but other than that there was no other awareness or knowledge of the Hutton’s shearwater (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B).

In December 2013 the population of Kaikoura had grown to 4,467 (Statistics New Zealand 2013) and approximately a million tourists visit Kaikoura every year (Fairweather, 1998).

I think it is accurate to state that in 2013 a majority of the of the local population has heard of the Hutton’s shearwater and understands at least some to some level the conservation efforts being undertaken.

I make this statement based on a number of factors outlined below.

Firstly, the local newspaper the Kaikoura Star, a weekly publication, publishes regular stories on the Hutton’s Shearwater (The Kaikoura Star 2013; The Hutton’s Shearwater Charitable Trust 2013). Whilst filming *Mystery Bird*, my filming partner and myself gathered past copies of the Kaikoura Star dating back to the year 2000. We found that approximately 50% of these stories mentioned Geoff Harrow. Stories ranged from the crash landing of birds in Kaikoura at night to the
new translocated colony. In 2012 the Kaikoura Star had a circulation of 1,483 copies a week (Fairfax Media NZ 2013) and when I spoke to one of the secretaries she believed a large proportion of the township read the local paper.

The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust was formed in October 2008 and alongside many local residents, Harrow was instrumental in forming the Trust. There are nine board members on the Trust and it currently has approximately fifteen sponsors, which include local businesses and New Zealand organizations. The board members have been chosen as representing the community – members include local business owners, the local Iwi, Department of Conservation staff and land owners. At the previous two Hutton’s Shearwater events organized by the Trust, there was a turnout of approximately 100 people (The Hutton's Shearwater Trust 2013).

Outside of Kaikoura there have been articles published in magazines and newspapers such as Forest & Bird (Forest and Bird 2013) and the Stuff NZ (Stuff NZ 2013) and many of these articles also include Harrow as part of the story.

Furthermore, Geoff has coauthored numerous journal articles about the birds such as a recent study on the population trends of the two colonies which was published in The Ornithological Society of New Zealand scientific journal Notornis in 2009 (Sommer et al., 2009).

Based on the above examples, conversations with many local Kaikoura residents and Department of Conservation staff, it is clear to me that Geoff Harrow has had a significant influence on raising awareness about the bird; however it is impossible to make any sort of estimate on the numbers of people who may have heard about the Hutton’s shearwaters through him.

I do believe that he can be credited with raising the majority of the awareness about the bird in the earlier days and that in the last ten to fifteen years the awareness campaign has gathered its own momentum, especially with the formation of The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust.
I believe where Geoff Harrow can continue to raise awareness is outside of the Kaikoura area and this is part of the reason he agreed to be involved with the film *Mystery Bird*.

In November 2011 when *Mystery Bird* premiered in Dunedin at the World Premiere of the student films from the Centre for Science Communication there was approximately 1500 people who watched the film. Most had not heard about the Hutton’s shearwater’s or Geoff Harrow before watching the film.

### 5.4.2 Action

In terms of action, Harrow is a very active conservationist and spokesperson. His actions, like those of Steve Irwin, have included a close relationship with the species he is campaigning for, including weeks camped out at the breeding colonies collecting behavioral information and data. Since 1965 he has been active in every conservation stage of the Hutton’s shearwaters including the development of the research hut next to one of the colonies, pig trapping, hunting of pests and more recently the relocation of chicks to the newly built fenced colony and the migration tracking work (Harrow 2010 see Appendix B; Harrow see Appendix C; The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust 2013).

Harrow has used these experiences to help raise awareness of the bird stating that “You’ve got to have people interested and feed them information” (Harrow see Appendix C).

He was also instrumental in forming the Hutton’s Shearwater Trust, he is on the board and is referred to as the “settler” by the Trust.

Much of Harrow’s actions for the birds have been closely tied to raising awareness with the ultimate aim of gaining funding in order to make sure that the conservation work that needs to occur for the birds’ survival has the funds to do so.
5.4.3 Fundraising

The Hutton’s Shearwater Trust has managed to raise a considerable amount of money since it was formed in 2008. The new translocated colony cost a significant figure numbering in the high hundreds of thousands.

Through conversations with Harrow and many of the Trust members it is clear that Geoff Harrow was passionate about raising the money and would participate in whatever way he could to achieve the goals set out by the Trust.

Harrow has also alluded to his own personal contributions to the Trust and research on the bird. In one of his interviews he talked about paying for the helicopters himself in order to get researchers up into the mountains.

Harrow’s agreement in taking part in the film *Mystery Bird* was primarily to raise awareness about the bird but also to help with future fund raising. In a premiere of the film in Kaikoura in early 2012, the film raised approximately $6000 for the Trust.

Again, it is difficult to state a figure that can be attributed to Harrow through his involvement as a spokesperson for the Hutton’s shearwater but from the above examples I believe it is significant.

I believe Geoff Harrow to be an effective spokesperson; he has significantly raised awareness about the bird particularly in the early days, he has raised money for the bird through campaigns, newspaper articles and films and has been actively involved in every aspect of the bird’s conservation.

In the next and final section I will discuss the merits of each type of spokesperson; celebrity, celebrity conservationist and hero conservationist and attempt to make some recommendations and conclusions for conservation campaigns that are considering the best spokesperson for their cause.
Conclusions and Recommendations

In 2010, when I first began my Masters in Science Communication endorsed in Science and Natural History Filmmaking at the University of Otago, concern for threatened species rated high on my agenda and I considered myself to be both a zoologist and an avid bird watcher.

Yet after living in Dunedin in the South Island of New Zealand for nearly 12 months, I had never heard of the endangered bird the Hutton’s shearwater, which lives in the same country and indeed on the same Island as me.

I can confidently state that none of my fellow classmates or indeed many of my colleagues in the Department of Zoology had heard of this bird either. Granted Kaikoura is over 7 hours drive away from Dunedin but still this is an endangered bird which has been recognised as being so by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2013) so why hadn’t more people heard about it?

When I first heard about the Hutton’s shearwater through a Greenpeace NZ article I was interested, but I have to admit that it wasn’t until I personally met Geoff Harrow in November 2010 that I felt like I wanted to know more about this bird and become active in it’s conservation.

Both my filming partner and myself believed that by producing the film Mystery Bird we would provide Geoff Harrow with a platform in which to raise public awareness about the bird. I believe to some level we succeeded and that Geoff Harrow is a spokesperson for the Hutton’s shearwater.

This thesis was then undertaken to examine and analyse what makes a successful conservation and wildlife spokesperson; who inspires us and what can that person achieve?

In order to do this I examined on a broader scale the use of spokespeople across different campaigns and throughout history.
I identified six key tools of ‘persuasion’ that are commonly used by spokespeople to succeed and I analysed how these tools were utilised by a spokesperson. My ultimate aim for this thesis was to understand and recommend the best type of conservation spokesperson for any given conservation campaign.

With this in mind in Chapter 4, I analysed the two main accepted categories of conservation spokespeople: the celebrity and the celebrity conservationist. I further proposed a third group: the hero conservationist because I felt that Geoff Harrow did not fit comfortably into either of the other two groups.

I found that all 3 types of spokespeople were effective and that all three possessed some if not all of the tools of persuasion listed above.

I have found it impossible to state whether one type of spokesperson is more successful than another. While Lucy Lawless as a celebrity spokesperson may have reached the most members of the public about oil drilling in the Arctic, Geoff Harrow as a hero conservationist may have succeeded in saving a species due to his commitment and Steve Irwin may have connected with the greatest range of people due to the nature of his communication.

Hence, I would recommend that a conservation campaign that is considering who is the best person to become a spokesperson for their cause, does so based on that person’s attributes that relate to the key tools of persuasion and the campaign’s goals and specific desired outcomes.

I also believe that there is no reason for a conservation cause to limit itself to just one type of spokesperson, and indeed, I believe a conservation cause that is headed by a hero conservation type could indeed benefit from multiple types of spokespeople. For instance if Lucy Lawless was to start campaigning on behalf of the Hutton’s shearwater I believe this would significantly increase the awareness of the bird both nationally and internationally and that Geoff Harrow would support this strategy. For the celebrity conservationist this may not be so simple. I wonder how Steve Irwin would have reacted to Lucy Lawless deciding to become Xena the Eco Crocodile Warrior?
However this aside I would recommend a conservation campaign seek a spokesperson who possesses some if not all of the following attributes:

1. Reciprocity
2. Commitment and Consistency
3. Social Proof
4. Authority
5. Liking

I further recommend that a campaign consider how these attributes can aid the spokesperson to achieve the following

1. Raise Public Awareness
2. Demonstrate Action
3. Raise Money for the campaign

I believe that Geoff Harrow, the inspiration for this thesis and the film *Mystery Bird* has achieved all of the above outcomes as a conservation spokesperson and indeed possesses many of the tools of persuasion that have helped him to succeed.

Furthermore, due to Harrow agreeing to feature in the film *Mystery Bird* there are approximately 2000 people in New Zealand that are now aware of the Hutton’s shearwater and a further $6000 raised to aid in their conservation.
References


NJ: Prentice Hall.
Appendices

Appendix A - Interview Lucy Lawless

Format: Written questionnaire emailed directly to Lawless who wrote her own answers.
Date: 15th December 2013

1. Do you see yourself as a conservation spokesperson? Can you describe yourself within that context?
No. I see myself as a person deeply concerned about the future of the human race owing to its craven lack of respect for the environment and its ecosystems.

2. What environmental campaigns do you speak for? Are passionate about?
I am desperate to spread the word about catastrophic climate change and the urgent need to seek clean energy, save rainforest and stave off the acidification of oceans.

3. What wildlife in particular do you speak for? Are passionate about?
All wildlife has evolved for a specific purpose in its environment. All species are part of a living fabric that exists in 4 dimensions, an organism, I guess. I am passionate about climate change and the health of oceans and forests, which support us all.

4. What areas of conservation/wildlife campaigns are you not currently involved in but would like to be?
I don't want to be part of any of it. I wish there was no need. I am not a leader but I will step up if I feel it is important enough.

5. What actions have you taken to campaign for a particular environmental cause?
Donated money, wedding presents were donations to rainforest and oceans charities, helped raise profile of a protest against National Govt mining low grade coal in high grade national park forest. Been arrested for occupying a drilling for 4 days with Greenpeace activists to protest oil giant Shell foray into the Arctic.

6. You are obviously famous in both New Zealand and Internationally – do you think this gives you an advantage as an environmental spokesperson? If yes why?
Yes. Because I suppose people are interested in what celebrities have to say and wider fame has wider reach in messaging. It is regrettable that the public won’t listen scientists but may listen to a celeb. On the other hand, we actresses get reviled for daring to speak out on issues that are not trivial.
I suppose the nature and rigour of academic study produces a mode of communication which comes across as a bit turgid in the real world. Not many scientists speak effectively in soundbites. We need more communicators like Neil DeGrasse Tyson, Richard Dawkins and Phil Bishop!
7. Do you have any qualifications relating to science, biology, zoology or any of the disciplines relating to the environment?
No. I am a thinking human being who is in awe of the specialness of Life in the galaxy and who doesn’t think the actions of one species should fuck it up for all else. That’s it.

8. Do you believe qualifications relevant to the topic are important to be a credible spokesperson?
No. You do want to check your facts before you speak, however. I never try to pass myself off as anything other than a concerned mother who wants to protect her children from a colossal wrong.

9. Are there other ‘elements’ outside formal qualifications that can give someone credibility?
Yeah, you have to be careful not to seem too emotional or shrill. People can then conveniently write you off. As far as climate change goes, it’s what they want because the truth is so awful and denial is so snug.

10. What do you hope to achieve through your campaigning?
Awareness. Then people can make informed choices and start voting with their dollar and wisely use their electoral power.

11. How do your personally demonstrate your commitment to your campaigns?
I have No DeepSea Drill signs on my property. I have solar panels on my house, drive a very small car, fly as little as possible (and never for pleasure), I continue my support of Greenpeace because I believe they are doing the world’s dirty work.

12. Its been said that you getting arrested raised your credibility and commitment significantly – do you agree?
Maybe in some circles. But I am seen as “too political” by the mainstream media who will not allow me to publicise my acting gigs on their pages. I see this as a compliment. They are white conservative males and I am a threat to the 20th Century way of life they continue to espouse.

13. It’s sometimes been said that celebrities don’t commit long term to a cause or campaign – do you think this commitment is important for credibility?
That’s a question for PR folks. To me the credibility of the campaign is what matters. Child slavery exists whether Khloe Kardashian is involved or not. (By the way, she’s not.)

14. How long have you been a conservationist?
Like I said, my primary interest is in saving human beings, my own offspring in particular. They cannot survive in a world that is environmentally bankrupt. And I feel the loss of a single species due to our greed, ignorance and sheer stupidity, is a crime.
15. Was there a eureka moment when you decided to speak out for the environment? Or what has been your path to speaking on behalf of wildlife and the environment?

The fact that the world’s use of CFC’s was opening up the ozone hole, leading to the world’s highest rates of skin cancer in NZ sensitised me to the fact that what a person consumes in one part of the world can horribly affect whole populations thousands of miles away. I realised we were really and truly connected. It’s not just an aphorism.

I evacuated New Orleans the morning that Hurricane Katrina made landfall. It was the most horrifying 11 hours of my life. Citywide terror when hundreds of thousands of people try to leave town at the same time. No radio, no cell phone, no information. Gridlock, swelling hands, feet, heads owing to ultra low barometric pressure, no food/ water, people screaming, lost kids, price gouging. It was only the beginning of months of chaos. I never want to go thru that again and I don’t want my kids to suffer it.
Appendix B – Interview Geoff Harrow

Format: Filmed interview recorded in Kaikoura Mountains
Date: 12th December 2010
Note: Interview was very long (over 2 hours duration) so consequently I have only included relevant portions and some parts are excerpts from answer.

1. Can you tell us how you found the birds?
It was quite obvious now that the Heslops had really given me a wonderfully true story, exactly where they had said and so I explored al around this area and thought their had to be at least a thousand burrows, I didn’t go beyond here or down stream on that first visit but I picked up a further carcass, 3 carcasses, dug out to burrows and they were empty burrows both of them but I was absolutely thrilled. Headed off about 11 o’clock and got out, back to my car at the station about 7 hours later going very fast with a light pack, knowing what the route was at this stage and on the way up I had made a whole lot of cans along my route and that was a huge help for getting back out but on the way in it took me 12 to 14 hours of travel to get in maybe one whole day and a morning, but coming back out I was really travelling very fast on my own with a small weekend pack and back home to Christchurch, very tired and after work that Monday I had rung up Geoff at the something museum and asked if I can have a look at some of the HS skins that might help the diagnosis and he said well get Don, he’s pretty good on Petrels and shearwaters and stuff like that and we’ll see if we can sort it out, anyways so I arrived at the museum at half past 4 but Geoff had rung scarlet, a very wonderful guy on bones and skeletons, cause remember I was a mountaineer and a deer shooter, not an ornithologist, I’ve always loved birds, I joined forest and bird when I was 10 years old in 1936 and had a wonderful egg collection when I was at primary school, even collected a bird egg on where the Christchurch airport is now. Anyways we had about two hours looking at the skins and skeletons of fluttering shearwaters and Hutton’s Shearwaters and we were all pretty confused because later we found out that some of those specimens were mislabelled so in the end we decided to bundle the whole lot up and send them off to doctor faller who later became Sir Robert faller at the museum in Wellington now of course called te papa and about a week later I got a telegram and it said congratulations all three specimens definitely Hutton’s Shearwater. So that was a wonderful thrill. So in his letter he said that their should be birds there until the end of March. Try and get back in again as quickly as you can and really search thoroughly and look for really fresh burrows with lots of droppings around and that sort of thing so a month later I came back up with two friends and we had rifles cause I had seen so many deer we knocked over a few deer on this next trip in came right up from 100 meters from where we are now and that’s where we made our camp, got straight in the one day cause I knew where to go this time and we found lots and lots more dead birds which we gathered up and dug out a few more burrows and again we struck empty burrows So very disappointed about that but I just didn’t know, I wasn’t skilled enough to know what was an occupied burrow and what was an empty burrow, cause we had nothing like burrow scopes or the modern gadgets that the ornithologists have these days but anyways we explored much further around and found, instead of a thousand burrows we knew that their might have
been five thousand burrows cause we went a little further up this way and further back that way and so that was good so I wrote a little story about that for the ornithological society magazine and the people in the ornithological society said look you should really do a proper study and then I got hold of people like Brian bell from the Wildlife Department and Don who was a good mentor in Christchurch helped and that was the start of an interest for the next 46 years.

2. How important are the birds to this area and New Zealand?
It was quite obvious that they were a NZ breeding bird which was suspected by the specialist ornithologists but he was proof that this bird bred high in the mountains, pretty unique for it to be so high. It’s a bird that’s only found in NZ and while at that stage it appeared to have perhaps ten or fifty thousand birds in this area although I was totally wrong about that, it was a bird that was a total mystery to the experts and here was a chance to find out the life story of a bird, really a bird that had been unknown to science since 1912 when Mathews described it from an Australian, he was an Australian ornithologist who had bird collected in NZ. Said to be way from the south of the south island. We don’t think that his collecting site was quite right. I thought it was a wonderful opportunity to do something really nice because I’d always loved birds and the naturalist um they were my heroes rather than the rugby footballers for instance and I thought well it would be lovely to do something like these people and so I started and the next year I planned to do about 6 or seven trips up into here but also one or two other trips to try and find other areas that might have been a bit closer.

3. What are some of the unusual characteristics of the bird?
Well first of all they nest so high in the mountains that they can come in when the whole country is covered in one to two meters of snow in the end of august and September and they can land pretty well right over their burrow, they can just get an idea from the landmarks that are left after it’s covered in deep snow to work out where they are. You can see thousands of these birds sitting all over these slopes in the late winter and spring. Just paired off by banding them and driving in stakes through the snow into the tussocks below I was able to find those same birds right alongside their burrows they were using later in that same summer and that was something very very special. The other incredible thing is that they don’t leave to come into from the sea to their mountain burrows until about two hours after dark and it doesn't matter weather it’s pitch black or a bright moonlight night they can just come straight in and land right by their own burrow. That is quite remarkable and they’re flying in at around 45 kilometres an hour in this severely rough country. I think that’s quite remarkable. The other thing is that I used to think they were here all year around but what I was seeing was fluttering shearwaters which is such a similar bird and so I got that wrong but I can be excused seeing I’m not an expert

4. Where did people think they were migrating too?
The Australians knew that these birds were part of their culture as well. They would see them in the winter months round many parts of the Australian coast. Again they were a mystery bird to them because they knew very little about them other than they were seen at sea occasionally. Occasionally one would get washed up dead on a beach. It was pretty well unknown what they did in the wintertime but slowly a pattern build-up of birds being recognized in Australia and for the last
30 years it's been pretty well excepted that quite a lot of our Hutton Shearwater go to Australia if no the whole lot and we hope fairly shortly from the new research being done right now that were going to solve that problem.

5. So how many colonies are left and how many birds?
When Richard Cuthbert went back to check a lot of my early places he was just aghast at the way they had gone and disappeared. I knew some of them had gone but I didn’t realize it was pigs at that stage and then it sunk into me very very clearly that these awful waterfalls and bluffs that I had so much trouble navigating in my early expeditions were the things that were saving these birds. These terrific waterfalls are the reason why we have Hutton Shearwater today. It hadn’t been for them they would’ve been wiped out by pigs but I didn’t realize that til many years later on.

6. Are they considered to be endangered?
A- Well when a bird population drops down from say 2 million to down to less than half a million so quickly they were very quickly reclassified as being endangered. I think that will the wonderful work that DOC is doing that they are reasonably safe now. I’m looking right behind you and I can see a pig trap that was put in a couple of years ago and any brawling pigs that are getting near the colony should get herded into this well designed pig trap to and dealt with.

7. How important for the birds was it that their colonies were discovered?
Yes I Suppose that the fact they were found was very important because if they hadn’t been found the pigs wouldn’t have eventually found a way through here, the goats and the deer would’ve eventually trampled out a big enough track for pigs to get through and once that had happened, two years and these 400,000 birds in this valley right around us right now would’ve maybe been gone in two years if several families of pigs had gotten in.

8. Excerpt from question about early childhood:
I’ve always been interested in birds from an early age...
That was when I was 10 years old when I joined Forest and Bird...

9. Excerpt talking about coming back up to mountains in helicopter:
It is just quite unbelievable. It used to take me if I was on my own and carrying a light load I could do it in 8 or 9 hours of hard hard tramping and considerably longer of I had some companions that were not quite as fit as they could be.
The helicopter now does it in about 7-8 minutes. Its well I couldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the helicopter today that’s for certain.

10. Do you still do a fair bit of walking?
I still ski I had seven days skiing this last winter.
I’m just thinking to see some of these shearwaters climbing up on these shear frozen snow and ice slopes in August and September they do it with the greatest of ease but I think that Ed Hillary would be really be scratching trying to get up some of these shear frozen snow slopes that these amazing shearwaters can do when all this countryside is just covered in deep snow...

11. Whets it been like for you here this week?
Each time I come here I think this must be my last time.
It’s been quite magical – a special part of NZ. Really we’re looking at a bit of
country now that NZ would have been like 1000 years ago. Because we have no
rats here....
Appendix C – Interview Geoff Harrow

Format: Filmed interview recorded at hotel in Kaikoura town
Date: 24th February 2011
Note: This was more of a chat than an interview hence I have not included the questions but instead an indication of what Geoff discussed. Again the chat was long so I have only recorded relevant portions.

1. Geoff talks about the climb a into Kaikoura mountains
I’d climbed mount manaku from the .... But I didn’t know the Kowhai at all ... and it was typical Kaikoura we had a lot of fog and made a lot of false starts went up the river bed and struck these huge waterfalls and had to backtrack and then climb on out through some .... Went quite a few hours along the tops above high above the kowhai and then got absolutely dehydrated so then I dropped my pack and made a whole little line of cairns down the hillside until I found water and I had a empty water bottle I hadn’t filled it up I hadn’t realised I was going to be so high up above the water line and I got a drink and carried some water back up and carried on and got up into that little side valley just above the pig pen and that’s where I camped the night and I’d been going about I don’t know about 9-10 hours at that stage and goats all round me and the deer where just so thick an I was very disappointed that night I hung onto about 11 at night trying to keep myself awake I was very tired and the experts had said the birds will come in a bit after dark and you should hear them and I never heard a thing other than goats bleating and that sort of stuff and I was very discouraged and disheartened and I thought this is just a waste of time. And then about half an hour after breaking camp going past where the pig pen now is and down the steep track toward the river bed I found that first carcass and that was just a very special moment checking it over and I thought no we’re onto them and carried on down some very tricky climbing and I thought well I’m on my own, if I slip here I’m 200 feet down a waterfall and a corpse at the bottom and so I used every bit of climbing skill I had to be very careful because you know I was on my own and it was tricky, it was quite a nice bit of rock climbing and out into the river bed and up the other side into to some quite rough scrub and then I really got into the burrows and I thought right this really is something and there were just hundreds of burrows in every direction and got another 2 carcasses that were better than the first one I found and bundled them up into a flour bag and thought well I’ve got to get back into Christchurch.

2. Talks about locals who first told him about birds
They’d told me the story about all these mutton birds right up on the tops of the mountains ... talks about asking Heslops about birds around hotel. And they said oh nothing down the coast but of course they’re up in the mountains you know right up the top in the snowline area and I thought that’s strange... and I was very curious and he was so full of exact descriptions of these burrows and the dead carcasses and stuff like that and so ... talks about heslops again. He was quite brusque and told me he wasn’t going to tell me anything about them that the birds were doing alright up there and you know he wasn’t going to confirm that they were there or anything like that. He said no I’m not going to tell you anything and so I thought right this is worth following up. I mentioned it to Mike S and Mike said
right well these might be these HS that are just the absolute mystery bird we don’t know anything about them and umm you should go have a look ... and I went up to have a look and that was the start of the HS story.

3. Talks about early days after discovery
It was spring time and lots of activity and lots of birds on the surface and it was all extremely exciting and I then I really started really talking to all of the local people, the farmers and he local towns people and it was very obvious that these were well known among the farming people and even quite a lot of the towns people they used to say oh those are the funny things that used to crash around their street lights and around their house lights on foggy lights mostly in the autumn but occasionally they said other times but so that's what they are. And it turned out that everybody knew about them and I talked to large numbers of people including the local iwi .... And there were reports of them going in fairly recent times going in looking for them but they never found them ... I’m talking of in the 1940’s 1950's that sort of thing they'd heard reports from the deer stalkers that the birds were still there and they went into look for them but they said they never actually found them. From 65 til 75 I was going up about I suppose 8- 9 times a year just to get filling in gaps that I had sort of in their life cycle/story and also try and find other areas of where the birds were and if there were some reports that sounded hopeful I’d go have a look and that way we got a fair idea of where the birds were in those days and it was then I suppose in the early 80’s that I thought these things are in decline, we should be doing something about it and I talked to Brian Bell and he was still very high up in the wildlife and Brian said well they didn’t have any money to do any real work on the birds but they were keeping them in mind but nothing much was happening and ......at that stage I sometimes just do perhaps 2-3 trips a year in those days and then perhaps a long trip by helicopter we’d pay to go in by ourselves we’d pay ...... we’d go in for about a week and do a bit more in depth research then ... It was virtually impossible to really tell whether how much they were reclining because we didn’t have burrow scopes. We could only reach no more than 5% of the burrows could we reach the nest chamber and in hindsight I think those little short burrows were young birds new to breeding which was giving you a totally wrong view of what really was happening but I knew that it needed some really good you good study done by professionals and at that stage DOC was formed and then there seemed to be much more interest. And there was a lot more encouragement for people to start doing work..... Talks about names of researchers. But they got pulled off to do other jobs and it didn’t carry on ... but Greg Shirley at least stirred up DOC enough to say look these birds are in trouble and something should be really done to get a big study done and that was the forerunner I think Of Richard Cuthbert being hired and funded to do a three year study.

4. Talks about Kaikoura town in 1965
There were I suppose a couple of dozen seals on the KK coast, nobody knew about the whales in those days and it ummm had three hotels ...the traffic was very quiet on the KK coast... it was a dead in , it was a quiet little village with no tourism whatsoever and it ummm and no body was interested in the muttons birds they were these silly things that crashed into the houses occasionally and it was ...interest in wildlife was non existent and then the cook strait ferry were started and the Lyttelton ferries were discontinued and so KK started to change. There
was much more traffic, people were catching ferries and so they wanted somewhere to stay in KK so they had a short run ... it was definitely getting far more traffic coming through, big trucks were coming through the hotels were starting to fill up, motels were starting to be built it was still ...

It was proposed that KK was going to have its rail centre closed down and the people that were keeping the lines open and the station manned were very very worried that they had no future in KK .... Had found that there were whales off KK and they were there all the time and she thought that .... And she suggested to these people...If you’re worried about your jobs on the railways think about getting some whale watching started. And that was the start of Whale watch these were these railway families from the .... So they took up the scientists suggestion and got into it and that was the start of tourism in KK, whale watching really took on in a big big way and the motels just expanded to pick up this journey and then you've got the swimming with the dolphins, kayaking in amongst the seals and the seal populations started exploding ... and they started taking a interest in the other bird life including the HS and with Richard Cuthbert's research the town got very interested and the schools started getting involved and wanting to find out about them ... and it just gathered a huge momentum in that particular way and then of course they said well he is this is the only place that these birds breed its our bird and it became our local special KK bird the HS.

**5. Talks about Kaikoura now**

All the albatrosses and the whales it’s become a real centre for wildlife and it’s a very special coast I mean this huge KK canyon with all the rich life and plankton its one of the best places in the world for seeing seabirds and its great and course when Richard suggested with only 2 colonies left in the mountains and we should have a third colony ...whale watch offered a prime piece of this land right on the end of the peninsula for a artificial translocation colony that really caught the imagination of a lot of the local people it got a huge amount of publicity locally in KK and the council got behind the scheme and the population and the schools and DOC of course were leading the charge then and then later of course we formed the HSCT to raise money for projects that DOC were finding great difficulty in financing and once we were able to fund that fence project for DOC, DOC encouraged the trust to take a much bigger role in the management of HS and its now become a local KK district project with the TRUST as the main fundraiser ... also perhaps suggesting research ideas of how we can expand the knowledge of HS... increase the knowledge and obtain better protection for them. You've got to have people interested and feed them information. If you're going to fund raise you've got to give them something to ....give them knowledge and interest and make it worthwhile for them.

To think that for 6 months of the year you may have almost half a million birds flying over each night carrying tonnes of food into the colony for their chicks and that sort of thing yes its incredible isn’t it and the speeds that they can fly in at and the fact they can navigate in the dark in completely dark moonless nights they can just go straight into their burrows high up in the mountains ... it’s a very intriguing bird.
Appendix D – Interview Geoff Harrow

Format: Filmed interview recorded at Geoff’s Home
Date: 17th April 2011
Note: Interview was very long (2 hours duration) consequently I have only included relevant portions and some parts are excerpts from answer.

1. How important is the survival of the birds to you?
The survival of the birds is critical as far as I’m concerned. It’s a NZ endangered species and it’s up to all New Zealanders to protect their own special fauna. Well having found or rediscovered them back in 1965 it’s been a lifelong interest as far as I’m concerned and I just want to see them do well.

2. How did you feel when the colonies started to decline?
Very worried, nobody seemed to be very concerned except one or two in the wildlife department or the internal affairs. We realized what was going on and they had so few resources in the way of staff and money that they could do nothing. What little money they had was put in to black robins and kakapo. Hutton Shearwater still had thousands upon thousands still there and they just couldn’t persuade the government to give them any more help. I was very concerned, in those years their was no DOC, we only had the wildlife division and they were totally under resourced, nothing was happening, the people of KK only vaguely knew that they had these birds so they were also very hard to persuade that this species was in danger, real danger.

3. When did it change?
It changed with the start of DOC, when DOC was formed out of the old forestry department and the wildlife department of internal affairs, that’s when everything changed. The big change came in 1987 when the DOC was formed out of the old forestry department and the department of internal affairs. Then there was a huge increase in staff and huge increase in the allocation of money and that was a breakthrough. They started regular surveys each summer and were looking for people to do in depth studies and it was a good start but to me it still wasn’t enough. I was still very concerned to see the colonies slowly slipping away all over the range.

4. How many colonies were left?
It really came down to just two from 8 and those 2 were going back steadily, especially shearwater stream. This was a real real worry, but at least it was comforting to know that the DOC realized what was happening and they had people like Allison Davies and Greg Shirley...

5. Can you talk about the threat of deers and pigs?
The local KK DOC staff did a huge job in reducing the massive population of deer and to a lesser degree the goats they were just never, they were always just on the edge of the colonies but they had never gotten into the colonies in big numbers and at that stage nobody on the staff or myself included had realized the big danger of pigs, that was to come later on when that factor came to light and it was when Richard Cuthbert came on the scene in 1995 with a proposal to do a PHD, three year study up there, that he came up with the proposal that the real real danger
was wild pigs had been a big factor in wiping out these earlier colonies, something that I hadn’t realized.

Yes, in the case of both the two remaining colonies they are protected by huge waterfalls and these waterfalls were keeping the pigs out. It was Richard that said look if pigs get past these waterfall barriers you’re gonna lose both of these colonies and the birds will be extinct very quickly. It’s only when we went back and really looked at what had happened that in the early colonies that the penny dropped, that these colonies had been wiped out by pigs.

Their very good evidence from the kowhai now that theirs an increase of 1 percent in the breeding population in the kowhai and shearwater stream is looking much better than it has been for years. The work that is being done at the moment looks very very helpful and very hopefully for the future

6. Can you talk Kaikoura now and how people feel about the bird?

These days know the locals have learned about the birds know that they nest up in their local mountains. They see the big masses of them in the springtime and they connect them with the same species we’ve got the Hutton’s Shearwater trust that is now formed. They work very closely with the community and the department of conservation. It’s a real joint exercise between the local community including ngai tahu and the KK charitable trust and it’s a wonderful community effort.

Yes they really think of the Hutton’s as their own bird and so they should do because this is the only place where they breed. Yes well the Hutton Shearwater, this is the last place they breeding the world, they used to breed all up and down the mountains of Marlborough and possibly even further south than that but now...

7. How does it make you feel that the community now has so much interest?

To have a farewell for the Hutton Shearwater in KK is a wonderful milestone to celebrate the survival and the survival and the....hmmmmm..

(start over)....I’m absolutely delighted that we’re having a KK official farewell for the HS leaving for AUS. It’s an accumulation of the community getting totally involved, the survival of the birds is now well assured and it’s just a lovely thing to do. It’s done for the godwits and now we’re going to do it, farewells and welcome backs for the KK people and a lot of people are coming from other areas of NZ to join in this celebration. I think it’s just wonderful.

The community involvement now with the Hutton Shearwater is huge. The bulk of our trust members are local KK folk and the local Nita hue and the KK community trust are enthusiastically behind the whole project. The locals now know that if birds crash around their lights to turn the lights off an rescue the birds, get them back to the sea very quickly. If they see a bird under the lights at night just pick them up, over to the sea and let them go. It is just great to see the interest from the school children, the community, and the local hapu of the Maori community and to have this new artificial colony Translocated from the mountains right next to the village on the end of KK peninsula is a wonderful thing for the community and it's gonna be quite a tourist draw cat I think.

8. Can you sum up your life’s connection with the bird?

It was a wonderful thrill to hear about these birds up in the mountains from the local Hislop brothers, deer shooters. To go up there and to find that what they were saying was true, that these were the mystery birds of the ornithological world, sorted out and then to work out their life history and to get the
ornithologists and the scientists and the wildlife authorities from government involved, all coming together and seeing the birds (Claire sneezes)......all the authorities coming together to help the birds survive from a very critical position from on the road to near extinction, to a very rosy future with the colonies increasing in size, with the success of the translocation and of course the huge involvement and interest from the local community now. It's just lovely to look back on it now over the last 46/47 years or so.

Yes it's been a long time and a very satisfying interest and to see a bird that was on the road to extinction, no question about that, doing so well, it's just very nice filling. Well I love mountains, I've always been a mountaineer and a climber, I've always loved birds and been in forest and bird since 1946 for over 70 years and it was the combination of the two. Mountains, birds and particularly a threatened bird that was virtually unknown. That was something that spurred me on and I've just found it very exciting and rewarding, tough work at times but that doesn't matter. I'm perfectly at home in all that rough tough mountain landscape and it was something that came very easily to me ..
Appendix E – Interview Geoff Harrow

Format: Filmed interview recorded at Geoff’s Home  
Date: 29th August 2010  
Note: This was more of a chat than an interview and Geoff showed me pictures as he talked, hence each excerpt has been triggered by a photo. I have included relevant excerpts.

1. On finding the bird:
Ten minutes after I took that picture I was coming down that very steep slope down onto the river bed just above that big waterfall below the hut and that where I picked up that first carcass and boy that was a very special moment. It had webbed feet and a hooked beak and I thought you know this must be a mutton bird this must be a shearwater – Is it a HS so that was a very special moment so I crossed the river and came up to where the research is and where I used to make my camp and found burrows all over the place and got another fairly complete circus, bundled up three of them and brought them back to CCH.

2. On being a qualified bird watcher and climber:
I was not a competent ornithologist by any means I’m still not but I would consider myself to be able to go anywhere in high mountains no trouble at all. Cause I’ve climbed all over NZ and the Himalayas, I would say that I am quite a competent climber. It was country I was perfectly competent to handle, it’s the sort of country you’d go shooting in and I’ve done a lot of shooting on my own, I fed my family on venison particularly for about 4-5 years when we were first married. I always found if you can stalk and hunt on your own you’re less likely to come home empty handed.

3. On spending time after finding researching the birds:
That’s quite a important picture that one because that’s the … all that country there in that picture shows the study area that I had for SS and part way up it can you see a little tent fly stuck across the tussocks halfway up, the picture is taken almost where the helipad now. Often I’d camp there alone… it was alright. There was no water there and once the snow had gone I had to carry water up. That shows exactly how I used to camp most of the time at SS except perhaps very early in the Spring I’d put a tent a maybe a fly over the top but I’d tie the tent fly onto tussocks and I dug out a bit of a shelf and burrows all around Well I was banding birds, trying to find out at what stage of the breeding cycle was happening each time I went up and I was trying to …. Beyond the tent is the sea you can see looking down onto the sea and you used to be able to see the ferries…. I didn’t have a clue how to band a bird so this is quite a nice picture of Brian Bell teaching me how to band birds it was about 19060’s, 1967…. It was to try and get a complete history of what the birds were doing each month of the year …. What was their natural breeding cycle, very superficial compared to what an ornithologist would do but it was all I could do as an untrained person interested in birds I did about dozen trips into Kowhai and then taking to the people of KK and particularly the farmers I got a pattern of where the birds were crashing and where the they’d been seen.
4. On climbing:
I’d climbed all the big peaks, all the peaks over 10,000 feet in the Mt Cook Nat Park, did all those and did a lot of new climbs climbed with H.... who was Ed Hillary’s mentor and Harriers taught Ed H how to climb and I learnt a hell of a lot from H...as well but I also got a huge amount of skill from people like....some of the top climbers of that time.  
They were going to run that in 1954 the year after Ed Hillary climbed Everest and of course Hillary was able to raise huge amounts of money because he was so famous and he’d just climbed Everest and he got a lot of funds from the Everest foundation. My mentor said why don’t you apply ....I wouldn’t have a hope in hell of getting in and he said yes you would you know you've got a pretty good record and so I wrote in and applied and was one of the eight chosen ...so that was how I got to the Himalayas’ ...just through doing a lot of climbing in NZ and a lot of new difficult routes too a number of first ascents in NZ and there weren’t too many unclimbed peaks in those days they were very difficult the ones that were left.

5. On climbing Mt Baruntse:
Ed Hillary said well he was going to hobble out down the Arun Valley back to Kathmandu but he said make sure you climb Baruntse it’s a lovely mountain and we've got to have one good summit that we've climbed at least and so we went up to have the climb on Baruntse and it was quite a technical climb... Each step took about 5 mins to cut because we had to get it big enough for our hips to pass through and I took over and cut 2 rope lengths ... and finally got through that horrible awful piece and he was then utterly exhausted and I had been sitting just waiting while he cut these steps anyway we broke through and there was some very deep snow up to the final peak and so I sort of lead on... Talks about Colin Todd being so exhausted he kept falling over. Geoff leads. Talks about cut off time and coming back down... 
We were just utterly exhausted both of us. 
We were just sitting in the snow just quietly going to die of hyperthermia I think.  
Talks about rescue from other team members.
It was quite a climb. Its 23,500 feet, 23,550 ummmmm. We were pig headed and fool hardy (laughs)....

6. Talks about work:
I was on the marketing side of that so I used to have to look after the south island and he south pacific on marketing their pharmaceutical products ... I only had 2 jobs in my life and they were both in the marketing of pharmaceuticals. Yes jobs were so hard to get, people just had one job the rest of their lives not these days its very different .... It was very different in those days. It worked out very well ... most of the work I did until I retired was weekends just you know you’d go up on a Friday night and up the hill early Saturday morning work all Saturday night on the birds, the whole night and you’d come back down on the Sunday absolutely exhausted and the drives back to Christchurch were often very difficult....

7. Final words on early days and consequences of finding birds:
I went up there well over a hundred times into different places you know up and down the ranges, well over a hundred times I would think.

I think that if we hadn’t found those birds in 1965 and the wildlife division of internal affairs and DOC hadn’t done the work that they did that HS would be extinct today and I fell pretty good that they are well and truly alive and doing well and we’re pretty sure that these days the colonies are expanding and I feel pretty chuffed about that, that’s a very good feeling that’s nice yup and I feel very fulfilled that the Trust has been set up and we’ve got such good people on the trust are knowledgeable and working so hard to increase the knowledge and the protection for HS, I think this is just wonderful. I’ve always had a great admiration for the early explorers of birds in the old days you know they were my hero’s ...all those early explorers and naturalists they were my hero’s.

Going in it was my hope that I would find a mystery bird, that was the reason I went, you know wouldn’t it be lovely to do something new and to you know see if there was something to this story, that was my hope and it certainly turned out that way.

The youngsters these days climb a new rock face, they’re going down to the Antarctic and finding new mountains to make the first ascent and there’s hundreds of mountains in the Himalayas’ that haven’t been climbed yet, there’s still loads of adventures around and youngsters are doing it and the same with the research that the young people are doing with all the GL and all these new gadgets, the fact that they’ve put the GL’s on the birds legs just recently and worked where the hang these things go in our winter and tracked their migration right out into the Indian ocean this is all wonderful new stuff that researchers are doing these days and its wonderful work and long may it keep going.