

Rejected Proposal Orphan Film Symposium Orphans 2020: Water, Climate, & Migration

The 12th Orphan Film Symposium
the 6th Eye International Conference
23-27 May 2020
Amsterdam, NL



David Ian Bellows/Griess & Elizabeth Lamb, *discipline with in nature*, 2018, 00:24:23, color, sound, digital video file & VHS edition of 25, image courtesy of interstices/bill of lading

Bios:

David Ian Bellows/Griess (pronouns: they/them) explores themes of control, labor, and sexual play through diy surveillance to relay the physicality and the resilience of the body. Bellows/Griess is a MIAP (Moving Image Archiving & Preservation) student pursuing their MA at NYU.

Elizabeth Lamb is an arts organizer and gallerist based in Brooklyn, New York. Lamb is a founding member of Human Trash Dump an online opensource archive of digital media. She is an editor and contributing author to the forthcoming compendium *Institution is a Verb*, 7 years of operations at Panoply Performance Laboratory published by The Operating System.

Description:

discipline with in nature by David Ian Bellows/Griess is set in California and primarily in Yosemite National Park during the summer of 2018. This video was made as the park reopened to visitors, roughly a week after the fires were put out inside the park. Many of the fight fighters working on the California fires were grossly underpaid prison labor which highlights a connection to the prison industrial complex, America's inability to reconcile its own history with slavery, and forced migration.¹ *discipline with in nature* is set to this backdrop, with tree scorched mountain sides juxtaposed with pristine views of unburnt landscape. The main character in this video takes turns wearing a homemade dog or a factory produced Frankenstein's monster mask. They roam the park aimlessly, exploring their surroundings and occasionally stopping along the way to engage in some self-discipline. In one scene, the Frankenstein

¹ Fathi, David. "Prisoners Are Getting Paid \$1.45 a Day to Fight the California Wildfires." aclu.org/blog/prisoners-rights/prisoners-are-getting-paid-145-day-fight-california-wildfires.

character floats and swims in a watering hole. Beauty, access (to resources), and capitalism remain intertwined in Yosemite, as multi-million-dollar housing continues to be erected in the park. Around 1800 Pioneer settlers migrated to the valley, more came in 1850 during the California Gold Rush, and eventually, the indigenous inhabitants of the land were forced out of the area.²

Water is the key focal point in one of the scenes filmed outside of the park, off the coast of California. In this scene, the character approaches the waves of coastline in what could be seen as a ritual / performance. The body is oriented towards the Pacific Ocean, on their knees as they crawl towards the water and spank themselves with a paddle. A self-flagellation. Through the title of this video as well as through the act of spanking by paddle, Bellows/Griess is in part referencing the 1981 song *Discipline* by Throbbing Gristle³. Part home movie and part purposefully obscured performance art video, *discipline with in nature* attempts to draw attention to some of the current effects of global warming (bigger more intense fires) as well as past destruction of nature in order to attempt to control and ultimately commodify access to land (Yosemite Valley). Both of which are problems that humans have either created or enabled to accelerate. Fire and water have enormous destructive power and they are vital elements to our existence. If we remain delusional that we can control them rather than only attempt to wield them for a greater good (for example clean water without corporate privatization) how can we control ourselves from ultimately destroying ourselves? Perhaps start with screaming along with Genesis P-Orridge, "We need some discipline in here!".

From 2018-2019 discipline with in nature was available (but never rented) through The Filmmaker's Coop in New York City. Bellows/Griess decided to remove the video from the catalogue in favor of non-commercial use only, forcing the film back into intentional obscurity.



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² "Early Inhabitants" & "Early Settlers and Pioneers." (website of National Parks Reservations), www.nationalparkreservations.com/article/yosemite-the-history-of-yosemite-national-park.

³ Throbbing Gristle, "Discipline." *Discipline*, Vinyl disc, 12", 45 RPM, Limited ed. (UK, Fetish Records Ltd., 1981). [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discipline_\(Throbbing_Gristle_song\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discipline_(Throbbing_Gristle_song)).