

Paul Shepard: A Photobiography

Florence R. Shepard and Kathryn Ann Morton

The generic human in us knows how to dance the animal, knows the strength of clan membership and the profound claims and liberation of daily rites of thanksgiving. Hidden from history, this secret person is undamaged in each of us and may be called forth by the most ordinary acts of life. (*The Only World We've Got*, xx)

1925–35: Childhood

Paul Howe Shepard III, born on July 12, 1925 to Clara Louise Grigsby and Paul Howe Shepard II, lives the first ten years of his life in Kansas City, Missouri.



“The deep human need for name learning and classifying that emerges in the individual with speech itself continues throughout life in satisfactions rooted in our sense of order.” (*Nature and Madness*, footnote 14, 137.)

At 6 months



1927 (age 2)

1928 (age 2) with
baby brother,
Richard



Paul and his younger
brother, Richard, play in
their back yard where their
father has installed a tank to
which he adds turtles and
frogs collected in his work
as a horticulturist. From an
early age, Paul finds animals
fascinating.

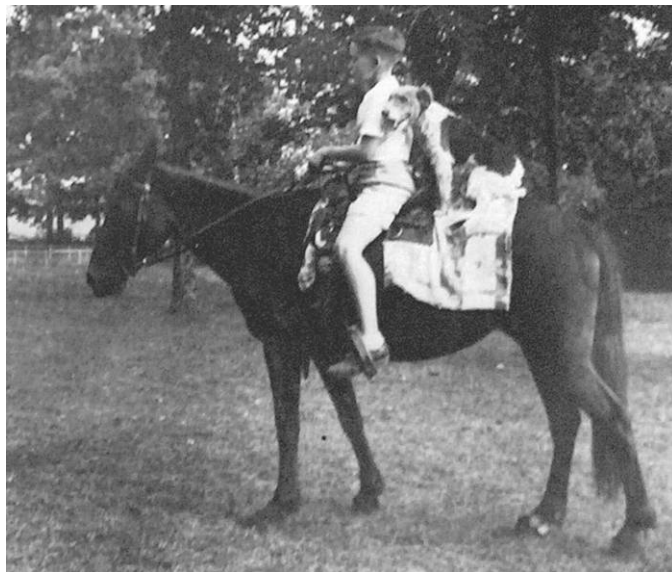
1930 (age 4) with Punch

1935–40: Youth



The Missouri Fruit Experimental Station, Shepard residence

Paul and his family—together with his maternal Grandmother Grigsby; the housekeeper, Mary; and Punch, the family dog—move to Mountain Grove, Missouri, where his father is appointed director of the State of Missouri Fruit Experimental Station. The two storied home and building complex sit on a hill overlooking the station’s orchards and vineyards and the Missouri countryside beyond.



With animal friends

In this setting Paul lives an idyllic childhood roaming through the landscape following his passionate and diverse interests. He collects bird eggs, which led him in late life to declare that he had spent half of his childhood in trees. Clara nurtures his interest in writing by helping him publish a weekly newsletter for families at the station. Both parents acknowledge Paul's passionate interest in animals and wild nature. The big barn on the station becomes a haven for animals he has captured or receives as gifts.



With pet rabbit



“Most death in nature is invisible and, moreover, is accompanied by the fantasy that animals that are not killed (by people) go on living.”
(Coming Home to the Pleistocene, 164)

With pet 'possum



Hunting

Paul takes up hunting and fishing, and follows Ben, an older friend, on his forays into the countryside to check his trap lines.



Fishing



With Napoleon and skins



With friends (Paul center back row)

“To “go out to play” is to go out of the banal envelope of the daily routine of the adults, to leave the system of profane rules, constraints which are inexplicable to the child, which are anchored in a scheme of mundane society where life is too limited and practical.” (*The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*, 197–98.)

In time Paul would come to understand the supreme importance of the attachment of children first to caregivers and then to the earth as necessary precursors to the separation that will demand that they be on their own.

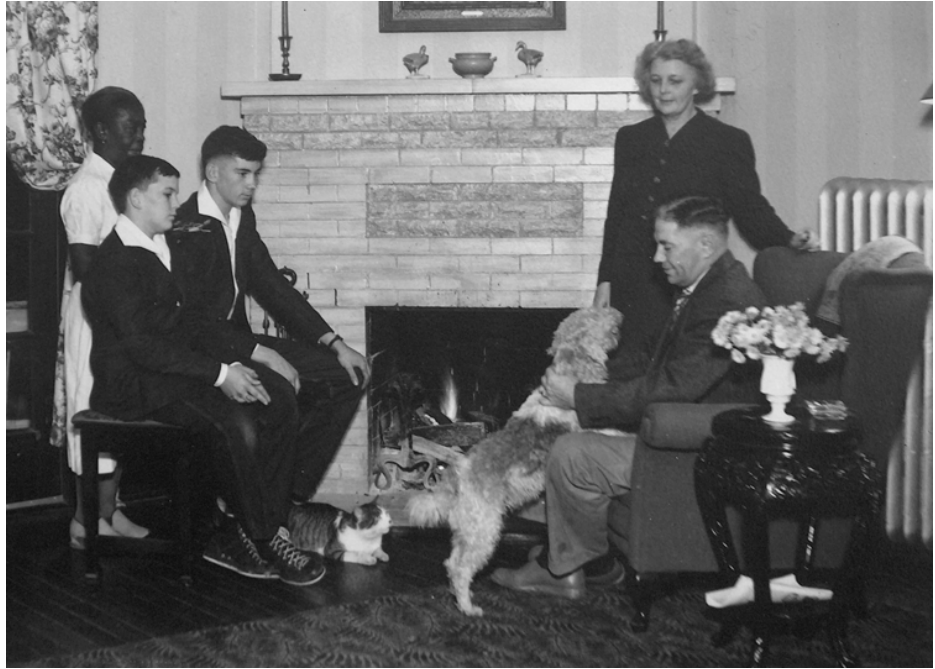


1939 (age 13) in childhood landscape

“Knowing who you are is impossible without knowing where you are.” (“Place in American Culture” (1977) in *Traces of an Omnivore* 107.)

1939–43: Adolescence

“The task of the adolescent is to become whole at a new level of consciousness.”
(*Nature and Madness*, 68).



Family portrait including, from left to right, Mary, the housekeeper, Richard, Paul, Punch, Clara, and Paul, Sr.

Paul is engaged in many aspects of high school and community life. He enjoys sports, and is on the football team. Thinking he will become a journalist, his parents send him to the Northwestern University Summer Institute of Journalism in his junior year.



“The emergence of the past into consciousness is inseparable from awareness of ourselves.”
(*Man in the Landscape*, 30)

1940 (age 15) in high school

Paul writes patriotic editorials for the school newspaper but is removed as editor because he produces the paper on his own without involving other students. In the drama club, he and his peers participate in public appeals to sell bonds to support World War II.



In the drama club, supporting the war effort (Paul second from right).

His interest in nature continues as he hunts and fishes with his father and becomes a passionate falconer, capturing fledgling raptors and training them.



1942 (age 17) training raptors

“The growth of self-identity requires coming to terms with the wild and uncontrollable within.” (*Nature and Madness*, 33)

Paul enlists in the army and takes tests for the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). He graduates as salutatorian from Mountain Grove High School and awaits induction into the army.



1943 (Paul on right, age 18) with brother, Richard

“How we feel about our bodies is...related to how we use language and how we think and feel about a great variety of other things.” (*Nature and Madness*, 86)

1943–46 Military Service During World War II

“The idea of history itself is a Western invention whose central theme is the rejection of habitat. It formulates experience outside of nature and tends to reduce place to location.” (*Nature and Madness*, 47)

Awaiting placement in ASTP, Paul enrolls at the University of Missouri but becomes impatient and in July volunteers.



1943 (age 18) after completing basic training in California

“Of all the scores of tools in the great Paleolithic atelier, there is not a single weapon designed for war.” (*Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, 163)

After completing his basic training in California he is sent to an ASTP program in New Mexico. When it is phased out, he is sent to Camp Barkley, Texas, with Battery A of the 493rd Armored Field Artillery for training as a radioman on M-7 tanks.

Transferred to Camp Tidworth on Windmill Hill in England, he goes ashore at Normandy and takes part in the Battle of the Little Bulge in the Rhineland and Central Europe where they liberate concentration camps and witness the end of the war.



1944 (age 19) in Germany (Paul center back)

“The dream of omnipotence is an infantile dream that should diminish rather than grow with personal maturity.” (*Nature and Madness*, 99)

With the end of the war in 1945, Paul is assigned as information and education specialist with the First Armored Division of Occupation in Heidenheim, Germany, where he edits and publishes his first book, *The Pictorial History of the 493rd Armored Field Artillery*.



1945 (age 20), in Germany, editing pictorial history

In the winter of 1946 the Army sends Paul to the University of Neufchatel in Switzerland as he completes his tour or duty. In April he is sent home and discharged from the Army.



“When we have taken our adaptability to the brink of physical and psychological endurance, we will discover that cultural choices, unlike our bodies, do not have built-in limitations and requirements. Constraints are not welcome in an ideology of unlimited expectations among affluent societies, where, in the rush of individuals creating themselves, the self is left as an open sore.” (*Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, 135.)

1946 (age 21) at the University of Neuchatel

1946–50 University of Missouri and the Missouri Conservation Federation

In the fall of 1946, Paul enters the University of Missouri in the Wildlife Conservation Program, a co-operative program with state and national wildlife agencies, directed by Rudolph Bennitt. Under the supervision of Bennitt, Paul undertakes an independent study of vertebrate eyes, which sparks his interest in the history of nature perception. Many leading conservationists are invited as speakers, Among them Aldo Leopold who has just published his *Sand County Almanac*.

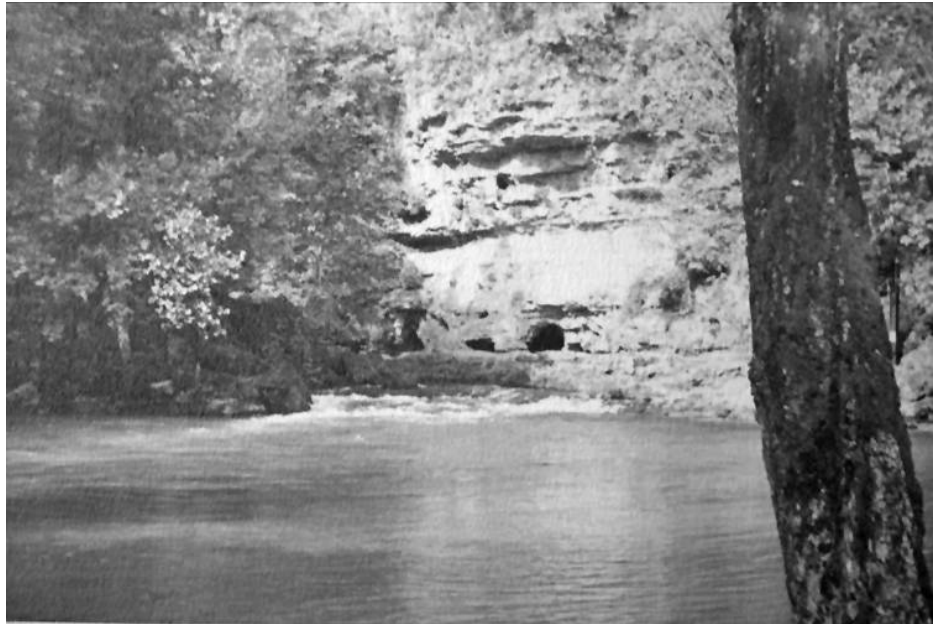
During the summer of 1947, following his keen interest in birds, Paul attends a course in ornithology at Cornell University, taught by Arthur Allen. That fall he is assigned as a teaching assistant in ornithology at the University of Missouri. This intense interest in birds carries him into the field early each morning to identify the Missouri birds. With rather poor eyesight, but an outstanding memory, he identifies birds by call as well as habit and retains this ability throughout his lifetime.



Birdwatching in the blind

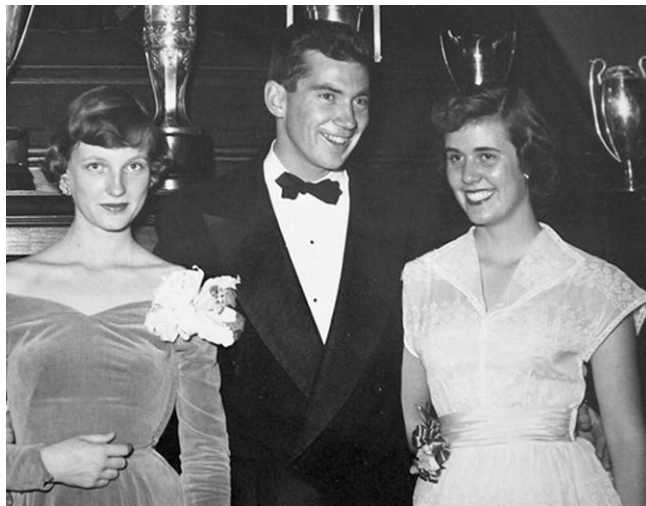
“The bird’s purity and flight lend themselves to esthetic, intellectual, and religious ideas. The keen, watchful raven seems to be consciousness itself, the laconic owl is wisdom, the murmuring dove is love.” (*The Others*, 78)

In the summer of 1948, as a seasonal naturalist at Big Spring State Park in Missouri (a vacationing spot of his ancestors), Paul becomes a whistle blower. He sends a letter to the governor reporting the logging of old growth trees. The governor eventually mandates a review and revision of state park policies.

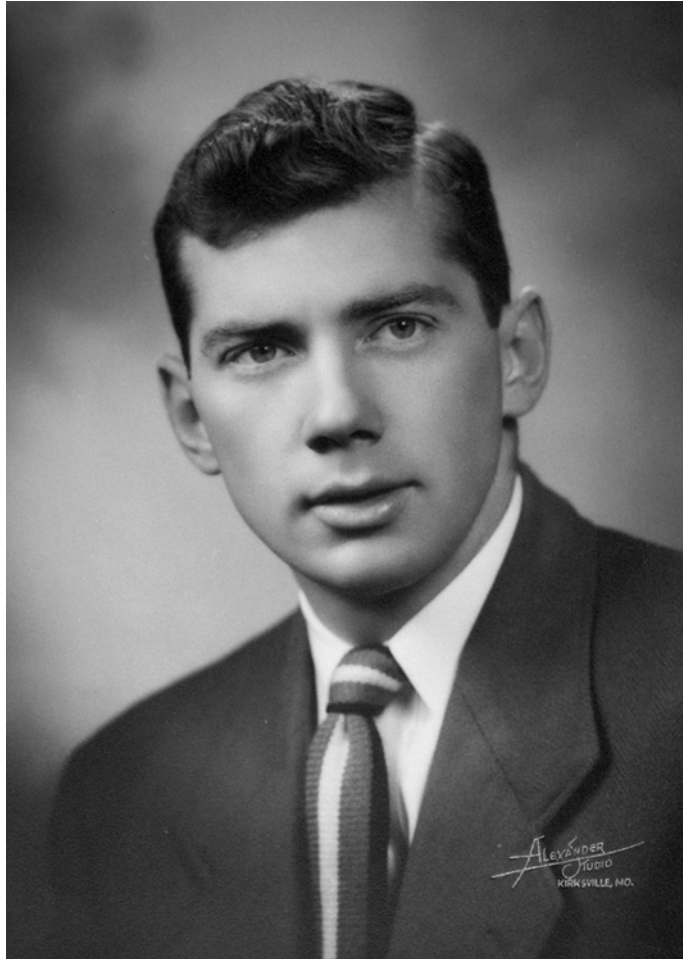


Big Spring State Park, taken in 1897 by Paul’s ancestors.

Paul is studious and unenthusiastic about joining his father’s fraternity but enjoys college life.

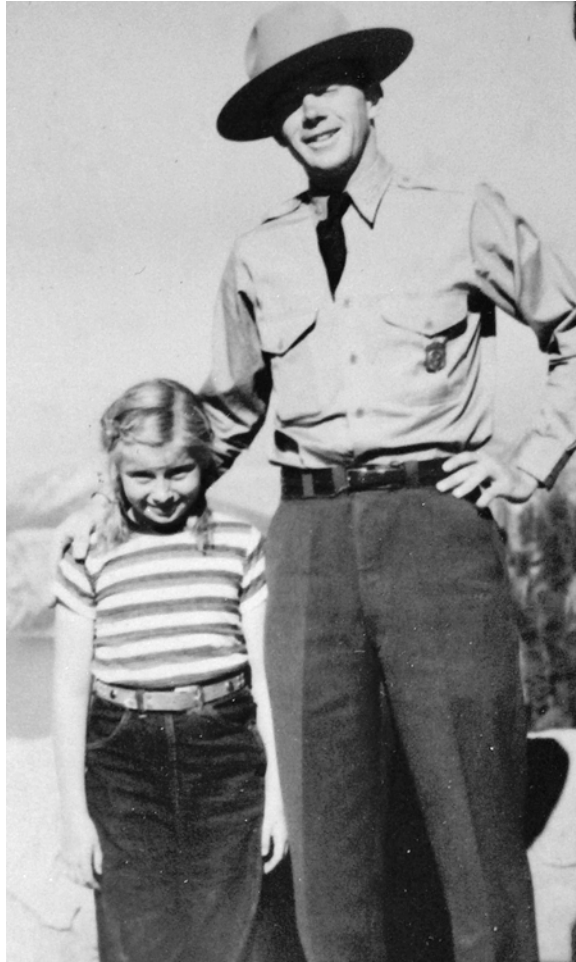


1949 (age 24) at a college dance



1949, graduates from the University of Missouri

Following graduation, he begins summer work for the National Park Service and is placed as a seasonal field naturalist at Crater Lake National Park.



“The naturalist cultivates a new visual facility in the individual who lives in a frozen world.”
(*Man in the Landscape*, 137)

Summer, 1949, Ranger Shepard at Crater Lake National Park with Mary Lois Hindt of Rock Rapids, Iowa

In the fall of 1949, Paul accepts an appointment as field secretary for the Missouri Conservation Federation directed by Charles Callison, a foremost conservationist of his time. In addition to organizing local sportsmen’s conservation groups, Paul is the associate editor of *Missouri Wildlife*.



Field Secretary for the Missouri Conservation Federation

During the winter of 1950, on icy roads on his way to a local sportsmen's meeting, Paul is in an automobile accident and sustains a serious knee injury. During his extended recovery, two events set a new direction to his life: He applies for and is admitted to a new Masters in Conservation Program beginning at Yale University, directed by Paul Sears, an accomplished plant ecologist. And he falls in love with his beautiful nurse, Melba Wheatcroft, whom he marries in the summer.

1950–54 Yale University

In late summer of 1950 Paul and his bride head for New Haven Connecticut to begin his graduate studies where he is appointed as a graduate laboratory assistant in zoology. After a studious year, he again heads west for summer work as a seasonal naturalist at Glacier National Park.



Seasonal ranger at Glacier National Park

In 1951, Paul participates in an American Museum of Natural History Grant to conduct population studies of the Cahow at the Bermuda Research Station, supervised by Brinna Kessel.



1951, Bermuda Biological Station

In 1952 Paul completes his masters thesis, "A Study in Landscape Interpretation," an analysis of the environmental perspective of the Hudson River Painters. After tracking down and obtaining photographs of 75 Hudson River Paintings, he visits and takes photographs of the actual sites. He then compares the present habitats with the perspective depicted in the paintings. This very ambitious undertaking leads him to his doctoral study on the history of formal gardens and nature esthetics in Western culture.

"The substitution of pictures for places was the step toward making places that match pictures. Now we are taking pictures of places whose patterns happen to suggest those gardens built in imitation of paintings, which were originally done as visual expressions of literary evocations of "classical" scenes." ("Ugly is Better," 1975 in *Where We Belong*, 36)

G. Evelyn Hutchison, a professor credited with being the father of evolutionary biology, serves as Paul's doctoral chair and encourages him to undertake an interdisciplinary degree encompassing ecology, conservation, landscape architecture, and the history of art.

A son, Kenton, is born to the Shepards in 1952.

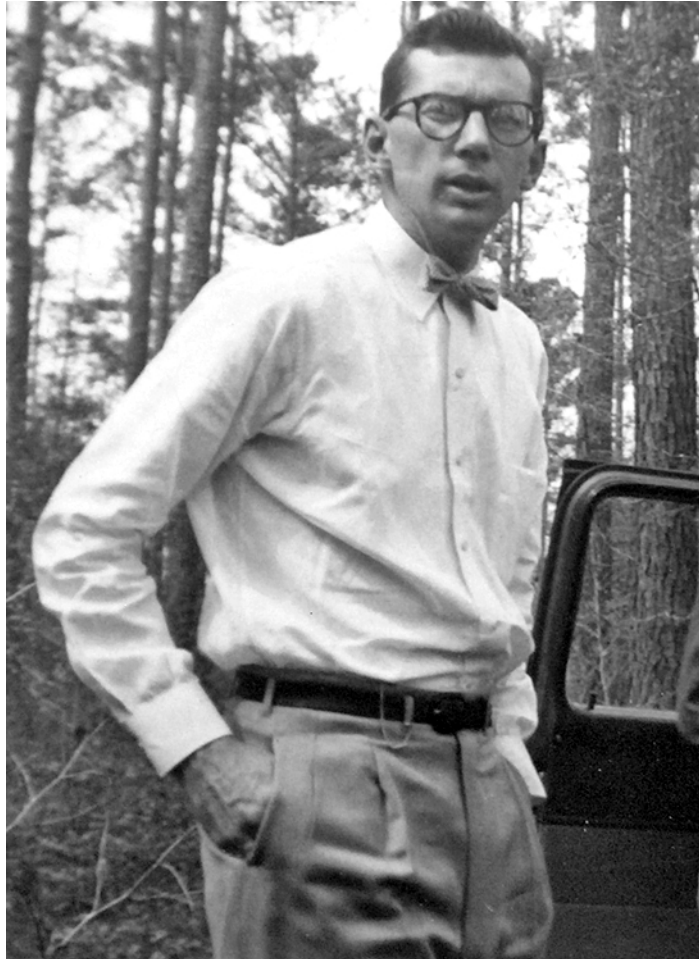


1953, with son, Kenton

While at Yale in 1953, Paul receives the Arthur Hoyt Scott Garden Award by the National Council of State Garden Clubs of America (NCSGCA), with a membership of 250,000. When asked to become their conservation chairman, he accepts. In this capacity he becomes a member of the Natural Resources Council of America (NRCA), an active lobbying organization comprised of Dave Brower, Charles Callison, Ira Gabrielson, and Howard Zanheiser. With Rachel Carson, he testifies before Congress on the effects of pesticides.

Paul disagrees with the NRCA compromise with the Bureau of Reclamation to accept the construction of Glen Canyon Dam with the understanding that one will not be built in Echo Park in Dinosaur National Monument. Paul believes that, in either case, priceless habitat will be destroyed and neither dam should be built.

In 1954, with the completion of his dissertation on “American Attitudes Towards the Landscape in New England and the West, 1830–1870,” Paul is granted a Doctor of Philosophy by Yale University.



1954 (age 29) PhD from Yale University

In the years at Yale, Paul has covered considerable ground and has laid his foundation for his future career as teacher and writer.

“My question is: ‘Why do men persist in destroying their habitat?’” (*Nature and Madness*, 1)

1954–64 Knox College

Paul is appointed professor of biology and director of Green Oaks, the college Biological Field Station, at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. Green Oaks is an un-reclaimed open pit mine surrounded with cultivated fields and woods. With the help of students and faculty, he restores the area with ponds, native shrubs and trees, and a tall grass prairie. (After his death, the tall grass prairie is dedicated to him.)



Green Oaks Biological Field Station, Knox College

“What makes the commercial ravagement of the American countryside so tragic [is] not that it is changed and modernized, but that the tempo of alteration so outstrips the rhythms of individual life.” (“Place in American Culture,” 1977, *Where We Belong*, 75)

In the summer of 1956, continuing his summer work as a naturalist at Olympic National Park, Paul once more becomes a whistle blower. He joins with others in opposing logging practices in the park and rallies the membership of the NSCGCA to write letters. A fury of investigations, firings, and clarification of policies follows. As a result, he is permanently banned from further employment as a seasonal ranger in the national parks. Although letters from NCSGCA members, which he encourages, positively influences the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Paul decides to resign as Conservation Chairman for NSCGCA. He turns his energies to research and writing.

During Paul’s tenure at Knox, two daughters, Margaret and Jane, are born to the Shepards.



1961, with family at Green Oaks (from left to right: Margaret, Jane, Melba, Kent, and Paul)

The years at Knox College are significant years as Paul continues to expand and deepen his knowledge through numerous grants. In 1958 he receives an E. I. Lilley Foundation Grant to study the environmental perception of travelers along the Oregon Trail.

“They came in the great tradition of travelers: as observers of the milieu, collectors of information, amateurs of natural history, lookers at scenery, tourists hoping for a glimpse of American Indians and bison, and, perhaps, most singularly, as witnesses. (“An Ecstasy of Admiration,” *Where We Belong*, 91.)

During the years 1959–60, Paul receives several National Science Foundation grants, among them one to Costa Rica and a National Institute of Health Grant to study the behavior of crows.



1960, studying crows at Green Oaks

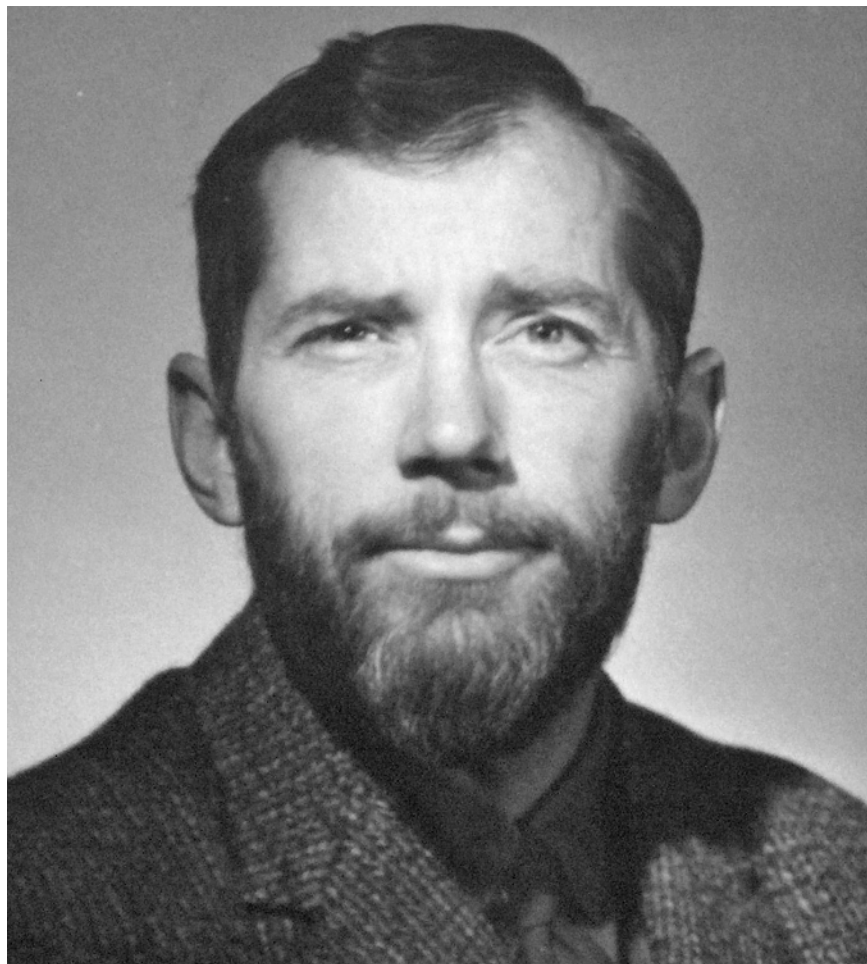
In 1961 he receives a Senior Fulbright Research Fellowship at Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand, to conduct research on the perception of the landscape expressed in the journals by English settlers.



1961, in New Zealand

On his way home from New Zealand with his family, he learns that his father has died suddenly from a heart attack.

Since leaving Yale, Paul has been a prolific essayist, critiquing the influence of aesthetics and nature perception on environmental attitudes. He has also toiled on a book that analyzes the antecedents of Western attitudes toward nature. As it stands ready for publication, his focus shifts dramatically to the deep history of our hunter/gatherer ancestors, which, he proclaims, still resides in our genes. At the same time, a sea change occurs in his personal life: his first marriage ends.



1967, at publication of his book, *Man in the Landscape*

Paul's groundbreaking book, *Man in the Landscape*, published in 1967, culminates 13 years of effort and sets the course for further work in the field of human ecology.



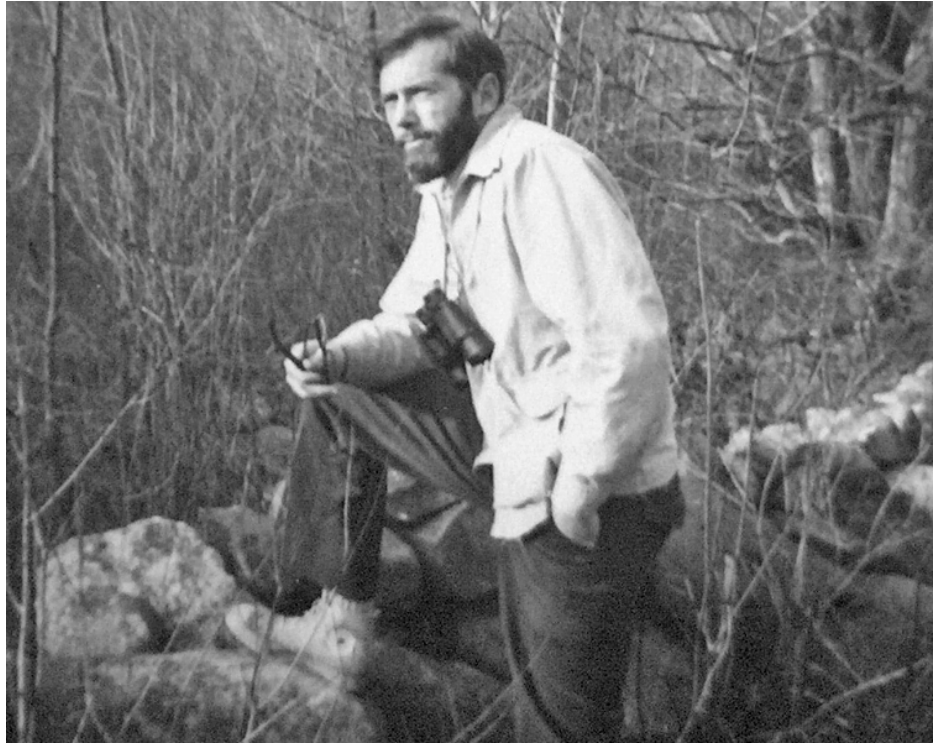
1969 (age 44)

“Restfulness to the eyes and temperament, unspoken mythological and psychic attachments, remain part of the forest’s contribution to the human personality.”
(*Man in the Landscape*, 22)

Paul and Daniel McKinley, a friend from his college days in Missouri, collaborate to publish two anthologies: *The Subversive Science, Essays Toward an Ecology of Man*, 1969, and *Environ/mental: Essays on the Planet as a Home*, 1971. Both books become popular readers in burgeoning Environmental Studies programs.

“Man is in the world, and his ecology is the nature of his ‘inness.’ He is in the world as in a room, and in transience, as in the belly of the tiger or in love.”
 (“Ecology and Man—A Viewpoint” 1969, *Traces of an Omnivore*, 111)

In 1969 Paul receives a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation fellowship to travel around the world studying hunting and gathering peoples. In 1973 he publishes *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*. The general reader does not receive as good news Paul’s proposition that we modern humans are little changed from our hunter and gatherer ancestors. A flurry of critical reviews carry such titles as “Down with Agriculture,” “Aw, Shoot!” and “Back to the Cave.”



1973, at publication of *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*

“What must surely have preceded farming was a shift in style and in man’s sense of his place in the world; a shift whereby man would presume to own the world, and wild organisms would be screened for those that have a certain infantile, trusting placidity that could be nurtured and increased in captivity.”(*The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*, 9)

During these years Paul holds various teaching positions at Smith College, Dartmouth, and The University of California at San Diego, but none of these satisfies his preference to teach in an environmental studies program without having to head or develop such a program.

1973–85: Pitzer College

In 1973 Paul is offered and accepts an endowed chair as Avery Professor of Natural Philosophy and Human Ecology at Pitzer College and the Claremont Graduate School in Claremont, California. In this capacity he is expected to continue publishing and lecturing and to teach in the Environmental Studies program. This position is perfectly suited to his interdisciplinary talents and one in which he thrives.



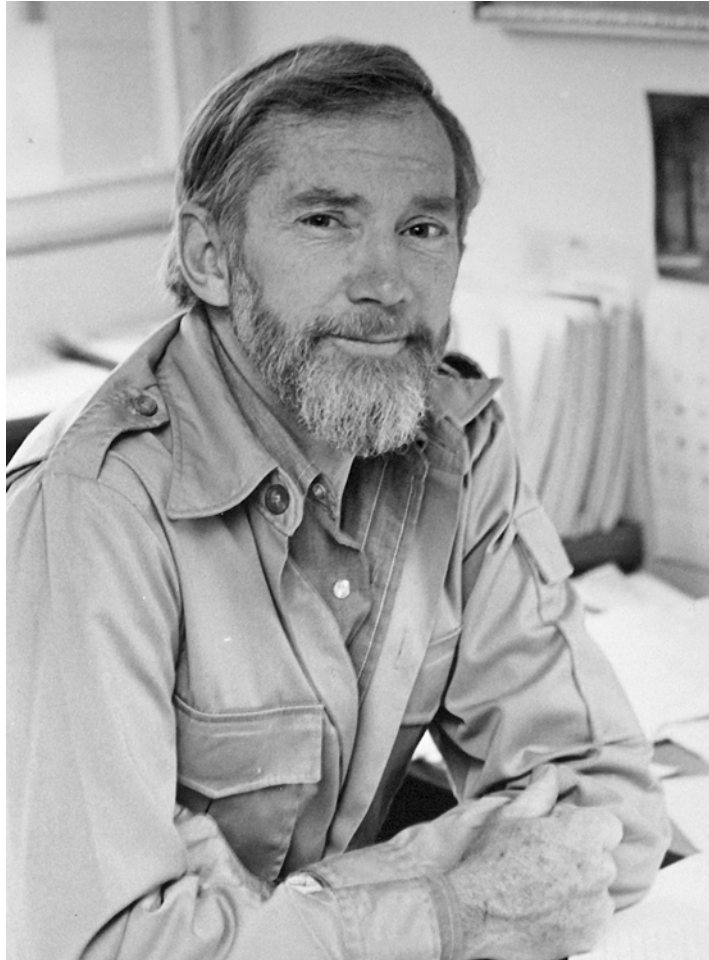
1974, solarium in his cottage in the San Gabriel Mountains

In the Environmental Studies Program, Paul teaches his unique courses on human perceptions of nature, the meaning of animals, and a field course team—taught with a lasting friend and colleague, Carl Hertel. He purchases a yacht that he sails along the Pacific Coast with family and friends.



On yacht

Paul travels extensively and lectures throughout the country. In 1978 he publishes *Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence*.



1978, at publication of *Thinking Animals*

“As self-consciousness was facilitated by consciousness of the diversity of the world, our barely speaking ancestor found in animals the tangible objects needed to embody otherwise slippery ideas.” (*Thinking Animals*, 26)

With an appointment as a Fellow in Humanities of the Rockefeller Foundation, Paul finalizes a manuscript he has reworked for years. In 1982 he publishes *Nature and Madness*, which he considers his most important book.



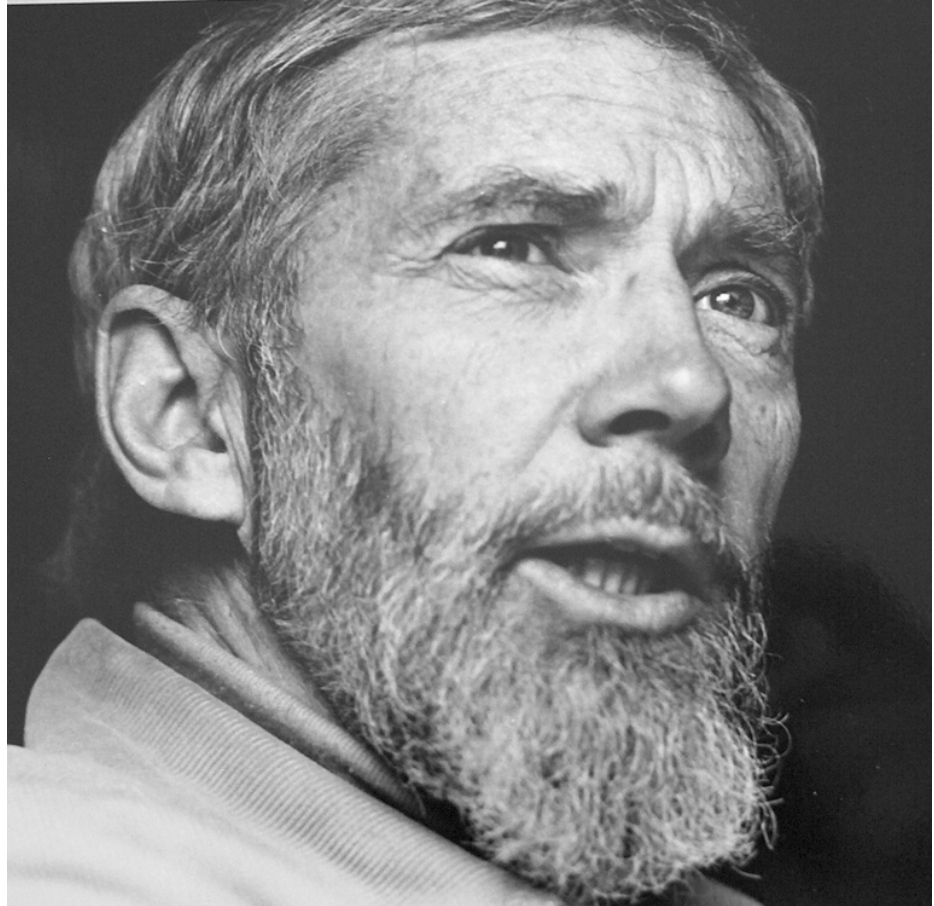
1982, with long-time colleague and friend, Kim Chase, at the time of the publication of *Nature and Madness*

“[Ideology] is the expression, often social, of an implacable and irrational dualism.” (*Nature and Madness*, 60)

Paul’s mother, Clara, begins failing and makes her home with him in California. She dies in 1983, the year that his second marriage ends.

1985–96: The Final Years

In 1985, Paul publishes *The Sacred Paw, The Bear in Nature, Mythology, and Literature*, with Barry Sanders. He is named a National Lecturer of Sigma Xi and travels and lectures on the bear throughout the United States.



1985, at the publication of *The Sacred Paw, The Bear in Nature, Mythology, and Literature*

“From time older than memory, the bear has been a special being: humanlike, yet close to the animals and hence to the source of life.” (*The Sacred Paw*, xi.)

Paul and Flo Krall meet in February of 1985 when he is a guest speaker in her graduate seminar at the University of Utah. He goes on to India and Australia on a Distinguished Fulbright Lectureship. Upon returning he and his family reunite at his cabin in Montana.



1985, at a family reunion in Montana

“We are members of a human family and society, but the presence of animal Others enlarges our perception of the self beyond our immediate habitations: not only to the limits of the outer world but deeply inward to that ground of being where live the lizard, the monkey, and the fish.” (“Animals: an Idea to be Thought” in *Encounters With Nature*)

Paul and Flo marry in 1998 and live for extended periods in London and in India where Paul is appointed a Fellow for the International Exchange of Scholars. Paul’s research on animals and human culture carry them to Greece and Italy, Scandinavia and Northern Europe, Africa, Canada, and the United States.



1985, in the Outer Hebrides



1988, on the Sheenjek River, Alaska



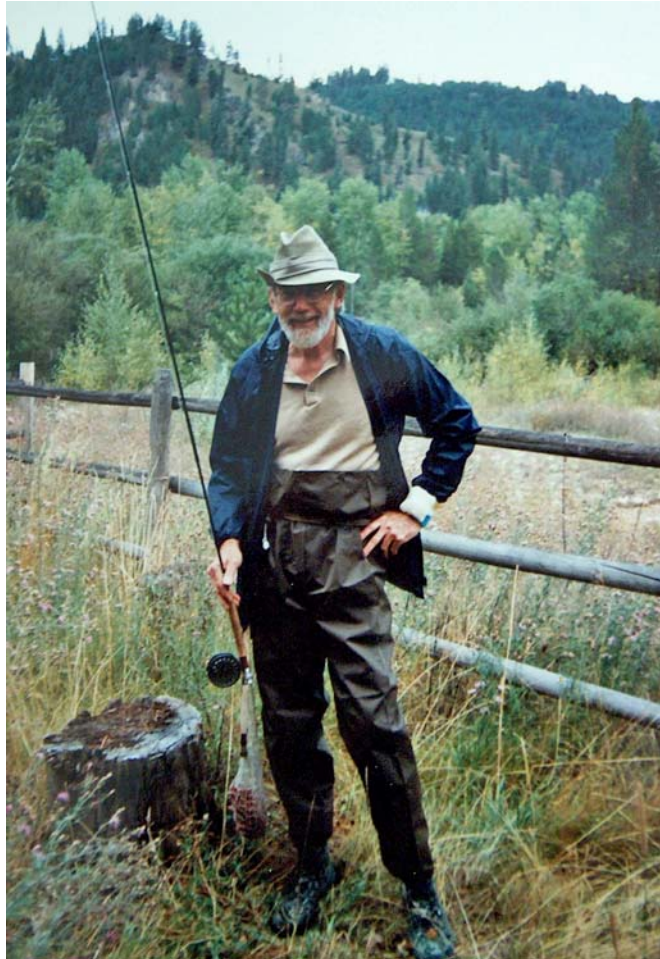
1988, with Flo in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

“Our consciousness and our culture buzz around [wilderness] like tiny lights, not illuminating a great darkness but drawing energy that makes a self possible.
(*Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, 132)



1991, Cabin built in the Hoback Basin in Wyoming

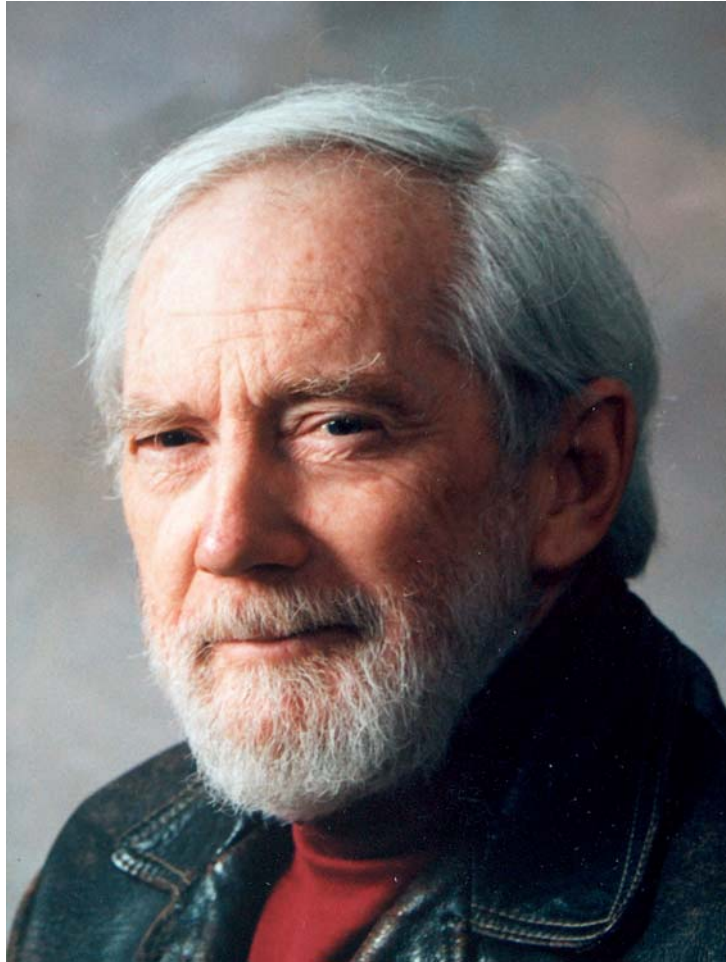
In 1991, Paul and Flo have a cabin built in the Hoback Basin in Wyoming where they spend their summers.



1994 (age 69) preparing for a day of fishing on the Hoback River

“I am asking that people change not their genes but their society in order to harmonize with the inheritance they already have.” (*The Only World We've Got*, xiii)

Paul retires from Pitzer College in the spring of 1994. In the fall he is diagnosed with metastatic lung cancer. While seeking cures through natural and western medicine, he continues working with his editors, Barbara Dean and Barbara Ras, on books in process. He dies on July 16, 1996, four days after his seventieth birthday, attended by daughters, Jane, Lisi, and Kathryn Ann, and wife, Flo. He is memorialized by friends and relatives and led in parting wolf howls by Paul Winter. He is buried in Kemmerer, Wyoming, with his last published book, *The Only World We've Got* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996)



Paul H. Shepard (1925-1996)

“We ‘go back’ with each day along an ellipse with the rising and setting of the sun, each turning of the globe. Every new generation ‘goes back’ to forms of earlier generations from which the individual comes forward in his singular ontogeny . . . we cannot avoid the inherent and essential demands of an ancient, repetitive pattern.”
(*Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, 169)



1994, birding

1996–2003: Posthumous Publications

Two completed manuscripts were in press at the time of Paul's death and were published in the fall of 1996:

The Others: Animals and Human Being (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1996)

Traces of an Omnivore (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1996).

The following books by Paul were in draft form at his death and were edited and published by Florence R. Shepard:

Coming Home to the Pleistocene, edited by Florence R. Shepard.
(Washington, DC: Island Press/Shearwater Books, 1998)

Encounters With Nature, edited by Florence R. Shepard with an Introduction by David Petersen. (Washington, DC: Island Press/Shearwater Books, 1999).

Paul's early essays on landscape and place were compiled, edited, and published by Florence R. Shepard in:

Where We Belong, Beyond Abstraction in Perceiving Nature, edited by Florence R. Shepard. (University of Georgia Press, 2003).

The University of Georgia reissued the following previously published books:

The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game, with a Foreword by George Sessions (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973).

Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence, with a Foreword by Max Oelschlaeger. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998; New York: Viking Press, 1978).

Nature and Madness, with a Foreword by C. L. Rawlins. (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1998; San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982).

Man in the Landscape, with a Foreword by Dave Foreman. (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2002; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967; New York: Ballantine Books, 1972; College Station, TX: Texas A&M Press, 1991).

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The Sacred Paw: The Bear in Nature, Myth, and Literature, with Barry Sanders (New York: Viking Press, 1985; New York: Arcana Books, Penguin, 1992).

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Encounters With Nature: Essays by Paul Shepard, edited by Florence R. Shepard with an Introduction by David Petersen, Washington, DC: Island Press /Shearwater Books, In Press, Summer, 1999).

Where we Belong: Beyond Abstraction in Perceiving Nature. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

Paul Shepard Website: <http://home.earthlink.net/~frshepard>