

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/mother-of-the-oceans/>

This video discusses the contributions of Elizabeth Mann Borgese, highlighting her unique role as both a scholar and practitioner in international relations, particularly concerning ocean governance. She played a significant part in the negotiations of the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III), advocating for the oceans as the common heritage of humanity. Borgese also served as the director of the International Ocean Institute in Malta and was a member of the Club of Rome. Her notable publications include "The Oceanic Circle," which explores the relationship between human society and the oceans, and she founded the Ocean Yearbook.

Borgese's work reveals the limitations of land-based political frameworks when applied to oceans, stressing the need for a new, ocean-based political model that recognizes the interconnectedness and three-dimensionality of marine environments. She argued that traditional principles of sovereignty could lead to environmental destruction, advocating instead for collaborative governance to sustainably utilize ocean resources. Her insights offer valuable lessons for enriching international relations by incorporating maritime perspectives.

Despite her significant contributions, Borgese remains largely overlooked in mainstream international relations, a phenomenon that particularly affects women scholars who bridge theory and practice. This video calls for a renewed examination of her work to advance the discipline's understanding of global and environmental issues related to the oceans, emphasizing that the discipline has largely ignored the crucial role of marine environments in international politics.