In the narrative history of the world, we have seen the establishment of nations come and go; borders have been erased and names have been forgotten. A majority of our present day borders as we know them have been designated for political, religious or geographic reasons. These national borders of our world’s countries seemed to have been long-settled on the map after World War II. But who enforces these imaginary lines that we social accept and define? Is it possible for someone to change these borders? What seems to be exclusive to the fiction of fantasy -- the redrawing of borderlines and the creation of new nations -- is the reality for some of the world’s people. Nearly 400 individuals have abandoned the boundaries of their domestic bureaucracy and formed newly founded nations in a category of their own.

These nations, known collectively as “micronations,” are unique: they are owned pieces of land that are independent and sovereign nations outside of the borders of commonly recognized nations. The earliest of micronations can be dated to the 18th Century. Actually developed because of Italy’s neglect to claim the land while drawing up their borders in the early 1800’s, Seborga is commonly referred to as the first micronation - though they never technically formed their sovereign government until the mid-1960s (Storm, 2014). However, eccentric adventurers or business speculators founded most other micronations, and several were remarkably successful.

The common world’s governments do not formally recognize these micronations in the same sense as they do other nations; they merely exist within their own doing (Storm). Some micronations are created with serious intent, while others exist as a hobby or stunt. As the Republic of Molossia President Kevin Baugh claims, his nation has "everything a country has, a bank, a post office, a railroad, and an active navy" (Parker,
Several micronations even have formed and participated in their very own World Cup through the Micronational Football Association. So President Baugh is not alone: earlier this year in Anaheim, California a conference known as MicroCon brought over 50 of the world’s micronations in one place (Usborne, 2015). Coming together in the fashion of the United Nations, MicroCon attendees are peaceful dreamers, simply living out a self-aggrandizing fantasy of ruling their own nations. The programmed events of MicroCon 2015 were located in a small Anaheim Library, just blocks away from the home of the most famous land of imagination, Disneyland, and featured a series of presentations from the 50 top micronations in the world. Following the self-proclaimed, “science fair” display of micronations, the renowned leaders were welcomed to a formal ball known as the MicroCon Cotillion (Baugh, 2015).

But what makes a micronation, a micronation? Three common themes appear: a self-aggrandizing effort (i.e. call me your majesty), a creative self-expression (i.e. their eccentric regalia) and a passion for a cause -- sometimes that may be avoiding taxes, while other times it's as simple as living out a childhood dream. Others are totally different: one of the first of its kind, “Upware Republic Society” is considered the first micronation to actually exercise its independent diplomatic power in 1851. However, this micronation was virtual -- an organization of clerics, and consuls who claimed to follow a science fiction author without having any territorial reign (Parker, 2015). By definition, micronations are not bound by physical territory and a magnitude of nations started forming in the early 1990’s when the Internet became a medium in which these micronations could exist. The Internet is a huge domain for the forming and organizing of micronations. “If you really want to start a serious micronation you have to put in a lot of effort and do a lot of research,
which means you really begin to develop a greater understanding of how an existing country functions” claims Vladmir Veselovsky, Supreme Dictator of the Free Autocratic Republic of Totalitarianism (Usborne). While extensive research and an understanding of how to run a country might be necessary, other aspects draw leaders in. For example, micronations often times don themselves in formal regalia, create flags as a symbol of their nationalism, and even mint their own currency in attempts to define their formidable belonging in the world.

Minerva, a micronation founded in 1972 by the real estate millionaire, Michael Oliver was created after a group of settlers moved to a south Pacific island, erected a tower and raised a flag declaring them independent. However, unlike most micronations who are usually denied recognition by established governments and international communities, Minerva gained a lot of attention once they started coining their own currency. Australia, New Zealand and Tonga along with other island nations held a conference in regards to Minerva’s effort to become a nation. As a result of this conference, Tonga declared Minerva and its nearby reefs a part of Tonga territory and sent troops to force Minerva to lower their flag (Andrews, 2010). Not all micronations have humble beginnings, and peaceful endings. But in an effort to exert their own creative endeavors onto our planet, micronations will remain to exist whether you chose to recognize them or not.
The term micronation, which literally means *small nation*, is a neologism. The first reference in English to the word micronation in a popular book appears in the 1978 edition of *The People’s Almanac #2*

Micronations are a piece of land that claim to be independent but are not recognized by world governments.

Micronations are often quite small, in both their claimed territory and claimed populations — although there are some exceptions to this rule, with different micronations having different methods of citizenship.

Micronations may have a form and structure similar to established sovereign states, including territorial claims, government institutions, official symbols and *citizens*, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Reports put the number of current micronations at over 400.

Micronations may issue formal instruments such as postage stamps, coins, banknotes and passports, and confer honours and titles of nobility.

One of the newest micro nations is Liberland located on the Croatian-Serbian border founded in April 2015.

In July 1964 Ernest Hemingway’s younger brother Leicester rafted 12 miles off the coast of Jamaica anchored the raft and called it New Atlantis, this started a whirlwind of interested people attempting to create their own micro-nations on artificial islands (Johanson).
References


