

Travel in Wilderness

- ▼ Wilderness and Etymology
 - ▼ In the English language, a good place to start is the Old English word “wildoer.” Wilde, meaning untamed. Doer, meaning beast. David Henderson in his essay “American Wilderness Philosophy.” <http://www.iep.utm.edu/am-wild/> Even today, wilderness is valued highly because it is a place for wild animals, some of which are “keystone species,” animals that play a crucial role in an ecosystem, who are indicators of the health of the ecosystem. Many times keystone species are like the beasts of yore, predators, like the mountain lions. The term keystone species was coined by zoologist Robert T. Paine.
 - “A single mountain lion near the Mackenzie Mountains in Canada, for example, can roam an area of hundreds of kilometers. The deer, rabbits, and bird species in the ecosystem are at least partly controlled by the presence of the mountain lion. Their feeding behavior, or where they choose to make their nests and burrows, are largely a reaction to the mountain lion’s activity. Scavenger species, such as vultures, are also controlled by the activity of the mountain lion. A keystone species’ disappearance would start a domino effect. Other species in the habitat would also disappear and become extinct.” National Geographic Magazine. (<http://nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/keystone-species/>)
 - Beowulf was one place where the word appears, but its use there brought together many legends of wilderness being filled with monsters and half-man, half-animal creatures. Roderick Nash in his classic *Wilderness and the American Mind* makes this statement. Beowulf solidified the idea for an English speaking population that wilderness was filled with wild beasts, but also that wilderness was forested. This may be why some of the first designated wildernesses in America were forested. Today, wildernesses can be deserts, tropical forests, coral reefs, oceans, and even outer space.
 - This distinction is important, because it sets up the binary that plagues discussions of wilderness, that between culture and nature, civilization and wildness.
 - ▼ Wilderness as Symbol
 - Wilderness in the new world, in the first accounts by Europeans landing in the U.S. carried the idea of physical challenge. William Bradford landing from the Mayflower said it was a “hideous and desolate wilderness” (Nash 24).
 - Wilderness also became a symbol for something spiritually sinister. (Hindee 10). The wilderness was a spiritually cursed place. Adam and Eve were sent out of the Garden into the wilderness. The Israelites were sent to wander the wilderness for forty years as punishment. It was also a place of temptation. Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.
 - The symbolism of wilderness as a dangerous place bled through to the literature, particularly Hawthorne’s *Scarlet Letter* (Nash 39). “The primeval forest he creates around seventeenth-century Salem represents and

accentuates the “moral wilderness” in which Hester Prynne wandered so long. The resort meant freedom from social ostracism, yet Hawthorne left no doubt that such total license would only result in an irresistible temptation to evil. The illegitimate Pearl...is the only character at home in the wilderness. For Hawthorne and the Puritans a frightening gulf, both literal and figurative, existed between civilization and wilderness.” (40)

- ▼ Wilderness, Manifest Destiny, Indigenous people Removal
 - In seeing the wilderness this way, Europeans newly arrive to the U.S. were ignoring the native peoples, casting them in the same light as the dangerous and untamed wilderness. It became an excuse for Manifest Destiny. The attitude was ubiquitous. George Catlin's 1833 call for a "nation's park" where tourists could come and see the Indigenous people "in his classic attire, galloping his horse ... amid the fleeting herds of elks and buffaloes." [3] (Mark David Spence. *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.) Manifest Destiny combined with the Indian wars of the nineteenth century “erased the human history of western North America and replaced it with an atemporal natural history that somehow prefigured the American conquests of these lands” (29). Tourists no longer romanticized the wilderness. They wanted an Indigenous people-free natural landscape. The Indigenous people removal in Yellowstone Park is a blatant "example of removing a native population in order to 'preserve' nature." Untamed and unsettled nature became the ideal both within the United States and abroad from the founding of the first National Park to the Wilderness Act of 1964 (70).
- ▼ (transition) William Bartram: passing through East Florida near Mount Royal and Lake George, Bartram comes upon a striking scene. He writes: “What greatly contributed towards completing the magnificence of the scene, was a novel Indian highway” (100). Indigenous people give the wilderness the right aesthetic.
 - ▼ In fact, as scholars and historians of Native American culture have shown, travels through forests and across plains had long been undertaken by first peoples. No matter how extensive a landscape might be, Native Americans used a network of trails. The Native Americans, then, had already domesticated what Anglo travelers called “wilderness.”
 - In West, Gifford Pinchot, the first chief of the Forest Service, wrote about encountering evidence of Indigenous people burning the wilderness of the Bitterroot Mountains in 1896, which perturbed him greatly. (find quote)
- ▼ Indigenous people also showed how uncomfortable white people were in wilderness.
 - ▼ Thoreau engaged Joseph Polis to guide him and his companion into the Maine Woods. Polis is a “The ‘Domestic Air’ of Wilderness: Henry David Thoreau and Joe Polis in the Maine Woods.” Thomas P. Lynch. Weber

Studies 14.3 (1997): 38-48. "Polis's ability to straddle the divide between white and Penobscot culture challenged Thoreau's ideas about the place of humans in nature" (39). In the "Alleges and East Branch" from the Maine Woods collection, Thoreau recounts the time he spent in the company of Joseph Polis, a Penobscot Indian. He hired Polis as a guide.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1034&context=englishfacpubs>

- Thomas Lynch argues that Polis upset Thoreau's ideas of wilderness, which were predicated on the nature/culture binary, which was to define much future thinking about wilderness. Comparing "Thoreau's notion of the Maine woods as wilderness with Polis's notion of it as home illustrates even more clearly how Polis effaces the nature/culture (or wild/civilized) duality that serves as a basis for both Thoreau's and, by extension from him, contemporary wilderness ideology" (39).

▼ Bertram and Romantic Wilderness

▼ William Bartram often considered American nature writer, coming from his wilderness expeditions.

- Born in 1739, he grew up helping his father in Pennsylvania in a botanical garden and was later hired by wealthy patron, Dr. John Fothergill, to travel the wildernesses of the American southeast to find useful and economical plants. Bartram's *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida* written between 1773 and 1777 and published in 1791 came out of that mission.
- Bartram's insights helped set the tone for three ideas about wilderness travel in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: it was idealized beauty; it was terrifying; it was profitable and there to be used. (Bartram, William. *Travels through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida*. 1791. Ed. Thomas P. Slaughter. New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., 1996.)

▼ Bartram admires the beautiful scenery he walks through, so that wilderness is valued for its aesthetic properties.

- QUOTE.

▼ But the wilderness qualities he finds are ones that will stay with wilderness travel for good. But his purpose was to find plants for economic and utilitarian purposes.

- Terrie writes: Bartram is "hopeful of finding useful discoveries in the wilderness" (Terrie 18, Phillip C. Terrie's article "Tempests and Alligators: The Ambiguous Wilderness of William Bartram"). Bartram himself says his purpose is be "instrumental in discovering, and introducing into my native country, some original productions of nature, which might become useful to society" (81).

▼ Still he has moments of terror in the wilderness.

- At one point, he sees two alligators fighting, and then he is threatened:

I was attacked on all sides, several endeavouring to upset the canoe. My situation now became precarious to the last degree . . . They struck their jaws together so close to my ears, as almost to stun me, and I expected every moment to be dragged out of the boat and instantly devoured (115).

▼ Thoreau

- ▼ Wilderness is always about walking.
- ▼ Thoreau is often cited as the forerunner of the American environmental movement and the touchstone for the focus in the U.S. on wilderness land.
 - “It is no exaggeration to say that today all thought of the wilderness flows in Walden’s wake (Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness*, page 171).
 - “Walking” is often cited as a defense for wilderness, especially the line, “In wilderness is the preservation of the world.” *The Atlantic*, May 1862. <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1862/06/walking/304674/>
- ▼ But what isn’t emphasized as much is that walking itself is the point of Thoreau’s piece. Walking and wilderness together make up the defense.
 - “I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements.” (*The Atlantic*, May 1862, online)
 - “When we walk, we naturally go to the fields and woods” (*The Atlantic*, May 1862, online)

▼ Walking

- ▼ Sierra Club and John Muir
 - Political - Rebecca Solnit, page 150. John Muir walking tramping across Yosemite and the Sierra Nevada in 1870s. “English mountaineers founded the Alpine Club in 1857” for the purpose of social and pleasurable walking through wild landscapes. The Sierra Club was different. It was formed for the purpose of defending wild land as well as the pleasures of traveling through it. It had a political purpose. On Jun 4, 1892, the Sierra Club was formed with Muir, friends and like-minded people. “Walking in the landscape had long been considered a vaguely virtuous act, but Muir and the club had at last defined that virtue as defense of the land. This made it a self-perpetuating virtue, securing the grounds of its existence, and made the club an ideological organization. Walking—or hiking and mountaineering, as the club tended to call it—became its ideal way of being in the world: out of doors, relying on one’s own feet, neither producing or destroying. The club’s mission statement said its purpose was “to explore, enjoy, and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; To publish authentic information concerning them; To enlist the support and cooperation of the people and the government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.”

- Land use has always been about excluding people, and this is true of wilderness as well: “But accessing the land has been something of a class war. For a thousand years, landowners have been sequestering more and more of the island for themselves [England], and for the past hundred and fifty, landless people have been fighting back....The commons were usually privately owned land to which locals retained rights to gather wood and graze animals, while the traditional rights-of-way—footpaths across the field and woods that the public had the right to walk no matter whose property they traversed—were necessary for work and travel.” Solint 160.
 - Jonathan Gros, 93: Thoreau actually walked close to home. “He did undertake a few long excursions in the forests of Maine, in Quebec and New Hampshire. But the experience of walking he writes about, which nourished his discourse, never concerns anything but his long daily strolls around Concord, setting off from home. . . . Walking is setting oneself apart: at the edge of those who work, at the edges of high-speed roads, at the edge of the producers of profit and poverty, exploiters, laborers, and at the edge of those serious people who always have something better to do than receive the pale gentleness of a winter sun or the freshness of a spring breeze” (Gros 94).
 - Bob Marshall as a walker through Wilderness.
- ▼ The Wilderness Society
 - If Thoreau laid the philosophical groundwork for the place of wilderness in the American mind, the Wilderness society was the political and organizational impetus behind that.
 - Driven Wild
 - Bob Marshall
 - Aldo Leopold
 - ▼ William Cronon
 - Trouble With Wilderness. Argued that wilderness denies “the long and extensive human influences on the North American landscape, and thus continuing the denial of the humanity of Native Americans. Wilderness thinking presupposes a pre-Darwinian dichotomy between people and nature by treating only people-less places as real or pristine nature. The result of this dualism is misanthropy and a tendency to see the removal of people as the solution to every environmental problem. Holding wilderness to be the ideal form of nature, they argued, is an obstacle to a responsible environmentalism, which must help us live in harmony with nature in the places we inhabit and work not just the places we visit and play in. Cronon in particular worried that caring for pristine nature far from home makes it easier to tolerate the abuse and destruction of mundane nature close to home. Wilderness thinking, they alleged, also tends to treat nature as static, seeking to preserve a place in a particular form, instead of recognizing the dynamic processes at play in nature.”
 - Apostle Islands

- ▼ Protected Areas around the world
 - Many countries have protected areas, and the number of such areas are increasing. These include national parks and wilderness areas, national preserves, national monuments, game preserves, safari areas, and cultural lands protected by national governments. Some include: Lake Gairdner National Park in Australia, Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the Congo, Nahuel Huapi National Park in Argentina, Pechora-Ilych Nature Reserve in Russia, Vatnajökull National Park in Iceland, Kerinci Seblat National Park in Indonesia, and so forth.
 - International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition that wilderness was:

A large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.

https://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gpap_home/gpap_biodiversity/gpap_wcpabiodiv/gpap_wilderness/
 - But a specific designation made by an Act of Congress is specific to the U.S.
- ▼ Wilderness Act
 - ▼ A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.
 - Howard Zanhiser specifically chose the word “untrammelled.” Trammel is not a form of trample, and does not involve the idea of walking. It means to bind up, constrain or fetter, not simply touch or influence. Trammel can also be a noun, referring to a kind of fish net or to rope shackles tied on a horse’s legs to keep it from galloping. You can and should walk, but you can’t shackle the land.
 - Rolston points out that:

Neither the Wilderness Act nor meaningful wilderness designation requires that no humans have ever been present, only that any such peoples have left the lands ‘untrammelled’. Rolston III, H. (2001) Natural and unnatural: wild and cultural. *Western North Amer. Nat.* 61(3): 267-276.

Soule explains that:

With rare exceptions, such as in the former Soviet Union ... wilderness areas do not exclude human uses. Fishing, bushwalking, and low impact recreation and camping are usually permitted in wilderness. Soule, M. (2002) Debating the myths of wilderness. In: The Wilderness Society (Aust) calendar 2002 (introduction).

- Ramachandra Guha, an environmental and political historian from India (1989). Guha argued that the radical environmental movement in America had an unhealthy focus on biocentrism and wilderness, which are largely irrelevant to the problems he claims are at the root of the environmental crisis: overconsumption and militarization. Environmentalism in India has largely been a class struggle between the rural poor, who depend on the forests for their subsistence, and the over-consuming urban industrialists, which threaten to destroy the forests and poor alike. Western environmental organizations coming into India and working to establish wilderness-like reserves, such as the tiger reserves, are further displacing traditional subsistence economies to make playgrounds for the wealthy. Wilderness, according to Guha, was not appropriate in densely and long inhabited places like India.
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/am-wild/#H4>
 - More critics soon followed, drawing out the imperialism, colonialism or ethnocentrism latent in the preservation project. Many of the criticisms were clearly grounded. Frontier nostalgia requires a certain blindness to the perspectives of Native Americans, and western style parks have been implemented in Africa in ways that are brutal to the indigenous inhabitants.
 - But the new conservationists, such as Reed Noss and Dave Foreman, are clear that their sense of wilderness is largely about securing the wildlife habitat necessary to mitigate the extinction crisis (Foreman 1995, 1998 and Noss 1991). Which does, in a sense, and ironically, bring us back to the original meaning of the word, a place for wild beasts.
- ▼ Plant/Animal Agency
- ▼ The Wilderness Act gave preference to plants and animals, to their needs and agency, although such respect for the agency of the natural world was part of Native Americans' interaction with the land all along.
 - David Abram. The Spell of the Sensuous.
 - ▼ Animal Agency
 - Donna Haraway, The Contact Zone
 - Val Plumwood
 - ▼ Plant Agency
 - The Intelligent Plant, Michael Pollan
 - Brilliant Green <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/radical-conservation/2015/aug/04/plants-intelligent-sentient-book-brilliant-green-internet>
 - Nailing Nadkarni, Between Earth and Sky: Our Intimate Connections to

Trees.

- ▼ One Wilderness Walker: Terry Tempest Williams
 - Refuge-birds, lake levels, refuge for people.
 - Finding Beauty in a Broken World - international
 - The Hour of Land - social and environmental justice.
- ▼ The Anthropocene
 - Smithsonian: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-anthropocene-and-are-we-in-it-164801414/?no-ist>
 - Defining the Anthropocene. *Nature* **519**, 171–180 (12 March 2015).
- ▼ Wilderness Travel in Urban Areas
 - Urban Exploration
 - Wild in Built Environments
- ▼ New Nature Wildernesses
 - Oostvaardersplassen
 - <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/12/24/recall-of-the-wild>
 - ▼ Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
 - <http://www.denverpost.com/2013/01/14/rocky-mountain-arsenal-national-wildlife-refuge-offers-free-wildlife-drive/>
 - Just outside Denver, Colorado. 5,000-acre site where the U.S. Army made mustard gas during World War II was once on the Superfund list of high-priority hazardous-waste sites. Chemical factories were torn down and contaminated soil moved. Native grasses have been restored. The site was used to stockpile weapons during World War Two, but the weapons were never deployed.
 - Deer, owls, coyotes, hawks, bald eagles and other wild animals live there, including bison.
 - The refuge is “wild,” but you can drive through it as well as hike. It is one compromise in bringing back wild areas to ones that humans have wrecked. And it is an acceptance of the fact that we cannot, and never could, produce a pure wilderness, one that existed before humans came along. It is, in effect, a sense of hope.
- ▼ Wilderness Travel Virtually
 - Ben, Thesis