CART211 Proposal Essay

The modern world has largely been severed from the wilds of nature. In the creation of our own environment, we’ve distanced ourselves from the environment we’ve evolved in. This isn’t the first time we’ve done this. When animals first left the water environment, of whom are our ancestors, they too distanced themselves from where they once were. Although they changed their gills for lungs and their fins for limbs, the fundamental story of their lives didn’t change. The story of their survival is the same, no matter the setting. Our story’s setting has changed, just like it did for our ancestors millions of years ago, but the meaning of it hasn’t. I want to tell stories of nature in a more human context so people can better understand what part of our existence has changed and what hasn’t.

My topic isn’t such a grand and pressing issue. I only want to subtly change the view we have of what is natural and what we are. I think people lack relatability with a lot of our history as humans and the natural world itself. By natural, I mean what we think of when we say the word nature. Nature explicitly excludes humans from the picture it paints. We use natural as a term that means untouched by humans. The severance of the word is very useful, as it’s an important distinction. But I want people to think more about what I think the word’s true meaning is. Nature means life, not just living organisms, but the nuanced dance of everything in the universe. I think that meaning is much more significant and less talked about. I can think of nothing better to encapsulate nature than a story that bridges gap between the word’s two meanings. People know how humans don’t fit in to nature, but they don’t know how they do. I like to approach grand ideas about our existence with playfulness and bliss. The stories of the animals I will depict won’t be trying to show the cold, hard truth about how brutal nature is and how soft we are, nor will they be cutesy and dry. I want the stories to be on a website instead of a book because I can create a much more specific tone with all the intricacies of web design. I can blend photography and playful illustration to get the perfect blend of the two meanings of nature in a story. Once we understand our nature, we won’t feel so disconnected to the natural world.

The website will have at least four different stories, each about a specific animal. Each story will take a humanistic approach to what the animals are thinking or feeling but won’t change what those animals do in real life. I think by reading the stories and experiencing the website the user will viscerally understand a little more about the nature of the universe.