Sung Woo Park - Week 1 Reflection

Everyone has a different definition of "nature." Experiencing nature is also different for each individual; to some it could be going for a walk around the neighborhood, but for others it could be going on a mountain hike where you are completely isolated from the busy city with tall buildings.

Today, a lot of people assert that human species are destroying nature. To what extent does a human have to influence the nature to say that nature is destroyed? Can humans and nature co-exist? These are some of the questions I asked myself before I could define the word "nature."

Another way I approached in defining the word was to ask myself, "what is NOT nature." In class, Alexios posed a question asking if planets in outer space isn't nature — I think they are also nature, and it helped me factor in both living and non-living things when considering about the definition.

Here is what I think the word "nature" means:

An environment where the natural products of the world are preserved, and natural relations and interactions of organisms are undisturbed.

In one of the pictures I have attached, you will see a green space with a few swings and a picnic table. When I first discovered the space, being inside the greenery made

me feel like I was in nature; however, I soon realized that even this little space has been anthropollogically influenced. Surrounded by multiple man-made structures, the small park had no other living species than a few birds flying around and a household kitten. Things weren't natural. It seemed like an artificial nature to me.

My relationship with nature has been very stagnant before I met my girlfriend Lily. Before meeting her, I really didn't know how insensitive I was about the relationship between me and the nature. I didn't know the difference between compost and waste; but thanks to Lily, I realized my wrongdoings were affecting the natural ecology of nature. Now, I want to learn more about the nature and raise an awareness to the people I know. After seeing how my perception and behavior changed over the year, I think that <u>anyone</u> can learn and change — or at least mitigate the catastrophic damages we've caused as human species. As a species, we should educate each other and realize that we're not the only ones living in this assemblage of living and non-living things. The amount we benefit from the nature should be paid back and balanced.

Our actions are "man-made changes" (Leopold 16), and these selfish "changes of unprecedented violence" (15) forces other

organisms in the biotic pyramid to adapt. As an entrepreneur who always thought economy is strongly tied with the nature, I was hesitant to change my perspective and "quit thinking about decent land-use as solely an economic problem" (18). There are so much more connected behind what merely seems to be soil. It's true that evolution will never stop and we, as human species, will keep "progressing." However, we need to take a step back and re-think what progress really means "in terms of ethically and esthetically right." As a human being, "one of thousands of accretions to the height and complexity of the [Land] pyramid" (14), we should learn to be more responsible and conservative.

We should actively change our attitude and not put a thin cover over the problems that exist today. We have to learn and understand ecology — be fond of the concept and be passionate about it. After all, we can only "be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in" ('13). Lily and I were having lunch today together and discussed on whether the anthropological damage done could be reversed within our generation. She answered, "Environmental issues are something you can fix with a pessimistic stance," and it all makes sense now.
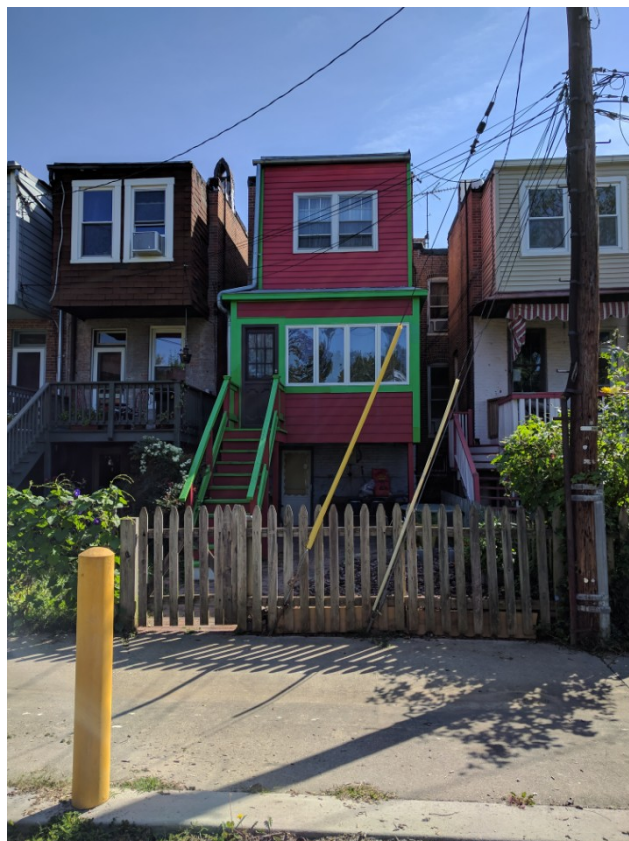
A small park located on the 32nd street

Green Area behind Garland Hall

A lovely cat I met at the park

A house by the park that looks like a watermelon

A free library by the park that lets you take a break away from technology and appreciate the nature