Joe Skimmons

2.13.17

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Exercise 2.2

1a. Cronon’s intellectual problem involves us separating ourselves from nature by idealizing it. In the way that people see nature as distant, we forfeit any chance of living amongst it in our true home, Cronon’s eyes. He believes in the harmony between wilderness and civilization, and that too much of one or the other is not a good thing.

1b. In order to push his argument forward, Cronon addresses many points in history, and what the term “wilderness” meant at the time. He is able to challenge what the reader thinks of the word by explaining how the idea of searching for a “wilderness experience” is a new idea to mankind.

1c. Wilderness- “The flight from history that is very nearly the core of wilderness represents the false hope of an escape from responsibility, the illusion that we can somehow wipe clean the slate of our past and return to the tabula rasa that supposedly existed before we began to leave our marks on the world” (Cronon).

Cronon’s definition of wilderness complicates it from the usual definition. He thinks that it is not a pristine place that humans should aspire to visit, but something that we should incorporate into everyday life.

Nature - “If we allow ourselves to believe that nature, to be true, must also be wild, then our very presence in nature represents its fall” (Cronon)

Cronon describes nature as something separate from ourselves, but something that we should be apart of and incorporate into our lives.

2. Cohen and Cronon share the warrant of the importance of protecting nature, albeit in different ways. Cronon believes that nature should be protected by being inhabited and that modern conservationist ideas about protecting national parks are not the true way to protect nature. In believing that nature offers an escape from responsibility and must remain wild, people are undermining their place in nature and the wilderness, and its importance. Cohen, however, believes that this is damaging to the modern environmentalist movement, and that protection of parks and nature is a positive thing. Cohen argues that this viewpoint is only held by those who have the power to return from the “wrong nature” and back to the right one, and is inaccessible.

Cronon and Dunlop share the warrant that the modern environmentalist movement needs to evolve in order to bring people closer to nature.

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