

David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus, eds. *The World and the Wild: Expanding Wilderness Conservation Beyond its American Roots*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001. xxiii, 231 pages.

This book was not what I was expecting. After reading David Rothenberg's "Introduction," I was anticipating a collection of essays designed to defend the concept of wilderness against those who would claim that it is an outdated, even dangerous, ethnocentric concept as applied to the world outside of the U.S. I was expecting a collection attempting to present a globally unified voice of wilderness affirmation in the face of contemporary critics. Indeed, most of the authors are either non-Western voices or Western voices representing non-Western parts of the world. However, many of these authors are quite skeptical about the success of wilderness American-style applied to the places they represent. The articulation of this skepticism creates a collection of essays that are, for the most part, thoughtful, serious, informative, and which offer rich discussion fodder.

Most of the essays are presented in a powerful narrative form; some are purely narrative; others are a mixture of narrative with exegesis. Most of the essays are especially well written, entertaining, and smart. Most of the essays are modest, avoiding inappropriately bold claims; and honest, fully aware of the complexity of the issue with which they grapple. Interestingly, most of the essays that possess these admirable qualities are from the non-Western or representative non-Western voices, while most of the essays found lacking in one or more of these areas are noticeably Western (only one essay in the entire collection is lacking in almost any redeeming quality).

Although not entirely clear from Rothenberg's introduction, the essays are thematically unified. They all, in their own way, attempt to grapple with the fundamental issue of appropriate human/nature relationships, especially with regard to how that relationship is manifest in the concept of a wilderness area, national park, or wildlife reserve. But, while the book and its authors demonstrate thematic unity, plurality and diversity of opinion on this theme most certainly highlight the book and make it interesting.

There are two variables at work here: the interests of human beings and the interests of the nonhuman world. We all seem to recognize that one cannot at all times and in all places maximize for two distinct variables entirely; that when push comes to shove we must choose one over the other. As one of the authors writes, "What happens when principles of local control and nature preservation come into conflict? One of these desiderata must go" (p. 61). Typically, this conflict is quickly glimpsed, lines immediately drawn, and variables selected for. While we discern the problem similarly, we most certainly do not agree on the solution. Although the authors in this collection admirably desire to maximize for both variables to the extent possible, their loyalty quickly becomes obvious.

Some of the authors in this collection make it clear that, at the end of the day, they choose for wilderness, wildlife, and reserve over even indigenous human interests. Most noticeable is John Terborgh's essay "Why Conservation in the Tropics is Failing" and his response to David Western. Defending top-down park preservation with "well-trained and well-equipped [armed?] guards" as "indisposable" (p. 82), Terborgh chastises bottom-up solutions initiated at the local or village level as unable to "improve the security of parks because they rely 100 percent on voluntary compliance" (p. 87), compliance that Terborgh seems to think is impossible because "individuals predictably strive to optimize current advantage" (p. 91). Given that the goal "is to conserve . . . the wildlife of parks all over the world" (p. 90), Terborgh is dismissive of "integrated conservation and (sustainable) development projects" (ICDPs) because they "shoot at the wrong target—local people instead of the park and its natural resources" (p. 84). Instead, Terborgh would "rather bet on the strongest institutions at hand—those that emanate from higher authority—than on the good will of local people to preserve habitats and their wildlife" (p. 91).

Somewhat less brazen is "For Indian Wilderness" by Philip Cafaro and Monish Verma. Cafaro and Verma unapologetically "support top-down regulations mandating nature preservation" (p. 61), define wilderness as "a place that remains largely unmanaged and unmodified by human beings" (p. 57), and suggest that when human needs (even the needs of "poor inhabitants adjacent to a park") "conflict with measures that are necessary to preserve species, we believe they should be met in ways that preserve wild nature" (p. 60). Although they are certainly not inconsiderate of basic human rights, and although they insist that affected and dislocated people be "adequately compensated" (p. 59), Cafaro and Verma certainly believe that "if we want to preserve tigers or any wild beings or places, we will have to sacrifice some human interests" (p. 60). As an articulation of the diversity of natural values, and a warning against purely anthropocentric approaches to conservation, this essay is worthy of applause. However, Cafaro and Verma are not as careful as they should be. Attempting to argue that designating reserve areas as wilderness "is the *only* way to secure the survival of many species and ecological communities" (p. 62, emphasis added), that "respect for nonhuman nature and an understanding of the threats facing it *logically* lead to strong support for wilderness preservation" (p. 63, emphasis added), Cafaro and Verma offer up little, if any, evidence, seemingly mistaking a spirited and forceful conclusion for a reasoned position. (Rothenberg does something similar in his introduction when he boldly asserts, but does little to defend, the conclusion that "Wilderness is essential for the perpetuation of this planet" [p. xiii].)

In a fairly pretentious and confused essay, "The Unpaintable West," Zeese Papanikolas also seems to throw-in on the side of wilderness as opposed to humans, or at least certain kinds of humans. Reflecting on the journals of Lewis and Clark, Papanikolas echoes a somewhat common refrain: knowing and

naming wilderness inevitably despoils it. For example, given that Lewis and Clark told of their encounters, that they were "men of science," that they named rivers and mountains, and that they described wondrous events, Papanikolas asserts that they were therefore "conquerors" (p. 29) of wilderness. Apparently assuming not merely a correlative but a causal connection, Papanikolas asserts that "the very naming of that wonder, in its innocence and joy, began the process of its destruction" (p. 25), that "henceforth, known, the wilderness was ready to be exploited" (p. 28). Although those who repeat this conclusion seldom provide evidence to support it, they seem to be assuming that knowledge of a natural thing (especially as this manifests itself in naming) inevitably reduces that thing to narrowly instrumentally valuable, inevitably culminating in the demise of that thing. This argument seems to neither be true—in that such demise is not inevitable, in fact even the opposite conclusion might arguably follow—nor cognizant of the extent of the impact that pre-Columbian peoples exerted upon this landscape: these places were not being named; they were being *renamed* by a new culture.

Other essays in this collection attempt to articulate a human inclusive idea of wilderness and reserve, suggesting that at least certain kinds of human activity can—even must—coincide with wilderness, wildness, wildlife preservation, reserves, or other such designations. The most important and thoughtful of these essays is "How Can Four Trees Make a Jungle?" by Pramod Parajuli. Parajuli's major difficulty with wilderness as applied around the world is not so much the destructive results on local communities that is so readily documented, but the conceptualization of the human/nature relationship which underlies and motivates that harm: "For a majority of people who eke out their livelihoods from nature's economy, the widely held ideas that nature can be preserved in wilderness and that wilderness is what is untouched by humans are simply untenable" (p. 13). "Restoring Wilderness or Reclaiming Forests" by Sahotra Sarkar, while making questionable assertions about the field of conservation biology and the role of the Endangered Species Act, also critically, yet constructively assesses both the underlying conceptualization of the wilderness/reserve mentality and the application of it. "Recycled Rainforest Myths" by Antonio Carlos Diegues offers the most forceful and condemning critique of protected areas; placing the ultimate blame on the American idea of wilderness. David Western's magnificent personal narrative on his experiences with the coexistence between the Maasai and a nature reserve along with his able response to John Terborgh is productive and inspiring: "Fifty years of experience has taught us that protected areas cannot survive and flourish in isolation" (p. 90).

Dan Imhoff's essay on Chilean preservation work by an American entrepreneur turned conservationist, "The Park of Ten Thousand Waterfalls," Ian Player's essay on his work with the Zulu, "Zulu History," Tom Vanderbilt's narrative about humans living in an unimaginably wild environment, proximate to an

active Mexican volcano, "Volcano Dreams," Kathleen Harris' account of the Mazatec Indians of southern Mexico, "Roads Where There have Long been Trails," and William Bevis' story about Bruno Manser, Manser's interaction with the Penan of Borneo and the demise of the Penan, "Bruno Manser and the Penan" are all wonderfully written and informative accounts of indigenous cultures and their struggle with Western conservation ideals. While not as polished, Damien Arabagali's account, "They Trampled on Our Taboos," regarding the callous destruction of a way of life in Papua New Guinea serves as an important reminder and warning.

Only a few of the authors in this collection attempt to address the basic problematic: that there are two distinct variables at work in this equation. Hence, few really try to approach this problem along a different tack. Parajuli's essay, Western's narrative, and Evan Eisenberg's, "Earth Jazz," which attempts a delightful analogy between ecology and jazz and the kind of thinking that both imply, are the most notable exceptions.

If we do begin to conceptualize this problem differently, we may also begin to search for solutions differently; to entertain new approaches and balk at some of our old ones as oversimplified or inappropriate. Although a logarithm prescribing some perfect general approach is probably fruitless, the broad strokes of the outline of an approach seem to appear after absorbing the wisdom contained in this collection. First, we begin to resist the temptation to quickly assess a given situation as a conflict between human and nonhuman nature, especially if we resist the temptation to quickly assume this bifurcation in the first place. Hence, we do not so quickly assume conflict. If, upon thorough reflection, we conclude that indigenous human communities do seriously threaten wildlife, the causes of that alienation demands unearthing and addressing. Next, by appealing to their own history, their own internal mechanisms of interaction with the nonhuman world, very determined attempts need to be made to bring these communities into line with conservation. If we are in fact interested in long-term solutions, then integrating indigenous local communities into that solution is the only effective, honest, pure, and enduring approach. Much as it is with motivating or altering the actions of individuals within a given community, while top-down dictates might be quicker and easier, organic and bottom-up appeals are the only truly effective and lasting solutions. The essays in this collection help us recognize this fact, and help point us in the right direction.

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