

Michael P. Nelson and J. Baird Callicott

Introduction

The Growth of Wilderness Seeds

*If you can look into the seeds of time and say which
grain will grow and which will not[,] . . . [then] speak.*

William Shakespeare

THE GREAT NEW WILDERNESS DEBATE was published in May 1998. A quick glance at the endnotes of the essays in this sequel, *The Wilderness Debate Rages On*, demonstrates that *The Great New Wilderness Debate* has since become the main reference work regarding the currently contested wilderness idea. While we, as that book's editors, are understandably pleased by this, we are at the same time sensitive to the fact that the topic the book tackles remains emotionally highly charged, contested, and controversial. Since that first publication, scores of scholars and wilderness defenders have weighed in on the great new wilderness debate with a considerable number of provocative (sometimes even vituperative) and mostly thoughtful essays. There have been, in fact, far more post-*The Great New Wilderness Debate* contributions to this conversation than could possibly fit into a second volume. *The Wilderness Debate Rages On* collects what we regard as the best of these contributions over the past decade mixed in with a few essays from the mid-1990s that somehow escaped our notice during the preparation of

the first volume. This collection also assembles important (yet hitherto unheeded) and timely historical voices of leading ecologists, echoing down to the present, mostly from the 1910s to the 1930s, on the role of wilderness preservation in biodiversity conservation.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IDEAS

Ideas matter. Socrates was put to death because of the ideas he critiqued and defended; otherwise sensible people continue to attempt to ban numerous books of fiction because of ideas these books are believed to espouse; and more and more of us realize that our ideas about nature lie at the root of and continue to shape all our land-use decisions. As author Sam Harris sharply states in his recent book *The End of Faith*, “A Belief is a lever that, once pulled, moves almost everything else in a person’s life.”¹ Requests for a reconsideration of ideas that over time become so sacred that they become fixed and objectified have always subjected those critiquing such ideas to censure and even penalty. And this is certainly the case in the debate over the idea of wilderness. Some of our most renowned and eloquent environmental thinkers and writers have become so spittin’ mad about questioning the wilderness idea that they have been reduced to name-calling in defense of what they believe wilderness to be. Other lauded environmental thinkers who offer a critique of the *concept* of wilderness have, for instance, been called “wilderness foes,” “faddish philosophers who will soon be forgotten,” “anticonservationists,” “dubious professors,” “antinature intellectuals,” “the high end of the wise-use movement,” and “high-paid intellectual types . . . trying to knock Nature, knock the people who value Nature, and still come out smelling smart and progressive” by those who see themselves as the embattled defenders of wilderness.² Sometimes critique and reconstruction of the wilderness *idea* are lumped in with other forms of nature destruction as just another part of the overall “war against nature.”³ Sometimes good-old-time-wilderness-religion zealots draw suspect analogies premised upon sophomoric logical fallacies.⁴ For example, they might say that because the philosopher Socrates makes a comment that evinces contempt for the world outside of the city (the world of nature) and because many of those who critique the

wilderness *idea* are philosophers (including the editors of this volume), such critics must believe what Socrates believed about the value of nature.⁵ Though such responses are interesting (even, we must confess, somewhat and perversely entertaining at times) and telling, in that they demonstrate the power of ideas and conceptual analysis (i.e., the power of philosophy), they are not arguments; they are, rather, emotive and intellectually empty diatribes, more formally known by philosophers as fallacies of personal attack (most often, *ad hominem circumstantial*).

Two stories that may be true or may be apocryphal urban legends, we don't know, nicely, but troublingly, illustrate the importance of ideas in this particular debate. The first is a rumor that floated around academic environmental conferences and e-mail correspondence that conservative talk-show bully Rush Limbaugh was regularly citing geographer William Denevan's essay "The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492" (reprinted in *The Great New Wilderness Debate*) on his right-wing radio show. According to the rumor, Limbaugh was employing Denevan's work as proof that environmental impact of notable scale has occurred in North America for thousands of years. Supposedly, Limbaugh was suggesting that environmental concern—premised on the idea that nature in the Western Hemisphere was pristine prior to 1492—was ill founded, that the continued currency of this idea among environmentalists demonstrated their naiveté, and that anthropogenic environmental impact was "normal" or "natural" and therefore nothing to worry about. Though this story is unsubstantiated (we declined to listen to hour after hour of Limbaugh tapes to try to confirm it), the fear of what "the other side" might do with the critique of the wilderness idea has been a very common and somewhat understandable response to the critique by some traditional wilderness defenders and environmentalists. Indeed, some of the essays included in this volume (most notably, those of Gary Snyder, David Orr, and Dave Foreman) express that fear.⁶

Second, since the late 1990s it has also been rumored that environmental historian William Cronon, a notorious critic of the wilderness idea, received a telephone death threat from an angry Earth First!er furious over Cronon's (in)famous article "The Trouble with Wilderness" (also reprinted in *The Great New Wilderness Debate*) and the subsequent

attention his work on wilderness attracted. A condensed version of “The Trouble with Wilderness” was published in the *New York Times* and was allegedly cited by a member of Alaska’s antienvironmental congressional delegation on the Senate floor.

Though we have been unable to verify either of these stories, their mere existence (even if untrue) shows how close to the bone this debate cuts. Name-calling, conference outbursts, accusations of strange bedfellows and political shape shifting, and even rumors of death threats all prove that ideas matter, that philosophical critique is or can be important, that this debate over the concept of wilderness continues to rage, and that a sequel to *The Great New Wilderness Debate* is mandated.

As we insist in our introduction to *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, so we insist here in *The Wilderness Debate Rages On*: we suggest no criticism of the places thought of as wilderness; rather, it is the wilderness *idea* that is problematic. Names matter. They frame what they label and make what they label available for various uses and abuses. By some, for example, well-watered regions of the tropics are framed as “jungles”; by others they are framed as “rain forests.” The jungle idea connotes disorder and danger, a place in need of discipline by machete, chainsaw, and bulldozer; the rain forest idea connotes complexity, balance, and harmony, a place in need of nothing but wonder and protection. The reality—and we certainly think that the *places* labeled as jungle or rain forest are real—is the same regardless of the way it is framed conceptually. What does the wilderness idea connote? Part of the reason it is problematic is that the wilderness idea connotes many different and sometimes contradictory things to many different people. To some it connotes a place for a certain kind of physically challenging recreation; to others it connotes a place of solitude and reverential reflection; to still others it connotes a habitat for big, fierce predators. So what are we to do when, say, big, fierce predators make a wilderness area unsafe for wilderness recreationists of either the sporting or the contemplative kind? What are we to do when, say, sporting wilderness recreationists are noisy and irreverent, spoiling the experience of contemplative recreationists, who go to some place designated as a wilderness area to experience solitude and reflect reverentially? This is only a sample of the kind of confusion that the wilderness idea creates when we at-

tempt to operationalize it. These and many other of its problematic connotations are discussed in the essays contained in this volume and its predecessor.

THE PRESENT COLLECTION

Like the pensive traveler in American poet Robert Frost's legendary poem "The Road Not Taken," at a certain point in the course of its development North American conservation took one path instead of another. We contend that, for wilderness preservation, this has indeed "made all the difference." The path that North American conservation chose—for better or for worse—led to the prevailing concept of wilderness (what in *The Great New Wilderness Debate* we refer to as "the received wilderness idea") in the North American mind—and now in the mind of much of the rest of the world. The North American idea of wilderness was fashioned between the 1830s and the 1930s. This received wilderness idea was inspired by the writings of thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, Robert Marshall, and Sigurd Olson—household wilderness names even today.⁷ It was this vision of wilderness that was then reflected in and perpetuated by the most important and long-reaching wilderness legislation ever enacted: the U.S. Wilderness Act of 1964. We contend that the course that first U.S. and eventually international wilderness preservation policies actually followed was ultimately set by the received wilderness idea, which itself coalesced from three main sources.

First and foremost was wilderness preservation for human recreational purposes. Theodore Roosevelt, Sigurd Olson, and the young Aldo Leopold were the early architects of this wilderness rationale. Moreover, the types of recreation they had in mind were mainly various sorts of "vigorous" and "manly" recreation that would secure the "virility" of men, namely, wilderness for big-game hunting and primitive travel. Hence, the places that were thought to qualify as a proving ground for manly men needed to be dangerous and rugged, untamed and tough to traverse, and available for manhandling. Environmental historian James Morton Turner's essay in this volume adeptly il-

illustrates how the historical conception of wilderness recreation in the “woodcraft” tradition is ironically in tension with our current take-only-pictures-leave-only-footprints ideas about appropriate wilderness recreation.

Second was the argument—emanating from American Transcendentalists such as Henry David Thoreau and John Muir—that wilderness served not only narrow or immediate human ends like recreation but “higher uses” as well. Thoreau and Muir focused primarily on the spiritual and aesthetic values of what they imagined wilderness to be. Wilderness landscapes were supposed to be awe inspiring, the clear and magnificent handiwork of a beneficent and powerful god, instantiations of beauty as well as the very standard of the beautiful itself, and places providing solitude so as to evoke profound spiritual self-reflection.

Third, and related to the second, was the tradition that focused on American wilderness as a source first of beautiful models for landscape painting and later for nature photography. When wilderness changed from the stronghold of the devil to the handiwork of God, from something viewed with fear and loathing to something lovely and divine, it also moved from the background to the foreground in painting. Through the work of painters such as Thomas Cole, Asher Brown Durand, Frederick Edwin Church, Thomas Moran, George Catlin, and Albert Bierstadt dramatic landscape painting became the visual embodiment of the Transcendental wilderness idea; and the remnants of wilderness in America, which were long gone in Europe, came to represent a new national identity for Americans.⁸ In fact, some scholars argue that paintings of wilderness scenery were a stimulus of the movement that established the U.S. national park system.⁹ As environmental historian Alfred Runte suggests, the landscape painters “dramatiz[ed] what the nation stood to lose by its indifference, [and] artists contributed immeasurably to the evolution of concern” that underlay the national park idea.¹⁰ As a result, in the American mind wilderness was portrayed (conceptually and now literally—or, rather, visually) as a place of big, dramatic, awe-inspiring, monumental scenery—places that gave Americans a unique national identity. Hence, what America (and perhaps the world) got in a wilderness system was, understand-

ably, land suitable for and consistent with these three sources of the wilderness idea.

Part 1, “The Unreceived Wilderness Idea: The Road Not Taken,” of the present collection is an effort to demonstrate that there was an alternate path—“grassy and want[ing] wear”—that the North American conservation movement could have traveled but did not. However, part 1 also represents an effort to demonstrate that, unlike Frost’s traveler, we can come, and in fact we may be coming, back to the point of divergence; that we can reblaze, and that we may be reblazing, our intellectual conservation trails and, more specifically, the rationales for a new preservation policy.

This alternate route was first explored by ecologists Joseph Grinnell and Tracy Storer in their 1916 essay “Animal Life as an Asset of National Parks.” Tellingly, they introduce their essentially different rationale for wilderness preservation under the umbrella of the recreational value of wilderness perhaps to try to co-opt the prevailing anthropocentrism, but Grinnell and Storer in fact emphasize the role played by wild lands or natural areas (“parks” in this essay) as places that serve as sites for scientific study and as habitat for wildlife. An examination of the subsequent literature on the topic of protected areas at this time reveals that, despite its initial invocation of recreation, this landmark essay greatly influenced those following Grinnell and Storer down the nonrecreational path not popularly taken. The essays by ecologists Sumner; Moore; Adams; Wright, Dixon, and Thompson; Wright; Shelford; and Leopold—all of whose ideas appear to merge in the amazing (for 1963, just one year prior to the signing of the Wilderness Act of 1964) essay by ecologist Stephen Spurr—demonstrate that an alternative path appeared before us at one point in our history. We believe that if the ideas put forward by these early American ecologists regarding those places we now think of as wilderness had informed wilderness preservation policy and the Wilderness Act of 1964, then much of the current brouhaha over the concept of wilderness would never have occurred, and there would be no need for the “rethinking” of the wilderness idea that is going on today. This rethinking suggests that what we currently want in a concept of wilderness is not principally

land suitable for manly recreation, higher spiritual or aesthetic uses, and inspiring great landscape art. Rather, current thinking seems to suggest that we now more desperately need the following:

1. Wilderness for science: Early on, this seemed to be a mostly and blatantly self-serving argument by ecologists for study areas. Their felt need for designated wilderness was premised on the prevailing ecological assumptions about climax equilibria that excluded humans. As environmental scholar Julianne Lutz Warren indirectly reveals in her essay, Leopold seems to have picked this theme up from his attempt to ally the recreational preservationists of the Wilderness Society with the ecological preservationists of the Ecological Society of America. However, Leopold transforms the case for preserving places free from human habitation and modification for purposes of ecological study into a case for preserving humanly uninhabited and unmodified areas as “a base-datum of normality,” that is, as a control for sustainably managing ecologically similar inhabited and economically exploited lands elsewhere. As philosophers, we would note how the persuasive power of the wilderness-for-science argument increases by the turn Leopold gives it. The value of humanly uninhabited and unmodified places for ecological study seems self-serving, while the necessity for base-data of normality seems to better serve the collective public interest.
2. Wilderness for threatened and endangered species: Some threatened and endangered species require large and unpeopled, unroaded, undeveloped land in which to flourish. Wolves and grizzly bears are leading examples.¹¹ If they are to survive, such species must have a place to live. Therefore, we must preserve large tracts of land for their habitat. To emphasize the *raison d'être* for such places, we might cease calling them “wilderness areas,” thereby conjuring up images of places to backpack and rock climb or places in which to meditate or view scenery and instead call them “biodiversity reserves,” a suggestion developed in this collection by philosopher J. Baird Callicott.

3. Wilderness as preserving representative landscapes and ecosystems: We might urge that all extant kinds of biotic communities, ecosystems, and landscapes be represented on the earth, no matter how unscenic they might be, how uninviting they might be to recreationists and transcendentalists, or, indeed, how marginal they might be as habitat for threatened and endangered species. This preservationist rationale is, like the preceding one, based on the current concern for preserving biodiversity. Biotic communities, landscapes, and ecosystems are levels of biological organization, the variety of which is now included in the concept of biodiversity, as any textbook in conservation biology will attest.¹²

When we (the editors) assert that we (conservationists) now want places serving these three purposes, who are the “we” who want such places? Well, that certainly includes us, the editors. However, our wish list is not just personal or idiosyncratic. We would suggest that this is a growing desideratum on the leading edge of the world conservation movement. From biologist E. O. Wilson to activist Dave Foreman, conservationists appear to be reaching the consensus that biodiversity loss may be one of our greatest environmental problems—if not our single greatest. Reconceiving wilderness preservation in terms of base-data of ecological normality, species preservation, and types of community, ecosystem, and landscape representation seems better to address our most pressing environmental concerns than the erstwhile conception of wilderness preservation in terms of recreation, higher spiritual or aesthetic uses, and viewing scenery, which we believe to be the primary connotations of the received wilderness idea.¹³ An examination of the essays in part 1 gives us an alternative historical path to an idea of wilderness preservation better fitting contemporary environmental concerns. Part 1 ends with a fresh essay by philosopher Mark Jenkins. Jenkins’s essay articulates and examines an argument (Argument 31) for wilderness preservation missed by Michael P. Nelson in his “amalgamation of wilderness preservation arguments” in *The Great New Wilderness Debate*.

Part 2 of the present collection mirrors part 2 of the previous one. In both *The Great New Wilderness Debate* and this sequel we have at-

tempted to represent the sometimes shocking critique of the received, originally American idea of wilderness as it has been translated for, exported to, and all too often imposed upon the rest of the world. Part 2, “Race, Class, Culture, and Wilderness,” adds to the “Third and Fourth World” critiques of the received wilderness idea in part 2 of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*.

In his review of *The Great New Wilderness Debate* and again in the introduction to his coedited (with Marta Ulvaeus) book *The World and the Wild*, philosopher David Rothenberg has defended the importance of the received wilderness idea for humans all over the world.¹⁴ Suggesting that wilderness is a universal, unproblematic, and positively valued good, Rothenberg claims that “wilderness has supporters all over the world, people who come from all levels of education, opportunity, and status. . . . [I]t is clear that wilderness has a place in the environmental philosophies of all cultures. . . . Although many cultures don’t have a word for wilderness, when they think about what it means, *they know what to do with it*.”¹⁵

Indeed, as the essays in this section of the book indicate (and as many of the essays in Rothenberg’s own book demonstrate), they do know what to do with the received wilderness idea—or, rather, these essays indicate what many people throughout the world think we Westerners (mainly Americans) can do with it!

Part 2 contains essays by Sahotra Sarkar and by Kevin DeLuca and Anne Demo that offer a more general alternative cultural critique of the received wilderness idea. The section also contains more specific contributions from a wide variety of often underrepresented voices and quarters. Chinese (Feng Han), Bantu (G. W. Burnett, Regine Joulié-Küttner, and Kamuyu wa Kang’ethe), South American (Antonio Carlos Diegues), and African American (Kimberly Smith as well as Cassandra Johnson and J. M. Bowker) perspectives in this volume add to the American Indian, Indian, Central and South American, and Australian Aboriginal critiques that we presented in part 2 of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*. As the reader will note, we have also attempted to broaden the contributions to *The Wilderness Debate Rages On* by presenting essays written in a different, more narrative style than those in

The Great New Wilderness Debate. In this part of the present book we have even included a piece of fiction: a chapter from writer Lynn Maria Laitala's north-woods-gothic book *Down from Basswood*, which critiques the Romantic wilderness ideas of wilderness writer and activist Sigurd Olson and his ilk from an American Indian (Ojibwa)/northern Minnesotan–Finnish perspective.

As it did in *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, part 3 of *The Wilderness Debate Rages On* represents the more mainstream Western and academic debate over the concept of wilderness as it unfolded after the publication of the first volume. To say that this has been a difficult and contentious debate would be like saying that Mike Tyson suffers from “moderate aggression” or that the U.S. presence in Iraq is “somewhat disruptive.” The academic (and nonacademic) community has produced many more essays of this kind than we can publish here. In fact, we are herein reprinting only about half of the essays we originally considered for the volume. The core of part 3 (essays by Gary Snyder, J. Baird Callicott, Dave Foreman, and Jill Belsky) is an integrated exchange that took place at the “Wilderness Science in a Time of Change” conference in Missoula, Montana, in the spring of 1999. In addition to reading a selection from his (then) recently released epic poem, *Mountains and Rivers without End*, poet and essayist Gary Snyder also read a version of his contribution to this volume as the conference keynote speech on the opening evening. The following day a session was arranged as a “debate” between Callicott and Foreman, with each presenting the essays included here. The day after that memorable exchange, environmental sociologist Jill Belsky presented an essay that provided a summary and critique of these three essays along with Belsky's own contribution to the discussion (Belsky slightly reworked her essay for this volume, as did Callicott).

The remainder of this part of the volume contains essays from some of our best-known contemporary environmental thinkers and activists. David Orr points to the wilderness critique by writer Marilynne Robinson (reprinted in part 4 of this collection) by way of posting a general warning about the political dangers of critiquing wilderness. (Readers can decide for themselves if Orr gets Robinson's critique right.) Phi-

osopher Wayne Ouderkirk defends the received wilderness idea but occasionally lapses into confusing the wilderness *idea* with the *places* we now associate with that idea.

Until recently, the philosophical side of this debate over the concept of wilderness has been dominated by the Anglo-American philosophical tradition. We ourselves work within that tradition. The essays by philosophers Jonathan Maskit and Irene Klaver, however, nicely represent the contribution of the Continental philosophical tradition—a Continental critique, if you will, of the received wilderness idea. The Anglo-American and Continental traditions of philosophy differ along many axes. One such axis of difference regards science. Generally speaking, Anglo-American philosophy regards science as providing if not certain then at least a body of continually self-correcting and self-refining knowledge, while the Continental tradition has been suspicious if not dismissive of science as a source of human knowledge, aligning more with the ways that creative literature and other cultural productions engage the natural world. Readers will find in Klaver's essay, for example, a more poetic and associative than scientific encounter with the wilderness idea.

Environmental sociologist Eileen Crist and philosopher John O'Neill present excellent but challenging contributions to this debate, though in very different ways. O'Neill's essay provides a needed but oft-neglected philosophical reflection on the justice issues that are central to this debate and that come up repeatedly in parts 2 and 3 of this volume. Instead of simply and emphatically affirming a naive wilderness realism (a view that would assert that wilderness per se exists apart from humans), Crist cleverly subjects the deconstruction of the received wilderness idea by scholars such as Callicott and Cronon to a deconstruction of her own. In the end, Crist provides a brief less for the classic or received wilderness idea than for something that appears to be very similar to Callicott's "biodiversity reserve" idea. Also included is a 1996–97 essay by former Sierra Club Executive Director Michael McCloskey that was somehow skipped over in *The Great New Wilderness Debate*. McCloskey's essay points out the surprising (to some at least) tension between "traditional Nature protection organizations and conservation biologists." In an

indirect and ironic way it documents our claim that the biodiversity reserve idea is better suited to contemporary conservation concerns than the classic or received wilderness idea. McCloskey's essay melds nicely with part 1 and with Sarkar's essay in part 2.

Finally, just as we tried to do with part 4 of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, part 4 of this collection offers ways to rethink, remedy, rehabilitate, or move beyond the received wilderness idea. Though the essays in this section are quite varied both in message and in style, each author or set of authors contributes something significant to this undertaking. These approaches to reconceptualization might be said to fall into two basic categories. On the one side are more radical rejections of the received wilderness idea from writers like Callicott and Robinson. While Robinson proposes a nearly complete abandonment of the concept of wilderness ("I think we must surrender the idea of wilderness"), Callicott proposes the replacement of the idea of wilderness, freighted with all sorts of unhelpful and unjettisonable baggage, with the notion of biodiversity reserves—protected areas named in such a way that the primary purpose they serve is clear and straightforward. Callicott would not prohibit their serving as places to recreate in the form of backpacking or canoeing or as sites for aesthetic and spiritual experience, but the biodiversity reserve idea would make clear what "use" takes priority when other uses conflict with biodiversity conservation in such reserves. Part of Robinson's denunciation of the received wilderness idea—the sense that it can and has served as a crutch and an inappropriate focus for conservation—is echoed strongly in the short essay penned by writer and farmer Wendell Berry in opposition to drilling for oil in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Though Berry does not necessarily propose the more dramatic abandonment of a focus on wilderness preservation, both he and Robinson warn that we cannot save nature by focusing on protected areas alone, whether we call them wildernesses or biodiversity reserves; in fact, both Robinson and Berry even assert that we may indeed do nature more harm in the long run with such a strategy. An appropriate and comprehensive strategy for conservation would give as much attention to the places we inhabit and exploit as to those we vacate and protect.

The other approach to reconceptualization represented in this part of the book includes authors who, in one way or another, appear to offer some sort of reform of our received wilderness idea. Also writing in opposition to Arctic oil drilling, nature writer Scott Russell Sanders suggests that wilderness areas ought to be thought of in the same way that religious people who honor the Sabbath think of that day of the week—as a space for rest, humility, and reflection and as a gesture of respect toward something larger than humanity. The reader of *The Wilderness Debate Rages On* might, however, note a tension between Sanders's suggestion and the warnings of Robinson and Berry: if we set aside Sunday, or wilderness, as our space for good behavior, then does that imply that the rest of the week, or the rest of nature, is not holy and thus available for profane and inconsiderate uses? Animal ecologist John Vucetich and philosopher Michael P. Nelson jointly suggest a move toward rethinking by pointing to a conceptual muddle that, they argue, clouds our thinking about wilderness. They employ the old philosophical tactic of drawing a distinction when an equivocation or a conceptual confusion is encountered, here tracing the line between a wilderness *experience* and the actual physical *places* that we call wilderness.

Finally, this part of the volume ends with a group of case studies. William Cronon illustrates how the received wilderness idea tragically negated the human stories during the recent movement to establish the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness Area in the Apostle Islands in Lake Superior. Cronon urges a wilderness rethinking that does not do this, that can somehow incorporate and even celebrate these human histories. Wildlife ecologist Rolf Peterson poignantly articulates how a commitment to and policy implementation of the received wilderness idea by the National Park Service could lead to the end of the wolf population in Isle Royale National Park, wolves that made it to the island on their own and wolves that are half of the longest-running continuous predator-prey study in the world. Peterson presents a dilemma that any respectable rethinking of wilderness certainly should address. Finally, conservation biologist Kurt Jax and ecologist-philosopher Ricardo Rozzi employ examples from the United States, Germany, and Chile to argue for the importance of wilderness conceived in accord with cur-

rent thinking in environmental science, a conception of wilderness that arguably coincides with the kinds of protected areas envisioned in the essays of the early ecologists in part 1.

We end this volume with a beautiful and provocative narrative by philosopher and writer Kathleen Dean Moore. Illustrating the importance of intact and healthy ecosystems (which the reader may or may not think of as wilderness areas), Moore issues a fierce warning about allowing wild lands or healthy ecosystems in general to become degraded over time, thereby affecting our default image of what constitutes a healthy landscape: “This is what we must resist: gradually coming to accept that a stripped down, hacked up, reamed out, dammed up, paved over, poisoned, bulldozed, impoverished landscape is the norm—the way it’s supposed to be, the way it’s always been, the way it must always be. This is the result we should fear the most.”

Both of us editors are environmental philosophers. Both of us have dedicated our lives and our life’s work to the attempt to understand human relationships with the more-than-human world and to create systems of ethics that foster appropriate and healthy human relationships with that world and the myriad nonhuman beings with whom we share it. We are not necessarily “for” or “against” the wilderness idea. We are most certainly “for” critical thinking and the clarification of concepts and most certainly “against” muddled or flawed thinking, even if that means that we will at times disagree with people whom we, in nearly every sense, view as our allies and friends, people we respect and admire tremendously. However, we both feel the need to “speak,” to critically examine what many of our friends and colleagues consider a holy concept. We both also worry that the seed of the wilderness idea that was planted in North America around the turn of the twentieth century has now sprouted into a plant that has ultimately borne desiccated fruit. We both, however, believe that a neglected conceptual seed can be replanted and nurtured in a different and more productive fashion—even if, in the process, the word “wilderness” is ultimately abandoned as hopelessly tainted and confused. This second collection of essays tracking the ongoing debate about the wilderness idea is offered in the spirit of just such a sowing.

NOTES

1. Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 12.
2. The first criticism was leveled by Dave Foreman in "All Kinds of Wilderness Foes," *Wild Earth* (Winter 1996–97): 2, 4; the second was a reported yet unverified comment; the remainder of these attacks are from Gary Snyder's "Is Nature Real?" collected in this volume or from earlier versions of that essay.
3. This is the title of Foreman's forthcoming book, which reportedly includes a chapter on wilderness deconstruction as another type of wilderness attack.
4. See Dave Foreman, "The Real Wilderness Idea," in this volume.
5. Socrates' comment about the world outside of the city is found in Plato's *Phaedrus*, 230d–e: "I am devoted to learning; landscapes and trees have nothing to teach me—only the people in the city can do that" (Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff [New York: Hackett Publishing, 1995]). Of course, all philosophers do not believe what Socrates believed (neither *everything* that Socrates believed nor *this one thing*).
6. See also Foreman, "All Kinds of Wilderness Foes."
7. The essays of these "founding fathers" of the received idea of wilderness are collected in part 1 of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*.
8. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 4th ed. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001), 78–83.
9. See, for example, Eugene C. Hargrove, *Foundations of Environmental Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989).
10. Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*, 3rd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 25. See also Hargrove, *Foundations*, 77–107.
11. The problem is one of coexistence. As a population biologist colleague who studies wolves once commented, "Wolves basically need two things: something to eat and not to be shot by humans." The same probably goes for grizzlies as well. That is, the main reason big, fierce predators need undeveloped lands to flourish is because of conflicts with people, who accidentally run over predators and intentionally shoot them when the humans feel they or their domestic animals are threatened by predators.
12. See, for example, Martha J. Groom, Gary K. Meffe, C. Ron Carroll, and contributors, *Principles of Conservation Biology*, 3rd ed. (Sunderland, Mass.: Sinauer and Associates, 2006).
13. The linkage between classic wilderness preservation and the preservation of biodiversity is challenged by philosopher of science Sahotra Sarkar in this volume.

14. David Rothenberg, review of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, *Environmental Ethics* 22 (Summer 2000): 199–202; David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus, eds., *The World and the Wild: Expanding Wilderness Conservation beyond Its American Roots* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001).

15. Rothenberg, review of *The Great New Wilderness Debate*, 202, emphasis added.